

Making up for lack of self-worth
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Freshmen tackle varsity
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OPINION

Growing up without cultural influence



By Julia Owens

"Are you related to Kim Jong Un?" "Is BTS your favorite artist?" Another personal favorite is, "Are you from North or South Korea?" These are questions that I have been asked while at San Marin. In elementary school, kids would press their fingers to the sides of their faces and turn their eyes upward when they saw me. Not knowing what it meant, I would laugh and do it back. While it was an inappropriate joke, and it likely didn't have any motive behind it, the issue was that it was never reprimanded and would grow into more harmful jokes. I can reflect and say that I don't believe children are in the wrong at all. Kids in Marin County are growing up with extremely limited cultural exposure, including myself, as I know little about my own culture.

In the foyer of my house, there is a picture of me in a hanbok, a traditional Korean dress. It has a wide, peach chima skirt and turquoise jeogori top embellished with a silver pattern. I rarely get comments on how beautiful it is and rather how weird it looks. Right next to that photo is me in a plain black sweater. That's the picture that receives the compliments. In the bubble of Marin, people are exposed to a majority of westernized culture and diversity isn't easily adjusted to.

When I think of a melting pot of diversity, Oakland immediately comes to mind. A mere 30 miles from Novato, the percentage of people who identify as racially white decreases significantly. The United States Census Bureau has listed that the "white alone" (excludes biracial individuals) population in Marin was 84.6% in 2022. In opposition to Alameda County, where Oakland is, the number was 47.1%.

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SPORTS

San Marin girls tennis team serves up success



Beatrice Plesica

Senior Ava Kaplan volleys the ball back in a practice 2 v. 1.

By Dana Fillinger

With newly repaved courts, the girls tennis team is wasting zero opportunities to make their way to the top. The girls have already made Mustang history by winning two lines against Redwood after eight years. With the team's recent success, players are hoping to get a spot in MCALs.

One of those players is Clare Zhu. Zhu is a sophomore

and has been playing tennis for four years. She has high hopes for the team and determination to win.

"We have improved a lot since last year, hopefully we can make it to MCALs," Zhu said.

Zhu is not the only one with success on her mind. Senior captain Ava Kaplan is wasting no time on the court helping her teammates succeed.

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NEWS

Online learning returns

By Annie McMickin

As of the 2023-2024 school year, many Spanish 2 students are transitioning from learning with a teacher to learning online. Because of the lack of Spanish teachers, students enrolled in Spanish 2 have started using APEX. APEX is an online learning platform with videos and activities to help students learn Spanish. It gives students lessons and then practice problems to review.

The San Marin community has mixed feelings about this change.

Principal Jennifer Larson discussed this change and why San Marin has transferred some students to online learning.

"We have a Spanish teacher who resigned at the end of

summer and we didn't have a replacement," Larson said. "Ideally we would have in-person classes for all of our students, but unfortunately we had a gap this year. As a team we came together to discuss all the solutions that could be in the best interest of the students."

Students were given options as to how they wanted to complete the year, working on APEX in the classroom, taking Spanish 2 through a community college, or pushing back taking the course until a later year. Sophomore Reese Cordero is taking Spanish 2 through APEX and spoke on her experience with it so far.

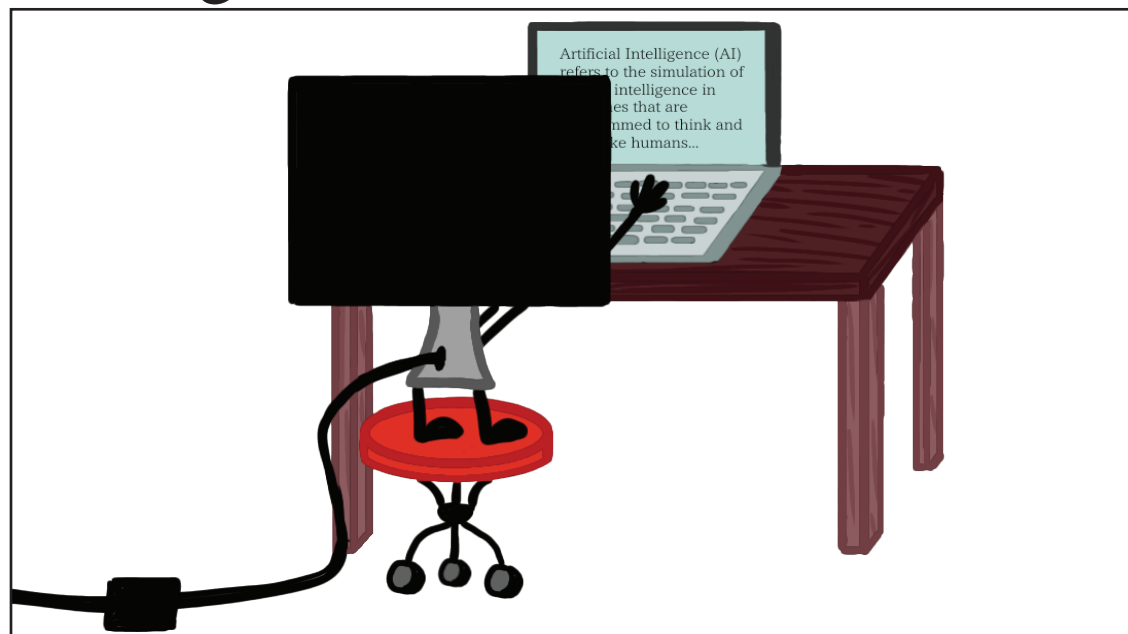
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Samantha Whitlock

FEATURES

Using ChatGPT: academic tool or terror?



Devi Narayan

By Ollie McCall

"In the hallowed halls of education, where the pursuit of knowledge meets the challenge of engaging young minds, a quiet revolution is taking place. Welcome to the era of ChatGPT in the school environment, where the boundaries of traditional teaching and learning are rapidly expanding to embrace the transformative

power of artificial intelligence."

While this introduction may seem well written with its intricate vocabulary and enticing information, it can come off as pretentious and insincere. This is due to the fact that it was written by the Artificial Intelligence (AI) chatbot, ChatGPT.

Many teachers may worry that AI can interfere with a student's learning due to its

accessible potential to be used for cheating, but several have said otherwise.

"I think there's a possibility for students looking at ChatGPT generated text and looking at it critically, like what it does well, and what it doesn't do well. That's one way I could see [students] using it," History and English teacher, Adam Williams, said.

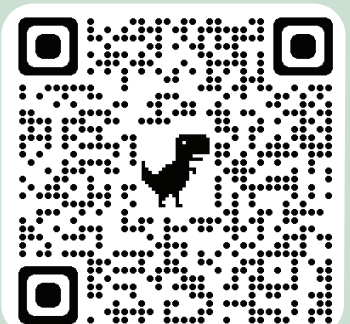
See **ChatGPT** on page 5



Scan the QR Code below to read about:

- Student morning routines

- Football's last season in MCAL



Class Presidents share goals

By Kaysie Ruvalcaba

ASB President: Brittany Casper

Senior Brittany Casper has been in ASB for four years. As ASB President she hopes to create a better environment on campus. “[My goals are] to make San Marin an all around happier and more fun environment for all the students,” Casper said. Leadership roles are not unfamiliar to Casper, as she was Junior Class President last year. “I have a lot of great ideas that I want to make sure happen this year,” Casper said.

Senior Class President: Stephanie Camarena-Gonzalez

Stephanie Camarena-Gonzalez has taken Leadership all four years of high school. She felt this was the year to run. “I wanted to leave my mark behind and I felt this was one of the ways to do so,” Camarena-Gonzalez said. She plans for the senior class to have more diversity and inclusivity. “My goals and plans for the school year are to make sure we can include people and have more diverse activities,” Camarena-Gonzalez said.

Junior Class President: Ava DeRuvo

This is Ava DeRuvo’s second year in Leadership, but it is also the second time she has been elected Class President. “I wanted to run because I wanted to make a difference and be able to make the junior class feel more seen and heard,” DeRuvo said.

Sophomore Class President: Talbot McAndrews

First year Leadership student Talbot McAndrews felt running for class president would be a good opportunity. “The opportunity presented itself and I thought it’d be fun and it would be a great way to leave my mark on the school,” McAndrews said. McAndrews plans on creating unity for the sophomore class. “One plan for me is to make our class more inclusive and to really bring us all together,” McAndrews said.

Freshman Class President: Mia Thoms

After hearing that some freshmen lacked the confidence to express their ideas to Leadership, Mia Thoms decided to run. Her goal is to have her class’s input in Leadership. “I wanted to make sure their voices were heard and their opinions were shared with the class,” Thoms said.

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Students honor Hispanic Heritage Month



Julia Owens
Students line up to buy food available at lunch on Oct. 4 in honor of Hispanic heritage.



Julia Owens
A mariachi band played for students, as part of San Marin’s celebration of Hispanic heritage.

Hispanic Heritage Month is from Sep. 15 to Oct. 15, and is a time in which the contributions, cultures, and histories are recognized and celebrated. On Oct. 4, San Marin celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month at lunch with a live mariachi band as well as catering from Cocina Antigua, with pupusas, empanadas, and drinks for sale, in order to bring Hispanic culture to campus.

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Spanish

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“I used APEX last year when my Spanish teacher quit. I don’t like it very much. It’s kind of rough and difficult,” Cordero said.

Students have supervising teacher Marisa Remak, who speaks a bit of Spanish, and offers them help and support in the classroom when needed.

“One of the things I’m really happy about and have heard good things about is that Ms. Remak has done a great job of supporting the online curriculum,” Larson said. “She has done this by giving students opportunities to practice and doing actual in-person lessons to review the units. I’m happy we have a really strong teacher supporting the students to give them a little bit of an in-person experience.”

“It doesn’t teach me anything. I haven’t learned at all this year,”

- Reese Cordero
Sophomore

Some students, like freshman Hailey Komorowski, feel APEX is helpful, as it allows students to work on their own, and bond with classmates.

“I like how there is no rush to do it. You can communicate with your friends and if you need help, you can go to someone even if there is no teacher,” Komorowski said. “Everyone has such a tight bond because we are all going through the same thing.”

Other students, such as Cordero, felt like APEX was not as beneficial as in-person Spanish classes.

“It doesn’t teach me anything. I haven’t learned at all this year,” Cordero said.

Some students also find it harder when there is no teacher to turn to for help in understanding the material.

“It can be hard when you have questions because you don’t have a teacher immediately there. Sometimes the teacher supervising doesn’t understand either, and so it can be hard to get help,” sophomore Eliza Stickle said.

Most students expressed that they feel unprepared for Spanish 3.

“Learning this way will definitely be a huge setback

when I go into Spanish 3 because I haven’t had much conversational Spanish,” Komorowski said. “I feel like we are missing out on the talking aspect of learning Spanish.”

Some students wanted to do their best and finish the year. They felt that they could successfully complete the year.

“I think I’m gonna finish the year. I feel like I can complete the year well because of going through school during COVID. I know I work really well like this. I wanna prove to myself that I can complete this course without a teacher,” Komorowski said.

Others said they were unsure about staying in APEX, but think that this path is the right one for them.

“This is the path I have chosen, but I think that in the long term, it will not make me successful in Spanish 3. I think that it will just make it harder,” Stickle said.

Students also talked about whether they would return if these were the learning conditions for next year’s Spanish 3 class.

“I would take Spanish 3 on APEX, but that’s just because it’s the same level of learning,” Stickle said. “I feel like APEX is easier, and once I move onto Spanish 3 it’s going to be so much harder having an in-person teacher.”

“Even if it has the same end goal, we are still missing out on that in-class learning experience ... It’s definitely going to be a setback in the future,”

- Hailey Komorowski
Freshman

Overall, students think that online learning is not as beneficial as in person, even if there are pros.

“I think it is definitely worse but not in a bad way,” Komorowski said. “Even if it has the same end goal, we are still missing out on that in-class learning experience. It has really isolated the kids who don’t understand the work because you can only take it online. It’s definitely going to be a setback in the future.”

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