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SCHOOL NEWSPAPER



“Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much.”

- Helen Keller

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Everyone's Embarrassed

Olivia Keller ('29)

Have you ever tripped on your Ugg in the hallway, said the wrong answer with full confidence, or waved back to someone who definitely wasn't waving at you? You probably felt that instant burn of embarrassment.

And honestly, who hasn't?

It's basically a daily part of high school life, hiding in the background of almost everything we do. But even though everyone feels it, we still treat embarrassment like something we're supposed to pretend doesn't exist. The weird part? It actually affects us way more than we let on.

Embarrassment is universal.

Every person in every classroom knows exactly what it feels like to make a small mistake and immediately want to sink into the floor.



But we don't talk about it beyond joking about "the cringe." We brush it off, laugh about it, and move on, but embarrassment stays with us longer than we think. It's the reason some people don't raise their hand, don't introduce themselves first, or don't volunteer to go first on a project. It shapes how we act, what risks we take, and how we see ourselves.

Part of the reason embarrassment hits us so hard is that we're hyper-aware of how other people look at

us. It's like our brains assume everyone is constantly watching and judging us, when in reality, everyone else is too busy overthinking their own embarrassing moments to care about ours. But at that moment, it feels huge.

We replay it in our heads, blow it out of proportion, and convince ourselves it meant something about who we are, even though it didn't.

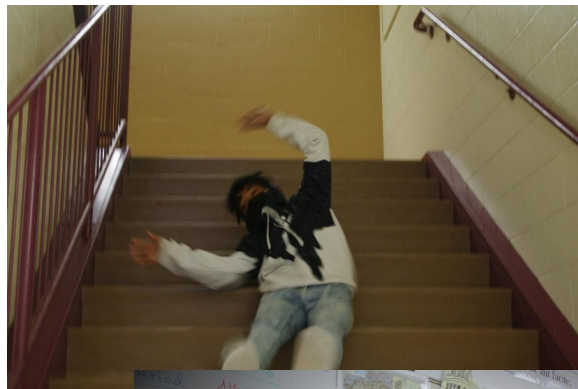
But here's the truth: most "embarrassing" moments are just normal human actions. They don't mean anything to your reputation or your personality or your future.

Nobody's life falls apart because they stumbled going up the stairs or mispronounced a word in History class. If anything, those moments prove you're actually participating in life instead of sitting on the sidelines trying to avoid every possible mistake.

Embarrassment deserves more attention than it gets. Maybe it's time to stop treating embarrassment like something to run from. If everyone feels it, maybe it shouldn't feel so awful or so personal.

At the end of the day, the moments you think have ruined everything are usually the ones that everyone forgets... except you.

And maybe you can let them go, too.



The Seahawks Are Back

Charlie Murray ('29), Fauss Patton ('29)

Eleven years ago, the Seattle Seahawks won their division over the San Francisco 49ers (12-4) and the Arizona Cardinals (10-6).

Seattle's defense, hailed as the Legion of Boom, commanded every game they played, allowing the fewest points, fewest passing and rushing yards, and the most forced turnovers (39) in the NFL.

Their elite offense was led by quarterback Russel Wilson and the beast running back Marshawn Lynch. In the playoffs, they faced the New Orleans Saints and then the San Francisco 49ers in the Conference Championship.

Both games were dominated by the Seattle Defense. Finally, they played the Denver Broncos, led by Hall of Fame quarterback Payton Manning. In that game, the Legion of Boom forced 4 turnovers, including a pick-six and safety. The Seahawks obliterated the Broncos, winning their first Super Bowl 43-8.

The next year, the Seahawks lost the Super Bowl to Tom Brady and the New England Patriots, because of a one-yard-line interception, and the following decade was one of mediocrity. The Seahawks had a good enough record to be in the mix for a playoff seed, but they weren't good enough to make a bid for the Super Bowl.

This meant that the Seahawks never had a good pick in the NFL draft. After a disappointing 2023 season, long time Head Coach Pete Carroll was removed from the position and replaced by Mike Macdonald, the former defensive coordinator for the Baltimore Ravens.

Macdonald is a defensive mastermind; his ravens defense being the first in league history to lead the regular season in fewest points allowed, most sacks, and most takeaways. In his first season as HC, Macdonald had a record of 10-7, the best record for a

first-year coach in franchise history and also the best record of any team this century to miss the postseason. Macdonald along with longtime General Manager John Schneider traded away key franchise players like quarterback Geno Smith and wide receivers Tyler Lockett and DK Metcalf.

The draft picks and cap space from these moves allowed the team to rebuild overnight.

A strong foundation of proven, acquired defensive players like Leonard Williams and Demarcus Lawrence, combined with young talent drafted like Devon Witherspoon and do it all rookie, Safety Nick Emmanuel was built upon by the blockbuster signing of the offseason, QB Sam Darnold, who had an MVP contending season with the Minnesota Vikings in 2024. Darnold, after a disappointing early career, was undervalued for a lack of consistency, allowing the Seahawks to afford him for a fraction of his worth.

This year, the new Seahawks team has been incredible.

As of December 9, 2025, they are winning their division, which is packed with fierce competition from the LA Rams and the 49ers. The offense, managed by visionary OC Klint Kubiak, another new hire, has been the most run-heavy in the league.

The runs haven't been outstanding, but this unique offensive scheme along with two tight end protection-heavy "12 personnel" sets has allowed for the most efficient passing offense in recent league history.

The passing game, led by QB Sam Darnold, has been excellent; he has so far passed over 3000 yards. He has been linking up with breakout superstar wide receiver Jaxon Smith-Njigba, who is in MVP and OPOTY (Offensive Player of the Year) contention and has a chance to beat the all-time single season receiving yard record with the first ever 2,000-receiving yard season. He currently sits at 1,428 receiving yards, leading the NFL.

The offense also has the most 30-point halves in the league with 4, the rest of the league combining for just 6.

Even with the impressive offense, the strength of this Seahawks team is their defense. They have so far forced 21 turnovers: 15 interceptions and 6 fumbles recovered.

They have an incredible running defense, allowing only 91 rushing yards per game and only 7 rushing touchdowns in total. An example of the defensive dominance this season would be linebacker Tyrese Knight forcing back-to-back fumbles from Arizona QB Jacoby Brissett, both of which were recovered by defensive end Demarcus Lawrence for touchdowns. They also recently shut out the Minnesota offense 26-0, with 4 interceptions, including an 85-yard pick-six from linebacker Ernest Jones.

There are still four more games left in the season, one of which is against the LA Rams, Seattle's division rival. Seattle currently sits number 2 in the official NFL power rankings, behind the Rams.

If Seattle can maintain their current momentum, they could have a shot at a playoff run and maybe even chance at the Super Bowl.



A Crochet Overview for your (Hopefully) Relaxing Winter Break

Audrey Zhang (29)

As winter approaches, Winter Break comes too. You may be thinking, "What will I do now that I have no homework?" One new hobby you could try out is crocheting.

You may have heard of crocheting before, since it's been gaining some popularity recently, so here's some basic information about crocheting that you may want to know:

Crochet is a type of needlecraft that uses a hook to create various objects from yarn. Various loops and stitches are created with the yarn and hook, eventually resulting in a wide range of items, including clothes, accessories, plush toys, household items, and more.

One aspect of crocheting that crocheters will definitely want you to know is that crocheting and knitting are distinct crafts. Knitting typically employs multiple long needles, whereas crochet utilizes a single hook. Saying that crocheting is the same as knitting in front of a crocheter or knitter will likely annoy them. Make sure to acknowledge their distinct differences!

For anyone interested in starting the hobby of crocheting, I recommend using single-color yarn to learn the basics of making simple amigurumi (a Japanese-style of crochet that creates plush toys). Some people suggest starting with Granny Squares, but unless you're willing to spend hours on making a couple dozen of the same Granny Squares, I suggest you start with Amigurumi instead.

Aside from yarn, you will need a crochet hook of the right size, stuffing, a thick needle for easier sewing, and safety eyes (optional). Unfortunately, writing a full tutorial on crocheting in this article would make it far too long, so I advise you to find tutorials on YouTube or even ask friends and relatives to help you learn.

In the end, I hope you'll pursue crocheting over Winter Break. You may find that crochet isn't for you, or you may find a new hobby and endless supply in toys, room décor, and clothes. Meanwhile, to people who already crochet, I hope any crocheting you do over break will be fun and relaxing!

If you're interested, here's a crochet pattern that I made myself, of a small snowman:



Key:

- Sc – Single crochet
- Inc – increase stitch
- Dec – decrease stitch
- Slst – Slip stitch
- Ch – Chain stitch

Body:

R1: 6 sc in a magic circle (6) This is the start of the head.

R2: [inc] x6 (12)

R3: [sc, inc] x6 (18)

R4-7: [sc] x18 (18) Do this for four rows.

R8: [sc, dec] x6 (12)

If you are using safety eyes, I suggest you put them in now. Ensure there is space for a nose by putting the eyes around 3-4 stitches apart.

R9: [dec] x6 (6) Stuffing the head now will make things easier. The rest is the body.

R10: [inc] x6 (12)

R11: [st, inc] x6 (18)

R12: [st, st, inc] x6 (24)

R13-16: [st] x24 (24) Do this for four rows.

R17: [st, st, dec] x6 (18)

R18: [st, dec] x6 (12) You can stuff the body now.

R19: [dec] x6 (6)

Sew shut.

Nose:

[ch] x3

[St] on the second chain from the hook, then one more [st].

End the stitches here, snip off the rest of the yarn, leaving a tail, and then fasten the yarn so it won't unravel (or do it your own way).

Then, sew the nose onto the snowman wherever you want. I put mine between right between the eyes.

Hat:

R1: 6 sc in a magic circle (6)

R2: [inc] x6 (12)

R3: [st, st, dec] x3 (9)

R4: [st] x9 (9)

R5: [inc] x9 (18)

Slst, they finish off. Sew it onto the head at the jauntiest angle possible. If you want, you can put stuffing under the hat.

Buttons:

Sew on 1-2 stitch-wide black stripes on the front of the snowman.

Finished!!

If you don't like this pattern (rude), Ms. Stearns recommends you check out ravelry.com for crochet and knitting patterns, though it does require a sign-up.

Either way, have fun crocheting!

Moments Worth Freezing

Everette Deng ('28)

The winter season transforms the world into a quiet shimmering canvas, making it one of the most rewarding and valuable seasons for photographers. Even if you are not a photographer, snow-covered landscapes, soft light, and delicate natural landscapes paint a canvas you never see at any other time of the year.

Despite these beautiful settings, the winter season can also be one of the most challenging for photographers. Here are a few tips regarding lighting, composition, technique, and safety to help you make your winter photography capture the most magical moments.

With the right technique, mindset, and a little bit of imagination, you can produce striking images throughout the season.

The first and foremost challenge the snowy winter season presents to you is lighting. The sunlight—your primary light source—reflects off of the snow or puddles often found throughout the Pacific Northwest during the winter season. This can cause problems for your photos, because it will make a lot of your photos underexposed or overexposed (if your exposure is not adjusted well enough), turning the white snow into a bright glare or dull gray in your final project.

Thus, make sure that before you take any photo in the winter in a very snowy and sunny setting where the light source is very strong or very weak you manually set your camera ISO (which tunes how much light can get in your camera at around 200-800 depending on how bright it is), and exposure compensation to bring the white tones back to life in your post processing stage. Furthermore, because many cameras may end up depicting the snow in a very cold blue color on automatic settings, make sure to adjust your white balance to a snow or cloudy setting or shoot in raw mode.

Now, let's move on to a few composition strategies for your photos.

First off is minimalism, which relates to the simplicity of the setting in the photo. With the absence of all the fall leaves and colorful contrasts which took place throughout the autumn, the winter season naturally simplifies scenes with its clean branches and simple colors (white and black).

This change makes for a clean composition look for any simple and straightforward scenery you can capture in black and white, emphasizing the minimalism of winter. Furthermore, look out for leading lines that can guide your photo's composition and the viewer's eye through a scene—like frozen streams, snowy paths, or fences. Pops of color also become especially powerful against white backgrounds; a red coat, evergreen trees, or the warm glow of streetlights bring life and contrast to a winter setting. Even small details, such as ice crystals on leaves or patterns in frost offer compelling close-up opportunities as well. So remember to keep your eye out for even the smallest details throughout this season!

Lastly, whenever you have heavy camera gear, remember to take care of both your own safety, but also that of your photography equipment.

Make sure to be aware of your surroundings wherever you may be capturing a moment, and watch for ice and moisture (which can help your camera lens' or damage other equipment). Further, protect your gear in a waterproof bag and maintain the quality of your gear.

Keeping both yourself and your gear protected allows you to stay out longer and shoot more freely.

Winter may seem like a cold, depressing, and dark season, but it's also full of beauty waiting to be captured. With a bit of preparation and creativity, your camera can reveal the quiet drama and subtle charm that makes winter photography unforgettable. Wherever you might spend your winter break, keep an eye out for any details and moments, both big and small, you may experience.

You never truly know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory, so each and every detail you encounter may be worth capturing!

Early Birds After Dark

Molly Copeland ('26)

Thursday's Evening of Music felt like one of those school nights where everything happens at once. Performers started arriving around 4:20, which meant the choir room filled quickly with instrument cases, music folders and everyone dressed in concert black.

Concert black is one of those traditions you don't think about much until you're actually wearing it. The idea is simple.

Everyone looks the same so the focus stays on the music, not the people performing it. It also makes a room full of very different musicians look like one group, even if it is not the most comfortable outfit choice.

Chamber Choir performed first.

We opened with "It's a Long Way," a setting of a poem by William Stanley Braithwaite, a poet and literary figure connected to the Harlem Renaissance. The piece moves slowly and requires a lot of control, which made it a steady way to start the concert.

Next was "Semangat Membara," which translates roughly to "burning spirit." The piece uses Malay text and centers on perseverance. It moves fairly quickly, with sharp entrances and nonstop rhythms, so singers are locked in almost the entire time.

We ended with "Witness Me" by Jacob Collier, a piece centered on empathy and shared support. It builds gradually and depends heavily on blend and balance, especially in the middle voices, so it really only works if everyone is listening closely to each other.

After choir, the Chamber Music Ensemble performed a set that moved through a wide range of styles.

They began with Beethoven's Egmont, which set a more serious tone. Music from Howl's Moving Castle followed, bringing in the familiar sound of Joe Hisa-

ishi's film score.

Guantanamera came next, drawing from Cuban poetry and folk traditions and feeling lighter and more relaxed.

They closed with "Danza Final" from Estancia by Alberto Ginastera, a fast, rhythm heavy piece inspired by Argentine dance that made for a strong ending to their set.

The concert closed with choir and CME performing "If You're Out There" together. The song was written as a call to action, and having both ensembles onstage gave it more weight without making it feel overly dramatic. The strings and voices supported each other well, and it felt like a natural way to end the night.

After the concert, things cleared out quickly. Music got packed away, stands were folded and people headed out. It wasn't overdone, just a solid performance that showed how much work both ensembles put in this term. Great job to all of the performers and soloists who made the night come together!

More recently, Chamber Choir continued a familiar tradition by singing festive music in the lobby of McCaw Hall.

On Sunday evening at 5:30, the group performed as people gathered and arrived, adding a seasonal start to the night and carrying the music beyond campus.

If you weren't able to make it to the concert, hopefully we'll see you at the spring trimester performances!



A New Force on the Ice

Julia Stewart ('28)

Pure energy.

That's how I would describe my first women's hockey experience in Seattle: a US national women's hockey team match versus the Canadian team. We took home the win, but I took home something greater: a newfound awareness of the women's hockey scene in Seattle. Since then, I have been itching for professional women's hockey to come to Seattle, and it was clear the city was going to back up that excitement.



Announced on April 30, the Seattle Torrent has arrived. Established in 2025 as one of the first expansion franchises in the Professional Women's Hockey League (PWHL), the Torrent have already made an undeniable impact on Seattle sports and the entire sport of hockey.

The name Torrent draws inspiration from Washington's powerful rivers and waterways (something I experience writing this during an atmospheric river!). The logo features a stylized "S" shaped like a rushing current using the team's colors: Slate Green and Glacier Blue.

In their first home opener on November 28 at Climate Pledge, the team drew more than 16,000 fans. This set a national attendance record for a women's hockey game, highlighting our city's support for women's sports. Capturing their first win in history over the New York Sirens, Alex Carpenter (a former Siren) and Hilary Knight are clear standouts for the Torrent.

In particular, Hilary Knight's stardom has long been historic, as she was the 2023 IIHF Female Player of the Year and captain of the 2023 Gold medal winning U.S. Women's World Championship team. But this team is not just hockey veterans; it's a dynamic mix of new and old players, all vitalized by the sheer force of Seattle sports.

From the first puck drop, the Torrent have been part of a budding Pacific Northwest rivalry with the Vancouver Goldeneyes, the other expansion franchise that began play at the same time.

Early matchups between the two have already produced competitive intensity and have helped shape the personality of both organizations. Rivalries between PNW sports are often huge focal points for the teams, with events like the Cascadia Clash for the Reign and Thorns garnering increased ticket sales and media attention. I can only now look forward to these future matchups, and trust that I will be ready to fight off any Canadians at Climate Pledge.

Off the ice, the Torrent are building a strong and energetic fan community. Season ticket sales, merchandise interest and social media engagement reflect the enthusiasm of longtime hockey supporters as well as new fans drawn to the growth of women's professional sports in Seattle. Local broadcasters KZJO (Fox 13 Plus) and KONG show the team's games, a milestone for women's hockey. Additionally, I highly recommend watching the games for free on the PWHL website (PWHL.com).

As the Seattle Torrent carve out their place in the PWHL, they carry both the legacy of Seattle's passionate sports culture and the promise of helping elevate women's hockey to new heights.

With an exciting roster, record-breaking crowds and a bold identity rooted in the character of the region, the Torrent are becoming more than a new franchise. They are a new chapter in Seattle's identity.



Skiing: More Than Just a Sport

Nima Rahbar ('26)

In case you haven't been looking out your window (I certainly haven't), we are entering the winter season! This comes with shorter days, an absurd amount of Christmas songs, another season of it failing to snow, and a frosted car I have to brush every morning. However, winter also brings a variety of traditions, sports, and activities that aren't available at any other time of year.

One of these activities is skiing! Skiing (or snowboarding...) is a lovely sport that holds a special place in my heart.

My parents taught me how to ski at a young age, and while I don't remember it well, I was quite resistant at first. They quickly learned how to win me over though: an afternoon of hot chocolate and candy. I grew to love ski days, driving up to Snoqualmie, skiing a few runs, and then enjoying some very overpriced but tasty lodge food.

One of the best parts about this sport is its ability to bring family and friends together. My family's ski trips not only provided us with valuable family time away from our phones, but it also allowed me and my brothers to bond with extended family. My uncle and two of our cousins are a great example of that: they moved to Washington around 10 years ago, and our earliest memories with them were formed through joint ski trips. We looked up to my cousin Atticus (a year older than me) because of his skiing skills, and the trips often ended with us all returning to our house and spending more time together.

When I was in 6th grade, my parents successfully convinced me to do the EPS ski bus, despite being nervous. I remember anxiously wondering where to keep my stuff, where to go to change, and who I would go with. Of course, things turned out alright, in fact, better than alright! I found a couple kids to stick with, we got food and talked, we skied, and we had a good

time. Unfortunately, COVID robbed me of ski bus for the next two years, but my memory in 6th grade inspired me to plan my own ski trips in 9th and 10th grade with friends. Both tons of fun! Now I watch as both of my younger brothers go on EPS ski buses, and I am the one picking them up and helping them load/unload their skis, reliving my own memories.

One of my younger brothers who goes here, Kian ('29), has given me a fun memory about skiing. At quite a young age, he became a lot better than me: he was faster, more willing to take risks, more motivated, and way more technical than me. At the time, I was a little annoyed, but looking back I realize that him being better than me helped him really come out of his own shell, take more initiative and try more things, and also pushed myself to be a better skier! I vividly remember him tearing down hills and me trying to catch up with him, his obsession with jumps, powder, double blacks, and moguls (all of which I was way more averse to), and while those may have been negative memories in the moment, they're very fun to look back at and laugh about today.

All in all, skiing is a perfect blend of exercise, fun, and socializing: from the natural breaks on the chairlifts, to the various challenging jumps and runs you can hit (and then say "bro, did you see that!?"), to the feeling you get when you learn a new way of tearing down a mountain faster than before.

As someone who considers themselves unathletic, skiing has always been a way for me to get exercise and have fun without it feeling impossible. It's been a sport that helped me grow, have lots of fun, and step outside of my shell. As we enter into this holiday season, I hope that everyone can find as much joy in this sport as I have, and for those of you who have yet to ski, it is never too late to start learning!



Spotify Wrapped 2025

Mira Lakhani ('29)

Disclaimer: As we speak on this topic, it is also important to inform ourselves about the businesses we support. There is currently a boycott of Spotify in response to the running of Pro- I.C.E. (US Immigration and Customs Enforcements) advertisements on the platform.

It's been a historic and groundbreaking year in music!

Let's unpack it together, all the stats, trends, and themes here. To start, the headlines - the top 10 global artists this year are as follows:

Bad Bunny
Taylor Swift
The Weeknd
Drake
Billie Eilish
Kendrick Lamar
Bruno Mars
Ariana Grande
Arjit Singh
Fuerza Regida.

The U.S. followed a similar pattern, but including artists such as Morgan Wallen, SZA, Zach Bryan, Tyler, The Creator, and Kanye West.

These artists released impactful projects this year and shaped listening trends.

Based on the statistics above, this year has been huge for international music, with Arjit Singh making history as the first Indian artist to break into Spotify's Global Top 10 Most-Streamed artists.

Additionally, Bad Bunny took the spot of Spotify's Global Top Artist for the fourth year now, reflecting his success in the release of his charting album "Debi Tirar Más Fotos", his culturally profound 30-day residency in Puerto Rico, and being chosen for the coveted

spot of headliner of the 2026 Superbowl halftime.

Moreover, Fuerza Regida, a Mexican American band, was the most-streamed artist in Mexico, while also gaining major traction in the United States. KPop-style music featured in the popular movie Kpop Demon Hunters also repped Korean music in the charts.

These artists not only dominated the charts, but showcased their cultures in unique ways, blending the old with the new, and bringing traditional rhythms to international stages.

A lot can change in a year.

We see a lot of familiar names on the charts this year, including Kendrick Lamar (who made waves with his 2024 album GNX and bold diss tracks), Taylor Swift (who released several popular albums), The Weeknd, Bad Bunny, Drake, Billie Eilish (AMA's Favorite Touring Artist), Chappell Roan (who performed at the Grammy's), Ariana Grande (blending music with cinema), Kanye West, and more.

On the other hand, we can observe several emerging artists striking a chord such as animated performer sombr and eloquent lyricist Gracie Abrams reviving band-style music with fresh generational takes and themes, as well as Morgan Wallen and Zach Bryan on the forefront of new country music.

Furthermore, we gained a new aspect of the Spotify Wrapped this year: listening age, which likely illustrates many listeners coming back to the classics in recent years.

We invite you to look back on your 2024 listening stats and compare them against this year.

How did your favorite tunes characterize that time in your life?



Let's dive deeper into the themes of our listening this year.

As mentioned, the U.S was won over by foreign music this year, integrating multicultural influences into the music industry and letting them shine more than ever before.

We also witnessed a surge in queer music, with Bad Bunny, Billie Eilish, Chappell Roan, and more breaking records.

The KPop Demon Hunters soundtrack was a huge hit, making it into the year's top songs and even top albums. This would be the first time a movie soundtrack has seen such success since A Star is Born's hit "Shallow", demonstrating the impact of film as a form of entertainment alongside music.

On the same note, audiobook and podcast stats revealed a lot about our listening beyond solely the realm of music.

Spotify analysts write, "Nearly all of 2025's top audiobooks were released in previous years, with listeners creating a new canon of "modern classics".

This canon mainly highlighted the Romantasy genre, a blend of the traditional romance and fantasy genres that exploded on social media but is rooted in works tracing back to the 1980's and earlier with foundations in medieval literature.

Podcasts have been an increasingly important part of online culture in recent years, shaping how we inform ourselves, and discuss societal events and issues.

Top podcasts this year lean into political and societal issues, with daily news sources, feminist discussions, and uncensored political discourse accompanied by the usual true crime and entertainment classics.

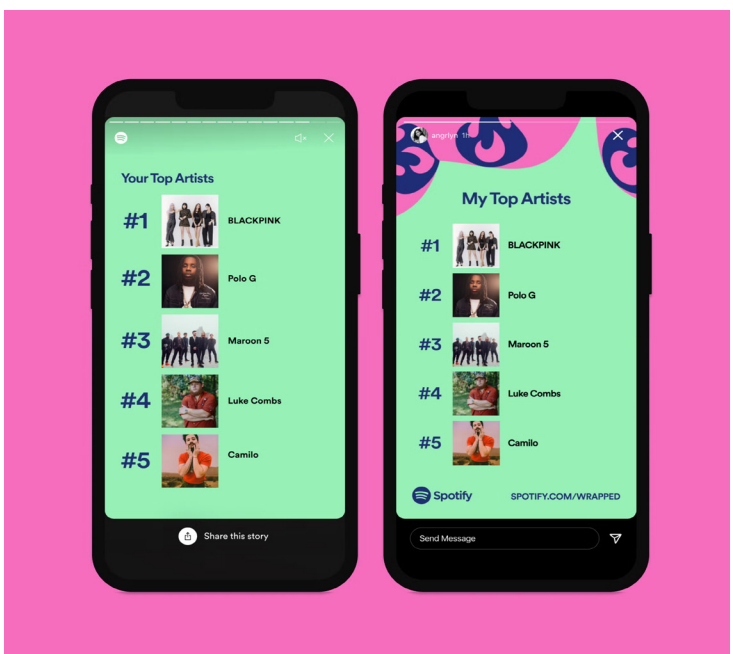
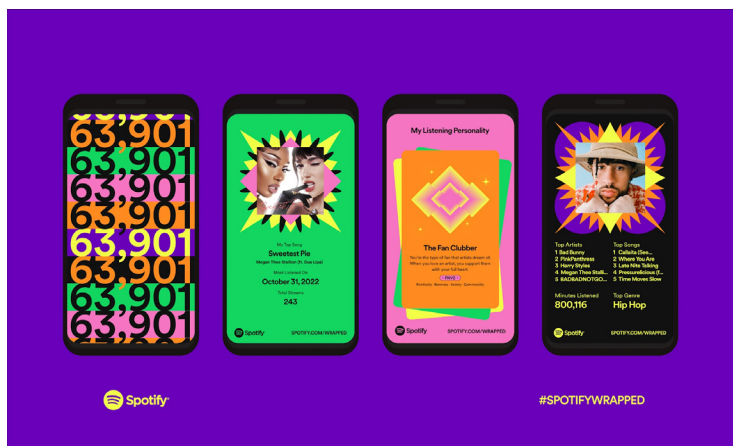
As we close out this year, reflecting on what our listening and consumption of media reveals about us as a society is a valuable aspect of the wonderful tradition we call the annual Spotify Wrapped, unveiling the soundtrack of each year.

Whether it is rooted in culture, politics, social media, musical history, generational sentiments, or the simplicity of a hypnotizing rhythm.

Speaking of politics in music, as the mentioned boycott movement against Spotify's actions gains traction on social media, shifts to other platforms such as Apple Music are predicted, potentially concentrating the consumer base of the app to a more right-leaning audience.

We will stay tuned to see what happens not only surrounding Spotify, but new developments in the global music industry next year.

Each new year has the potential to bring a new favorite tune!



Eagle Pride in Holiday Traditions

Emily Wang ('29)

From the aroma of peppermint mochas to the sounds of our choir rehearsing for the winter concert, teachers decorating Tali with tinsel and fairy lights, and students excited for upcoming winter events, our school is filled with the buzz of the holiday season. But behind all the festive energy, students celebrate the month of December in many different ways, some familiar and some you may not have heard of before.

Christmas is often associated with joy, family, and gifts, and for many students, the excitement of giving and receiving is a highlight of the season. While some students celebrate Christmas as a cultural tradition, others also take time to honor its religious roots. Tori from Christian Affinity Group shared her favorite Christmas experience as a Christian, pointing to the Christmas Eve service as something especially meaningful. "It's so pretty," she said. "We all sit in this really big room, like a sanctuary. We sing hymns and light candles, and everyone turns the lights off. It's so beautiful."

Another widely celebrated December holiday is Hanukkah, which centers around the lighting of the Hanukkah and the story behind it. The nine candles represent tradition, remembrance, and perseverance, and the holiday is marked by family gatherings, rituals, and reflection.

Our school also keeps the spirit of the season alive through its own traditions, helping bring students together during a busy time of year.

Whether it's lighting candles, opening gifts, or watching the same holiday movies every year, traditions remind us of who we are and the many different ways people celebrate this month. Across every hallway and building on campus, these stories continue to shine throughout the holiday season!

Giving Back This Holiday Season

Vivian Lee ('29), Hannah Yamashita ('29)

With Christmas right around the corner, many of us start thinking about what the holiday season really means. Beyond the decorations and winter break excitement, this time of year is also a reminder of how powerful small acts of generosity and helping others can be.



And the good thing is, there isn't just one way to give back. There are countless simple options, and even the smallest effort can end up making a huge difference for someone else. Giving back helps shape a community where people feel supported, especially during a time when not everyone experiences the holidays the same way. It's a simple reminder that even the smallest contribution could have a meaningful impact.

One way students at EPS got involved this year was through its fourth annual Holiday Giving Tree, run by the Middle School Kindness Club and the Upper School Service Club. Students chose tags from the silver tree in the TALI Atrium and brought in gifts for Friends of Youth, a local organization that supports kids, teens, and families.

Seeing how many students participated showed how powerful one simple act can be. Every tag taken turned into a real gift that could totally brighten someone's Holidays and bring them the joy everyone deserves during this special time.

There are many ways to get involved in giving back locally. For example, food banks are always looking for volunteers, and taking a couple hours out of your day can have lasting outcomes.

Last year, I (Hannah) helped organize and package food at Food Lifeline, and it was such a meaningful experience.

Seeing how much food we prepared and realizing it would help out so many families made the impact feel real. It felt good that putting in effort for just a couple hours of my day made a difference. It reminded me that giving isn't only about buying something; it can be about offering some of your time, your energy, and your heart. Sometimes those things matter just as much or even more.

If you're looking for a place to start, winter break is the perfect time. Volunteering for an hour or two at a food bank nearby, donating clothes you've outgrown, contributing to a toy or coat drive, or helping a local charity are all great ways to give.

Drives and community events pop up all around our area during the holidays, and donating a jacket you no longer wear or a toy you don't play with anymore, will mean a lot to someone else.

Taking part in these events can also feel surprisingly rewarding. Small acts can make a big difference and show someone that they are cared about. This holiday season, helping out in any way, big or small, can spread real joy to others during this time of year.



Culture night (Allies for Equity)

Cass Megido ('26)

On Tuesday, February 10th, from 6:00 - 8:00pm, EPS will host its annual Culture Night! EPS Culture Night is a celebration of our community's rich diversity of cultures and traditions! But, to make it work, we need YOU. We invite and encourage EPS students, families, faculty and staff to be a part of a celebration of the diversity of the EPS community's culture. Feel free to bring visuals, traditional food, games, or any activities that embody the essence of your background. To sign up, look out for a form in the Weekly News. Whether you're a presenter or simply a visitor, we would love to have you!



A Change to Winter

Katelyn Lee ('33)

The leaves fall from the trees, which were once full of warm colors. As the cold crisp air turns into a brisk frosty breath, you will see lights on houses and holiday cards appearing in shops. You can start drawing on your foggy window with your fingers and start wearing scarves and hats! The cold, chilly air brings joy as people get ready for the holidays. You will see your breath clouding in front of you as you talk.

A Strong Start for Eagles Basketball

Kabir Singh ('33), Kevin Cui ('34), Ismaeel Rashid ('34)

WHAT'S UP EAGLES!!!! Today I am bringing you the latest news about the current winter sports through an interview with the 5/6 basketball team.

Ismaeel Rashid: "I think that the basketball team is starting out strong, and we had two practices so far, and we have some strong players such as Devin, Victor, and Alexander because they have really strong attacking attributes."

Kabir Singh: Like Ismaeel said, we are starting off strong, and we have a good team, and I have a feeling that we are going to have a good season. For our defensive attributes, Ian is good because he can intercept passes well, and Isaac is good at passes as well as defense. For both offense and defense, Carter and Liam are good in both ways because they are exceptionally good at dribbling, passing shooting, and intercepting."

Angad Bhutani: "We're doing good, but we do still need to work on our passing and our communication on the court. We are kind of uncoordinated as a team."

Isaac Garduno Morales: "I think the basketball team is doing good, but we could work on communication. I think we're probably going to have a good season. I think that Liam, Devin, and other players are good."

Oliver Sun: "I think it is nice, at the start everyone is not the best. However, everyone is improving and getting to know each other. Ismaeel's shooting and passing skills are nice and Victor's ability to move around the court and being able to shoot accurately."

Eric Qi: "I think that the basketball team consists of people who are good people who can improve, but over time we will get better. I think we're going to have a good season where we will have fun, and work as a team no matter what."

Siblings Around Campus

Kabir Singh ('33), Kevin Cui ('34), Ismaeel Rashid ('34)

Now, moving on to EPS families, we want to highlight some of the siblings who share more than just a last name.

Having siblings on campus adds a unique dynamic to the EPS community, whether that means walking to class together, sharing teachers, or cheering each other on at games and school events.

For many students, seeing a sibling in the hallway makes the school feel a little more familiar and welcoming.

This year, EPS has a wide range of sibling pairs currently attending the school. These include Kevin and Eden Cui; Ian and Eli Long; Roger and Audrey Zhang; Vyan and Jia Hirani; Lucas and Emily Wang; Ione and Conrad Lin; Hassan and Ismaeel Rashid; Isaac and Ilan Garduno Morales; Andrew and James Hurd; cousins Nirvan and Kabir; Victor and Anna Dumitrascu; Alex and Irene Qu; Aarul and Saanvi Singh; Marcus and Karina Zhang; Nihaal (graduated) and Nirvan Oberoi; and Evan and Claire Yoo. Each pair brings their own personalities, interests, and contributions to the school, helping shape the community in small but meaningful ways.

In addition to siblings who are both currently enrolled, EPS also has students with siblings who have graduated or attend other schools.

These family connections often continue to influence school life through shared traditions, stories, and experiences passed down over the years.

Together, these sibling relationships highlight the strong sense of community at EPS and show how the school truly feels like a second home for many families.

December Art of the Month



Kaitlyn Pan ('26)



Ella Wang ('26)



Emma Gonzalez ('26)

Music of the Month



Ella Wang ('26)



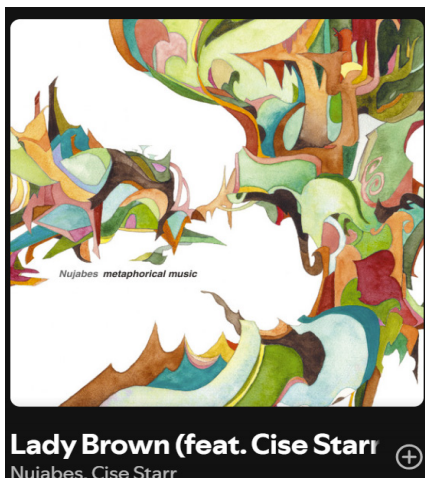
Alex Simone ('26)



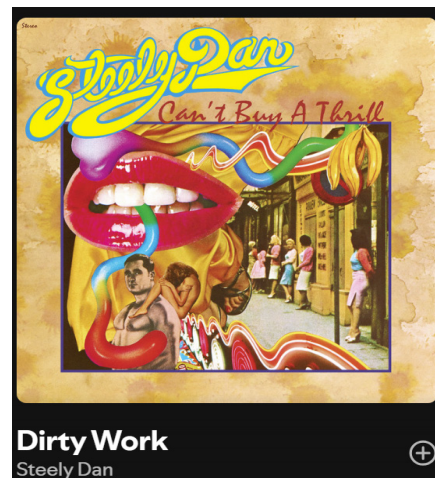
Lucas Mack ('26)



Kaitlyn Pan ('26)



Arnav Garg ('26)



Kaitlyn Copeland ('29)

Mini Word Search: December Buzzwords

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

DESIGNING
WINTER
TEAMWORK
PHOTOGRAPHY
EAGLES
SKIING
EDITING
CROCHET
EMBARRASSED
SEAHAWKS

