Applause

Volume 28, Number 3 School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC November 2026



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From the Editor

Dear Readers,



This past month has brought countless things to be proud of. From the production of *Oklahoma!* to the Theatre Senior Thesis, students have settled in and flourished in their art. Students have continued to succeed in various aspects of their work, from sports to college admissions to literary competitions.

As we approach the end of the second semester, we look forward to seeing the culmination of students' hard work across majors in the Holiday Spectacular, Dance Senior Thesis, and even more.

We're endlessly proud of all that our students have achieved thus far, and can't wait to see what else they will accomplish in the fall semester.

Your Editor,
Lila Hayes

SOA Calendar
by Keller Fauerbach

Tuesday-Wednesday, 12/1-2: Freshmen Grade Theatre One-Act, BBT, 4/6 PM
Tuesday, 12/1: MS Orchestra and Vocal Holiday Magic Performances, RMMT, 6 PM
Thursday, 12/3: Bard in the Box 8th Grade Show, BBT, 4/6 PM
Thursday, 12/3: Best Before Break High School Visual Arts Show, VA Hall, 6 PM
Thursday, 12/3: HS Band Winter Concert, RMMT, 6 PM
Friday, 12/4: MS Band Concert, RMMT, 6 PM
Saturday, 12/5: Wordfest, Barnes & Noble, Town Center, 9 AM
Tuesday, 12/8: Holiday Spectacular School Show, RMMT, 10:30 AM
Tuesday, 12/8-9: Holiday Spectacular, Gaillard, 7 PM
Tuesday-Wednesday, 12/8-9: Sophomore Grade Theatre One-Act, 4/6 PM
Thursday, 12/10: Dance Senior Thesis, RMMT, 6:15 PM
Tuesday, 12/15: Poetry Out Loud School Competition, Media Center, 4 PM

Applause

since 1999, the official student publication of
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Founded in 1995 by Rose Maree Myers

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Cover by Moxie Jo Galvin



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by Sally Lewis

Where Are They Now: Catching Up With Law Fox
by Juliet Ladd

Photos: Theatre Showcases Senior Thesis
by *Applause* Staff

Editorial: Giving Season

Halloween is usually associated with costumes, candy and trick-or-treating. However, this year, more than 100 volunteers in Washington, D.C., spent part of Halloween doing something even more meaningful: helping families in need.

On October 31, 2026, volunteers gathered at Bread for the City for its annual Harvest Fest. Although the event included Halloween costumes and plenty of excitement, its main purpose was to prepare supplies for families ahead of the holiday season. Together, the volunteers packed 2,600 holiday meal bags, organized 15,000 donated diapers and sorted 1,000 pieces of clothing. These supplies will help thousands of families facing financial difficulties during the colder months. What makes this event so inspiring is that people chose to spend their Halloween morning giving back to others. Instead of focusing entirely on their own celebrations, they came together to make a difference in their community. This event is an perfect example of what the fall season should represent.

As Thanksgiving approaches, people often talk about gratitude and generosity, but these volunteers demonstrated those values through their actions. While one morning of volunteering cannot solve every challenge families face, it can make a meaningful difference in the lives of thousands of people. Perhaps this is what the spirit of fall is really about. It is not just the changing leaves, seasonal celebrations or holiday traditions. It is about recognizing the needs of others and finding ways to help. In a world where negative news often receives the most attention, the efforts of these volunteers deserve recognition. Their actions prove that even small acts of kindness can create a lasting impact.

Opinion: What Ever Happened to Riot Grrrl?

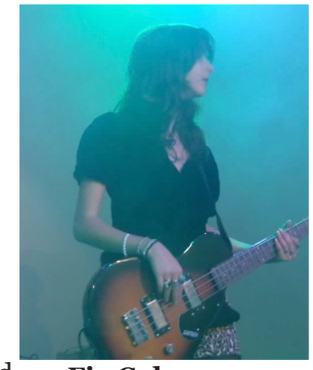
by Fia Coleman

A month ago, me and my band Poster Grrrl drove out to Greenville to play on a metal/grindcore bill with eighteen other bands. We were the only girl band on the bill. To be honest, it was the worst show we've ever played. The amps we played on weren't our kind of sound, and after being mansplained to for about ten minutes, we couldn't even draw a crowd during the set. A bunch of random guys stood around awkwardly in the front, and while we were mortified and rushing to get off stage, a group of girls stood in the back dancing that we couldn't even see. After the show, we talked with a girl who was the editor for Noise Complaint Magazine, a zine about the music scene in South Carolina based at USC. She explained to us that she was looking for girl bands to interview, but that she couldn't find any besides us, and they were literally nowhere to be found.

I've been thinking a lot about what she said, and wondering how many women have also felt isolated and alone within their art scene.

At most local shows or big concerts, men are blocking the barricade, aggressively beating everyone up in a mosh pit, and being creepy towards women in the crowd. Even when a concert is geared more toward a female audience, women still aren't given the room to enjoy the show; to freely scream, dance, and just let go for a minute. The misogyny that permeates through circumstances like these are so deeply ingrained in our social behaviors that it seemingly doesn't enter a man's conscience. It feels as if it's a given that women stand in the back while the men get the majority of the front or get the majority of a pit, etc. The subconscious action of pushing women out is such a norm within our society that women aren't even recognizing this great imbalance, even if it's as simple as letting a man stand in front of you at a concert.

This blatant neglect for a women's right to space can be applied to any art form. Women are constantly being pushed around within their creative medium, whether it's to minimize their work or success, to be ignored or denied opportunities, or to have their passion be overruled by a male who's doing the same thing. For example, 87% of artists in major American museums are male. Female writers are often rejected by critics and labeled as "overly emotional" or "unstable" while male writers with similar themes in their work are labeled as "intellectual" or "genius." Fem-fronted groups or female singers are a lot from men's taste (for example if a man is listening to Clairo it's labeled as "performative"), and men consuming art created by women have a negative stigma around them.



Fia Coleman

There is a spectrum when it comes to women's relationship with art, and that spectrum has definitely progressed and in some ways digressed over time. Whether it's a group of guys blocking you at an all-girl show, or having your art or music be pushed aside so a male artist can be recognized. I'm not saying we should bring back the original riot grrrl movement. The racism and prejudice within that scene is not something that should be commemorated. But, I do think that women are being suppressed within a community that they should feel comfortable in. As Kathleen Hanna said, "Find something you really love doing and mix it with something you really care about." We need more female artists out in the world!

Sass Attack: "Unattainable Bodies" And The Victoria's Secret Fashion Show

by Caleb Brown

On October 18th, Victoria's Secret's annual fashion show premiered live on YouTube for the entire world to watch. While this year's show definitely had its fair share of controversy, there's one conversation we have every year surrounding the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show: "Should Plus-sized models walk the runway?" For the last couple of years, Victoria's Secret has been making sure that they have a diverse group of girls on the runway, but for some reason, every time a larger girl is present, some elitist, pretentious TikTok fashionista has to say, "There's nothing wrong with being fat, but isn't the whole point of the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show to showcase unattainable bodies?"



Applause Staff

Caleb Brown

I don't think I have to tell you that the whole *unattainable bodies* thing is literally just really, REALLY badly disguised fatphobia. The term unattainable bodies in the first place is just a slightly more PC way of saying super skinny. And it's true, up until 2018, all of the VS Angels were really slim, but calling these bodies unattainable is a little backhanded at best and dehumanizing at worst. In the past, the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show only added to the societal beauty standards that treat thinness as the goal, and larger people as less than. Now it shows that beauty comes in all forms and isn't limited to one body type. And mind you, while everybody's complaining, the beauty standards the original Angels were held to are still very present, just more diverse. All of the Angels, including the plus-sized ones, are tall, have hourglass body types,

and are conventionally attractive. Like, have you seen Precious Lee? That girl is stunning. So I really don't understand what we're complaining about anymore!

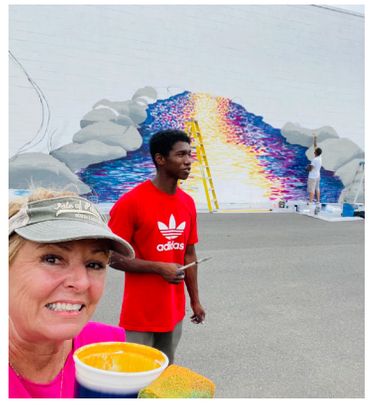
The people pushing this fatphobic rhetoric are always the chronically online, bedrotted, Adriana Lima idolizers who SO desperately want to go back to the "good ol' days", even if that means regressing back to a 2000s level obsession with skinniness and diet culture. We moved away from this culture for a reason; it can cause psychological conditions like body dysmorphia and eating disorders, which should remind us how important representation and body diversity are.

At the end of the day, it's a fashion show; the point is to sell clothes. People of all sizes wear clothes, so why wouldn't they showcase their clothing on people of all sizes? There is genuinely no legitimate reason to keep plus-size models from being Victoria's Secret Angels, so I think it's time to officially banish this conversation to discourse hell along with its weird bigoted undertones.

Where Were They Then: Ms. Richardson

by Sally Lewis

Ms. Barbara Richardson has been teaching Visual Arts at SOA since 2019, and has made an indelible impact on her students over that time. This issue, Applause *staff writer Sally Lewis asked her about her childhood and passion for art.*



Ms. Richardson and former student Enrique Boyd working on the first mural painted for the city of Goose Creek!

Sally Lewis: Where were you born and raised?
Barbara Richardson: I was born and raised in Charleston, South Carolina, and for most of my life, I believed I was an only child until I recently had the opportunity to meet my biological sister.
SL: What was your childhood like and what did you want to be when you grew up?
BR: My own story began before I was born, as I was adopted at birth. At the time, my birth mother was living in Bordeaux, France, where she was attending boarding school. Although my beginnings were somewhat unconventional, I was fortunate to grow up surrounded by a loving family, plenty of pets, and many relatives who were artists. Being immersed in such a creative environment from an early age made art feel like a natural part of my life. I always knew that, in some capacity, my future would involve the arts.
SL: How did your passion for art turn into a career, and what is your life outside of a teacher?
BR: Today, I have been fortunate enough to turn that lifelong passion into a career. In addition to serving as the Art Director for the City of Goose Creek, I am also a professional mural artist. Both roles allow me to combine my love of creativity with my desire to make art accessible, meaningful, and impactful within the community. Whether I am creating large-scale public artwork or developing opportunities for others to experience the arts, I feel incredibly fortunate to do something I have loved for as long as I can remember.
SL: What advice do you have for current students at SOA?
BR: My advice to current students at the Charleston County School of the Arts is simple: listen to your art teachers and take their advice to heart. The art faculty at SOA are not simply educators; they are accomplished professionals who actively work and contribute within their respective fields. They bring real-world experience, knowledge, and insight into the classroom that can help prepare you for opportunities well beyond high school. Take advantage of that knowledge, be open to constructive criticism, experiment with unfamiliar materials and techniques, and never stop learning. You may not always realize it at the time, but the guidance and skills you gain from your teachers can have a lasting influence on your creative journey and your future career.

Where Are They Now: Law Fox

by Juliet Ladd

Law Fox graduated from SOA as a Theatre major in 2024. Since then, he's continued to achieve success within a variety of fields. Applause *staff member Juliet Ladd sat down with him to learn more about his career thus far and what he looks forward to in the future.*

Juliet Ladd: What have you been up to since graduating from SOA?
Law Fox: I've continued my acting training in NYC at Pace University's Sands College and took workshop classes at Stella Adler! This past year I returned to Charleston to work professionally- auditioning through my agency, writing and recording my own music, and working as a production assistant on sets, as well as working as a line cook, performing in open mics, and modeling. I most recently flew to Amsterdam & Michigan this summer to act in a student feature film!



Law Fox on set of a student feature film in Amsterdam.

JL: What has been your biggest project or accomplishment so far?
LF: I booked a co-star role on *Will Trent,* a crime-dramedy show on Hulu and Disney+! It was so exciting to be on a huge set, getting to meet the crew, and learn firsthand about the filmmaking process for procedural television. I even had my own trailer with a FIREPLACE (could totallyy get used to that). Because that was my first union project, I've become SAG-Eligible, opening me up to higher paying and major project auditions in the industry #letsgo #win.
JL: How did SOA prepare you for your career?
LF: The opportunities from my theater teachers to perform and collaborate with my peers taught me the importance of a strong community. It was in SOA's improv troupe, The Fighting Gnomes, where I felt most in my element, being able to visit various schools and perform improv for students. In hindsight, that joy I felt in those outreaches totally translates to all of my work today. To have fun with your work is to have an undeniable confidence in it; there is humor in every corner of every medium, it's only a matter of how it's perceived. Because

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of this, my work has become infinitely more fun, personable, and truthful.
JL: What are you most excited about working toward in the future?
LF: So many things... that's a hard one! I'm foremost eager to push my acting further into comedy. I've been saving up this past year to move back into NYC full-time, and my first order of business there will be to take improv classes with the Upright Citizens Brigade. It's been a prominent cornerstone for countless actors... I almost feel like it would be a disservice if I didn't train with UCB haha. On that note, I have zip-zap experience in standup, but it's always been a dream of mine to perform a (preferably tomato-less) set, so my eyes are newly set on finally doing that! I've always put standup on a pedestal, thinking of it as the ultimate vulnerability you could possibly endure, but I've recently come 180 on the idea... sure it IS the ultimate vulnerability, but why not endure it!? Even if you bomb, imagine how good of a story that would be... muahaha. You only live once!
JL: What advice would you give SOA students pursuing a career in the arts?
LF: Embrace the fun! Practice love!! And find your community!! The world can be so serious and it's easy to get lost in the monotony of day to day life. Success isn't just monetary- it's the community you create and the people who cannot be measured whom you share your victories with!

SOA Introduces Hope Squad

by Lena Fernandes

SOA's inaugural Hope Squad is already making a difference by encouraging kindness, building connections, and reminding students that asking for help is a sign of strength. Through student-led activities, the group hopes to create a welcoming environment where everyone feels supported.

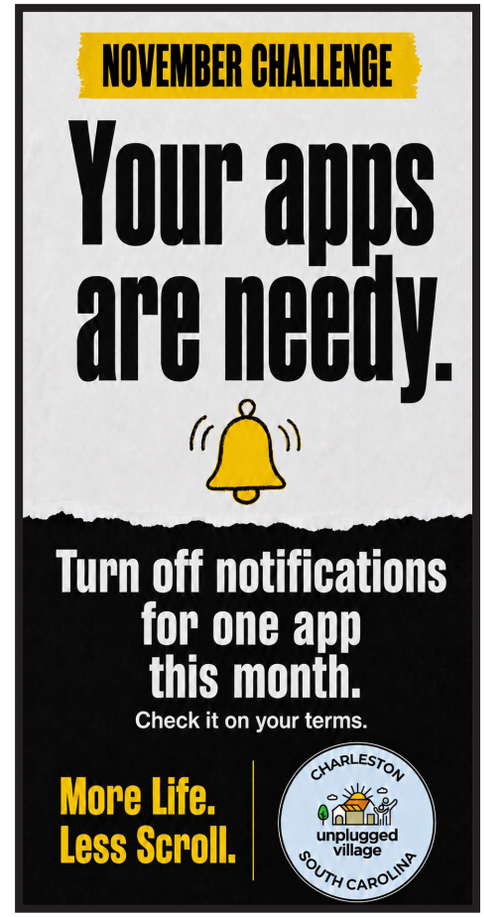
One of the group's first efforts was participating in the Out of the Darkness Walk, an event supporting suicide prevention and mental health awareness. SOA students raised almost $1,000 for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Students, parents, teachers, and district officials came together to show that supporting mental health is a shared responsibility.

For senior Hope Squad member **Kayden Plair**, one of the group's biggest goals is creating something that will continue to benefit SOA after she graduates. Plair hopes to build a strong foundation for future members and create a community where no student feels alone. She believes that sometimes support can be as simple as having someone willing to listen or sit with you. The group will be hosting its first schoolwide event, Sunshine Day, after Thanksgiving break. Members will welcome students with smiles, positive energy, and high fives before handing out sunshine pins and encouraging messages during lunch. These small acts of kindness are meant to remind students that they are part of a community that cares. Plair emphasized that Hope Squad members are always available to listen without judgment, whether someone needs help or is simply having a rough day. Members also work to connect students with trusted adults when additional support is needed. As Hope Squad continues to grow, its members hope to make kindness and mental health awareness a regular part of school life. Their ultimate goal is to ensure every student feels welcomed, supported, and reminded that they matter.



Hope Squad looks forward to student-led activities throughout the year to support their peers!





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Creative Writing Students Win First Place at Charleston Literary Festival

by Lila Hayes

For years, SOA's Creative Writing Department has celebrated winners of the Charleston Literary Festival's Young Writers Awards. This year, the department boasts four winners of the prestigious contest: Lillian Pastre, Isla McClain, Lucille Harper, and Aurelia O'Brien. Aurelia and Lucille were both awarded first place in the categories of fiction and nonfiction, respectively, each winning a $300 cash prize.



Aurelia O'Brien at Charleston Literary Festival

When asked by Applause which part of the award they were most excited about, both talked about the opportunity to read their piece at the festival. "[Sharing] my work with an audience is such a memorable, valuable experience," said Lucille. The students are also able to meet writers hosted by the festival. In Aurelia's case, she was able to meet New York Times Bestselling author Curtis Sittenfeld before her performance.

The juniors were both grateful for the experience given, but looked differently on their future in writing. While Lucille told Applause that she plans "to keep up with [writing] after graduation," Aurelia looks forward to studying chemistry in college. "I plan to quit while I'm ahead."

Congratulations to all of the winners of the Charleston Literary Festival.



Visual Artists Host Glow Show

by Ella Bonazzi

Visual Arts hosted their annual Glow Show and displayed incredible works created this year!

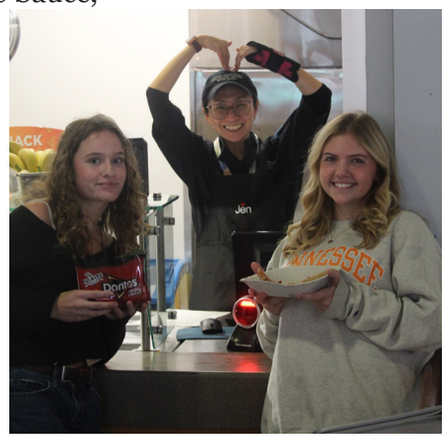


Battle of the Lunchroom

by Juliet Ladd and Sally Lewis

This month, Applause *staff members analyzed SOA's lunch menu and created a comprehensive review of their top ten lunches.*

1. Orange Chicken: The undisputed lunchroom champion. The chicken is perfectly crunchy, with just the right amount of sauce. And the rice, when paired with Charlie Sauce, is a culinary masterpiece. We have no notes.



We are endlessly grateful for our cafeteria staff!

2. Pasta with Red Sauce: The unlimited parmesan and option to go with or without sauce make this a meal that never disappoints. Throw in the garlic knot, and you really have something special.

3. Grilled Cheese: Perfectly toasted bread dipped into warm, fresh tomato sauce. Sometimes the simpler, the better.

4. Nachos: Separate, the elements are nothing special, but the queso and the meat mixed together create a heavenly experience on the perfectly round, crunchy chip.

5. Hot Dog: Crispy bread, a classic dog, and tater tots on the side. It may not be fancy, but it gets the job done.

6. Walking Taco: A revolutionary new addition to the lunchroom. You can customize it with a display of toppings like lettuce or sour cream. The fat-free chips unfortunately take it down the list, but overall, a solid lunch all around.

7. Chicken Smackers and Mac and Cheese: Not particularly impressive on its own. The mac and cheese lacks flavor, and the chicken isn't our favorite. We recommend putting barbecue sauce on the mac and cheese and using Charlie Sauce with the chicken, it's pretty good. Trust the process.

8. Beef and Cheese Empanada: Looks are deceiving for this lunch. Despite its overly toasted exterior, the soft inside is actually really good. We recommend adding some taco sauce, it really elevates the flavor.

9. Chicken and Waffles: A pretty good attempt at combining breakfast and lunch (leckfast). The sweet and savory combination has strong potential, but the sometimes soggy waffle and sugar-free syrup hold it back.

10. Cheeseburger: Definitely not our staff's favorite meal. While the patty and bun aren't anything extraordinary, and the toppings are a little limited, it's still a solid option.

Overall, these reviews are only lighthearted and we are very grateful for our cafeteria staff. They work hard everyday to deliver hundreds of students and faculty multiple nutritious options for their midday meal, all while keeping a smile on their faces. Even the meal ranked lowest on our list still draws students to fill three lunch lines. Not only us, but the entire school appreciates the hard work they do.



SOA Senior Named As QuestBridge Finalist

by Leo Voelker

Editor's Note: QuestBridge is an organization which provides high-achieving students from low-income backgrounds the huge opportunity to go to college for basically free. QB have 55 colleges that they are partnered with, which includes top schools all across the nation. Senior Creative Writer **Aiden Withers** *was recently chosen as a finalist. Finalists will learn on December 1 if they will be chosen. About 1/3 of the finalists will be matched with a school of their choice.*

Leo Voelker: What has been the biggest challenge in your application process?
Aiden Withers: The stress of having so much to keep track of. There was the initial QB application, then the supplementals for each college and also all the tedious financial aid forms that I had to complete by Nov. 1st. I applied to twelve colleges (the average QB applicant applied to ten.)
LV: What was your first reaction to finding out you're a finalist?
AW: I was extremely happy but also surprised. Until December 1st, I will continue to be cautiously optimistic because there is still a chance I will not be accepted by or matched to any of my schools- fingers crossed though!
LV: What are you looking for most in a college match through Questbridge?
AW: I am hoping most to be matched with my top colleges. These are all out of state and up north because I would prefer to experience a very new environment from SC for my higher education.
LV: What do you think helped your application stand out?
AW: I think what helped my application stand out was the variety of writing awards I have received.
LV: Which of your colleges do you most hope to be matched with?
AW: The three I hope most to attend are Vassar College (New York), Bates College (Maine) or University of Richmond (Virginia).

We wish all of our seniors the best of luck during college applications!



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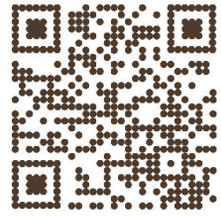

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At SOA, he's known as Julia's dad.

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Marley and Juliet Have Thoughts!

Marley and Juliet return to help students with social issues and school stress!

How do I stop being in a talking stage? (9)

The "talking-stage" is a term that's become much more popular in recent years, but the exact meaning is pretty abstract. In order to start dating someone, you need to get to know them! When you're in middle or high school, this process can feel like a commitment. Our advice to you is to take "talking" less seriously. You're each still learning about what you want in a relationship, as well as if that person is a fit for you, and there's nothing wrong with taking extra time to learn about the person that could be a big part of your future.



Ask Us Anything!

However, this is not a one solution situation. If this talking stage is anything other than simply getting to know each other, if you feel you're being led on or deceived in any way, please know that a relationship, especially a high school one, is not worth your energy if it is no longer benefiting you. Finally, know that you have the power to end it (nicely) whenever you feel that this person is not for you or you are changing yourself for them.

In my class, people often copy off my work and take my answers whenever I get a 100. How do I help people get good grades but still help them learn while they're doing so rather than just copying? (8)

Honestly, this situation can feel a little rocky, socially speaking. You obviously want people to succeed, but not at the expense of your own grades. Even further, by sending your answers over, you're risking losing points if teachers notice the copied work, and you're not actually helping anybody in the long run.

Because copying is easier than comprehending, people will always try to take the shortcut. However, if you keep letting yourself be the easy way out, people are going to keep using you for it.

As awkward as it may seem, you have to draw a clear boundary that you're not just going to hand over the answers. You can tell them you're worried about getting in trouble, say you don't have your paper on you, or whatever feels most comfortable. At the same time, you can still offer to actually explain the work so they understand it, and remind them that tutoring is always an option. Real friends will respect your boundaries, and the ones who actually want to learn will appreciate the help.

Can you help me with ways to study and divide my work? I always go home with hours of homework. (8)

You are definitely not alone in this! SOA can feel overwhelming, especially when you go home with hours of homework. Start with whatever is due soonest, but try to work ahead when you can. Spending a little bit of time on a big project on a low stress day, even if it's only 20 minutes, will save your future self a ton of stress! And if you have a study hall, USE IT. It's so much easier to lock in at school than at home. When it comes to studying, it takes some trial and error to find what works for you. I'm a visual learner, so making charts and drawing things out helps me a lot. You could also try watching videos or teaching the material to a parent, sibling, or even a pet! Most importantly, don't be afraid to ask for help. NHS offers free tutoring with high school students who can help you out. Take things one assignment at a time, you've got this!

Lean On Me: Songs of the 70s
Thursday, January 28th 6-8pm
Rose Maree Myers Theater



SOA Athletes Close Out the Season

by Fletcher Seminaroti, Kai Boone, and Micah Howell

The Raptors finished the season 4-7 after falling to number one seed Phillip Simmons in the first round of the playoffs 21-47. Throughout the season SOA athletes shone with senior **Bryce Lee** leading the team in receiving yards with 34.5 yards per game, and senior **Caleb Parrish** leading in punt return yards averaging 6.67. Although the Raptors fell short this season, SOA athletes dominated the field for the Raptors, setting team records and building the program along the way.

Cheer has wrapped up their sideline cheer schedule along with football. Now attention has shifted to basketball and competition cheerleading, where the Raptors will take a whole new turn to cheering. When asked on her thoughts of sideline season Senior **Alexa Waters** commented, "It went by so fast and I'm so glad I had a great last season!"



Although the sideline cheer season has ended, the Raptors look forward to basketball and competition cheering.

On October 22nd, Junior **Isaiah Liu** competed in the SCHSL Region 5-AAA Championship with North Charleston High School, finishing seventh in the region with an impressive time of 17:50:00, with first place finishing less than a minute ahead. He is looking forward to the track season, aiming to "make state again in the 4x800 and hopefully reach the podium." Sophomores **Alexander Sanchez** (18:38) and **Aldrin Moriarty** (16:21) have also successfully made the state meet, along with fellow sophomore **Andrew Amani** (16:06), who has really improved on his "dedication and work ethic to practices."

Juniors **Lucy Harper** (22:02.42) and **Zoey Gebhart** (26:55.05) have been running strong with the Women Raptors XC with Zoe improving the most with "just showing up to practice and running when I really don't want to." Sophomores **Lillian Pastre** 23:09.33 and **Saylour LoVallo** (31:09.33) have enjoyed their seasons as well, with Lillian most excited about the Starlight Invitational, because "the course is one of the fastest" and the night aspects of wearing "glow paint and light-up scrunchies."



Bryce Lee led the team through an impressive season.

Junior **Sam Bundy** has had his best season this year for the Men's Volleyball team, cementing his status as a regular starter and helping the team in his favoirte moment of the season, winning the first region championship in Academic Magnet history "in a 5-set thriller vs. Bridges Prep. It was a super close game, and we ended up winning by 3 points in the final set."

Following up on their undefeated Region V-AA championship, Academic Magnet's women's tennis team completed an extraordinary postseason run to capture their second consecutive SCHSL Class 2A State Championship, finishing the season with a 19-2 overall record. Entering the playoffs as the Lower State's No. 1 seed, the Raptors dominated their late-October home matches, losing just one individual game across three rounds, before defeating Waccamaw 5-1 on November 3 to claim their third consecutive Lower State title. On November 7, Academic Magnet capped off the three-peat with a 5-2 victory over Upper State champion St. Joseph's Catholic. Congratulations to our SOA student athlete **Bella Billew** for the team's success!

Raptors wrapped up this season with many goals and successes achieved. Join *Applause* in congratulating these incredible athletes as they finish their seasons!

SOA Students Tackle Rugby

by Fletcher Seminaroti

SOA athletes are not restricted to only SCHSL sports. Two SOA students, **Ella Smyth**, a 12th-grade Fashion major, and **Claire Craig** (CC), a 10th-grade Creative Writing major, both compete for club rugby teams. Both students are competing in their first seasons, practicing twice a week for two hours at a time. Smyth plays for the Wando Wahines after being introduced to the sport by her older sister's boyfriend. Smyth plays hooker, a position similar to a center in football. Heavy physical contact, accompanied by initiating offensive plays, forces a leadership role upon Ella.

CC, on the other hand, plays for rival school Oceanside. While this is her first season, her family ties run deep, with her dad playing for 29 years and coaching for 10. She plays as a winger (undecided left or right). The role of the winger is to carry out most finishing tries, cut in-field to offer support, apply pressure to defense when performing box kicks (when the offending team kicks the ball across the field to create space away from their tryline), and make precise tackles on the outer edges. With this high responsibility on the field, CC has her hands full. After trying other club sports in the past, rugby has been the one that stuck, offering a connection locally and in her family.

We will follow up with these amazing athletes as their season develops, while we eagerly await a game schedule.

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Theatre Majors Present Senior Thesis

by Juliet Ladd, Caleb Brown, Guest Photographer Evelyn Gwynn

"Tu Contra Te," **Haven**; "A View From Here," **Henry**; "Curb Appeal," **Callum**; "The Last Dance," **Melissa**; "Under the Stars," **Lola**; "The Life & Death of a Gunslinger," **Oppy**; "A Rise to Fame," **Rylie**; "A God of No Name," **Kam'Ryn**; "Two Stops Away," **Maddison**; "Three Little Birds," **Marley**; "The Last Vote," **Reeves**; "Port de Bra," **Brody**; "Bad Case of the Hiccups"; **Mena**; "Swipe Right," **Grayson**; "Till Death Do Us Part," **Alicia**; "The Case of the Missing 'A,'" **Kimberly**; "Problomb," **Maggie**; "Behind Closed Doors," **Luna**.






















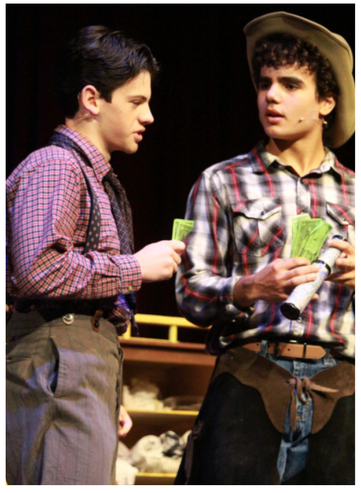



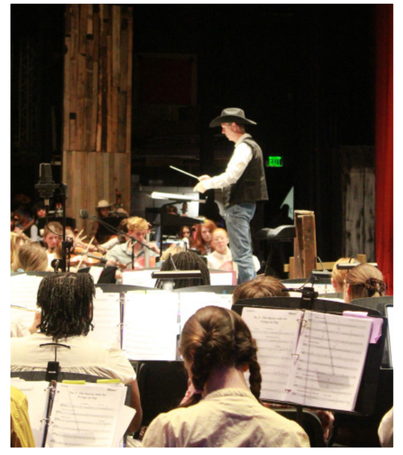


SOA Presents *Oklahoma!*

Photos by *Applause* Staff








SOA Alumni at Manhattan School of Music: Meredith Layne Hungerford

by Marley Mendes

Housing three recent SOA alumni, Manhattan School of Music is a conservatory-style school known for its intensive musical training and vast opportunities for aspiring performers. Applause *staff writer Marley Mendes touched base with Meredith Layne, to hear about her journey from SOA to Manhattan School of Music.*

"From the beginning, I knew that Manhattan School of Music (MSM) was my first choice," said Meredith Layne Hungerford, 2023 graduate and former vocal major who now studies musical theatre in one of the most connected cities on earth.



Meredith Layne as Lucy in *The Threepenny Opera*.

Getting to MSM meant navigating one of the more competitive college application processes; musical theatre applicants often apply to twenty or even thirty programs, in hopes of securing a handful of auditions and acceptances. Meredith Layne decided to be more selective, applying to eight schools, primarily in New York. She advanced past the initial screening process at seven, and received acceptances from six.

Interestingly, though musical theatre wasn't always her plan, Meredith Layne had previously considered becoming an opera singer or even pursuing medicine and becoming a surgeon. It wasn't until her junior year at SOA, when she was cast as Éponine in *Les Misérables*, that her plan shifted. "I discovered that musical theatre is about more than singing beautifully; songs are an extension of the scene, and telling the story through song matters most."

MSM's approach to training seems to prioritize the exact kind of set-up Meredith Layne needed to succeed. The school operates quite differently from a traditional university, with a campus consisting of just two interconnected buildings. Students have access to practice rooms throughout the day, and musical theatre majors are required to participate in mainstage productions at either Neidorff-Karpati Hall or nearby Riverside Theatre. The program runs quite intensely, with the schedule running from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. on some days; while rigorous, Meredith Layne adapted quite well to the fast-paced nature. "I feel like the intensity of the program allows for so much growth for everyone in my class."

Her time at SOA has also proved useful in ways that extend beyond the classroom. She credits SOA for some of her foundational learning. "The emphasis on sight-reading, musical terminology, and learning music quickly gave me a strong advantage, especially in professional theatre."

Since arriving in New York, Meredith Layne has already added some notable productions and performances to her resume. Her first professional production was NXTGen's Off-Broadway production of *Sunday in the Park with George*, which earned her two BroadwayWorld Award nominations. Giving thanks to both SOA and MSM's preparation, she describes the experience as, "much less intimidating than [she] expected."

She's since performed at venues including the Rainbow Room at Radio City and Green Room 42. In October 2026, she sang at the Kaufman Center alongside Broadway performers Christian Borle (*Something Rotten!*), Carolee Carmello (*Parade*), and Liz Callaway (*Miss Saigon*) in a tribute concert honoring composer Bill Finn. She was also selected for CHORUS-VERSE, an initiative by Prospect Musicals and MSM's new dean, Or Matias. Through a 32-bar audition, Meredith Layne earned a place in the program, where students worked with professional composers and writers to learn music from nine short musicals in just ten rehearsals.

Currently, she's preparing for her role as Margaret Johnson in MSM's spring musical *The Light in the Piazza*. Margaret, a fiercely protective Southern mother, is a character Meredith Layne is particularly excited to explore. When discussing her approach to the role, she points to her own mother as her biggest inspiration, "She is the kind of woman that goes to bat for me and my siblings, who will always make the impossible possible, and who loves us fiercely." In this production, she'll be sharing the stage with another familiar face: former SOA classmate Zion Platt, who studies at MSM as well.

For SOA students interested in pursuing musical theatre, Meredith Layne recommends starting the college preparation process during junior year. She emphasizes researching programs early, working with vocal coaches to select audition material, and getting self-tapes and dance reels prepared well in advance. She also encourages students to apply to a variety of programs and not take rejections personally, "Everyone lands where they are supposed to land." Above all, she reminds prospective performers not to let musical theatre take away from the other interests and experiences that make them who they are.

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Ty McGinnis, we are so proud!

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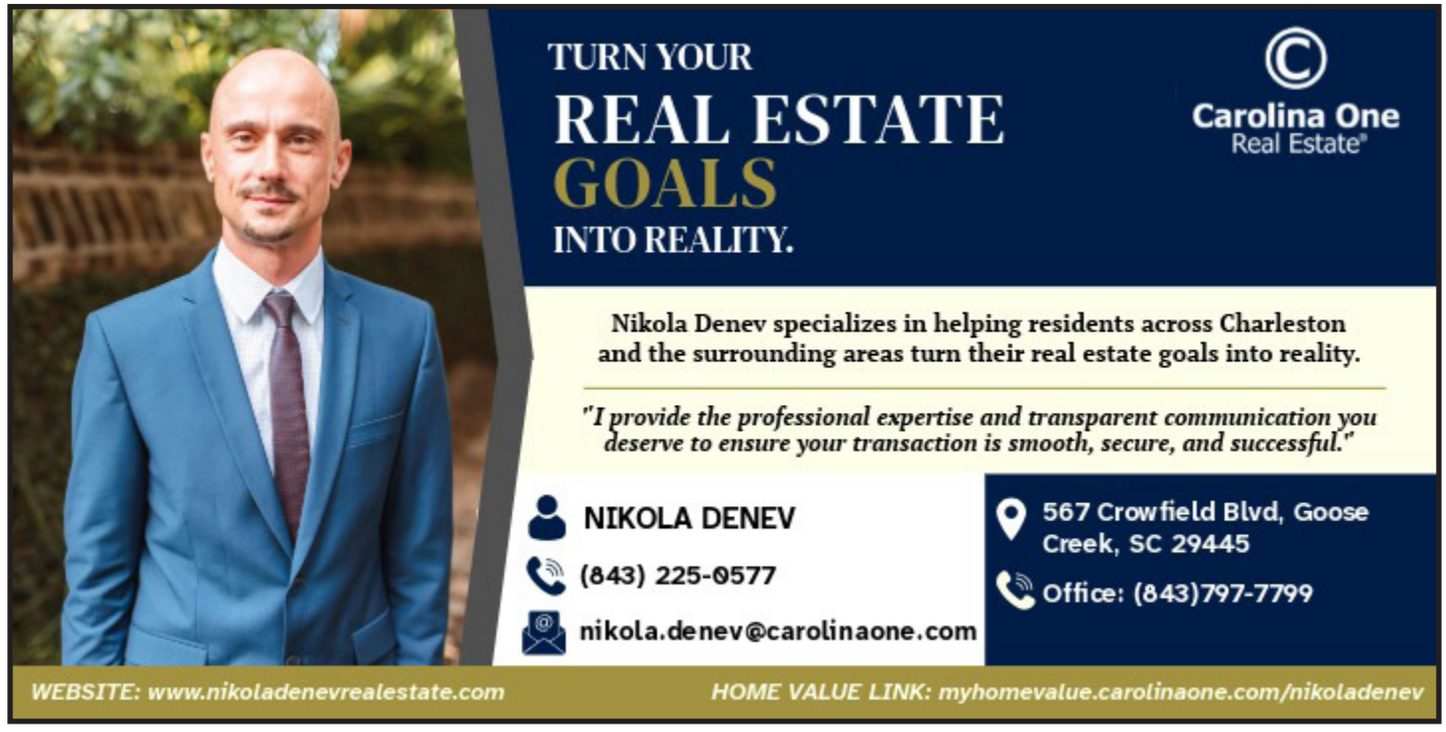

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SOA Slang

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.*

Rocket (n): In casual, particularly sports and UK/Australian/online slang, an "absolute rocket" refers to a very attractive person.
EX. "She's an absolute rocket."
Chirp (v): Talking too much, being overly chatty, or 'running your mouth'.
EX. "Yo this bird is absolutely chirping right now."
Flam (adj): Something that is boring, uninteresting, or lame, most commonly referred to in the context of a party, social gathering, or get together.
EX. "I ain't sliding to that func it's gonna be flam as heck."
Library (n): Just like a public or personal library is packed full of books, having "a library" in your phone means you have an overflowing roster, directory, or stack of options to "check out."
EX. "I got 99+ on my snap quickadd bro I gotta go through my library."
Buzzword (n): A specific word meant to trigger a reaction people use to sound smart, fit in, or show they are up-to-date with current trends. Often used in a string, and out of context.
EX. "Peter Thiel lowkey gaslighting me with gatekeeping Palantir, he needs to go touch grass and stop trying to farm main character energy from Clav before Flock cameras get him."
Repmaxx (adj): The concept of a certain group rebuilding their reputation, often after losing it from past actions or infractions.
EX. "Boys, we might have to fade that, we have to repmaxx after last time."
Buggin' (v): Acting crazy, overreacting, or making no sense. Commonly used as "you're buggin'" or someone is "buggin' out", meaning that they are making a big deal out of nothing.
EX. "Nah bro I don't think it's that deep, you're lowkey buggin'."
Leckfast (n): A meal consisting of a combination of lunch and breakfast. An alternative to 'brunch'.
EX. "Yo Cannon, throw on a nice leckfast outfit."

SOA Band Highlight: Poster Grrrl

by Ty McGinnis

This month, **MJ Johnson** *and bandmates answered some questions about their band Poster Grrrl. This band plays locally around the Charleston area, performing some of the best grunge and punk rock sounds around. I've personally seen them play, and I can truthfully say they make a great sound. The band members are sophomores* **Lila Estes**, MJ Johnson, *and* **Fia Coleman**.

Ty McGinnis: What kind of music do you play?
MJ Johnson: I don't know, like, punk rock, noise, grunge. We are really influenced by that 90s era of female-dominated rock. We look up to figures like Courtney Love, Kathleen Hanna, and Kat Bjelland. It's about the idea of girls taking up traditionally male-dominated scenes and tearing down expectations. Boy bands are kind of cliche.
TM: What was your favorite gig and why?
MJ: I think my favorite gig was when we played in Columbia over the summer. We sounded really great. We met so many cool people from that scene and connected with other bands. The crowd was amazing, someone busted a hole in the wall during our set! I also loved Tua Lingua, because Lyla Carpenter from Lefty Lucy played with us and we even duetted a song together.



Poster Grrrl playing at a gig in Columbia.

TM: In your opinion, What defines a good gig?
MJ: If the audience and us are on a wavelength together. It's all about the exchange of energy I think.
TM: If you had the choice to play at any venue, where would it be?
MJ: I would want to play the original 1970s CBGB in New York City, the energy and time would've been insane.
TM: What is your dream set up? (guitar, amp)
MJ: I don't know anything about gear but just a really loud amp and a dirty pedal. I also really want a red fender mustang, that would be cool.
TM: What would you say is your best original/song?
FC: My favorite song we have is "Kitty" because it's very upbeat and fun, and it's one of our first songs we wrote so it holds a special place in my heart.
TM: If you had to recommend one piece of advice about music in general, what would it be?
LE: I would say just have fun, even if you don't think other people are going to like it or whatever. Like don't worry too much about what



everyone thinks.
MJ: Also, listen to a lot of music, study why you love certain songs, and don't take yourself too seriously. GIRLS START BANDS!!!!!! NOW!!!!!

Poetry Out Loud Is Back!

by Keller Fauerbach

SOA has a long and successful history at Poetry Out Loud. Since we started competing in 2010, we've produced five state champions, one of whom, Jessie Lietzel, went on to become a national finalist. Beyond the opportunity for up to $20,000 of prize money, the competition encourages kids to "internalize a poem, bring it to life," according to Dr. Cusatis. It's particularly valuable because it encourages students to explore poets on their own, which leads to them being exposed to artists of a variety of voices and backgrounds.



Jessie Leitzel after winning the state competition in March 2024

Last year, the Anthology which students select their poems from was reduced in size by over two-thirds. The SOA English department felt that this made it "not representative of the English-language poetry tradition," and for that reason chose not to officially compete.

This year, in large part because of the support of a new sponsor, the Mid Atlantic Arts, the Anthology was restored and SOA will compete again. Anyone who would like to participate but isn't in an English class should contact Dr. Cusatis. The schoolwide competition is December 15 at 4 PM in the Media Center, and even students who aren't competing are encouraged to come and watch, both to see great performances and to support their peers.

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Photos by Guest Photographer Evelyn Gwin





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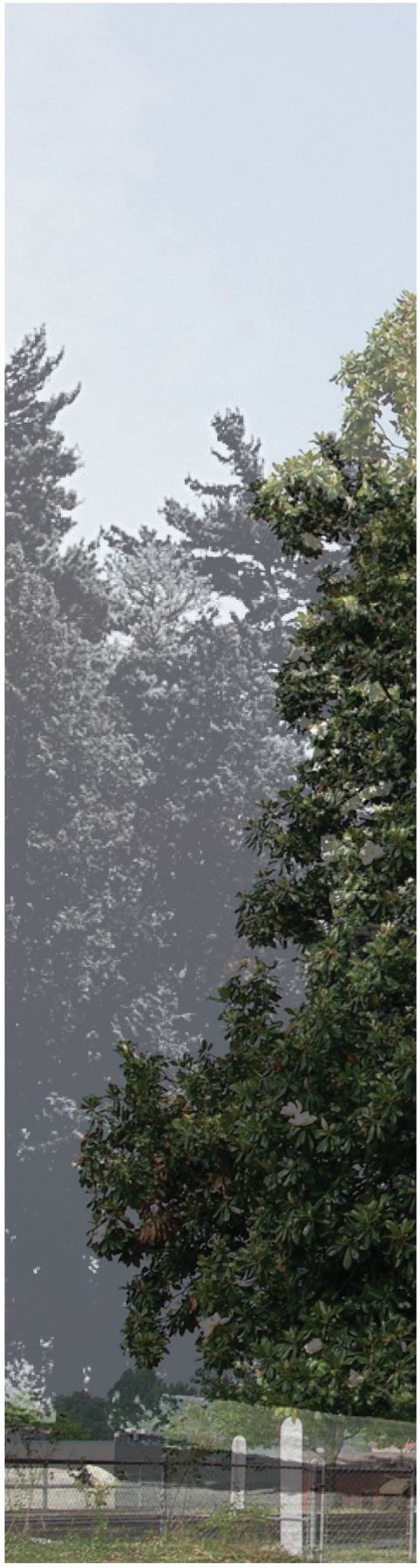

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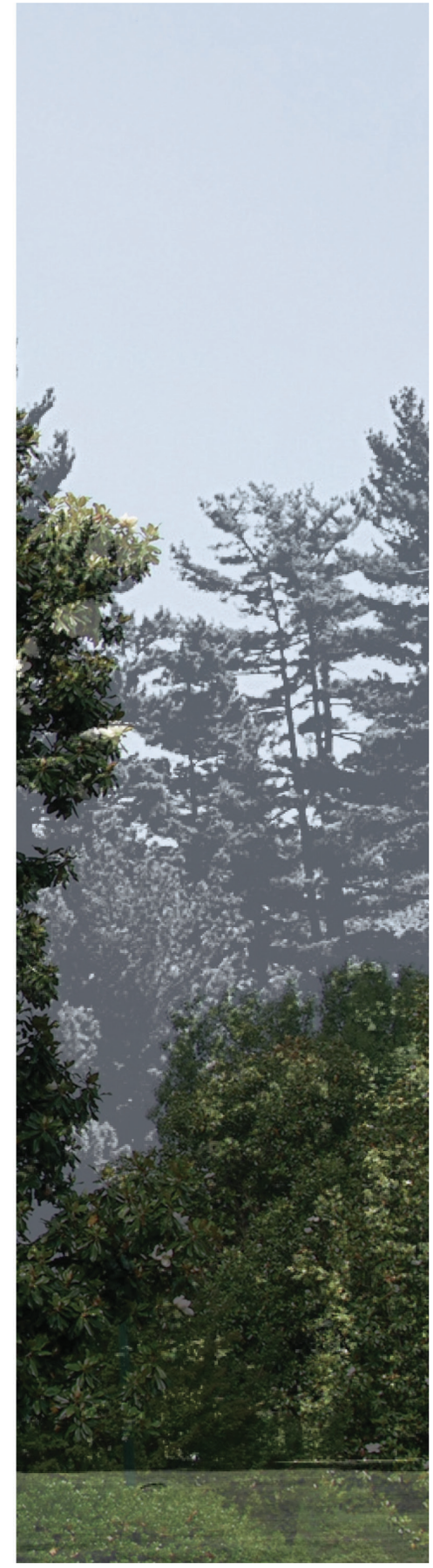




Wade Miller, 10th



Georgia Nail, 9th



Audrey Cen, 11th



Olivia Carnecki, 12th

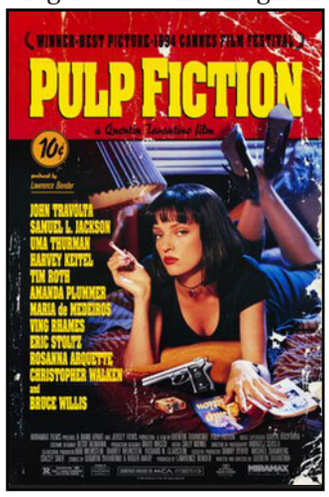


Natalie Erickson, 9th

Classic Movie Review: *Pulp Fiction (1994)*

by Fia Coleman

Pulp Fiction is one of the greatest films of all time, while also being highly controversial –and according to the large booing crowd at the 1994 Cannes film festival, "a disgrace"– one of the reasons for its popularity to this day. Directed by one of the most influential directors of all time, Quentin Tarantino, it is regarded as his magnum opus. The film captures an original, dramatized American crime storyline, following four loosely connected tales, which take place in the cinematic haze of an early 90s Los Angeles. But, for me, what makes the film so precious, is that it unapologetically breaks every rule. Its bold style, sharp and witty dialogue, and deeply complex characters make the watch memorable.



Pulp Fiction

While the film didn't necessarily invent anything objectively "new," what was revolutionary was the way it fuses avant garde and indie filming techniques with a mainstream, global audience, completely changing the trajectory of the indie film industry and introducing that complex world to a fresh audience.

One of the most stand-out elements of the film is the nonlinear timeline, shifting perspectives, and jumping between multiple different stories that somehow all tie together. The film opens with a dictionary definition of the word pulp, which sets the perspective for the movie, paying homage to cheap-thrill American crime fiction. The first scene takes place in a Los Angeles diner, while a couple, who have nicknamed each other "Pumpkin" and "Honeybunny," casually discuss the dangers of robbing an array of establishments. The scene quickly escalates into the couple getting the idea to rob the diner, alerting the customers and taking out their weapons to exercise their own sick psychological thrill. At this early point in the storyline, the viewer is immediately anticipating the obvious robbery scene, before being completely derailed and abruptly launched into a relaxed scene of two hitmen Vincent Vega (John Travolta) and Jules Winnfield (Samuel L. Jackson) having a comedic discussion about fast food in Amsterdam while cruising Sunset Boulevard. This pattern is repeated throughout the movie, jumping between different timelines and storylines, constantly surprising the viewer. Following the wild misadventures of an array of characters–other notable ones being Mia Wallace (Uma Therman) and Butch Coolidge (Bruce Willis), the overlapping plotlines center around a mysterious briefcase and main mob boss Marcellus Wallace.

Pulp Fiction should definitely be a film that everyone should watch at least once. With its revolutionary blending of genres, subverted Hollywood tropes, and outstanding screen writing, Pulp Fiction is a force to be reckoned with in the film universe.

Contemporary Movie Review: *Send Help (2026)*

by Marley Mendes

Released in 2026, *Send Help* directed by Sam Raimi is a survival thriller adopting the classic, "deserted on an island" trope. The film focuses on Linda Liddle (Rachel McAdams), an overworked yet underappreciated office employee who anticipated a promised promotion, only to be let down by her late boss's entitled nepo son, Bradley Preston (Dylan O'Brien). After a private-jet crash that lands the two of them on a lifeless island off the gulf of Thailand, that power dynamic completely flips on itself.



Send Help

To me, it was satisfying to watch this film, as I naturally began rooting for Linda's transformation from the awkward, ugly-duckling character type to a ruthless island beast. She slowly becomes unhinged, torturing Bradley with the reality of his newfound incompetence and lack of power in this setting.

My critique of this film lies in the early portrayal of Linda Liddle. The opening views her as rather vulgar and grotesque, relying on extreme caricature, which does help make the character arc clearer, however, in my opinion, it forces her character into a box that's perceived negatively despite her intellect. I feel a better portrayal would rely less on characteristics like physical unkemptness and social awkwardness, as this subjects the character to unfair audience judgement and reinforces negative stereotypes.

Overall, I think this film succeeded because it used a cliché and classic format but laced each scene with unexpected twists and turns. The star-studded cast, the genius production design, and the very interesting ending leads me to recommend this film to anyone looking for an entertaining watch.

Classic Album Review: *The Fame (2008)*

by Caleb Brown

In 2008, the pop landscape was dominated by easily accessible music. R&B- and hip-hop-influenced albums topped the charts, until a fresh new face arrived with her rhinestoned sunglasses. Lady Gaga's Debut album, *The Fame,* was a dancey, campy, yet kind of dark take on pop music, and its impact can still be seen today.

Lady Gaga talks about the concept of fame from a new perspective, from the viewpoint of someone who is unbelievably hungry for success. Someone desperate for all parts of it: the beautiful, the dirty, and the rich. It romanticizes the good and the bad and takes us into a world full of late nights, limousines, and nightclubs

The album opens with a generational 4 track run with "Just Dance", "Lovegame", "Paparazzi", and "Poker Face", and each of these songs is a global smash hit for a reason. They're just different enough to pique your interest, and yet catchy enough to keep you coming back for more. Gaga's theatre roots also come through in these songs, especially the first two; she uses this superficial, ditzy, teasing tone that contrasts really interestingly with the dark subject matter of some of these songs. Some of my other favorites include the campy, old Hollywood vibe of "Beautiful, Dirty, Rich", the pure Lady Gaga energy in "Starstruck" and the rags-to-riches movie that is *The Fame,*

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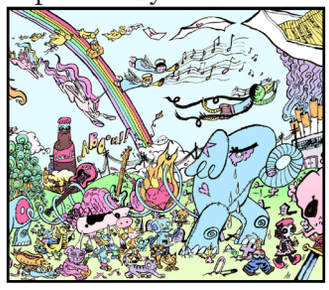
which might be the most relatable song for anyone with big dreams.

The Fame has had such a huge impact on pop culture. Today we can see its influence in the new generation of pop music, from Chappell Roan's The Rise and Fall of a Midwest Princess to Adéla's PRIMA, so many new artists have reheated The Fame's nachos and added their own twist. The fact that Lady Gaga debuted, with an album this cohesive, this unique, and this iconic, cements her and The Fame as one of the greatest of all time.

Contemporary Album Review: *Cutting Up The Elephant (2026)*

by MJ Johnson

I first stumbled across *Cutting Up The Elephant* (abbreviated C.U.T.E.) from a random TikTok video with 200 likes featuring the band playing a show for Cherub Dream Records in San Francisco. Although the clip was only fifteen seconds long, I was immediately captivated by the band's live chemistry and jangly tweemo chords. I immediately searched for their music on every platform I could think of, only to find an Instagram page with a small following. I thought to myself, *this is going to be big*.



Cutting Up The Elephant

Flash forward to November 2026, the 4 piece emo/screamo band from Oakland, California has since released an impeccable debut album, disbanded, and amassed a listening of over 16,000 monthly listeners on Spotify. It was one of those moments where I felt psychic.

After months of anticipation I instantly purchased a *cutting up the elephant* CD online and eagerly popped it into my CD player as soon as the package arrived at my door. The first track "Are you coming back?" opens with warm and jangly guitar as the harmonica plays in unison. "I hate these walls / these photos of you" sung in a sweet but melancholy tune. The song ends by building up and fading out into the next track "Guitar Center," which features dual vocals that materialized something light in my chest as I listened to the fluttery arrangement.

A personal favorite on the album was the sixth track "My Body, The Hand Grenade" which I gravitated to for its heavy guitar, screamo vocals, and the fact that its title is an homage to Hole's 1997 compilation album of the same name. The song is powerful, it made me want to dance around in my room while screaming into a hairbrush as my makeshift microphone. The song is followed by my second favorite on the album, "I have a smash tournament tomorrow!!!" which is a perfect blend of melody and fry vocals. In the middle of the song the music slows and pauses while the vocalist recites spoken word while a tense crescendo builds to an explosion of noise and intensity.

Other stand outs are on tracks like "Letters and Packages" with soft spoken word and emotionally resonant narratives that lead up to peaks of emotion then dip back down to quiet vulnerabilities. Or tracks like "Like two kites flying, that's how we'll be" which is spoken word taken entirely from the lead singer's journal while the music follows the rhythm of the words.

Cutting Up The Elephant's music is impossible to dislike. There is something incredibly intimate about the way they weave together journal entries, spoken word, melodic guitar riffs, and explosive screamo vocals into seamless transitions. There is a beautiful contrast between the softness and aggression throughout the album, and somehow, neither ever feels out of place.

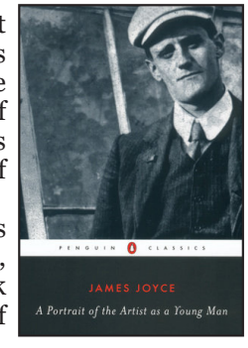
Although the band has disbanded, their debut album is sure to make a longstanding impact on the scene and is beloved by many. Sometimes, the best music finds you when you least expect it, and Cutting Up The Elephant is a perfect example of that.

Classic Book Review: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916)

by Keller Fauerbach

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man was James Joyce's first novel, which, over time, became recognized as one of the greatest works of the 20th century. It is considered the prototypical Künstlerroman—a genre that follows an individual's artistic development, exploring how influences and impressions in childhood become art in adulthood. Initially, praise for "Portrait" wasn't nearly as widespread as one might expect.

Many contemporary authors vehemently supported Joyce's projects—Ezra Pound was his chief champion and facilitated the initial publication of "Portrait" as a serial in The Egoist—but critics and publishers harshly criticized Joyce's voice, which was even more experimental than it had been in his earlier short stories. In an effort to close the distance between the reader and his subject, Stephen Dedalus, Joyce wrote "Portrait" almost entirely in free indirect discourse. While some readers felt alienated without the welcoming narrator typical of 19th-century literature, Joyce's experiment stood the test of time.



A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man

While reading, I was absorbed by Stephen's deep, everchanging mind. The book follows him through a series of epiphanies, dotting his first twenty-odd years that lead him from being a strange, sickly child in Ireland to finally asserting himself as an artist, when he resolves to leave his homeland for Paris.

"Portrait" is full of great characters, and is steeped in Stephen's murky musings. Some readers might not appreciate the lengthier, less narrative sections, like the ten-page sermon on hellfire. But, I feel that it is largely these scenes that make the book work; they are not only interesting in their own right, but they also make the reader feel Stephen's hang-ups and conclusions viscerally.

Like any great book, it doesn't seek to shift paradigms or to change the literary world. Instead, Joyce wanted to bring readers into Stephen's mind—which is more or less his own—and every choice followed from that. That he was so ruthless, willing to ignore tradition or any confounding motivation, was what made the novel seem radical, and its endurance as a classic is proof that his means were justified. For me, it was both enlightening and fun, and I imagine anyone will have the same experience, so long as they are prepared to give it the time and attention it deserves.

Restaurant Review: Pattaya Thai

by MJ Johnson and Fia Coleman

If you venture out to Mount Pleasant, it's necessary to take a pit stop at Pattaya Thai, an authentic family-owned, five star Thai restaurant nestled in The Plaza At East Cooper since 2009. It's one of our favorite spots, and each time we come back, it keeps getting better. The quality is consistent, the atmosphere is cozy, and the overall experience is truly one of a kind.

The interior of the restaurant is cozy and welcoming. The space is carpeted to comfort all of the guests, matched with cozy booths nestled into the walls. Paired with ambient instrumental music featuring the same three pop songs on loop and a harp version of "What Is A Youth?" from the 1968 Romeo and Juliet, it feels like a place where you can just forget about your worries and just enjoy a delicious meal, stress-free of course.

Walking in for the first time, we had trekked on foot all the way there in the late August heat. We were sweaty, overheated and incredibly hungry, but settling down in those plush booths, feeling the soft carpet underneath us, and listening to the calming instrumentals playing over the speakers, we were finally comfortable. This is exactly what we had needed. And as newly seasoned restaurant reviewers, and now experienced diners at Pattaya, we're here to say that the food at Pattaya Thai is hands down the best Thai food in Charleston. We don't make the rules.



Pattaya Thai

Ranging from noodle soup to pineapple

fried rice and plum sauce, the menu is extensive, all while having the same grade-A quality throughout each dish. The noodle soups are bursting with different spices, and the fried rice is deliciously seasoned and refreshing. The hefty portions of each dish have you lost in the flavor, almost like you're in a dream while eating. When eating there with my family or friends, there is barely any conversation happening at the table, because we are all zoned into our delicious dishes.

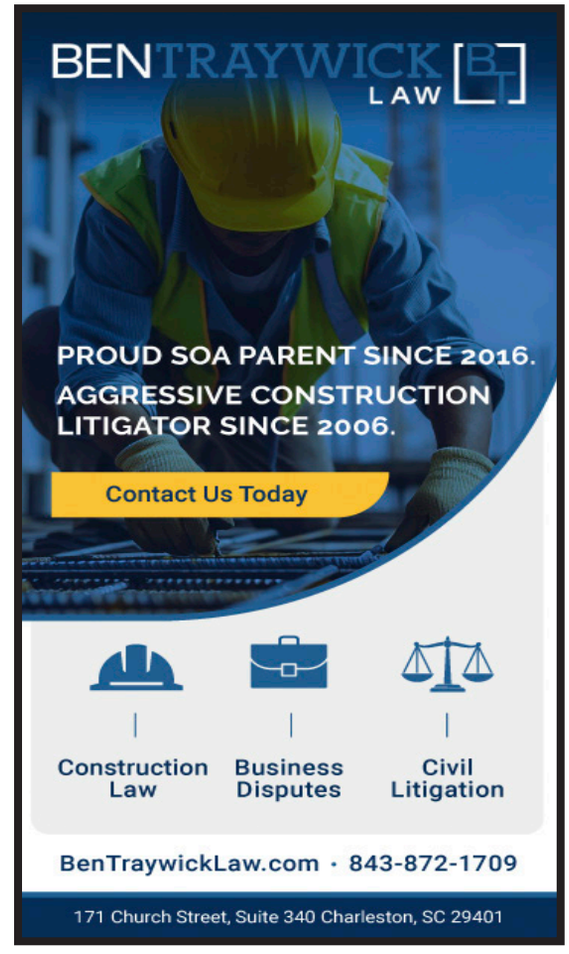
As for beverages, we both chose to sip on freshly made strawberry milk tea with tapioca pearls! This place has everything, the bubble tea was a nice contrast to our delicious meals.

The service is incredibly attentive as well. They are very kind and welcoming, offering plenty of refills and constantly checking in to make sure customers are having a good experience (and of course, they always are). It's also reasonably priced and affordable!

Overall, Pattaya Thai deserves all the love it can get. It's the perfect little Thai spot, and also a family owned small business!

Poetry is so powerful, and this is why arts competitions specifically are so important—competing in them teaches us that a longing to share is always larger than a need to win." -Jessie Leitzel, SOA's 2024 Poetry Out Loud National Finalist. (See pg. 22)







November Horoscopes

by Fia Coleman and MJ Johnson

Capricorn (December 22 - January 19)

Protect your wallet and your bank account this November. Confused about that ominous recurring $12.99 charge that's been dwindling your savings since 2025? You have really got to get on top of that and trust us you don't need another subscription to that lifestyle app you will only open once.

Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)

Sure, you're in motion but your compulsion to start celebrating Christmas extra-early this year isn't what you should center your manic energy on. Just because Santa Claus appears at the end of the Macy's Day Parade, that doesn't mean it's appropriate to bombard us with Christmas songs.

Pisces (February 19 - March 20)

Maybe you've been feeling tension with your friends but it's okay! As Mercury ends its retrograde, all miscommunications will be resolved. Go host a friendsgiving. After all, friendship is the greatest gift of life!

Aries (March 29 – April 19)

We admire your passion and drive but you don't have to wake up at three in the morning to score those Black Friday deals. Maybe minimalism could be a nice change, do you really need that exclusive Urban Outfitters x Stanley Flowstate Quencher. Control yourself Aries!!!

Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

Coming off Venus retrograde this mid-November, it's time for you to buck up and trust your instincts. Don't fall into the wrong crowd, stay loyal to your true friends even if they test your patience sometimes. Stand your ground, Taurus! Be assertive when declining Depop offers, and don't tolerate mistreatment from your boss. Remember, you're in charge. You got this!

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

November for Gemini focuses on editing your mindset. Think about how you could modify your daily routine for productiveness (no shame in binging a Netflix series and doordashing dinner on a Tuesday, though). Perhaps start a daily workout routine, or maybe an aesthetic sunset walk for rejuvenation. Anything to reset and clear your head, Gemini.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

Cancer, don't take this too far, but I have to admit November is the perfect time for emotional recalibration (and... maybe some romantic reflection), BUT! I must warn you, don't go off the deep end with your rekindled romantic endeavors. Remember to maintain cautious communication (you're a master at articulating your words), and be careful who you leave on delivered.

Leo (July 23 - August 22)

It's time to discover a new spark in your inner self. As Madonna says, "express yourself, don't repress yourself." Mid-November supercharges your self expression and drive. Shed outdated expectations, who cares what other people think? Don't be afraid to experiment with your style, explore some new music, or pick up an unusual hobby. Look deep inside yourself for what you really want, Leo!

Virgo (August 23 - September 22)

Take a breath, Virgo. Everyone can see you never stop, but (and I know this may be shocking), it's okay to skip out on a single sports practice. You don't need to study for a test that's a month away (sometimes cramming is beneficial!). Take some time to yourself and let loose.

Libra (September 23 - October 22)

As the Sun and Mercury highlight your money sector, November is the perfect time to manage your looming debts. Make sure to spend your money wisely! It doesn't grow on trees (arguably)! Pay back your friends for that overpriced black cat frappuccino, put some money in your savings account, and plan out your spending carefully this November.

Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)

With the new moon aligning with Scorpio early November, this might be the best time for you to reflect. Buy a rustic journal, untangle your thoughts in it, cozy up with a fuzzy blanket, and don't be afraid to mix things up.

Sagittarius (November 22 - December 21)

This fall break is the best time for travel. Book a flight to Paris, or maybe Tokyo...or maybe some more local options. Myrtle Beach? Savannah? A small road trip with your friends might be fun too. Anyways, just get adventurous and make the most out of fall break!

November Spotify Playlist

By Ty McGinnis

Need a soundtrack for your fall break? Check out our November Spotify playlist!



Thanksgiving Trivia

by Tallon Tirozzi and Ella Bonazzi

1. What year was the first Thanksgiving feast celebrated?
2. Which state produces the most cranberries?
3. How long did the first Thanksgiving last?
4. Which Peanuts character wears the chef's hat in Charlie Brown Thanksgiving?
5. In 1995, what popular Thanksgiving vegetable was the first to be grown in space?
6. What is the Monday after Thanksgiving unofficially called?
7. What is the name of the horn-shaped basket that's filled with fruits and vegetables and also commonly associated with Thanksgiving?
8. In what city and state did the pilgrims settle?
9. How fast can turkeys run?
10. What year did the Black Friday shopping tradition begin?

Keller Tumminia, 12th grade Vocal



3/10

1. 1621
2. Maryland
3. 4 days
4. Snoopy
5. Squash
6. Black Monday
7. Cornucopia
8. Boston MA
9. 12 mph
10. 1987

Sam Smyth, 11th grade Vocal



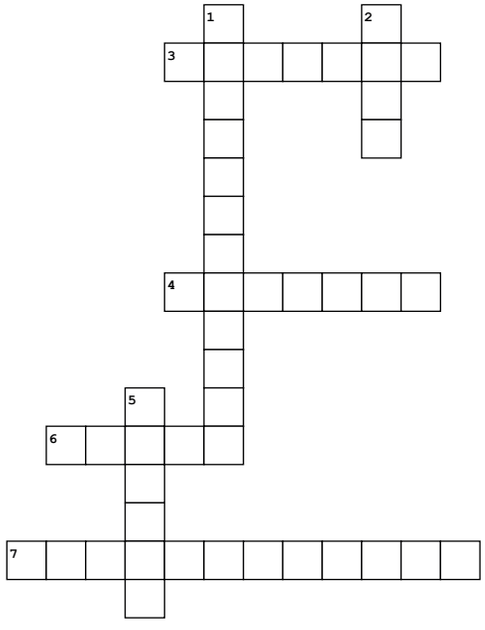
7/10

1. 1621
2. Wisconsin
3. 3 days
4. Snoopy
5. Potato
6. Cyber Monday
7. Cornucopia
8. Massachusetts
9. 20-25 mph
10. 1920s

1. 1621, 2. Wisconsin, 3. 3 days, 4. Snoopy, 5. Potato, 6. Cyber Monday, 7. Cornucopia, 8. Plymouth, Massachusetts, 9. 25 mph, 10. 1924

November Crossword

by Keller Fauerbach



Across:

1. What a student might take, per their teacher's request
5. A video game level, perhaps
6. A wooden, folding tripod
7. A powerful tool for deep sea fishing
8. Kind of toy popular with suits

Down:

1. Gaze intently
2. "_____ in," doesn't rush
3. One in a squad you might call for IT help
4. A losing flaw, in poker, perhaps
5. A farmer's hopeful spread

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

November Word Search

by Keller Fauerbach

Family
Cranberries
Apple
Pumpkin
Parade
Gourd
Gravy
Stuffing
Pecan
Cider
Potatoes
Baster

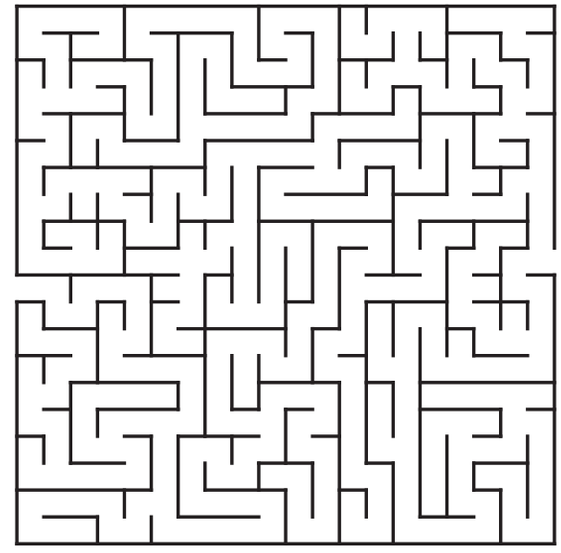
SOA Sudoku

by Keller Fauerbach

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

Help Ms. Richardson Paint Her Mural!







What are you spending all of your money on for Black Friday?

by Fia Coleman and MJ Johnson



"Noah Kahan concert tickets."

Charlie Chewning, 6th grade Theatre



"Dino nuggets."

Dax Lynch, 7th grade Band



"Probably like, dogs."

Aubrey Mcanner, 8th grade Creative Writing



"Christmas presents."

Ms. Derrickson, Assistant Principal



"Stuff for my kids."

Ms. Morelli, Social Studies Teacher



"The 30% off Free People sale."

Ms. Black, Theatre Teacher



'K-pop albums."

Sunny Barrett, 9th grade Fashion



"Robux."

Charlotte Kandik, 10th grade Band



"Books."

Lucille Harper, 11th grade Creative Writing



"All of the elements on the periodic table."

Ms. Godwin's 12th grade AP Chemistry class