

# Applause

Volume 28, Number 1    School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC    September 2026



DIAMOND

The Landis Family  
Dr. Anthony Ross

EMERALD

Dr. Shannon Cook  
The Mason Family  
SOA PTSA  
David Thompson Studio,  
Architecture and Design  
The Wolf Family

RUBY

Anonymous  
Bonds Wilson Library  
The Bundy/Richardson Family  
Audrey Cen  
Sarah & Justin Coleman  
The Felber Family  
The Fernandes Family  
Isaac & Simon Halberda  
The Howell Family  
The Kazley Family  
The LeVeen Family  
Oxana Smith  
The Stoners  
The Thomson Family  
“Coach Bill” Wilson

SAPPHIRE

Lea Bagnal  
Samantha Bannon  
The Barranca Family  
Kevin Biegel  
The Billew Family  
Aaron, Claire, & Blake Bowman  
Isabelle Boyd  
Sally Cappelmann & Jay Russell  
The Coakley Family  
Shirley Coleman  
Juliette Crousillat  
Dr. Taras & Paula Danyluk  
Sylvia Edwards  
Sara & Erik Engstrom  
The Fauerbach Family  
Forever an ink-stained wretch  
Evelyn & Natalie Gillen  
The Hayes Family  
Pat, Jen, & Marmalade Hayes  
A.R. Horton  
Hyatt-Eakes Family  
The Ivanov Family  
The Kilb Family  
Suzanne & Kevin Lewis  
Eleanor & Sylvia Lucas  
Alexandra & Ryan Malloy  
Congratulations, Caper Markham!  
Hugh & Lindsay McDaniel  
Kenneth Melton  
Nicole & Thomas Payne  
Barb Richardson  
David Rieder

Vander Zee | Rosko  
Laura Smith  
SOA HS Orchestra  
Stephen & Carissa Smith  
Rebecca & Ryan Stephenson  
Wimberly Design  
Meghan Voelker  
George Younts

AMETHYST

Kevin Cantlin  
Anne Wyman Cipolla  
Amber & Jason Cote  
John & Anna Cusatis  
Sarah & Bret Davis  
The Fennell Family  
Jackson Ferreira  
The Gatewoods  
Tracy Gordon  
Jeanette Halberda  
Meredith Harman  
Page & Travis Horschel  
Adelaide Horton  
Andrea & Troy King  
The Kohls  
Congratulations, Libby!  
The Lucchi Family  
The McClain Family  
Gail Moore  
The Moses Family  
Alison Pesavento  
The Seminaroti Family  
Or De Sertyou  
The Sprotti Family  
Quinn Powell  
The Richter Family  
The Roff Family  
Caroline Jordan Ross  
The Sausser Family  
Daniel Stefanyshyn  
Sophia Tang  
Kenneth Ward  
Lorelai Williams  
The Zetrouer Family

TOPAZ

Margaret Allen  
Anonymous  
Evan & Olivia Baker  
Pepper Baney  
Christine Bednarczyk  
Black Student Union  
Samantha Boevers  
The Boone Family  
Leslie Cantu  
Eunyoung Choi  
Dayton Colie  
Danielle DeTiberus  
Eknoor Dhammu  
Myeshah Dixon  
Do Family  
Catherine Ellis

Natasha Fields  
Rob Grant  
F. Rutledge Hammes  
Beth Webb Hart  
Jaqueline Healy  
Summer Holmes  
Sarah Johnson  
Alissa Julian, RN  
The Kennelly Family  
Juliet, Keller, & Libby  
Sarah Kozlik  
Beth Lasley  
The Little Family  
Anna Lonon & Krishna Bhat  
The Johnsens  
Patrick Martin  
Linda Meyer  
Amanda Miller  
Austin Miller & Family  
Rebecca Mortensen  
Josie Oakley  
The Peavy Family  
Melanie Phillips  
Jessica Richards  
Robin Rogers  
Ilya Rosanov  
Ms. Rumph  
Stephani Sclesky  
Kevin Short  
The Soltysik/Johnson Family  
The Southwick Family  
Stephanie Smalls  
Kathy Sullivan  
The Tirozzi Family  
Matt Verone  
Brielle Viscidi  
Alison Wager  
Amanda Waite  
Richard Watts  
Zoe Wheeler  
Luke Whitley  
Shannon Whittemore

GARNET

Alice Aldredge  
Barbara Brock  
Yongyi Chou  
Leo Ellis  
Leslie Jones  
Tiffany Paeschke  
Shannon Pennetti  
Mrs. Richter  
Rylie Smith  
Kylie Stancliffe

TURQUOISE

Andrew Collins  
Amanda Evans  
Shannon Horn  
Amanda Mertowski  
Dr. Chris Selby  
David VanArsdalen

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

Over the past weeks, we've lost multiple people who were incredibly influential in the arts. Although we weren't able to honor all of them in this issue of *Applause*, I would like to dedicate the September issue in part to Gloria Steinem and Robin Morgan, two women who passed this month after a lifetime of dramatically shaping both journalism and feminism. Steinem co-founded *Ms.* magazine, a radical publication that broke free of traditional women's media by including feminist theory and perspectives in print. Morgan, a radical feminist and poet in her own right, was also the editor-in-chief of *Ms.* for five years. Both of these figures had an indelible impact on the arts as a whole as well as journalism, which is why it seems fitting to remember them in the first issue of this year's *Applause*.

As artists, we can all take inspiration from these women as we begin the school year. I would be remiss if I didn't mention the late poet Wendell Berry, who passed recently. With those legacies in mind, I hope you enjoy the first *Applause* issue of 2026 featuring the beloved Dolly Parton.

I would also like to give a special thanks to everyone who made this issue possible, including our almost brand-new staff and Dr. Cusatis, but most of all our patrons and advertisers who allow us to continue producing *Applause*.

Your Editor,  
Lila Hayes



SOA Calendar

by Keller Fauerbach

|                                                                |                                                                                              |                                                                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Tuesday, 9/29:</b> HS Orchestra Fall Concert, RMMT, 5:30 PM | Fashion Show, Cafeteria, HS Lunch                                                            | <b>15:</b> Long Form Improv Show, BBT, 4/6 PM                           |
| <b>Wednesday, 9/30:</b> MS Jazz Piano Concert, RMMT, 5:30 PM   | <b>Monday-Tuesday, 10/5-6:</b> 11th grade Theatre, <i>Taming of the Shrew</i> , 4pm & 6:30pm | <b>Tuesday, 10/20:</b> 10th Grade Theatre Scene Night, BBT, 4/6 PM      |
| <b>Thursday, 10/1:</b> HS Jazz Piano Concert, RMMT, 5:30 PM    | <b>Saturday, 10/10:</b> Jump Jive and Wail, Visitor's Center Bus Shed, 7-10:30 PM            | <b>Thursday-Friday, 10/22-23:</b> <i>Oklahoma</i> Act 1, RMMT, 10 AM    |
| <b>Friday, 10/2:</b> Fabulous Faculty                          | <b>Wednesday-Thursday, 10/14-</b>                                                            | <b>Thursday-Sunday, 10/22-25:</b> <i>Oklahoma</i> , RMMT, 6-9 PM/2-4 PM |

Applause

since 1999, the official student publication of  
School of the Arts

Founded in 1995 by Rose Maree Myers

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Lila Hayes

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- |                  |                     |
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| Kai Boone        | Juliet Ladd         |
| Caleb Brown      | Sally Lewis         |
| Fia Coleman      | Ty McGinnis         |
| Keller Fauerbach | Marley Mendes       |
| Lena Fernandes   | Fletcher Seminaroti |
| Micah Howell     | Tallon Tirozzi      |
| Haven Hughes     | Leo Voelker         |

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Cover by Quinn Powell



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In This Issue

Looking Back With Ms. Bagnal  
by Lena Fernandes

SOA Grad Prepares For Album Release  
by Marley Mendes

SOA Dominates Fall Sports  
by Fletcher Seminaroti, Micah Howell, and Kai Boone

# Meet Your 2026-27 Applause Staff!

Photos by Marley  
Mendes



**Ella Bonazzi**  
*Senior Vocal major*

**Favorite Artist:** Georgia O'Keeffe  
**Don't:** want go to work  
**Love:** my sister



**Kai Boone**  
*Senior Vocal major*

**Favorite Restaurant:** Moe's  
**Sweet as:** Pie  
**Weekend:** Warrior



**Caleb Brown**  
*Junior Theatre major*

**Obsessed with:** Pop Music  
**Too Busy:** Buying clothes  
**Sombr:** Flopped



**Fia Coleman**  
*Sophomore Creative Writing major*

**Dazed:** and confused  
**Microwave:** ramen  
**Bangs:** untamed



**Keller Fauerbach**  
*Senior Creative Writing major*

**Listening to:** Tom Waits  
**Going:** with Fergus  
**Occupation:** ask again later



**Lena Fernandes**  
*Sophomore Band major*

**Listening to:** Kenny Chesney  
**Needs:** my license  
**Favorite Place:** Waffle House



**Lila Hayes**  
*Junior Creative Writing major*

**Hair Dye:** already faded  
**Film:** overexposed  
**Paycheck:** already spent



**Micah Howell**  
*Junior Creative Writing major*

**Training:** Twice, six days a week  
**Slight:** caffeine addiction  
**Sleep:** Deprived



**Haven Hughes**  
*Senior Theatre major*

**Color:** White  
**Silverware:** Steak Knife  
**NOT My Number:** 843480223 ;)



**MJ Johnson**  
*Sophomore Creative Writing major*

**Live:** through this  
**Almost:** Famous  
**Yoko Ono:** didn't break up The Beatles



**Juliet Ladd**  
*Senior Vocal major*

**Music:** on  
**Silverware:** Teaspoon  
**Sippin' On:** Redbull



**Sally Lewis**  
*Junior Visual Arts major*

**Wants:** a dog  
**Listens To:** rock  
**Likes:** chocolate



**Ty McGinnis**  
*Senior Creative Writing major*

**Height:** 4'1"  
**Favorite Number:** (843)-819-7300  
**Occupation:** Underwater Ceramics Technician



**Marley Mendes**  
*Senior Theatre major*

**Probably:** slumped  
**To Infinity and:** waffles  
**Venmo:** marley-mendes-1



**Fletcher Seminaroti**  
*Senior Creative major*

**Favorite Exercise:** Extra Fries  
**Favorite Rapper:** Yuno Miles  
**Doctor:** Pint



**Tallon Tirozzi**  
*Senior Piano major*

**Favorite Artist:** Freddie Mercury  
**Favorite Sports Team:** New York Knicks  
**Weaknesses:** Leaving the Beach



**Leo Voelker**  
*Senior Creative Writing major*

**Super:** Nice guy  
**Protector of:** The halls  
**Bully's:** Worst nightmare

## Editorial: Applause Joins SOA in Wishing You a Happy Dolly Parton Day

On August 26, the world experienced a heartbreaking loss. The iconic country music legend Dolly Parton tragically passed away after a brief battle with cancer. While her death marks the end of an extraordinary life, it is certainly offset by her enviable legacy. Dolly will be remembered for the inimitable example she displayed of how a life might be lived, for oneself, one's family, and in the service of others.

Dolly achieved extraordinary feats in her eighty years, writing more than 3,000 songs, building businesses, expanding literacy internationally for the young with her Imagination Library, and donating countless sums to those in need.

She came from nothing but became one of the most recognizable and beloved figures in the world.

When we think of the phrase "rags to riches," Dolly Parton is one of the first people to come to mind. She was born and raised in the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee. Growing up in a tiny, two room log cabin with no electricity, plumbing, and only old newspapers for insulation. She was the 4th out of 12 children. Dolly's heartfelt song "Coat of



Artwork by Sally Lewis

Many Colors" is based on a childhood jacket her mother made for her out of old rags that had been given to her family. Despite growing up in poverty, Dolly never allowed adverse circumstances to diminish her future.

Dolly's passion for music appeared at an incredibly young age. At just five years old, Dolly wrote her first song. Creating a homemade microphone out of a tobacco pole and tin can, Dolly would perform on her porch to the farm animals. At age eight, Dolly received her first guitar as a gift from her uncle. And at the young age of ten, Dolly made her first professional breakthrough, earning \$20 a week as a regular performer on the *The Cash Walker Show* in Knoxville, Tennessee. At 13 years old, she released her first single "Puppy Love" in 1959. Fresh out of high school, Dolly moved to Nashville, Tennessee and got a recording contract with Monument Records, which led to her breakthrough debut album *Hello, I'm Dolly* at just 21 years old.

However, Dolly's accomplishments go far beyond those in the music industry. Not only was she an amazing musician, she was also an actor, writer, businesswoman, and philanthropist. Dolly Parton donated an estimated \$600 million to various causes over the years such as childhood literacy, medical research, disaster relief, and local community organizations. She donated more money than she kept, with her net worth coming in at an estimated \$450 million at the time of her passing.

She also had tremendous entrepreneurial successes. Dolly famously co-founded the Dollywood Company, which operates both the Dollywood theme park and Splash Country water park in Tennessee. She managed multiple successful dinner theater attractions and launched her own independent record label Dolly Records. One of Dolly's most successful accomplishments was creating the Dollywood Foundation's Buddy Program which provided a \$500 incentive if two students paired together both graduated and got their diplomas, drastically lowering the dropout rate in Sevier country from 35% to just 6%.

In a career spanning seven decades, Dolly wrote such classics as "I Will Always Love You" and "Jolene," recording genre-defying songs that reached generations of listeners. She starred in major movies and television programs, built successful businesses, supported innumerable charitable causes, and inspired people who may never have even listened to country music. Yet perhaps her greatest accomplishment was the way she made people feel.

Dolly had an extraordinary ability to make people feel seen, welcomed, and capable of becoming something greater than their circumstances. This is why Dolly Parton's legacy should not be defined by her death. Her passing may be a sad moment for the millions of people who admired her, but sadness should not be the final chapter of her story. When we think of Dolly, we should think of the little girl from Tennessee who dreamed beyond the limits of her circumstances. We should think of the songwriter who turned childhood memories into music, the performer who entertained generations, the business woman who built opportunities, and the philanthropist who spent decades helping others. We should think of the children who always have a book to read because of her, the families who benefited from her generosity, and the countless people she inspired with her determination and kindness.

Dolly Parton is a role model for artists, humanitarians, business leaders, women and all individuals. Her story is one of resilience, generosity, ambition, creativity, and love. Let us celebrate her extraordinary life and the countless lives she changed. Dolly Parton gave the world music, laughter, hope, and opportunity, and that is how she deserves to be remembered. Thank you, Dr. Cook, for designating September 25 "Dolly Parton Day."

## Opinion: We Are Killing Our Youth Third Spaces

by MJ Johnson

A few weeks ago, a conflict arose in the Charleston youth arts & music scene when a veteran venue, Tua Lingua, became the victim of an escalated social media witch hunt over the issue of a four-second AI-altered video clip. Tua Lingua opened its doors in 2014 as a non-profit space open to artists around the Charleston area, and since then it's been putting on shows and acting as an open space for artists to congregate and work on their creative endeavors. It's been one of the only all-ages venues left for young alternative people to come together, however it appears that after twelve years the venue will be closing its doors for good by next year.

Two days before a punk show was to be hosted at Tua Lingua on August 20th, the venue found itself in hot water after posting a four second AI video clip of the space's art room falling apart. When I first saw the clip, I thought, "You know, the owner is older! He probably just thought it was funny, maybe someone should politely let him know by sending him a DM." I didn't care enough to do it myself because I thought it wasn't that big of a deal, especially considering the mountains of work Tua Lingua has done for artists. Clearly there was no ill-intent.

However, the reaction from the public was much different than mine. Two hours after the story was posted, a user then made their own Instagram story calling for the Tua Lingua community to boycott the venue. Before you knew it, there was a "Boycott Tua" movement circulating via Instagram stories online. It was scary to see how fast the situation was sensationalized, spread, and torn apart without any proper discourse over the matter. Instagram users started tagging Tua's account



**MJ's band Poster Grrrl playing at Tua Lingua.**

in their stories with a hostile nature saying things like, "Sad to see @tualingua posting AI art when it prides itself on being an art space," thus creating the false narrative that the space was using generative AI to produce artwork. Most people I spoke to who had hopped on the "Boycott Tua" bandwagon hadn't even seen the AI clip!

There were kids posting about it who had never been to a single show but suddenly they were boycotting a space they had never once stepped foot on. It seems counterintuitive to immediately jump the gun and boycott an art space that hardly turns a personal profit over a hundred dollars per show without even attempting to have a constructive conversation.

It's no secret that there's a lack of third spaces for young people to meet, even less for those who fit into alternative subcultures. Over the last year, two all-ages venues have switched to being 18 and up, dwindling the places that once were open to all. We are killing our already minimal third spaces with this holier-than-thou attitude. I'm not saying the people attacking Tua Lingua were necessarily in bad faith, but there seemed to be a slanted view on the issue that fuels a larger problem in the scene.

The issue here isn't whether people are allowed to criticize Tua Lingua. Of course they are. Artists and community members should be able to question the choices of the spaces they support, especially when those choices involve something as controversial as generative AI. But there is a massive difference between criticism and condemnation, and we seem to have forgotten that treating every mistake as grounds for exile regresses our ability to have productive conversations, extend grace, and build stronger communities.

A four-second clip can become a referendum on an entire person, organization, or community. Tua Lingua is not some faceless corporation with millions of dollars behind it. It is a small, independently operated space that has existed for over a decade and has provided somewhere for musicians, visual artists, photographers, performers, and young people to gather. Spaces like this are incredibly difficult to keep alive. They require time, money, labor, patience, and, perhaps most importantly, a community willing to support them when they inevitably make mistakes.

It wasn't just a venue, it was a place for kids who felt like they didn't have a place to make a space for themselves. For me, and countless others, Tua was a safe space where your art and voice were encouraged to be seen, somewhere to figure out who you are. Losing this space means losing the interactions that happen inside of it. The band that was going to form after two people met at a show, the person discovering their new favorite band, the photographer who needed somewhere to shoot, or the kids who finally found a group that understands them. These are the things that made Tua Lingua what it is, not just a four-second clip.

We should be asking ourselves what kind of accountability we are actually creating. That doesn't mean people should tolerate genuinely harmful behavior by any means. There are absolutely circumstances where leaving a space, organizing against it, or demanding consequences is justified.

The point is that there is nuance in situations like these. Not every disagreement means division and not every mistake automatically means it deserves to become a public exile. There should be room between loyalty and complete abandonment, but it seems the current approach to conflict is less about change and more about who is the most enlightened. It's easier to repost Instagram stories than it is to actually show up, talk to someone, explain why something bothers you, listen to their response, and work toward a common ground. Community requires that approach rather than the self-righteous one. We can hold people accountable without immediately seeking to destroy them or the spaces we claim to love.

## Opinion: Woke Has Lost Its Meaning

by Fia Coleman

We are constantly surrounded by labels. We label ourselves, and other people label us. Whether by your style, your personality, or your political stance (arguably those three things can go together), the list goes on. Today, one of the most commonly used labels is the term "woke", but what does this term even represent?

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines woke as an adjective used to describe being "aware of, and attentive to, social problems, especially racism and inequality." In modern politics, right-wing politicians and conservatives use it as a negative label for left-wing policies on identity and culture. The term originated in African American Vernacular English (AAVE) during the early-to-mid 20th century, meaning staying alert (or "awakened") physically and metaphorically to social injustice. Back then, there was no question about what it objectively meant. The term's definition has shifted since the emergence of social media.

mainstream culture with the hashtag #staywoke following the police shooting of Michael Brown, an eighteen year-old who was killed after a dispute with a white police officer. Now, over a decade later, the definition of the term seems to have shifted even more, becoming a staple of modern politics.

While I firmly identify as a leftist, when having discussions with friends, political or not, we find ourselves playfully saying “you can’t out-woke me” or “I’m the ‘woker’,” almost in an attempt to reassure ourselves and our peers that we are aligning with our shared beliefs. Phrases like these are obviously reflections of what we see on social media, like most of Gen-Z’s dialogue, or at least more than we would like to admit. Even when joking around with my friends, I find myself wondering what this word even means anymore. While I see myself aligning with the values in its original definition, it seems to be twisted by social media. Left-leaning people on social media appear so obsessed with looking a certain way to everyone else, they almost seem to oppose the values that they claim to identify with. It’s a constant competition on who is “woker” and who is more “progressive,” who is more informed, enlightened, educated, or any other number of buzzwords. In the end, it doesn’t feel like we’re fighting for a unified cause anymore, just trying to win the unspoken competition for our own self-righteousness and low self-esteem.

This also brings up the complicated concept of “cancel culture.” The Merriam-Webster dictionary definition of cancel culture is a modern social phenomenon where people publicly reject, boycott, or withdraw support from a public figure, brand, or organization they claim did something considered offensive or unacceptable. As soon as someone steps out of this treacherous line created by social media, people are chomping at the bit to be on what is deemed to be the right side. Oftentimes, they barely know the depth of what they are fighting for, as long as they look “woke” to the masses. It seems like it’s all about your image and how people perceive you. As long as you’re satisfied with how you display yourself, the cause doesn’t even matter, right?

Don’t get me wrong, I’ve definitely had my fair share of participating in social media frenzies, and I’m much less down to earth than I would like to be. But even so, I think everyone needs to take a step back and reevaluate their own personal beliefs before jumping into another social media cesspool of sanctimonious “woke-ism.”

## Sass Attack: KATSEYE

by Caleb Brown

KATSEYE is the American record label Geffen and Korean record label HYBE’s latest social experiment and ragebait machine. KATSEYE’s entire career has been a whirlwind of controversies, with the members- Sophia, Manon, Lara, Megan, Daniela, and Yoonchae caught in the eye of the storm.

See, I’ve been interested in KATSEYE since its inception, and their career began on a much sweeter note. Their debut was a 5-track



Fia Coleman

EP called *SIS (Soft is Strong)* with fun, girly pop songs like “Touch” and “My Way.” I was immediately drawn to the concept of a diverse group of beautiful, talented girls from all across the globe. Paired with their cute, sugary aesthetics, I was hooked. I had no idea they were gonna play in my face.

The beginning of KATSEYE’s soulless slop train was on April 30th, 2025, when they released one of their most controversial songs, “Gnarly.” When it comes to music, I am very open-minded. My music library is a mess, but Gnarly is a mess I can’t get behind. It features lyrics like, “Boba tea. Gnarly. Fried chicken. Gnarly,” and “Hottie Hottie like a bag of Takis. I’m legit.” I mean, do I even need to elaborate? It’s literally a glorified ad, full of blatant product placements and AI-generated visuals. I’m irritated. Yet somehow their braindead fans streamed Gnarly onto the Billboard Hot 100. Gnarly taught their label that foolishness still made them money. This was my last straw, and so I officially revoked my stan card. Though I still kept up with them just to see what stunt FLOPSEYE would pull next.

I would say that people who genuinely enjoy KATSEYE have the music taste of a 3rd grader, but most of KATSEYE’s fanbase are literally 3rd graders. This supports one of KATSEYE’s biggest criticisms- that there seems to be a disconnect between the audience they’re pretending to have and the one they actually have. Ever since the “Gnarly” era, KATSEYE has been trying desperately to brand themselves as these “mature” bad girls, while simultaneously marketing to children, i.e., performing Gnarly’s not-so-family-friendly choreography at the Nickelodeon Kids (emphasis on KIDS) Choice Awards. It’s so obvious that they know their fanbase is young, yet they still turn up the heat on every new single. KATSEYE has become The Pussycat Dolls for tweens.

The broader issue within KATSEYE is their management. The members of KATSEYE have done nothing wrong, yet they are subject to hate from hundreds of thousands of people online for the foolishness they’re forced to perform. The members of KATSEYE are incredibly talented, yet they’re stuck singing obviously scrapped Charli XCX demos. At this point, the best course of action would be to just throw the whole group away. This is NOT what I ordered...o stars.

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## Meet the Newest Faculty at SOA!

Photos by Applause Staff

*Each year, SOA excitedly welcomes new teachers and staff to the campus. Our talented writers sat down with them to find out more about their lives, education, and more!*

### Mr. Andrew Collins, English

by Sally Lewis

**Sally Lewis:** What classes will you be teaching this year?

**Andrew Collins:** This year I am teaching English 2 Honors and CP as well as AP Language and Composition. I'm looking forward to teaching a guitar elective in the 2027-28 school year.

**SL:** Where did you go to college and what did you study?

**AC:** I attended the University of South Carolina in Columbia, SC-Bachelor of Arts in English, a Master of Arts in Teaching Secondary English, and a Master's in Secondary Administration.

**SL:** Who is your favorite artist and why?

**AC:** I would have to choose David Bowie as my favorite artist. Not only was he stunningly creative, he also showed an uncanny ability to constantly reinvent himself, somehow remaining relevant for over 50 years.

**SL:** What interests do you have outside of school?

**AC:** My main hobby is fencing, but I also juggle and play guitar and drums.

**SL:** What drove you to be a teacher?

**AC:** There are many reasons. I believe that teaching is a noble, rewarding profession; some of the most influential people in my life have been teachers.



Mr. Collins

It's crucial for young people to have good mentors, so I aspired to be one of them.

### Mr. Matthew Danford, Resource

by Keller Fauerbach

**Keller Fauerbach:** Did you grow up in the Charleston area? If not, where did you grow up, and what attracted you to Charleston? And why SOA?

**Matthew Danford:** I grew up in Toledo, Ohio. My wife and I moved here in 2004 to escape the cold and have some warm sunshine on our faces. I've always heard about what a great school and community SOA has to offer so I thought I'd give it a try!

**KF:** Where did you attend college and what degrees did you earn?

**MD:** I attended the University of Cincinnati for my undergraduate degree and Walden University for my Master's degree.

**KF:** Where did you work prior to coming to SOA?

**MD:** I worked at Phillip Simmons High School and West Ashley High School mainly.

**KF:** What were some of your earliest jobs? What did you learn from them?

**MD:** I started working at age 13. I helped my brother with his paper delivery route. I also worked bagging groceries at the local grocery store. I learned how to build employability skills and manage my own money. Working also prepared me for life after college.

**KF:** Is there any moment or story you'd be willing to share that stands out to you as one of those "this is why I do what I do" moments?

**MD:** I have dedicated my life to teaching because I feel that knowledge is power. I wasn't the greatest student in high school but I worked hard to succeed so I try to help the students that need that extra support to reach their academic and personal goals.

**KF:** What books, movies, or musical acts have meant a lot to you? What do you like about them?

**MD:** I love the Ted Lasso series because I feel staying positive and investing in relationships with a shared goal are important attributes to have in life.

**KF:** Is there anything else you'd like SOA to know about you as this year begins or any advice you'd like to offer students?

**MD:** Failure is part of the process, don't be afraid to fail at new things, that's how we learn and grow.



Mr. Danford

### Ms. Amanda Mertowski, Science

by Tallon Tirozzi

**Tallon Tirozzi:** What classes will you be teaching this year?

**Amanda Mertowski:** I am teaching Earth Science and Chemistry

**TT:** Did you grow up in the Charleston area? If not, where did you grow up, and what attracted you to Charleston? And why SOA?

**AM:** I grew up in Buffalo, NY. I came to Charleston for the weather and family. I chose SOA for the amazing environment of being around such great talented students and staff.

**TT:** Where did you attend college and what degrees did you earn?

**AM:** I attended Buffalo State University where I have a Bachelor's in Business Administration, Bachelor's in Earth Science, and a Master's in Science Education.

**TT:** How did you become involved in education as a career and how long have you taught?

**AM:** I became involved in Education after working at a daycare and as a substitute teacher. This is my 6th year teaching.

**TT:** Where did you work prior to coming to SOA?

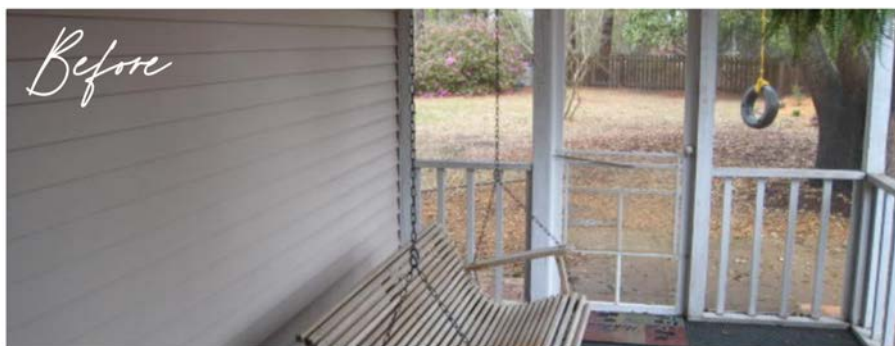
**AM:** Prior to SOA I worked at another high school in Hamburg, NY.

**TT:** What did you like or dislike about your own early education?

**AM:** I enjoyed my early education mainly because of the amazing educators and a passion for learning new things everyday!



Ms. Mertowski



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## Mr. Matthew Smith, Student Teacher

by Michelenas Fernandes

**Michelenas Fernandes:** Where are you from?

**Matthew Smith:** I grew up here in Charleston.

**MF:** Where did you go to school, and what did you study?

**MS:** I went to James Island Charter High School, and for college I went to Trident. I originally wanted to go into the medical field, but I worked at a hospital for a summer and realized I hated it, so I went to CofC to become an English teacher instead because that just makes sense.

**MF:** What inspired you to become a teacher?

**MS:** When I chose the career, I chose it because it allows you to move around a lot, being able to do both online and work all around the world, and once I started doing student teaching I found I really enjoyed being a teacher, so I got into it for the benefits, and stayed for the experience.

**MF:** What subject or grade level do you specialize in?

**MS:** I am going for secondary education, specifically high school freshmen and seniors, and I taught three lessons at St. John's and one at West Ashley.

**MF:** What were your first impressions of our school?

**MS:** I found the students were much more motivated here and really cared a lot not just about their art but also their content matter. The sense of community is really strong here and I like that. It's a cool place.

**MF:** What goals do you have for yourself as a student teacher?

**MS:** That the kids learn at least three things. I really want to get better at questioning and facilitating discussions, but also I want to learn from the students.

**MF:** What do you enjoy doing outside of teaching?

**MS:** I like to surf, I like hiking and backpacking, I like to climb trees and see good views, and really I like to just travel and see cool stuff.

**MF:** Oh cool, what is your favorite place that you have traveled to?

**MS:** My favorite place that I have been to is Carvers Gap on the North Carolina and Tennessee border, but I am also going to Hawaii as soon as I graduate.

**MF:** Where do you see yourself in 5 years?

**MS:** Stranded on an island somewhere in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.



Mr. Smith



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## Ms. Kylie Stancliffe, Social Studies

by Lila Hayes

**Lila Hayes:** What classes will you be teaching this year?

**Kylie Stancliffe:** This year I am teaching personal finance!

**LH:** Where did you attend college?

**KS:** I went to the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

**LH:** Before coming to SOA, you taught in Thailand. How would you describe that experience, and what did you take away from it as a teacher?

**KS:** I would describe that experience as truly incredible. In Thailand I was able to teach a very diverse student body. I learned about and lived in a culture completely different from my own and was stretched in ways that I would have never foreseen but now will always cherish. Teaching in Thailand was my first teaching experience, so I learned so much from my time there! I think the main takeaways from my time there are that I really love teaching and getting to invest in students' lives and see their growth. I think risks are worth taking and anyone who gets an opportunity like that should take it, I would not trade my time in Thailand for the world. I am super super thankful for the people and community and time that I had there.

**LH:** What pieces of art and media have significance for you?

**KS:** I really love European History, and I have a special/random love for both Renaissance and Baroque art. My personal favorite is the Last Supper by Tintoretto (look it up, not the more famous one by Da Vinci). I love the use of light and shadows to tell a story and to highlight really cool themes. I feel like I can look at that painting forever and walk away with new questions and curiosities each time.

**LH:** What do you want students to take away from your classroom?

**KS:** I hope students take away practical financial skills from my classroom that benefit them both in the present and future. I also hope that students walk away feeling cared for and supported. My goal is for my classroom to be a place of learning and growth that feels safe and loving for all students.



Ms. Stancliffe

## Mr. Bill Wilson, Social Studies

by Juliet Ladd

**Juliet Ladd:** What classes will you be teaching this year?

**Bill Wilson:** AP Psychology, Honors Psychology and AP Seminar

**JL:** Are you from the Charleston area? If not, where did you grow up, and where did you teach prior to coming to SOA?

**BW:** No, I was born in Greenwood, SC and have lived in different parts of the upstate, Thomson, Georgia and went to high school in Franklin, NC. I taught one year at Ahoskie High School in N.C. and forty-two years at D.W. Daniel High School.

**JL:** How did you become involved in education as a career and how long have you taught?

**BW:** I became a teacher because I loved history and wanted to help young people understand themselves and the world around them. What began as an interest in teaching a subject quickly became a lifelong commitment to helping students discover their abilities and believe that they can make a difference. I began teaching in 1983, so this is my 44th year in education—and I am still learning from my students.

**JL:** What books, movies, or musical acts have meant a lot to you? What do you like about them?

**BW:** I have always been drawn to books and movies about ordinary people who find the courage to stand up for others and create change. Mary Poppins, It's a Wonderful Life, and Dead Poets Society are meaningful to me because they show how one person's compassion, courage, or encouragement can affect many lives. Musically, I have always enjoyed Elton John because of his creativity, individuality, and ability to connect with people across generations.

**JL:** What do you most want students to take away from your classroom?



Mr. Wilson

**BW:** More than any particular fact or lesson, I want students to leave my classroom believing that their ideas matter. I hope they become more curious, thoughtful, compassionate, and willing to examine the world from different perspectives. Most importantly, I want them to recognize their own potential and understand that they can use their talents to make a positive difference in the lives of others.

## Where Were They Then: Ms. Bagnal

By Michelena Fernandes

*Applause staff writer Lena Fernandes sat down with SOA Computer Science teacher Ms. Bagnal to learn about her childhood, education, and early teaching career!*

**Michelena Fernandes:** Where were you born and raised?

**Lea Bagnal:** A small town in South Georgia; Waycross GA.

**MF:** What was your childhood like?

**LB:** It was a great childhood. We had a close immediate and extended family. I lived near my grandparents and saw them often. We got together with cousins on many occasions, and took family trips often. Typical daily life for a small town back in the day!

**MF:** Where did you attend college and what did you study?

**LB:** University of Georgia - Go Dawgs! I have a business degree with a major in marketing.

**MF:** Where was your first teaching job?

**LB:** Hillcrest HS in Greenville SC.

**MF:** Did you enjoy it?

**LB:** I loved it!

**MF:** Were there any major lessons you learned in college or your first job that have helped you throughout your career?

**LB:** Find something to be joyful and thankful for each day.

**MF:** What led you to SOA?

**LB:** My family in the area (4 grandchildren now!)

**MF:** So far, what is your favorite memory at SOA?

**LB:** Seeing my first performance and realizing how talented all of the students are in their major. My first Holiday Spectacular was incredible.

**MF:** Is there any advice you would like to give to the students?

**LB:** Learn something new each day!



Ms. Bagnal with her daughter.



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# Where Are They Now: Skyler Waddell

By Marley Mendes

*Skyler Waddell graduated in 2024 from the School of the Arts' band program. Today, he lives a double life as a student at College of Charleston and touring local musician. We caught up with Skyler to see how his musical journey has evolved since high school.*

**Marley Mendes:** When did you become passionate about music and when exactly did you know it was your plan to pursue it?

**Skyler Waddell:** I've been involved in music in some way for all my life. I think that going to an arts high school, being surrounded by like-minded friends, really drove me to pursue it more seriously. It was never a plan, I just started gigging before I ever had a job and realized I could actually make some money with it. Pursuing music has always been the obvious choice for me.

**MM:** It sounds like it evolved very naturally for you. Besides musicianship, what have you been up to since graduating?

**SW:** I'm currently studying jazz performance at the College of Charleston, which has been a perfect fit for me. I also coach the rock climbing teams at James Island County Park, teach drum lessons, and work as the lead A/V tech at the Unitarian Church in Charleston.

**MM:** You definitely keep a packed schedule! Speaking of your music, I know you've been performing with your band, the Stono River Project. Tell me a little bit about the process of producing and how that's going!

**SW:** We've been hitting it hard— recording and gigging as much as we can. We're in the process of recording an album with Mark Bryan of Hootie & the Blowfish. This project has been so much fun, and we're taking time to develop the songs and find our sound. We just released our first single from that project called "Make It Home Tonight", and our second single comes out October 2nd.

**MM:** That is an incredible opportunity. Looking forward, do you ever plan on exploring a different path, besides music?

**SW:** I'm open to any path. Music will always be a part of my life, even if it's not my full-time job. I never want to turn my nose up to new opportunities, so who knows where I could end up. I find that mindset keeps things exciting.

**MM:** Having that flexibility is so important. Looking back to where you started your journey, what's one thing about your life now that you never would've expected could be true during high school?

**SW:** I never thought too far ahead, so I couldn't have really expected any of it. I'd probably be surprised at some of the amazing venues I've had the opportunity to play so far— the Pour House, Charleston Music Hall, Charleston Bluegrass Festival, and most recently the



Provided

**Stono River Project is currently recording an album.**



**Skyler in the Stono River Project playing at the Pour House.**

Windjammer. These are places that were hugely influential to me growing up, so it's super special to be playing on their stages now.

**MM:** It must be amazing to stand on the stages you grew up watching. To wrap this up, considering a lot of students will be reading about your experiences, what's one piece of advice you'd give to students interested in pursuing a similar path to you?

**SW:** Keep your eye out for any opportunity that comes your way, and take advantage of it. Even if it's not exactly what you're looking for, explore it, because you never know where it could lead.



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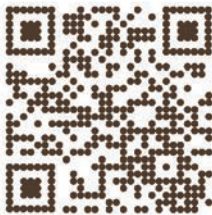
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SOA Hosts Club Day!

Photos by Applause Staff

*This month, more than 60 unique new and returning clubs including Black Student Union, Dragonflies for Care, DAYLO, and more set up tables in the breezeway to recruit new members or the 2026-2027 school year.*



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Junior Visual Arts major Sally Lewis and Senior Vocal major Juliet Ladd went on a mission trip to Honduras!



Senior Creative Writing major Macey Levine and Senior Strings major Hugh Hollinger went to Scotland!



Luke Whitley, a junior Vocal major, visited Aspen, Colorado and participated in the Resnick Action Forum where he spoke at a generational dinner.



Senior Vocal major Rayhona Mukhova went ziplining in Asheville, North Carolina.



Mr. Martin went to Buc-ee's in Florence, SC, and tried to go viral.



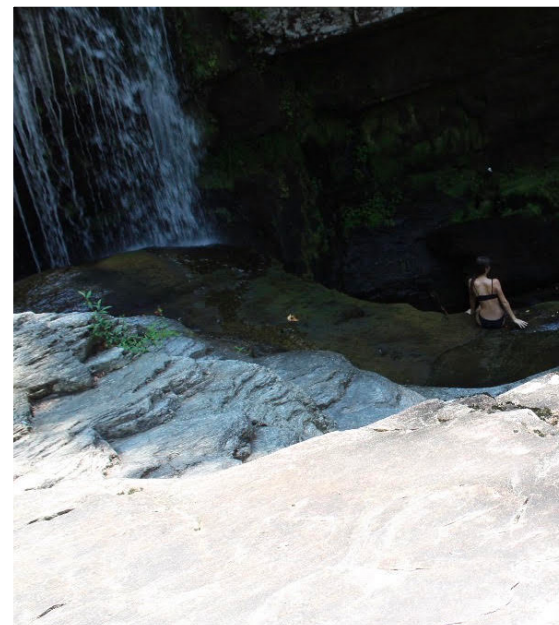
Senior Visual Arts major Evyn Angelos visited Carowinds!



Senior Vocal major Caleb Parrish caught a shark while fishing.



Sheridan King, junior Band major, worked with SOA Alum Jonathon Heyward at a music program!



Senior Theater major Maggie DuRant went camping at Lake Jocassee!



Junior Theatre Major Zoey Gebhart, saw the emo band "Never Any Ordinary" in Park Circle.



Sophomore Theater major Yongyi Chou and sophomore Creative Writing major Fia Coleman visited the Eiffel Tower in Paris!



Sophomore Vocal major Ernie Frazier visited Zambia and South Africa.



Sophomore Creative Writing major Wren Scheutze explored England.

# What did SOA do over Summer Break?

by Applause Staff

## Eighty-Three SOA Athletes Kick-Off Fall Sports Season

by Fletcher Seminaroti, Micah Howell, and Kai Boone

The fall athletic season has kicked off, and eighty-three SOA student-athletes have joined Academic Magnet teams, while a few others have joined their home schools to compete in football, cross country, swimming, volleyball, women's tennis, and sideline cheer.

The men's volleyball team has won four games, three in dominant fashion 3-0, including a victory over last year's state champions, Oceanside Collegiate Academy, with an incredible comeback win against Bridges Prep, after being down 0-2, putting them first in the region. Their only loss has been to Hanahan. Junior **Sam Bundy** is the backbone of the front row, putting up block after block. His goals for the season, he says, include "winning more games than we lose and making the playoffs." Sam is a presence both on and off the court, encouraging his teammates from the bench and bringing an electric atmosphere to the team.

The women's volleyball team is also off to an auspicious start, posting a record of 3-1. Sophomores **Ava Unterreiner** and **Emma Hollowell** and seventh-grader **Charlotte Chubb** have all started the season strong. Ava says she is focused on how she can improve throughout the season, wanting to work on "hitting, blocking, communication, and consistency while helping my team win as many games as possible." She also commented on the team environment, which she describes as "positive and supportive, even during tough games."

The cross country team participated in their first meet, the Creating Waves Invitational, in late August in Summerville, where juniors **Zoe Gebhart** (27:14) and **Lucille Harper** (21:38), and sophomores **Aldrin Moriarty** (18:11) and **Andrew Amani** (18:04) helped lead AMHS on the challenging 5K (3.1-mile) course. Lucille is looking forward to the Starlight Invitational, where she hopes to "break 21:00," which would put her under a seven-minute-mile pace. Andrew told Applause his goal is to do his part to help Magnet win the state title in November. Junior **Isaiah Liu** hoped to kick off his season with North Charleston High School, but the team bus broke down, and they were unable to attend the upstate meet, waiting at "a weigh station in the middle of nowhere." But the team made the most of their frustrating situation by going on a long run together. At their next meet, the Eye Opener Invitational, sophomore **Lil Pastre** ran an impressive 25:36 on the 5K course.

Raptors Football has been working throughout the summer to improve this season. Fighting through hot and humid field practices consistently through July and August, the Raptors hold a promising composure. The Raptors are now 2-1, losing to First Baptist in Week 1, enjoying a free Week 2, traveling down to Savannah to play St. Andrews High School in Week 3, and shutting them out 47-0, and competing against Baptist Hill, beating them 55-14. Newly implemented weight training through local athletic gym Palmetto Performance House has boosted performance strength; players have added over fifty pounds to their three compound lifts: squat, bench, and deadlift. SOA players on this year's roster are seniors **Eli Ellington**, **Simon Halberda**, **Jonah Karen**,

**Bryce Lee**, **Caleb Parrish**, and **Bryce Promanee**, juniors **Mukisa Donaldson** and **Sam Smyth**, sophomores **AJ Duncan**, **Caleb Reed** and **Lucas Turner**, and freshmen **Miles Burkett**, **George Johnson**, and **Mason Slenzak**. Team captain Caleb Parrish spoke to Applause about the commitment of the whole team, while noting the impressive number of seniors: twenty-nine.

The sideline cheer squad can be found supporting the football team, spending their Friday nights at D-4 Stadium. **Cyniah Green**, **Alexa Waters**, and **Ava Wolf**, all SOA seniors, are enjoying their final year on the squad. Alexa, a Dance major, says she is looking forward to "the last year with my girls!" She is returning from a shoulder injury and has been working to build back both her strength and confidence to perform for the Raptors. The team is well represented by SOA juniors: **Rose Wolf**, **Gianna Brown**, **Cora Caughman**, **Leland Erickson**, **Reese Erickson**, and **Izzabella Paul**. Sophomores **Annabelle Cawthra** and **Lily Bilbrey** and freshmen **Jasmine Brown**, **Brooklyn Smalls**, and **Sarah Till** make up the rest of the SOA cheer squad.

The AMHS boys' swim team competed against Porter-Gaud and Philip Simmons on August 20, with several SOA swimmers making a strong presence in the early-season meet. Eighth-grader **Keith Aikman** won both the 100-yard butterfly (56.52) and 200-yard individual medley (2:04.44), while sophomore **Brayden Knauer** placed second in the 500 freestyle (5:52.12) and took third in the 100 breaststroke (1:13.79). Sophomore **Nathan Wright** finished fifth in the 50 freestyle (25.97) and eighth in the 100 freestyle (58.96). Wright hopes to reach the 3A state consideration time in every event while continuing to improve in the 50 free, 100 free and 100 fly. He said one of his favorite parts of swimming is "being able to cheer on your friends during a race, and them cheering for you." Wright's favorite swimmer is Kate Douglass, a five-time Olympic medalist. Junior **Jack Leon** added a sixth-place finish in the 200 freestyle (2:17.90). Sophomore **Harry Baxley**, in his first season on the team, is aiming to break 1:30 in the 100 freestyle and credits the team's welcoming community and teammate Nathan Wright's encouragement with helping him get started. SOA players on this year's roster are 7th graders **Roger Chen**, **Leo Hinen**, **Connor Graham**, **Lyndon Smith**, and **Nicholas Umbaugh**, 8th graders **Edward Hackler** and **Keith Aikman**, sophomores **Harry Baxley**, **Brayden Knauer**, and **Nathan Wright**, and junior **Jack Leon**.

The Magnet girls swim team has opened the season with a 3-1 record, while building on its runner-up finish at the 2025 state championship. This year's 48-swimmer roster is the largest girls team in Magnet history and includes eighteen SOA students. At the August 20 home meet, freshman **Moxie Jo Galvin** placed second in the 100-yard backstroke (1:11.21), and third in the 200 individual medley (2:30.53). Junior **Priya Cardella** finished second in the 100 breaststroke (1:20.89), while senior and Captain **Judith Suttle** took third in the 100 butterfly (1:11.93) and sixth in the 200 individual medley (2:35.64). Junior **Finley Bowers** added a third-place finish in the 500 freestyle (6:46.03). The girls defeated Philip Simmons by 129 points and also beat Porter-Gaud by more than 30. With more meets ahead, the team is chasing personal-best times, state cuts and another opportunity at the championship. SOA swimmers on this year's roster are 7th grader **Fiona Rachman**, 8th graders **Isabel Gregg**, **Arlyn Hibler**, **Emma Klingshirn**, and **Elin Trezies**, freshmen **Moxie-Jo Galvin**, **Pluma Hyatt-Eakes**, **Paige Sheets**, and **Nurit Shmilovich**, sophomores **Mia Esposito** and **Eleanor Soler**, juniors **Finley Bowers**, **Priya Cardella**, **Katie Childers**, **Vivian Rachman**, and **Elizabeth Sprouse**, and seniors **Judith Suttle** and **Mery Traxler**. Suttle and Traxler will be recognized during Senior Night on Sept. 24, when Magnet faces Bishop England and Stratford.



Lucille Harper (left) and Zoe Gebhart post-meet.

The Magnet girls tennis team has opened its season with dominant victories over West Ashley, James Island and Porter-Gaud. The Raptors began on August 25 by sweeping West Ashley 6-0 at home. They followed that performance with another 6-0 shutout against James Island before defeating Porter-Gaud 8-1. Four SOA students are part of this year’s team: freshmen **Bella Billew**, **Charlotte Grass** and **Simone Kaya**, and sophomore **Fia Coleman**. Fia hopes “to improve a lot and hopefully win a lot as a team.” She described the team as “lots of fun” and said everyone cheers one another on during matches. As the season continues, Fia is especially excited to see the team celebrate its wins. She told *Applause* that American star Coco Gauff is her favorite professional player. Magnet has played its home matches at Collins Park while the school’s new courts and stadium remain under construction. The strong opening stretch has given the young SOA tennis players an opportunity to gain experience while enjoying what will surely be a successful season.

Best of luck to all our SOA student-athletes!



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## SOA Explores!

*This summer, SOA students embarked on two major trips. Ms. Bednarczyk led students on an expedition to Peru, and the Creative Writing department roamed through England on a literary tour! Two of our worldly staff writers wrote about their experiences.*

### Literature in England

by Keller Fauerbach

This June, several of SOA's Creative Writers went on a tour of England, which took us all across the country and hit every major highlight of the country's extensive literary history. The already long journey was extended by a five-hour layover in Atlanta and kept exciting by one or two lost passports. Our transatlantic trek deposited us, ragged, in the bustling Manchester International Airport, where we met up with our tour guide, Fiona, and waited for the other groups to arrive.

Over the nine days, we explored the majestic Lake District, learned about the Brontë sisters in their own ancestral home, and visited the York Minster. In Stratford-upon-Avon, we learned many gross details of Elizabethan daily life in the house Shakespeare grew up in, and later gave to one of his sisters. Though there is no longer a tannery next door, (the place is now taken by a colorful butterfly garden), the property had its own discomforts for us. The heat wave was in full swing, and though the floors weren't level and the doors incredibly short, we found ourselves impressed by the period's insulation technology. Handheld fans became treasured commodities and, that night, the hotel's fire alarm was even triggered by the incredible temperature.

Oxford was predictably breathtaking, and a few students had particularly emotional moments in the courtyard that was featured prominently in the Harry Potter movies. And though the Oxford campus felt ancient, we were given even greater perspective the next day when we toured Bath. We saw ancient Roman baths, and some even tasted water from the natural spring, which was bitter and disgusting.

London was a remarkable escalation in the scale, and density of sights. The temperatures were dropping to be more manageable, so students enjoyed the freedom to explore London independently, then enjoyed a showing of Mother Courage at the Globe Theater, a reconstruction of Shakespeare and his company's home stage. The next day, we got to tour that theater, and learned the history of London theater at large. During that time, we also managed to squeeze in all the classic sights of London, and students took selfies with Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace, and others.

As we made the journey back home, we all felt the bittersweet feeling of an amazing, but tiring, trip coming to an end. Still, we took comfort in the knowledge that we would always carry those experiences



*Creative Writing students before departing!*

with us, and were far closer with our classmates and teachers than we had been before.

### Adventures Through Peru

by Leo Voelker

This June, I had the incredible opportunity to travel with Ms. Bednarczyk and fellow SOA students to the breathtaking country of Peru. The eleven days that followed could be best described as an adventure, filled with early mornings rushing to train stations, and altitude that was absolutely brutal for our sea-level bodies, but also breathtaking views everywhere from the Andes mountains to the Amazon rainforest, and a culture shock that shifted all of our perspectives on the world outside of Charleston.

We started our journey in Lima, where our tour guide Mariza showed us around the city's rich culture and history. A highlight for me here was our tour of the city's underground catacombs, where we got to explore where many 16th century Peruvians were buried for religious practices.

After that, we made our way to the Andes mountains, where we stayed in the village of Ollantaytambo. Here, we got to visit an alpaca farm, and learned how Peruvian weavers make



**Students explored Machu Picchu!**

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ponchos out of alpaca wool.

Then, in my personal favorite part of the trip, we made our way to the village of Aguas Calientes, a town that sits directly underneath Machu Picchu, one of the seven wonders of the world. When asked what his favorite part of the trip was, senior Piano major **Dean Barnwell** said, “I loved playing soccer with the local kids in Aguas Calientes.” This was a great experience because we got to understand more of what life is like for the locals in these small Peruvian towns.

After a short stop in Cuzco, where we ate some of the best local food including fresh ceviche and Peruvian chicken skewers, we took a flight to the Amazon rainforest. This was, in my opinion, the perfect ending to an amazing trip. We got to do so many interactive activities such as shooting blow guns with a local indigenous tribe, fishing for piranhas out of our boats, and taking a night walk to explore the diverse wildlife that lives inside of the rainforest.

When asked how the trip ranked among other EF tours she has taken students on, Ms. Bednarczyk said “Peru was among one of my favorite trips I’ve taken...It was so action packed!”

All in all, I think everyone that came along on this trip can agree this was a groundbreaking experience, and a once in a lifetime adventure!

## SOA September Slang

by Fletcher Seminaroti, Ty McGinnis, Kai Boone, and Leo Voelker

*Each issue, Applause’s brightest staff writers put their heads together to find the newest slang terms circulating around SOA. These were the top picks of this month.*

**Fried:** (adj) When someone is functioning at a lower capacity, often appearing to lack basic conversation skills.

Ex. “Bryce, you have to get some more sleep. You look fried, bro.”

**That’ll play:** (adj) A phrase used when a result, action, or situation is good enough to settle/work with, even if it is not perfect; often a compromise. Typically used in golf terminology. Ex. “I like those jeans, that’ll play.”

**hav:** (adj) A British slang term used to describe a young person stereotypically known for wearing casual sportswear or flashy imitation designer clothes.

Ex. “He was dressed in the usual chav outfit of a track suit, white trainers, and a baseball cap.”

**Fierce:** (adj) Popularized in LGBTQ+ ballroom and fashion culture, it praises an outfit, makeup, or walk that exudes powerful, flawless confidence.

Ex. “Girl, you look good– that top is fierce.”

**Quiet on the creek:** (v) A playful way to tell someone to quiet down or keep a secret, originating from a viral stream.

Ex. “Shh we’re in the library, you gotta be quiet on the creek”

**La Peace:** (adj) A viral Minecraft meme sparked by a livestream moment between Kai Cenat and IShowSpeed. When Speed mistook a block for diamonds, Kai calmly corrected him saying, “That’s lapis,” but mispronounced it as “la peace.” Speed hilariously lost his mind, asking if it was an ancient Greek reference. The internet loved the sudden jump from gaming rage to calm vibe, and social media is now flooded with edits turning Kai into a wise, enlightened monk radiating pure serenity.

Ex. “Bella, you need to find La Peace.”

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**Amelia Butler, 8th**



**William Oldal, 11th**



**Lucia McArthur, 11th**



**Dylann Starck, 10th**



**Brooklyn Kleinschmidt, 12th**

SOA Band Highlight: Any Thing Better

by Ty McGinnis

*Inspired by the countless student bands at SOA, staff writer Ty McGinnis decided to begin a column featuring SOA musicians. For our first issue, senior Piano major Shamah Norris-Rogers answers a few questions about his band Any Thing Better and about himself.*

**Ty McGinnis:** What’s your favorite type of music?  
**Shamah Norris-Rogers:** I like a lot but mostly Indie Rock and RnB.  
**TM:** What instrument do you play?  
**SNR:** For my band, Any Thing Better, I play bass, but outside of my band I play piano, guitar, drums, and trumpet.  
**TM:** When are your upcoming gigs?  
**SNR:** 11/8 at the Coastal Carolina Fair and 10/17 at the Hanahan Music Festival  
**TM:** What has been your favorite gig/place to play in the past?  
**SNR:** My favorite gig that we played was the Breaking the Silence Fest.  
**TM:** What do you do to warm up?  
**SNR:** I usually play “Isn’t She Lovely” by Stevie Wonder and try to reharmonize it and stretch my creativity for when playing anything else.  
**TM:** What do you love about music?  
**SNR:** I love the freedom that can be expressed when playing any type of song or music and the connection that music makes from the stage to the crowd.  
**TM:** Who is your favorite musician and how do they inspire you?  
**SNR:** My favorite has always been Stevie Wonder, he has inspired me to not only learn other instruments but also try to master them and never limit my creativity.

Upcoming Gigs to Check Out:

**9/18:** “Punk Pixies for PSAF” with Angel Gray and Skunk Mother, 7pm at the Tin Roof, \$10  
**9/19:** “New Dirty Shoes” at the Refinery  
**10/17:** “Biscuit Beatdown” in Greenville, 3pm  
**10/17:** Hanahan Music Festival  
**10/25:** Molly Macquire at Tua Lingua, 9pm  
**11/8:** Coastal Carolina Fair



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## A Day in the Life of a Sixth Grader

by Macie White

*For this issue, Applause staff writer Leo Voelker brought back a tradition that he was a part of during his first year at SOA by inviting a sixth grade student to write about their experience on their first day at SOA.*

If I had to choose one word to describe my first day it would be chaotic! I know all my friends were nervous too. My day started on the bus. I was excited to have a few familiar friends to sit with. The bus ride was long and overwhelming, but I had my friends Cora, Millie, and June. We were all sharing about how nervous we were.

The big moment had come! I was there! I walked through the breezeway overwhelmed by all the bigger kids. When I finally found the cafeteria, I sat with my homeroom classmates. I met a girl named Teagan and we sparked up a conversation. When all the kids got there we headed to our classrooms. Luckily my homeroom teacher, Ms. Lasley walked us to our classroom. I was so relieved that I was being led to my classroom or else I might have gotten lost! My homeroom was really great. We did team-building activities to get to know each other.

After homeroom I got to go to the class I was most excited for, Creative Writing. When I got there I met my Creative Writing friends, who I will be with for 7 years! We just got to talk and write a short life story. After being hungry for so long it was time for lunch! I sat with my homeroom friends. The cafeteria was very loud! It was a bit overwhelming because the piano in the background mixed with the talking made it very, very loud.

I went to science with Ms. Healy after lunch. We did a worksheet and got to know about her. At the end of the day I had math with Ms. Pennetti. She was so nice to all of us. We got to know a little about her. The bell rang and I was so excited I made it through my first day of middle school!

My day overall was very fun. So far I love middle school. I have more friends than I have made in elementary school in a year. SOA is a really great school. I love how we can show our differences in clothing and personality. I feel a lot more free than I felt in elementary school. It is a big change but I have my friends to help me through it.



*"I made it through my first day of middle school!"*

## Joining SOA as a Senior: Applause Talks To Henry Himes

by Leo Voelker

*Applause staff writer Leo Voelker sat down with senior Theater major Henry Himes, who started his first semester at SOA this year, to find out more about what motivated him to join SOA.*

**Leo Voelker:** You recently joined SOA. What about our school inspired you to want to join senior year?

**Henry Himes:** I have wanted to come to SOA for a few years, but have had other things that inhibited me from doing so. I finally decided that I wanted to finish high school where I wanted and made the switch.

**LV:** Since joining SOA, what have you noticed about our school that differs

from your past highschool?

**HH:** It is significantly more connected than my previous school; I already know most of my grade and others, whereas before in a school so big, it was hard to get to know everybody, let alone other grades.

**LV:** What has been the biggest adjustment joining an arts school like SOA?

**HH:** My schedule is much more traditional than it was last year. Last year I had an internship and a block early out, so I was only at school for three hours, so that has definitely been a big adjustment.

**LV:** As a new member of the SOA theatre department, have you been doing theatre before starting school here?

**HH:** Yes, I have been performing since I was in second grade. I take many hours of dance a week and take voice lessons, but have never really done straight theatre. I have been in lots of shows around town and am currently in Grease at the Footlight Players!

**LV:** How was your experience with the SOA audition process?

**HH:** It was really smooth! I missed the initial deadline to audition, so I actually didn't do my audition till the summer. I met with Mrs. Horn and Mr. Younts and performed for them. Since I have been doing theatre for a while, I sort of knew Mrs. Horn from Thespian competitions or from friends that go to SOA, so we talked about what my senior year would look like if I got in. Soon after I got my acceptance letter!

**LV:** What do you feel is the most unique part about school of the arts that makes it distinctive from other Highschools in Charleston?

**HH:** Even though its obvious, the emphasis on the arts is by far the most distinct quality. While I took theatre classes at my old school, and all the majors at SOA are offered in other schools, like choir or art classes, it's a completely different environment when every person at the school has a specific area of study that they enjoy and improve in every day.

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## Classic Movie Review: *American Psycho* (2000)

by Marley Mendes

*\*Please note- this film is rated R.*

Released in 2000, Mary Harron's cinematic adaptation of Bret Easton Ellis's novel *American Psycho* left a lasting mark on cinema history. The film brilliantly explores themes of male vanity and fragile masculinity through a lens of surrealism and off-putting psychological gore.

From the opening frames, the film's unique visual identity is established by clean, steady cinematography, lacing each shot with sterile and methodic choices. As noted in the director's commentary, Harron wanted to create a hyperrealistic, glossy, and clinical look for the film, particularly seen in the intense scenes to further the viewer's discomfort from the juxtaposition. Not only did this create a subconscious sense of unease, this hyper-ordered aesthetic makes Bateman's descent into madness all the more jarring.

To elaborate on the protagonist and film's center, this film features Patrick Bateman, played by Christian Bale. Bateman is a well-established businessman with a lust for unconventional killing, but his carefully calculated, ego-driven view of the world begins to derail when he makes a careless choice to murder a colleague, and Detective Donald Kimball played by Willem Dafoe, begins an investigation that results in an eventual breakdown.

Ultimately, this film served as an excellent commentary on the superficiality and decadence of high-finance culture. Whether you are looking for a sharp social commentary, or an excuse to stare at Christian Bale, I recommend this film.

## Contemporary Movie Review: *Obsession* (2026)

by Marley Mendes

*\*Please note- this film is rated TV-MA.*

It's not every day an indie horror film with a sub-\$1,000,000 budget crashes into the highest-grossing movies worldwide, but Curry Barker's film *Obsession* claimed this impressive feat. Released in May of this year, this film did not take long to turn heads in the cinema world.

The story features protagonist Nikki

navigating a particularly interesting mental journey as her free will is robbed by a children's wish-casting toy. The love spell held by this "one wish willow" is cast by her friend and admirer, Bear. Their relationship flourishes until it catapults in the wrong direction by birthing a catastrophic, jealous, and crazed version of Nikki. I find this film extremely interesting as it emphasizes the dangers of meddling in powers bigger than yourself, leaning heavily on the "be careful what you wish for" philosophy; I've found myself second-guessing my 11:11 wishes since watching this feature.

Diving into what made this film soar in popularity, I believe it takes on the genre of horror in such an unconventional way, at least in regards to the current horror movie culture. On that, director Curry Barker, in an interview with film blogger Phillip Concannon, described his approach as, "something that's more scary than traditional [horror] is uncomfortability." Barker worked closely with lead actress Inde Navarrette on not playing Nikki as possessed, but instead as an unhinged, ridiculous version of a crazy girlfriend. These elements made the dynamics between characters addicting to analyze.

As a sophomore filmmaker, Barker has definitely left a lasting impression with this film, climbing charts and birthing a new fandom.

## Classic Album Review: *Jolene* (1974)

by MJ Johnson

In the wake of Dolly Parton's passing last month, I've felt a strong impulse to return to her music, to sit with the songs that have influenced generations of listeners. I mean, who didn't adore this woman? Dolly's career took off in 1967 when she joined The Porter Wagoner Show singing the hit single "Dumb Blonde" from her debut album *Hello, I'm Dolly*, leading her to securing a regular spot on the weekly television program singing duets with Porter Wagoner. Her appearances on the weekly television program introduced her to a much wider audience. She began releasing singles of the duets between her and Porter Wagoner, but her attempts at solo albums weren't as successful.

When *Jolene* was released in February of 1974, it arrived during a monumental point in her career as she was preparing to leave *The Porter*

*Wagoner Show* to fully establish herself as a solo artist.

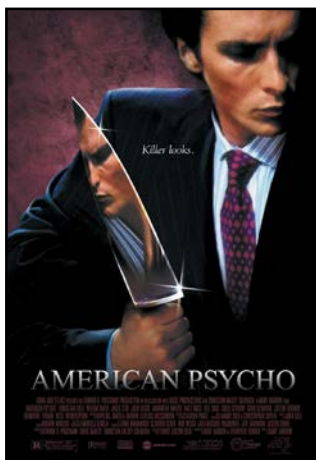
The success of the album solidified her legitimacy as a solo star and she promptly announced her departure from the country variety show. It was a transition; an artistic farewell that proved she could thrive as her own.

The album begins with the career-defining title track "Jolene." Honky-tonk songs about jealousy and heartbreak were hardly new to country music but "Jolene" approached the subject in an unusually sensitive way. Dolly puts herself in a vulnerable position by pleading directly with the other women and acknowledging her beauty, rather than condemning her or lamenting over heartbreak. Dolly took the Nashville sound and gave it more urgency with a hypnotic C-sharp minor key and restrained musical arrangements. It's excellent songwriting: pulling the listener in with that tense urgent mood, it forces you to put yourself in the speaker's shoes.

Another obvious standout hit is the sixth track "I Will Always Love You," which (the legend says) Dolly wrote the same night as "Jolene." My favorite thing about this song is her soft feathery delivery on the chorus in her signature high lonesome Appalachian style soprano. Although Whitney Houston's 1992 cover of the song is widely accepted as the best version of the song, I prefer Dolly's achingly gentle tone; there's something so intimate about the way she sings as if she's afraid to let go.

My two personal favorites from this album are "Lonely Comin' Down" and "River of Happiness." I love the countrypolitan-pop sound on "River of Happiness," there's something warm and hazy about the lyrical imagery of the song, nature heavy and simple like old Kodak film. It's soft around the edges, sweet and nostalgic like old summer polaroids. The innocent lyrics about sitting on riverbanks in the warm sun takes the listener back to an easier time, a sort of metaphorical childlike memory of a fleeting moment in time. It's like you're there with Dolly standing barefoot in a shallow mountain stream catching crawdads while she plays guitar in the grass.

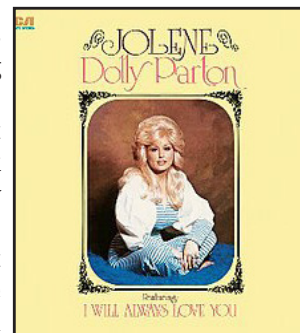
Dolly's version of Porter Wagoner's "Lonely Comin' Down" resonated with me for its melancholic mood, it begins as a slow-paced quiet ballad and slowly builds into a lazy sprawling progression as Dolly sings in her high lonesome "I wondered, where the love had gone" before resolving back into "then again, I felt the lonely, coming' down." It's beautiful,



*American Psycho*



*Obsession*



*Jolene*

her voice shines on the high notes, and it cuts right through to the heart.

The album can effortlessly go from big emotional peaks like “Jolene” to the sweet eden-like imagery of rainbow flowers, meadows, and butterflies in “Early Morning Breeze” to sweet sappy love songs like “Randy” and then onwards toward sorrowful traditional-esque tunes like “Lonely Comin’ Down.”

It’s a strong album and the one I’d recommend to anyone wanting to get into Dolly Parton. It’s a classic, timeless but also the relics of a bygone era in Nashville when traditional country was headed into a more commercial direction. In the midst of the departure of the polished “Nashville Sound” era to the grittier blossoming subcultures of Outlaw Country and southern rock, Dolly Parton’s Jolene transcended the crossroads of the times.

Today “Jolene” has been covered thousands of times yet it still feels fresh. Even in the modern age of music, the album remains pristine, unwavering, and authentic; a testament to the woman Dolly Parton was in her lifetime.

## Contemporary Album Review: *Bleeds* (2025)

by Fia Coleman

Wednesday, a shoegaze indie rock band, has recently come out with a new album in 2025 titled *Bleeds*, that has dominated most of their top ten. Since the album came out, they have gained a lot of popularity, despite being a band together for nine years. The iconic band leader Karly Hartzman (who has an unmistakable presence and is an amazing songwriter. I didn’t know that much about her but after listening to the album I have recently become obsessed), describes the band as creek rock or creek gaze. If you’re listening to Wednesday for the first time, *Bleeds* is definitely the place to start, because it captures the essence of the band so well. It’s basically Wednesday in a nut shell.

The album kicks off with a total bang (my personal favorite song on the album), and immediately you’re immersed into the first song, “Reality TV Argument Bleeds”. This song totally hooks you onto the album, and you’re



*Bleeds*

immediately wanting to listen to more. It’s loud and intense and gripping, with unmistakable lyrics like “If you need me, I’ll call you / In wino shoes, he drags his feet / And I crawl toward you unkillably.” That line really stands out to me, it’s just such a cool and harsh image. Everything melds together so perfectly to make one unified sound, and that’s what really makes the song stick out to me.

Throughout the album there’s a lot of variation, going from an intense electric sound with songs “Townies” and “Wasp,” to slowing down into a more unique alternative country sound with songs like “Wound Up Here (By Holdin On)” and “Elderberry Wine.” “Elderberry Wine” is their top song, so even if you’ve never listened to Wednesday, you’ve probably heard that one before. I’ve never really enjoyed country music, but I found myself singing along to “Elderberry Wine”, a song I’d never even listened to all the way through (Karly Hartzman’s voice really just makes me want to ascend). I really appreciate the different sound variations the album has, it’s truly not expected and definitely keeps the listener on their toes. Each song has its own unique intimacy, no matter how fast or slow, which makes the album feel really personal.

Overall, *Bleeds* is now definitely going to be one of my albums on rotation for the foreseeable future (also I can’t wait to see them with Mannequin P\*\*\*y November 4th!). It’s a heavily versatile album with a song on it for any occasion, and I highly recommend listening to it if you want to delve into a noise indie rock sound with an alternative country twist.

## Classic Book Review: *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937)

by Guest Writer Aviva LeVasseur

The end of summer always brings to mind hurricanes, and for me, hurricanes bring to mind *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston. It’s a novel written by a central female figure to the Harlem Renaissance, a major cultural movement in New York City in the 1920s and 30s. The book, published in 1937, was originally received with criticism and went out of print after Hurston’s death for decades. It was “rediscovered” in 1978 and after was lauded as one of the best books of the 20th century by Modern Library and Radcliffe Publishing House.

In my opinion, the beauty and depth of Hurston’s work doesn’t need to be pointed out in flowy reviews by major critics—it shines through in the work itself. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is a

poignant coming of age story that follows a young African American woman, Janie Crawford, through her life—from her time as a naive young girl to a headstrong, defiant, sassy woman of forty. It tells her life story through Janie herself—she describes her childhood and three different marriages to one of her best friends in the aftermath of a disaster.

Taking place in the early 1900s in Florida, it tackles themes of change within society and the main character as well as themes of the freedom and independence of choice.

The story gives an interesting view into the tumultuous beginning of the 20th century in the South; part of it takes place in Eatonville, one of the first all-Black towns in Florida. It mixes history and love and betrayal and disaster into one intriguing melting pot; all in all, Hurston’s unique descriptions and lifelike dialogue draw the reader into the heart of Janie’s tale. Hurston’s writing style immediately caught me up in the story and, in many places, put me on the edge of my seat.

I first read this book a few years ago and I certainly think that, with every re-read, something else stands out to me about the story—this time it was Hurston’s use of the symbol of a pear tree for Janie’s stages in life. While it does get confusing at times, keeping track of all the characters and deciphering some of the dialogue, I feel the crescendo makes up for roughness around the edges.

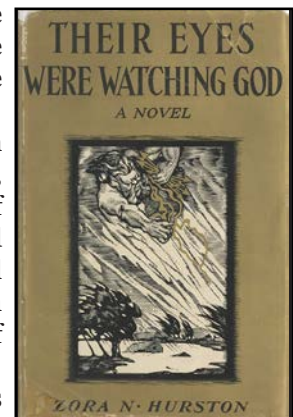
With the world constantly changing around us, sometimes it’s good to find something to ground you and remind you of the simple joys of life—*Their Eyes Were Watching God* delivers that feel good, laugh out loud kind of enjoyment we all need.

## Restaurant Review: Konnichiwa

by Fia Coleman and MJ Johnson

The experience of visiting Konnichiwa on 975 Savannah Highway is one of genuinity. It is classic, a little bit vacant, but uniquely personal. The vacancy of the space brings it a certain charm that makes your experience there feel much more intimate and pictorial in a way. When you cross the threshold of the restaurant you are greeted with an enthusiastic “Konnichiwa!” that pertains to a little bit of zest.

The entryway is decorated with a lowrider motorcycle ornate in front of a regal fountain,



*Their Eyes Were Watching God*

there is something lynchian about the character of the space, and the deep green paint of the walls that surely adds to the zen. As we sat down at our usual booth (for we are regulars) we looked around at the two other customers sitting adjacent to our booth. It reminded us of a set in Pulp Fiction... truly an experience of cinema. Were we in Charleston or LA?



Konnichiwa

A young waiter came to take our drink orders, per usual, however he was overthrown by our favorite eccentric elder waiter. The service was excellent, and whilst getting our orders taken, there was a bit of verve and humor sprinkled in by the waiter. Since we frequent the spot, he had already memorized our usual order of two chicken bento boxes and a starter of tofu skin nigiri! Such a great staff!

While the atmosphere at Konnichiwa is highly notable, the food is an equally enticing quality about the restaurant. As soon as you sit down in a cozy booth, you are greeted with a vast and diverse

menu with truly something for everyone. From bountiful bento boxes (our personal favorite) to a delicious tuna tataki dish, to A-grade sushi, every dish is an equal amount of quality and thoroughly consistent. Each time we come back, the food quality is always equally as delicious as the last. It's fresh, filling, and highly palatable. Along with the restaurant component, there is also an abundant bar with plenty of soft drink and cocktail choices.

The bento box that we frequently order comes with fried rice, 4 california sushi pieces, 2 fried gyoza, vegetables, and your meat of choice (we choose chicken, but they also have beef, pork, shrimp, etc). The array of food that comes with the bento makes the meal almost adventurous in a way, with the ability to combine different things to create a mix and match of flavors within each bite. The rice is perfectly fried, the blend of vegetables is tastefully seasoned, and the chicken is explosively flavorful. The sushi and dumplings on the side is a great way to end/start the meal as well. And the fountain coke... 10/10.

Whether dining casually with your friends, celebrating something, or just looking for a quick bite, Konnichiwa is a perfect hidden gem for any occasion.

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## September Horoscopes

by Fia Coleman and MJ Johnson

**Capricorn (December 22 - January 19)**

For the love of all things good, please stop micromanaging every one's incompetence and just accept that people can be incredibly stupid. It's not your job to try and make the blind see. Don't snap at us either, you're not the only one on their last nerve, okay? Take it easy, it won't be so bad.

**Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)**

You need to chill out, seriously. It's only the beginning of the school year, stop with the theatrical behavior! You don't even have anything to stress about yet. Get it together, be disciplined and precise within these first few weeks; stop the galavanting about and lock in or else you never will. Avoid impulsive decisions, especially with money, and ground yourself.

**Pisces (February 19 - March 20)**

Get your head OUT of the clouds. Summer's over, and it's time to focus on being an academic weapon. Stop being flighty, keep track of your things, and PAY attention. Stop daydreaming, get over your deeply delusional crush (they DON'T like you. GET over it), and stop feeling sorry for yourself. You're overanalyzing!! That one C- you got on a quiz that you're crying about won't matter in the long run. Sorry, Pisces, but you're easy to manipulate and you need to get in touch with reality.

**Aries (March 29 - April 19)**

Honestly Aries... you need to let loose. Break free from the clutches of parents and the pressures of schoolwork. Go to that party, bedrot guilt-free for a weekend, and maybe even do some karaoke or go on a golf cart ride. Sorry, Aries, but these drastic measures are necessary. You're a fast learner, so don't even worry about having to cram for that test, you'll do great regardless, so take some time to yourself and have fun.

**Taurus (April 20 - May 20)**

The overconsumption that took place over the summer needs to come to a halt. No more spending excessively, no more splurging. Participating in the sickening unicorn frappuccino craze? Cut. Sauntering through weekend flea markets for five hours? Enough. You're gonna go broke by the first few weeks of school. Break free from Venus and become more grounded. Do a yoga class, touch a tree. Perhaps maybe even... deleting Instagram? Sorry-not-sorry.

**Gemini (May 21 - June 20)**

You're a Gemini, of course you're in love with a new person every second, of every minute, of every day. That manic pixie dream girl is only going to come to save you if you really manifest it. So close your eyes, light a colored candle, and speak her into existence. Or, on the other hand, maybe you've done enough collateral damage in your love life. We don't make the rules!

**Cancer (June 21 - July 22)**

We know you truly love your friends, but sometimes the clinginess gets to a point. You know you are capable of walking across the cafeteria to get a napkin yourself... right...? Sometimes, it's okay to not hang out every weekend. We know you can't be alone with yourself, so to supplement your friends being constantly around to drown out your dark internal monologue, binge watch a show, or start a dense intellectual novel. Your lack of independence is starting to be detrimental to everyone around you. So as a solution, walk to the nurse's office alone for some exposure therapy.

**Leo (July 23 - August 22)**

Since school just started, it's time to put yourself out there while you can. Before your theatrical flair and love for the spotlight becomes repressed by the piles of schoolwork and the mid-year depressive state you will inevitably enter. Go audition for the lead role, sweep Scholastic, and win superior. You got this!

**Virgo (August 23 - September 22)**

Ready to clean up your act? GOOD! Get off of reels, your brain is melting out of your ears and we can only tolerate so many folk valley jokes. Let's be honest here, it's been long overdue that you had a solid reset. Stop questioning whether you should text that person or buy that overpriced "y2k vintage" shirt on Depop, get to work!!! Money doesn't grow on trees and neither does our patience for your constant changes.

**Libra (September 23 - October 22)**

You've never been more in your element, in fact, your radiance is blinding us all! Your front and center on stage, don't make us jealous. Your power of attraction is extremely high, go talk to that person you've been eyeing, as Mercury enters Libra, your communication skills will carry you through it. And do us favor, finish up that project you've been putting aside, no more procrastination here!

**Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)**

So, you've been feeling emotionally confused and as if you are kept behind closed doors. Don't worry, as Venus moves in your sign mid-month things will start to become more clear. Stop stressing about what people think, alright? Your charm is dangerous, your hustle is loud, and anyone giving you issues can be left for the dregs. Whatever you do, if your ex texts you back CUT THEM OFF before they can even get a sentence in, you're too good for the back-and-forth.

**Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)**

Drop the dead weight. You know what we're talking about, you're taking your ambition lightly. Nurture it, stop waiting for things to come around and just take charge. No one is saving you. Your poor spending habits and bursts of pent-up frustration are starting to slow you down, though. Get some sleep, your poor sleep schedule ruins your mood just as much as it ruins ours.

Dolly Parton Trivia  
by Tallon Tirozzi and Ella Bonazzi

- 1. What state was Dolly Parton born in?
- 2. What is Dolly Parton’s middle name?
- 3. What iconic Dolly Parton song did Beyoncé reimagine on Cowboy Carter?
- 4. Who does Dolly Parton play in the movie 9-5?
- 5. What was Dolly Parton’s first recorded song?
- 6. Which Dolly Parton song became a global hit when Whitney Houston covered it?
- 7. What is Dolly Parton dubbed as?
- 8. What is the theme park named after Dolly Parton?
- 9. What is the famous song by Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers in 1983?
- 10. Which famous pop star is Dolly Parton’s goddaughter?

Answers

1. Tennessee, 2. Rebecca, 3. Jolene, 4. Dolly Parton, 5. “Puppy Love”, 6. “I Will Always Love You”, 7. The “Queen of Country”, 8. Dollywood, 9. “Islands In The Stream”, 10. Miley Cyrus

Aspen Ross, 12th grade  
Creative Writing



Ella Bonazzi

4/10

- 1. Tennessee
- 2. Marie
- 3. IDC about Beyoncé
- 4. Dolly Parton
- 5. Probably something good
- 6. Coat of Many Colors
- 7. Queen of Country
- 8. Dollywood
- 9. Oooh, dude, I don’t know.
- 10. Miley Cyrus

Alicia Reyes,  
11th grade Theater



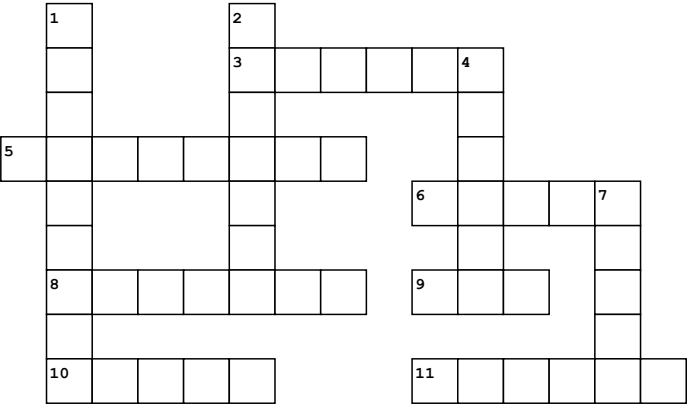
Ella Bonazzi

6/10

- 1. Tennessee
- 2. Sparkle
- 3. Jolene
- 4. Dolly Parton
- 5. I Will Always Love You
- 6. I Will Always Love You
- 7. Queen of Country
- 8. Dollywood
- 9. 9-5
- 10. Miley Cyrus

Dolly Parton Crossword

by Micah Howell



Across:

- 3. How old she was when she passed.
- 5. What was used to pay for her birth.
- 6. The musician she refused to record “I Will Always Love You” with.
- 8. Imagination \_\_\_\_\_, one of her charities.
- 9. How many Billboard 100 #1’s she achieved.
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_ Magnolias, a famous movie she starred in.
- 11. \_\_\_\_\_ Cash introduced her at a performance.

Down:

- 1. Her favorite fast food.
- 2. Her middle name
- 4. Her favorite color of rose
- 7. The age at which she started singing.

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

by Sally Lewis

Acorn  
Cheerleader  
Football  
Math  
Science  
Backpack  
Bonfires

English  
Fall  
Harvest  
History  
Teacher  
School  
Pumpkin

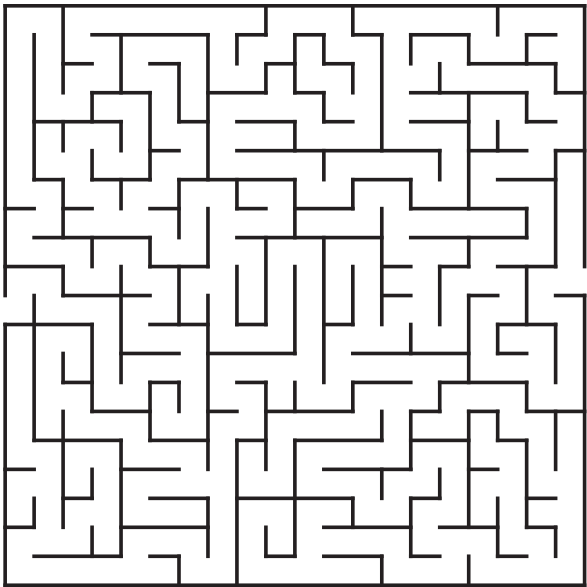
SOA Sudoku

by Sally Lewis

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   | 9 | 2 |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   | 7 |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   | 6 | 1 |   |   |
| 3 | 8 | 4 | 1 |   |   | 9 |   |   |
| 6 | 5 |   | 3 |   |   | 4 | 8 |   |
| 1 | 2 |   |   |   |   |   | 3 |   |
| 4 |   |   |   | 6 |   |   |   |   |
|   |   | 5 | 2 | 3 |   | 6 | 7 |   |
|   |   | 8 |   |   | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 |



Help Ms. Bagnal Find  
Her Code!



010110010101  
100010001011  
001001101010  
000111001001  
010100100101  
101011010100  
110101001101

JJOJJOJJOJ  
JJOJJOJJOJ



"I saw a brand in Canada named 'No Name'; it was very funny."

Simon Pardo, 6th grade Band



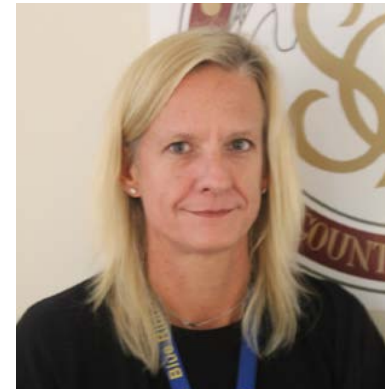
"For summer reading I read a book that wasn't on the list, and I had to redo my whole assignment."

Ivy Hrvanovic, 7th grade Dance



"At Rattlesnake Bike Park, my friend fell and crashed."

Nev Barnard, 8th grade Band



"I saw a gigantic box turtle on the beach in St. Augustine, it was pretty weird."

Sally Cappelmann, Attendance

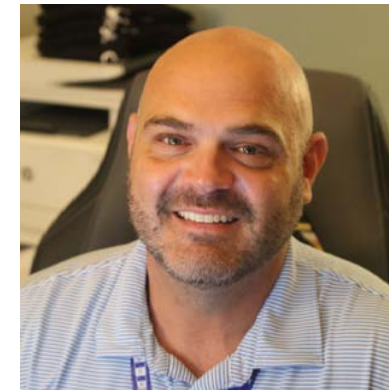
## What was the funniest thing that happened to you this summer?

by **Lena Fernandes and Micah Howell**



"I got kicked out of multiple museums for staying until closing on my trip to Germany."

Mr. Rieder, Social Studies Teacher



"At the beach, a little kid surfing absolutely wiped out; he tried to act like no one saw it but everyone did and was laughing."

Mr. King, Band Director



"I got a concussion; it was pretty funny."

Isla McInvale, 9th grade Fashion



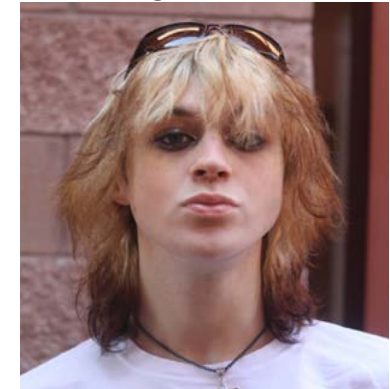
"I saw a kid rub a spider on his eyelash as a joke; then the spider crawled down his back."

Antonio Gerideau, 10th grade Theater



"We got stuck in a storm on a boat in the Edisto river for nine hours; we almost died!"

Katie Childers and Elizabeth Sprouse, 11th grade Visual Arts



"My friend Zoe and I got lost in London, and we had to sprint back to our tour group."

Ellis Richards, 12th grade Creative Writing