

The Aviary

Apr. '24, Week 34 By Students, for Students Vol. 1, Issue 2

BBSU Brings Student Events



BBSU leaders Zharia Clausell and Andrea Avena oversee a game at the BHM Performance.

~ Nathan Valdivia, Gabriel Koppula

WISH Academy—Introduced earlier this year, the Black & Brown Student Union (BBSU) has hosted a variety of events embracing black culture. Founded by President Zharia Clausell and Vice President Andrea Avena, the club has organized a number of events during Black History Month including a potluck, spirit week, and pep rally. The goal of their club is to “provide a safe and supportive space for Black & Brown students of all ethnic backgrounds on campus...” and to “promote cultural awareness and education.”

Founding members Zharia and Andrea started the club because they felt “the school has a lack of representation and activities and incentives that represent black and brown culture on campus.” They were inspired by WISH’s co-located school Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnets’ own BBSU and their

intent to “bring a supportive space for Black & Brown students of all ethnic backgrounds on campus.” Since the club’s creation at the beginning of the year, the leaders had intentions to host several events throughout the year, most in February for the annual Black History month. Many of these events have been a success for their first running, and Zharia remarks that they have learned a lot about the process of creating events. They hope that the club can learn from first year challenges to improve their offerings of representation for years to come.

Hosted by BBSU, the Black History Month (BHM) Performance, held on February 28th, was a large production led by club leadership Zharia and Andrea, theater teacher Ms. Landon, Principal Dr. Johnson, and Yamilet Ramirez, that brought together both WISH Middle and WISH Academy students. The production included performances from both the High School & Middle ... (see pg. 2)

Charter Schools Sue Over New Limits



The LAUSD Board of Education votes to approve the new policy on March 19th. A member's absence invalidated an earlier vote.

~ Nicholas Steinman

Los Angeles—On Tuesday, March 19th, the Los Angeles Unified School District’s Board of Education voted 4-3 to restrict new and modified charter school co-locations (or agreements to share space on one campus) on many of the district’s campuses across the Los Angeles region starting in 2025. Weeks later, the California Charter School Association sued to block the policy in court. The new policy prohibits whenever possible the offering of additional space to charter schools on the campuses of the district’s 100 Priority Schools, Black Student Achievement Plan (BSAP) schools, and Community Schools, as well as in locations where the difference in grade levels between the district’s traditional schools and the charter schools could be unsafe or give charter schools an advantage in enrollment. ... (see pg. 6)

Reader's Guide

Read on for...

- * Charter schools’ case against the LAUSD School Board’s controversial decision,
 - * A look behind the scenes of Media Madness’s Student Store,
 - * More on club activities,
 - * Influential paintings,
 - * An update on improvements to the WISH Library,
 - * Comics, crosswords, satire pieces,
- ... and more!

Brackets [] are added in quotes when words are added or inferred for clarity.

Mr. Illko On Music Program, Grammy Award

WISH Academy—The past year has been very eventful for the WISH Academy music department, and for the music teacher, Mr. Markus Illko. On March 15th, The Aviary’s Nicholas Steinman sat down with him to discuss the recording and release of the department’s first vinyl album, 2023 (also available on streaming), the department’s successful biannual concerts, and Mr. Illko’s personal success, which saw him winning a Grammy Award as part of instrumental group The String Revolution and embark on a press tour earlier this year, and more. The following transcript has been edited for length and clarity.

Could you describe a bit your journey to becoming a music educator?

So the journey actually started as just a musician. I always wanted to play guitar. I started to study guitar when I was like 15, started at university when I was 16, finished university when I was 19, and I just wanted to play concerts. That was the first thing. So I got into [performing] music, and then eventually I started teaching when I was 20 or 21, and I enjoyed it.

It was always part of being a musician. So that’s actually where this whole thing led into becoming a music educator as well. I think ... (see pg. 4)

Historical Tidbit: Norman Rockwell & the "Four Freedoms"

~ Emma Petersen

On consecutive weeks in 1943, American painter Norman Rockwell debuted a set of four paintings that he called “The Four Freedoms.” These paintings were inspired by President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s 1941 speech to Congress regarding the nation’s struggle to promote democracy during World War II. Though the U.S. didn’t enter the war until 1942, President Roosevelt began his speech by describing the existential threats facing America and its allies. In the speech, Roosevelt asked regular Americans to make sacrifices to protect democracy around the world. He then detailed the four freedoms which he saw as most fundamental to a new, democratic world order after the war. Each of Roosevelt’s four freedoms is vividly interpreted in one of Rockwell’s works.

The first of the paintings is “Freedom from Want.” The painting portrays a family seated around a lavishly decorated table, enjoying each other’s company as they are being served a decadent meal. Themes of a united family, and the ideal American lifestyle are portrayed through the joyful expressions worn by each character, and in their apparent disregard for the food being served. An important aspect of this painting is that the characters are aware of the food being served, but they appear to value each other’s company more than the meal being served. Because food exists in such abundance, they are free from desire for more. To inspire Americans to stay focused on the American Dream during times of struggle, Rockwell illustrates a happy family that is able to appreciate the importance of fellowship rather than worrying about everyday necessities.



Painted during World War II, Norman Rockwell's "Freedom from Want" depicts an abundant family dinner in a nostalgic setting.

The second of these paintings is “Freedom of Speech.” This painting is based off of President Roosevelt’s call for “freedom of speech and expression—everywhere in the world.” Rockwell portrays an ordinary man rising to speak at a town meeting. His seated peers listen around him as he expresses his opinions.

“Freedom of Worship” is the third painting from this series. It portrays people from a variety of faiths in profile as they pray. As one of the country’s founding ideals, freedom of worship remains an important part of what it means to live in America. This painting, however, only represents a fraction of religions that exist across the nation. Because of this, it can be perceived as contradictory to its purpose of attempting to represent religious freedom.

The final painting is titled “Freedom From Fear.” The painting portrays two children tucked peacefully into bed, seemingly oblivious to the perils of the world. In the foreground of this painting, the children’s parents stand, watching their children sleep, while the father holds a newspaper. Furthermore, the newspaper is riddled with headlines regarding the treacherous state of the world. This juxtaposition of the sleeping children against the perilous ... (see pg. 4)

Inside the Black History Performance

(from pg. 1) ... school. Students from WISH Middle school shared powerful poems and messages with students. Additionally, WISH Middle displayed a Step-dancing presentation. Stepping, sometimes referred to as “step-dancing” or “soulstepping,” is a form of percussive dance in African American culture originating from the 1700s that utilizes a mixture of clapping, footsteps, and other body motions to produce complex rhythms. A team of six middle school students, led by Ms. Doneshia performed an original step routine to the two schools.

On the high school side, BBSU hosted several games for students to participate in, including the wildly competitive “Head, Shoulders, Knees, Cup” that pitted students and teachers against one another. The presentation also



WISH Academy theater students read poetry at the Black History Month Performance. featured coordinated dance performances from WISH Academy’s K-Pop Dance Club. K-Pop groups, most notably global phenomenons BTS and BLACKPINK, are known for taking heavy inspiration from hip-hop to produce their tracks, incorporating rapping and graffiti-like visuals. To end off the event, WISH Academy’s VAPA program performed “The Hill We Climb” ... (see pg. 4)

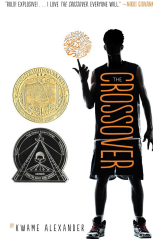
Dante's Book Reviews

~ Dante Gutrecht



1. The Knife of Never Letting Go

This book is the first in a trilogy by Patrick Ness called “Chaos Walking.” The story follows Todd Hewitt, a kid who has lived his whole life in Prentissstown, where everyone can hear everyone. One day, Todd finds a space without noise, which should be impossible. I find the trippy and psychological aspects of this book very interesting.



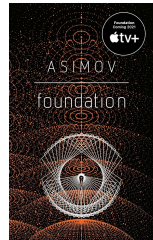
2. The Crossover

Kwame Alexander’s book of poems follows the lives of two brothers as they try to figure out how to get through life together. It is inspiring and full of life lessons.



3. Norse Mythology

Neil Gaiman. Myths. What’s not to love here? It's very nice as a little read in case you have nothing better to look through. It is well written and worth sinking some time into.



4. The Foundation

Asimov’s thought-provoking novel is one of the pioneering works of science fiction. It imagines a time when space has become an entirely new and explorable world for humanity and in the present time, one that is slowly collapsing.



5. Armada

Ernest Cline, the author responsible for the little-known book called Ready Player One, brings the action off-world with Armada, an alien fighting game set in an interstellar conflict that is more real than it seems.

~ Dante Gutrecht

WISH Wash

A Look Ahead: Upcoming Events

~ Nicholas Steinman

WISH Academy—With Summer Break fast approaching, many of the semester’s activities are beginning to come to a close. However, much remains for students to do and enjoy as we reach the culmination of an eventful school year. Here’s a look ahead to what’s in store in the final 7 weeks of the 2023-2024 academic year.

One of the most hotly-awaited events of any high school year is Prom, and the WISH Academy ASB is confident that this year’s will be their best yet. The “Masquerade Ball”—themed formal dance will welcome juniors, seniors, and guests on Saturday, April 27th, from 7 to 10:30 p.m., at the Shay, a modern hotel on the border of Culver City’s Downtown and Arts District. The last day to reserve tickets is Monday, April 22nd, and students must first submit a digital or paper permission slip. Tickets, which had been sold for \$10 off if purchased early, now cost \$150, which includes a full dinner service, dessert, drinks, and offerings such as a photo booth. ASB and a dedicated committee of parent volunteers have been working to plan the details of the event and prepare its decorations, including dedicated artworks by staff parent Lynda Modaff, for months. The seniors of ASB, led by ASB President Gabriel Koppula, have done much of the planning and have also dreamt up a number of fundraisers to support the event.

At the time of publication, Prom is less than a week away, and ASB has collaborated with the Black and Brown Student Union (BBSU) to plan the Prom Spirit Week to spread the joy of the event. The spirit week days are Pajama Day (Monday, April 22nd), Twin Tuesday (Tuesday), Meme Day (Thursday), and ‘90s Day (Friday). There will be no school Wednesday, April 24th, in observance of Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, a state holiday.

At the same time, ASB has also been working with the administration to plan WISH Academy’s annual Service Learning Assembly. Every year, all three WISH schools hold assemblies around the end of the Quarter of Service (the third quarter of the school year) to honor the students, staff, parents, and outside community members who dedicate their time, effort, and resources to community service. The assemblies ... (see pg. 7)

Library Grows Despite Timing Struggles

~ Nicholas Steinman

The Library—On the morning of Monday, March 18th, the seniors of Ms. Phillips’s AP English Literature class returned to the WISH Academy library. A quiet murmur filled the space as students spent the last half-hour of a shortened class conversing, studying, and perusing the expanding collection of about 2,500 titles laid out on WISH’s solitary, room-spanning book wall. It was this class’s second visit to the library in the school year, and perhaps the seniors’ third class visit at WISH Academy overall, despite hopes at the beginning of this year for English classes to access the library at least once a month. WISH staff librarian Allison Grover-Khoury was there to welcome the students and reflect on the library’s challenges and successes as it has striven to better serve high-schoolers in recent months. After speaking with *The Aviary* alongside her colleague Jen Scott for the paper’s previous issue, she agreed to participate in a second interview to share updates on the library’s progress.

The WISH library operates two branches: one for WISH Elementary at the Wright Middle School campus, and one for WISH Middle and WISH Academy, which shares space with the WESM library. Beyond the challenge of stocking books for elementary, middle, and high school students, sharing the library spaces brings special complications. On the Middle and Academy campus, in addition to the



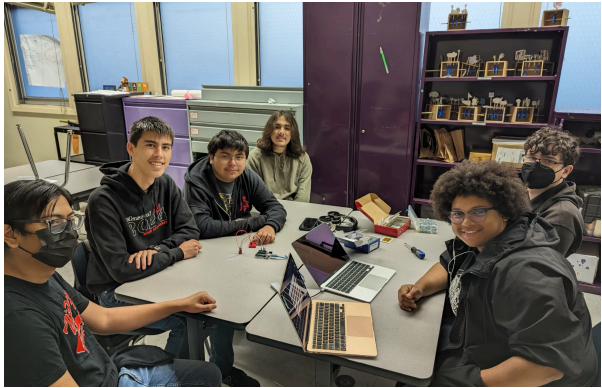
WISH and WESM libraries splitting the bookshelves (with WISH’s wall comprising about one-third of the total shelves in use), the libraries are also open to students on different days of the week, granting each school full use of the library’s furniture and reading areas on their respective days. This year, WISH gained a second day in the campus library for the first time, allowing it to serve more classes—particularly, high school classes, whose students previously had to access the library during lunch and nutrition as the middle school took the scheduled class slots. The library is now open for WISH middle and high school students on both Mondays and Thursdays. The high school’s class visits to the library take place mostly on Mondays, but students can also visit the library during free time (such as Lunch and Nutrition) on either day. WESM and co-located District school Katherine Johnson STEM Academy, jointly, have use of the library on the remaining three days.

Thanks to this expanded access for high-schoolers, Scott and Grover-Khoury have been working ... (see pg. 6)

CubeSat Shoots for the Stars

~ Azariya Ermias

WISH Academy—If you’re looking for an exciting, academic club focused on engineering, look no further than CubeSAT. Overseen by Ms. Doyle, the nine current members of this unique club meet every Friday during lunch in K9 to bring their ideas and endeavors into reality. The club was founded in 2020 by Nathan Scott and Felix Cifuentes as a robotics club focused on building a cube-shaped miniature satellite. However, as more people joined and their skills sharpened, it evolved beyond that simple project: CubeSAT became an educational and competitive club focused on engineering and robotics. CubeSAT’s goal is to provide real-life experience



with experimentation, engineering, and most importantly, to have fun.

“I wanted a space where I could engineer creatively outside of just class, and the opportunity to engineer with friends,” said founder and club leader Nathan Scott.

As the club’s size and knowledge grew, this group became ... (see pg. 8)

Mr. Illko Speaks Out

(from pg. 1) ... it's important not just to play, but also to teach.

That was in Austria, correct?

That was back in Austria, yes. And in Spain.

So when did you come over here [to Los Angeles]?

I came over here in 2013. I got a job offer to come over here to Los Angeles to work on some movies. So I did music for movies for several years.

Moving on to the WISH music department, I wanted to ask—who came up with the idea for the themes of the [fall] concerts to be the decades?

To be honest, I don't remember how it came along. I think it was a mix between students and myself. Because some people wanted to play '80s songs, some people wanted to play '70s songs, [and] it was important just to have that. And it's good for the concert. It's fun. If you have a theme, it's way, way easier. ... It's also more fun for the students to dress up.

So do you think you'll have '90s and 2000s concerts in the future?

Most likely, yes.

Is there anything you'd like to tease for the Spring Concert that's coming up in a few months?

For the Spring Concert, it will be kind of a mix of different genres, a mix of different times. It's just very important for me that the students choose most of the songs. But it will be a mix of different genres.

The Spring Concert is now scheduled for the evening of Thursday, 5/24; more information will be released soon as it approaches.

Moving along to the album [2023] that came out this year, how did the idea for that come about?

I did that for a different school 10



Mr. Illko performs with students at last month's album release party.

years ago, and I thought it would be fun to have again because you learn so many different things if you were in the studio. And it's nice to have something in your hand. You know, it's not just on Spotify or on Apple [Music]. And it's a completely different working process as well. So I thought it would be nice.

What are some of the things you think the students who did that last year learned?

I think [they] learned a lot of the music business. I think [they] learned a lot of work in the studio. I think they learned a lot about musicianship—you know, if you work towards a project and a final product. I think students learned a lot of the entire mixing and mastering process as well.

The post-production process for the album did take quite a few months. Were there any challenges that you encountered with that?

Time was the biggest challenge. Because it took several months to edit and to mix the entire album.

And how much of that was you, would you say?

All. I did all the mixing and editing.

What does it mean for the album to have been mastered [prepared for release] at Abbey Road Studios?

They have the best gear. I mean, they have been around for a ... (see pg. 9)

BBSU Spirit Weeks, Events



BBSU meets in K3 during Lunch.

(from pg. 2) ... from President Biden's inauguration by Amanda Gorman, the first National Youth Poet Laureate and youngest inaugural poet in U.S. history. The atmosphere was electric as the combined student bodies of WISH Middle and WISH Academy cheered throughout the event and participated in the awesome activities.

Just a day after the performance, BBSU came back with another awesome event: the Black History Month Potluck. The potluck, held February 29th, was a huge success with the support of English teachers Ms. Phillips and the community donated dishes. As the lines for the food went down the majority of the entire K building, staff and BBSU (with the support of ASB) served traditional cultural dishes like collard greens, cornbread, fried chicken, and more. When asked about the event, many people said they enjoyed all of the different food that others brought to the potluck. Those in attendance enjoyed the sheer variety of dishes offered with the donations of both homemade dishes and premade items with significance, like peach cobbler. Despite the offerings spanning five tables, all of it ran out quickly, showing the excitement over the food as a great conclusion to the festivities of the month.

In the midst of the BHM festivities, BBSU also hosted a spirit week consisting of themed days like Historically black colleges and Universities (HBCU) Gear Day, Throwback Thursday ('70s-'90s), and more. Club president Zharia said that she felt "joyful" that BBSU's events have been well received throughout the year despite this being their first year of operation. Their first round of events taught the club that "it does take a large team [and each member] needs to contribute," as the leadership team reflected. Despite their work, they aren't quite yet done for the year. Ahead of WISH Academy's Masquerade Prom this weekend, BBSU has released another spirit week to excite students for a fun weekend. This club has had an undeniable impact in increasing cultural awareness, with the promise of more excitement to come in the future.

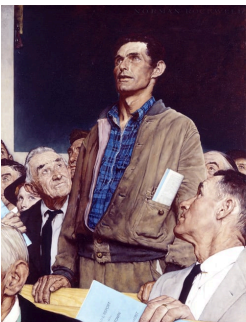
~ Nathan Valdivia, Gabriel Koppula

Rockwell Painted Nation's Dreams

(from pg. 2) ... headlines could be said to represent the trust that Americans had in their country to keep them safe.

While Rockwell's paintings effectively express the American ideal, it is important to note that his works do not accurately depict the racial diversity present in America. This is, in part, a result of the harsh criticism that artists faced for depicting people of color and people of different ethnic backgrounds. The original sketches of "Freedom of Worship" included an African-American man who appeared in the attire of an agrarian worker, but it was removed from the final painting, perhaps because his editors criticized his characters for being too representative of specific stereotypes, or as a result of racist motivations.

This collection of paintings, even today, is an important reminder of how



In "Freedom of Speech," a man rises to speak from an audience of his peers.

the nation aimed to be perceived, and what kind of place it has historically aspired to be. While it is important to note that Rockwell does not portray important aspects of diversity in his works, his pieces are his interpretation of what the United States stood for and the hard work put in by its people to grow and preserve its freedom. When these paintings were published during World War II, they represented a central pillar of what Americans were fighting for.

~ Emma Petersen

FowlPlay Crosswords!

1: Bird Species

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Down:

1. They are tall and have long, red necks; they cannot fly

2. AMERICAN BIRD

3. They call a flock of these birds a murder

5. What kind of bird can't fly? This one. It's black and white and lives in a cold place.

6. This bird delivers babies to their homes

Across:

4. Eaten grilled or fried; this bird will wake you up in the morning if you're on a farm

5. Meant to live in rainforests or jungles—but they sell them in Petco, too

6. Grey and white; often found stealing food at the beach

7. Little grey birds that hang out in parking lots or downtown streets

8. Yummiest bird for Thanksgiving dinner

2: Layers of the Earth and Atmosphere

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Down:

1. The planet on which we live; the world

2. Innermost layer of the Earth, located at its direct center below the outer core

4. Between the mesosphere and exosphere; contains the ionosphere

5. Solid bulk of the Earth's interior, between dense, super-heated core and outer layer

6. Lowest layer and bulk of the atmosphere; most clouds and weather are found here.

9. Outer layer of rock on which we live

10. Between thermosphere and stratosphere; highest layer of the atmosphere where the gases are mixed and not layered by mass

Across:

3. A mixture of gases that surrounds the Earth

7. The uppermost region of the atmosphere that fades into outer space

8. Fluid layer of mainly iron and nickel; lies between Earth's solid inner core and mantle

11. Part of the atmosphere extending from top of the troposphere to ~30 miles above the surface

12. Where extreme UV and x-ray solar radiation ionizes atoms and molecules, creating a layer of electrons; lies inside the thermosphere and reflects and modifies radio waves

13. Vast, comet-shaped bubble that played a crucial role in Earth's habitability; the region around a planet dominated by its magnetic field

Can New Tech Save Cinema?

~ Duncan Rampen

Satire—It's no secret that movie theaters have been struggling in the past few years following the pandemic, but a new development in theatrical technology has made a massive breakthrough in audience immersion. Perhaps you have sat down to watch a film and thought to yourself, "Why don't any of the characters ever use the bathroom? Surely they must have to use the bathroom." You would be right, but the trouble has always been with theater equipment not being up to par to carry out the director's unaltered vision. However, with the new Cinemark-patented "Advanced Lavatory Immersion" ... (see pg. 7)

'Gatekeeping' Trend Threatens Biodiversity



~ Duncan Rampen

Satire—With the recent rise of real animal fur pelts in the high fashion world, it's not surprising that everyone wants to get in on the trend. Initially, arbiters of high fashion began with simple, locally sourced pelts for their jackets—but soon, the trend spread to the masses. This sparked the rise in demand for rarer animal fur pelts, and fashion connoisseurs turned to endangered species ... (see pg. 9)

Bringing Flavor to the (Lunch) Club Scene



Anthony Baca speaks with a student while staffing Media Madness's T2 classroom store.

~ Aida Mebea

WISH Academy—Walking into T2, one is immediately hit with the sight of bloody limbs and clothing. People are hanging from the walls, and the music resembles blood-curdling screams. This is the room where Media Madness, one of the latest additions to WISH Academy's wide array of lunch clubs, conducts their

business, enticing students to purchase their variety of snacks and lunch items. Under the guidance of Ms. KB, WISH Academy's media arts teacher, and led by club president Mareon Mott, the group aims to foster a space where students from diverse backgrounds can come together to discuss the impact of art and entertainment on society. With a focus on inclusivity, Mott emphasizes the club's welcoming atmosphere, where everyone is encouraged to express themselves freely. "I received an inclusivity award because who doesn't want to be in a club where you feel welcomed. I don't feel against any kind of race, identity, or gender, I like when people come together just to be themselves."

Every day, club member Anthony Baca runs Media Madness's very

successful student store, a major initiative driving the club. The store not only provides snacks for hungry students but also supports arts programs at WISH. Proceeds from the store are reinvested into the club, fund educational outings and purchase supplies. Baca explains, "We use the money to educate members of our club; we mostly go on field trips. The store helps to pay for education, the club is kind of small now but I can't wait to see what we are going to do next. Supplies also are purchased to actually sell, free hot chocolate is provided for students during the winter and much more!" The club also entices the entrepreneurs of tomorrow. Baca sees this venture as valuable business experience for his future endeavors and notes the importance of ... (see pg. 9)

DARE

By Xander Youngless



WISH Library Update

(from pg. 3) ... throughout this year to tailor more of the library’s offerings to high school students. The middle and high school branch of the WISH library now features many more advanced novels and books suited to older audiences. Grover-Khoury explained, “We have a small older classics section which would include books that people would recognize published from, maybe, the 1700s to the mid-1900s. Most of the authors would be white, and they’re things that people have studied in English class for years. But what WISH has done is really try to find the contemporary classic writers, many of whom will be from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. ... I’m excited about the fact that there are so many excellent writers writing today of every racial and ethnic background, so we have a beautifully diverse [contemporary] classics section that is growing by the year, because there are so many good writers writing now.” These books are fully integrated into the library’s collection, and students who ask for recommendations will hear about many of the books which Ms. Grover-Khoury and Ms. Scott think should be studied and enjoyed today.

Proudly showing off the library’s display table of new volumes, Ms. Grover-Khoury highlighted two of her favorite additions: “This book is called *All the Fighting Parts*, by Hannah Sawyer; she’s a professor at LMU. This is just an astonishing book—it is a novel in verse, but she writes in a variety of voices. She won two awards, this is her first book that’s being published—this is a [Young Adult], high school-ish [book] that’s really amazing.” She added, “I’m hoping to get her [Sawyer] here next year to speak to our students.” Moving to a



different book on the table, Grover-Khoury said, “Another book that we just got in is the young people’s edition of *Caste*, by Isabel Wilkerson, which I feel is a vital text that I hope is read in some class in high school. I think some high-schoolers could read the original... but it’s pretty dense, and I feel like the young people’s edition might be more accessible, even to our high schoolers.”

Beyond providing a wide and diverse collection of fiction titles, the librarians also envision the library serving as a hub for non-fiction resources and research opportunities for high-schoolers. The library already includes informational books covering a variety of interests. With titles such as *What the Eye Hears: A History of Tap Dancing* and *Chess Strategy Open Games: How to Beat Intermediate Chess Players* occupying the same shelves as countless history books and research essentials—such as encyclopedias and a sturdy, aged volume of the Webster’s *NewWorld Dictionary*—recent additions have only expanded the breadth of the collection. “For example,” Grover-Khoury recalled, “somebody just gave us ten cookbooks, and everybody’s enjoying the cookbooks. Several of them are checked out right now. A bunch of students just came in and said, ‘Can we get some books on antique cars?,’ so we bought a couple of books on antique cars.” The librarians ... (see pg. 7)

LAUSD May Move Charter Schools—Gradually

(from pg. 1) ... The policy also changes the school district’s definition of which classrooms on campuses can be given to charter schools to use. It was drafted by school district staff in order to implement the controversial Goldberg-Rivas resolution passed last year by the Board of Education’s new anti-charter school majority. Questions remain about how the policy will be implemented when it goes into effect for the 2025-26 school year—but its adoption, and the lawsuit filed against it, are just the latest developments in a decades-long debate over the prevalence of independently-run public charter schools, such as WISH, within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD).

In their lawsuit, filed on April 2nd, the California Charter School Association (CCSA) argues that the policy violates

Proposition 39, a law approved by voters in 2000 which requires school districts in California to accommodate charter school students “in conditions reasonably equivalent to those in which the students would be accommodated if they were attending other public schools” if their schools request to rent space on district campuses. According to the CCSA and other charter school advocates, the school district’s new policy prioritizes the accommodation of students in traditional, district-run schools over those in charter schools, worsening political divisions in a school district that they believe has enough campus space for charter schools and other public schools to coexist.

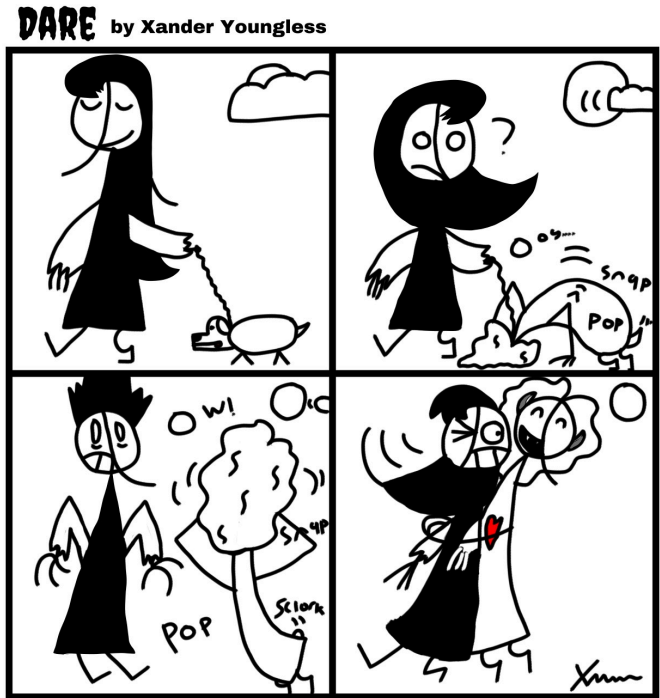
The resolution’s supporters, including a majority of the current elected Board of Education and many parents, students, and staff from district-run schools,

disagree. They cast the new policy as an effort to shield the school district’s most important programs from the negative effects of sharing space with another school, which they say has left many schools under-resourced and limited student access to programs which often operate in “empty classrooms” they had to give up to charter schools, or in spaces they have to split time in, like athletic facilities and libraries. The Board of Education’s resolution directing District staff to draft the new policy, passed by the same 4-3 majority in September, stated that, “[t]he co-location of charter schools, pursuant to Proposition 39, is often detrimental to District schools and the students they educate, and has a tangible negative impact on the District’s ability to maintain and grow important priorities...” ... (see pg. 8)

Immersive Film Lavatories

(from pg. 5) ... system, you can now immerse yourself in the world of a film like never before. In the bathrooms next to the theater, real-life bathroom stalls are surrounded by a Dolby Atmos-approved microphone setup that triggers every time an onscreen character has to use the bathroom. This allows the viewer to truly believe that the characters in the film are living, breathing people, just like them. With the rollout of this technology beginning in June, movie lovers everywhere are rejoicing at the opportunity to view their favorite films the way they were meant to be seen.

~ Duncan Rampen, Satirist



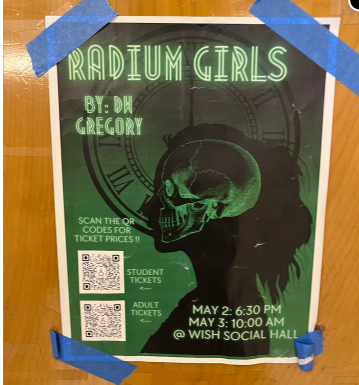
~ "DARE" comic strips by Xander Youngless

Upcoming Events: May '24

(from pg. 3) ... are part of WISH's long-standing emphasis on service and service learning both within WISH and in the broader area. This year's Service Learning Assembly is still in the works, but it is expected to take place in the next few weeks. Students should submit their service hours through MobileServe (check) as soon as possible for a chance to be honored at the event.

Also fast approaching is WISH Academy's final theater production of the year. Their first on-campus show of the year will be "Radium Girls" at the Social Hall on Thursday, May 2nd at 6:30 p.m. "Radium Girls" covers the women who worked long hours painting watches and other items with glow-in-the-dark radium paint in the early 20th century—until it was finally admitted that the radioactive paint was a deadly poison. The play will feature some of the most advanced production techniques seen by the school to date, and it will culminate a busy year for the theater program. Theater teacher Ms. Landon secured a \$50,000 grant for improvements over the summer, and recent months have seen successful performances of "Sing Ho for a Prince," a series of vignettes for the fall 1980s Concert, and the musical "Into the Woods." Students have also taken home medals at multiple Drama Teachers Association of Southern California (DTASC) competitions as recently as last weekend.

The last few weeks of the school year will be a busy time for many students, especially those with back-to-back end of year tests coming up. State testing begins next Monday, April 29th, for juniors and seniors; students should look out for any announced changes to the schedule for that week and next week, Math and English SBACs (11th grade) and science



A poster advertises the upcoming theater production "Radium Girls"

CASTs (12th grade) will spend a chunk of each day testing.

AP students will know that their AP exams, determining eligibility for potential college credit, are also coming up the two weeks after that, from Monday, May 6th to Friday, May 17th (CHECK). Popular AP exams at WISH Academy include U.S. Government (May 6th), English Literature (5/8), U.S. History (5/10), Calculus AB or BC (5/13), English Language (5/14), Computer Science Principles (5/15), and Music Theory (5/15). Of these, only Computer Science Principles and Music Theory will take place at noon, with the others scheduled for 8 a.m. each morning.

Finals Week for WISH Academy classes will take place the following week, from May 20th to May 24th; more information about class finals is expected to be announced by teachers over the coming weeks, but students should prepare to be assessed on what they've learned over the last year or semester.

But while students should prioritize being well-rested and prepared for the exams, there will still be more to do as the end of the year approaches. Many students in music classes will be preparing for the WISH Academy music department's spring concert, which is scheduled to take place on the evening of Friday, May 24th and will feature performances which many of Mr. Illko's music classes have been ... (see pg. 10)

Expanded Library Offers Services, Experiences

(from pg. 6) ... always welcome new donations, and they are also continuing to explore routes such as seeking grants to speed the growth of their non-fiction section.

Expanding the library's non-fiction collection is only part of the librarians' vision of improving student research opportunities, however. This year, the WISH library has partnered with the Los Angeles Public Library's Student Success Card program to automatically provide free digital library cards to all WISH Academy students. In addition to allowing students to easily check out books from the Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL), the cards provide free access to the many resources of one of the largest public library systems in the country. Beyond the LAPL's enormous collection of print books from all over the

world, they also offer many ebooks and audiobooks, free streaming of many movies and TV shows, and other services, accessible both online and in person at dozens of LAPL branches. While anyone in California can obtain a free LAPL library card, the Student Success Card program seeks to make it easier for students in particular to access the public library. While the K-12 library cards provided through the program only allow students to check out 5 books at a time, they differ from regular library cards in that they do not incur fees for lost or damaged materials. According to the WISH librarians, student library card numbers were sent to all advisory teachers to share in class, but any student who doesn't know their number or PIN is welcome to ask Ms. Scott or Ms. Grover-Khoury during library hours or by email

to receive the information and start using their library card. The LAPL website also offers a retrieval form for student library card information.

In another example of their efforts to encourage students to use libraries in their daily lives, the WISH librarians also helped to organize a walking field trip to the LMU campus library for seniors on Thursday, March 21st. There, overlooking the city at the William H. Hannon Library atop the Westchester Bluffs, the seniors learned about the ways college students and members of the public can seek print and digital resources from campus libraries and explored part of their extensive art collection.

Despite this work, the WISH library has struggled to become a consistent part of student life at WISH Academy this year. By March, few ... (see pg. 8)

LAUSD Co-Location Policy

(from pg. 6) ... If not interrupted by the courts, the revised co-location policy will take effect as the school district considers new or modified co-location agreements for the 2025-2026 school year (the school year after next). Its most sweeping provisions require LAUSD staff to, “as operationally feasible and permitted by law... [avoid] Proposition 39 co-locations that ...

- * Are on school sites with the District’s Priority Schools, BSAP schools, and/or Community Schools;
- * Compromise a District school’s capacity to serve neighborhood children; and/or
- * Result in grade span arrangements that negatively impact student safety and build charter school pipelines that actively deter students from attending District schools.”

These changes are expected to impact tens of thousands of District and charter school students across many of LAUSD’s campuses, which are spread across the City of Los Angeles and many outlying areas. The policy specifically targets new or expanded co-locations the district’s 100 Priority Schools (100 schools identified by the district as needing special support due to underperformance or unique student needs), Black Student Achievement Plan (BSAP) schools (in the highest tiers of LAUSD’s 2020 plan to provide greater support to schools that have historically underserved high Black student populations), and Community Schools (part of a California initiative encouraging schools to partner with their local communities). More ambiguous language also suggests that the district should disallow co-locations of older charter school students with younger District school students for safety reasons

and to avoid giving such charter schools an advantage over local District schools in attracting matriculating students.

According to the California Charter School Association, the new policy would likely have prohibited about half of the 53 charter school co-locations currently existing on LAUSD campuses had it been in place before they were agreed to. That includes schools like the WISH middle and high schools on the campus of Westchester Enriched Sciences Magnets (a BSAP and Community school), and WISH Elementary on the campus of Orville Wright Middle School (a BSAP school). However, the policy does not require the school district to move these charter schools from where they are already co-located unless “existing conditions change” for reasons like the school requesting more space or having revised its charter (the plan, approved by the LAUSD Board of Education every few years, for how each charter school can operate) to allow the school to enroll more students. It’s unlikely, though not impossible, that the new co-location policy would require one of WISH’s campuses to be moved in the near future, even after the policy takes effect for the 2025-2026 school year.

The policy also seeks to protect “set asides,” spaces other than offices and rooms where classes are usually taught that the District seeks to avoid giving to charter schools when possible. It lists examples such as technology labs, computer rooms, and support spaces for students and the staff that work with them. Previously, some District schools said that such rooms had sometimes been labeled as “empty classrooms” and given to charter schools, limiting their ability to provide important ... (see pg. 10)

Library Logistics

(from pg. 7) ... English classes had visited the library more than twice throughout the school year, despite initial plans for each class to access the space about once every month. Much of the issue is campus space—although WISH usually has access to the library room during the day on Mondays and Thursdays, the librarians are sometimes preempted by other WISH meetings or events. Earlier in March, the library space had been used over a Monday and a Thursday for sex-ed presentations; while students visited the library for the presentations, the librarians were not there to allow students to check out or return books. Ms. Grover-Khoury estimated that the librarians had full access to the space, without preemption by other meetings, on only about 60% of the Mondays between Winter Break and Spring Break, presenting a significant impediment to classes accessing the library on a regular basis. While using the library space in this way isn’t ideal, it is sometimes the only option when a meeting or event (such as a morning info-tour for prospective students and parents interested in coming to WISH) needs to be held during the week while classrooms are occupied.

That issue has been compounded this year, as WISH Academy’s campus co-location (or space-sharing) agreement with the school district has further limited the amount of time WISH can reserve in other shared spaces like the Auditorium and the Social Hall during school hours. WISH Middle School faces similar problems: in one notable incident in January, middle school administrators, having been delayed in accessing the Auditorium in the morning, had to make a quick decision to hold their first-semester Honor Roll Assembly in the library instead. The event was attended by a large portion of the middle school, plus many more parents, family members, and teachers, resulting in crowding within the library and dozens of would-be attendees waiting outside to enter the space throughout the period.



Crowds overflow after a Middle School event was moved from the Auditorium to the Library

Making matters more complicated, while all of the middle school’s class periods meet on Thursdays, allowing all middle school English classes to access the library in one day, only odd-period high school classes meet on Mondays, when high school visits to the library have so far been ... (see pg. 9)

CubeSat Competes, Perserveres

(from pg. 3) ... competitive. They entered the Future Engineers NASA TechRise Challenge, a competition that allows middle and high-school students to propose experiments they conceived for flight testing and development by NASA.

CubeSAT won the NASA TechRise Student Challenge twice in a row, in 2021 and 2022. They didn’t let this year’s loss demoralize them; they simply analyzed and improved. Towards the end of the year, they will launch a satellite based on the original 2020 project, an experimental project that measures atmospheric pollution such as CO2, ozone, and UV radiation.

When asked what they hope to achieve, students Logan Westerfield and Marlin jokingly responded, “World domination.” Ms. Doyle stepped in,



Nathan Valdivia works on a circuit board for a CubeSat project

saying, “No, but I wouldn’t put it past them. They’re actually building a weather satellite that they will launch in 4 different locations to analyze and measure air pollution.”

~ Azariya Ermias

Mr. Illko's School, Personal Projects

(from pg. 4) ... long, long time. They recorded, mixed, and mastered the Beatles, and any big artist you can imagine. I think it's just important to work with good people, with professionals.

Do you foresee doing another album in the future?

We definitely want to do it. We're working on the next one. 2024, it's called. **Is this going to be a more yearly thing now?**

Well, let's see. But this won't be a vinyl—the upcoming one—it will only be digital.

Are there any other things people should look forward to for that?

Well, this time it won't take me as long to mix and edit it, because students need to do editing. It's completely student produced. I will just help.

Can you tell us a bit about your personal projects?

Sure. I'm working on a lot of different projects. I'm working on reggae artists; I'm working with some pop artists as well. I'm working on some film scores [music written or arranged specifically a movie] [and] some advertising scores. I'm working on some [video]game music as well—and I'm working on a new album with my band, The String Revolution.

What was it like to win a Grammy [with The String Revolution] and embark on a press tour?

First of all, it's a huge honor, because 18,000 people voted for you, or part of those 18,000 people voted for you. And you know, I was in the same category as Mick Jagger, Keith Richards, and the song from Oppenheimer. And then in the end, we won—this is a huge honor. And it's very surreal to win a Grammy.

How do you manage all of that? It sounds like you have a ton of stuff

you're doing. What's your secret?

I don't sleep very long. I only sleep like five hours, four and a half, five hours max. Every night, every day. ... And trying to do sports every day.

What's the most important lesson you'd like students to take away from your classes?

Well, in the best case, they have a way to express themselves, and have a good time while doing it, and learning to work with each other, and learning to enjoy life. Because if you make music, you make music because you enjoy it and you want to have a good time. For me, that's always the most important thing. You need to be happy. And if that's a good outlet for you, music, then it's perfect.

To close, do you have a favorite musical artist to share?

I love the artist Avishai Cohen. [His music is]—I wouldn't say minimalistic, but it has different rhythms, and they're playing against each other. You know, you have a 7/8 against a 6/8 [time signature]. You have a 3 quarter [note] rhythm against a 4 quarter [note] rhythm. So that's just, for me, super super interesting. So I have a lot of respect for these guys.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Yeah, maybe that I would love to hear if someone has not been in my classes yet and they have some musical instruments they play, or they would like to sing. They should just pass by [and], like, audition. I will also audition for a new choir, honor choir. Yeah. So we'll set up just the honors choir, and people can audition right now.

Well, thank you; have a great day. I really appreciate it.

~ Nicholas Steinman with Mr. Illko

Satire—Desire for Exclusivity Could Decimate Species

(from pg. 5) ... such as leopards, orangutans, and even elephant skins to regain their fashion exclusivity. But as imitators begin to catch on, the response from high society is clear: remove all endangered species. Thousands of rich gatekeepers began to fund poaching expeditions, and many began taking to the jungle themselves on the hunt. The fight for exclusivity remains ever tumultuous—and the endangered species list is expected to be fully cleared by 2030.

~ Duncan Rampen, Satirist

Library Changes

(from pg. 8) ... scheduled. While the librarians and English teachers have been working on the logistics of allowing even-numbered high school classes to go to the library when they meet on Thursdays (of which one day each month is unused by the middle school classes), these conversations remain in early stages. The librarians hope to meet with WISH Academy administration soon to discuss these issues and work towards prioritizing student access.

Even when WISH Academy classes have accessed the library, few students have yet taken the opportunity to check out books from its expansive collection. Ms. Grover-Khoury regretted that there hadn't been time for more teachers to come into the library and help present to their students about how to use it. As well, students seeking to check out books are required to have a permission slip on file, a step which may prove a barrier when students see the librarians less than every three weeks. Nevertheless, Grover-Khoury expressed hope that the situation would improve in the future as students got used to going to the library and became familiar with the process for checking out books. Students interested in checking out a book can find the permission form in the weekly Advisory Slides or ask the librarians for help. Books are lent out for a period of a month, but checked-out books can be renewed for longer.

Despite the WISH library's challenges, the librarians and WISH teachers remain committed to increasing student access to an improved campus library. This Monday, April 22nd, Ms. Avalos organized a poetry event in the space, bringing in students from multiple English classes. Students there also saw the first of the new ... (see pg. 10)

Media Madness!

(from pg. 5) ... understanding customer preferences and market dynamics.

Despite competition from the nearby WESM student store, Media Madness remains resilient, offering a unique selection of snacks favored by the student body. Cup noodles, mac n cheese, and pop tarts are among the top picks, attracting a loyal customer base. As Kylie, a sophomore purchasing chips, explained, “The Media Madness student store has more affordable prices than the WESM store. It's also more accessible than the WESM store because there are shorter lines. Another big plus is the cup of noodles that Media Madness sells that WESM lacks.” Students can support this club by buying snacks from them when they feel peckish everyday during nutrition and lunch in T2. Looking ahead,



A poster taped to the T2 door explains that Media Madness's student store is cancelled for the day due to a film project.

club president Mareon Mott wants to expand the club's reach, with plans for more elaborate fundraisers and improved advertising under future leadership next year.

~ Aida Mebea

Upcoming Events



Students perform at last year's spring WISHapalooza concert.

(from pg. 7) ... working on all year. The concert will be part of “WISHapalooza”, WISH’s annual TK-12 spring event showcasing student projects and performances.

Students in spring sports will also be busy, with Boys’ Volleyball, Baseball, Beach Volleyball, Swim, and Track games ongoing on campus or around the city. Students are encouraged to look out for more information on upcoming sports events to attend to honor the many athletes who have been representing WISH Academy this semester.

But the end of the year will be most momentous for the Class of 2024, WISH Academy’s fourth-ever senior graduating class. Seniors can expect an array of events as graduation approaches. A college acceptance celebration will take place on Friday, May 17th. On Thursday, May 30th, graduating seniors will take part in a Cap and Gown Procession at WISH Elementary to inspire WISH’s youngest generation of students. Then, on the night of that Sunday, June 2nd, participating seniors will spend their Grad Nite at Disneyland, departing from WISH Academy at 8 p.m. and returning well after 2 a.m. Monday morning for their final week of school. Graduation dress rehearsal is scheduled for 9 a.m. on Wednesday, June 5th, and graduation itself will take place on the last day of school, Friday, June 7th, at the Central Park bandshell in Playa Vista, beginning at 6 p.m. Each student will receive four tickets for family members to be seated in chairs, and room for a blanket to seat about 6 more. There will also be overflow seating available further away. With the departure of the Class of 2024, the final cohort of students present in the TK class of WISH Elementary at the school’s 2010 founding will have completed a full TK-12 education at WISH Charter and move on to new horizons.

June 7th will cap off what has been a busy year for WISH Academy students and staff. We hope you enjoy what remains of the school year until then; following Summer Break, WISH Academy will return to school on Monday, August 12th.

~ Nicholas Steinman

Co-Location Debate Continues

(from pg. 8) ... services and straining their staff.

In their lawsuit, the California Charter Schools Association argues that these provisions violate Proposition 39, the law governing charter school co-location, by giving priority to district-run schools over charter schools. For example, they say that the “set aside” rooms seek to give District schools as much space as they want to offer programs and services by giving charter schools less space to offer classes and programs of their own. According to the CCSA, the new policy assumes that charter schools are only entitled to “leftovers” after all the space district-run schools want is taken, violating Proposition 39's "reasonably equivalent" accommodations rule.

Charter school advocates also say that the new rules will harm students at both district-run and charter schools. For one thing, the policy will require many charter schools, sooner or later, to move to the remaining district campuses which aren’t protected from co-locations by its changes. This may result in multiple charter schools being placed on a single campus, ultimately harming the District schools there. Further, they claim that the rules seek to chip away at the very ability of charter schools to exist, despite data that they say shows charter schools often provide better education to students. Some charter schools also seek to serve specific groups of students that they think have been underserved by their local public schools; WISH’s focus on inclusivity for people with disabilities is one example. Advocates see charter schools as key to a public school system willing to innovate and provide options to students with varying needs.

Many in the school district, however,

say they’re fed up with sharing space and resources with charter schools. Opponents of charter schools, often supported by the LAUSD teachers’ union, United Teachers Los Angeles (many charter schools, including WISH, are not unionized), argue that charter schools take resources and students away from district-run schools, making it harder for them to provide the innovative programs they want to implement. Since public schools are funded largely based on how many students enroll, district-run schools stand to lose funding if students choose to go to other schools, including private schools and other public schools like charter or magnet schools. With the growing popularity of "school choice" and charter schools, some have worried that declining funding and campus space taken over by charter schools could lead to worse and worse outcomes for the most vulnerable students as all others jump ship.

While charter schools are not run by school districts directly, they are regulated in many ways. Charter schools are public schools which must be approved by the school board (which previously had a pro-charter school majority for many years) and meet certain requirements, like admitting students equitably (usually through a lottery for eligible students which only gives priority for practical reasons like having siblings at the same school or for living within the parent school district) and charging no tuition. While the future of the system remains a subject of vehement debate, it is simply a fact—more or less bitter—of everyday life for many of the over 560,000 students who attend schools, charter or otherwise, within the Los Angeles Unified School District.

~ Nicholas Steinman

Librarians Optimistic

(from pg. 9) ... ADA-compliant tables being installed in the library to replace its existing ones, which can be at the wrong height for some students.

Over this year and the next, students can expect to see further changes to the library space and its offerings. For one thing, the empty stacks (standing bookshelves between the walls) in the back of the room, not up to current earthquake code, are set to be removed by WESM, and more new furniture should be coming to the library to fill the space and replace aging tables and chairs. Also planned are more books, as well as potential guest speakers and other events to educate the community about the importance of reading and the important role of libraries in 21st-century life.

Since *The Aviary’s* previous report,

the WISH librarians have continued to share a strong working relationship with Mr. Howard, the WESM librarian. As WESM’s first full-time librarian since before the pandemic, Mr. Howard has faced similar challenges to the WISH librarians this year, from expanding an outdated collection of books to securing consistent times for students to access the library within his school’s block schedule. Summing up the situation at WESM and echoing the sentiment of the WISH librarians, he said that the library had been “out of sight, out of mind” for too long and hoped that his current freshman class would get to know him through their senior year, enough time to build habits and create a new library-going culture.

~ Nicholas Steinman