

THE Grauer Gazette

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ENCINITAS, FRIDAY, MAY 1ST, 2026

The Grauer School

Who is Coachella 2026?

By Sadie S.M.

Last weekend, Coachella 2026 kicked off. Based in Indio, California, the annual event has occurred in April since 1999. Now, twenty-seven years later, the festival is a staple in music culture for fans, influencers, and celebrities. This year, three new headliners took the stage: Sabrina Carpenter, Justin Bieber, and Karol G. Each one has truly made their presence known in the music industry, yet some people still do not understand who they are or how they got to this point. Instead of searching for background information, their stories are outlined below.



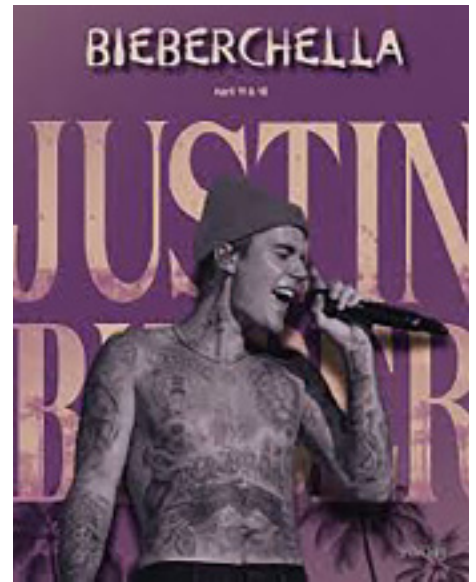
Day 1 - Sabrina Carpenter: Similar to other musicians, Sabrina Carpenter's fame began in a different field—television. Native to Pennsylvania, she signed her first acting deal in 2014 on Disney Channel's *Girl Meets World*. Following her big break, she had various movie roles, including *Tall Girl* and *The Hate U Give*, as well as other performances, including a Broadway rendition of *Mean Girls* right before COVID-19 hit.

On the other hand, Sabrina knew she had a place in the music industry back in 2009 when she first participated in a singing contest. Following that, her career included a few minor releases throughout the late 2010s; however, it did not gain momentum until she changed record labels and music styles in 2021. Shortly after, she dropped her song "Skin," which was widely interpreted as a response to fellow past-Disney star Olivia Rodrigo's song "Driver's License." Both songs sparked major online debates, yet the rumors were never truly confirmed or denied. Over a year later, her album *emails I can't send* launched, and it instantly topped worldwide charts. Her song "Nonsense" was the main attraction, with her spontaneous,

unforgettable outros; she even performed it at Coachella in 2024 alongside the debut of her universally recognized song "Espresso."

While her singles "Espresso" and "Please Please Please" were released in the summer of 2024, the entire album, *Short n' Sweet*, did not come out until later that year. It did not disappoint, as she was nominated for six Grammys and won two. She then went on tour to 70+ countries across North America and Europe. In the latter half of her 2025 leg of the tour, she did another shocking thing...she released a new album. Now her most recent, *Man's Best Friend*, topped the charts once more for her signature piece "Manchild." While she was nominated for a few 2026 Grammy awards, she unfortunately did not take any home.

Day 2 - Justin Bieber: Unlike Sabrina, Justin Bieber stepped straight into music. Growing up in Ontario, Bieber taught himself multiple instruments, including guitar, piano, drums, and trumpet, and eventually began singing. Shortly after he turned thirteen, his extended family became interested in his talent and asked him to post content on YouTube. However, Bieber's family members were not the only ones to watch as his videos instantly went viral. With his immense following, former music industry executive Scooter Braun noticed him. Braun saw extreme potential in young Bieber, so he immediately flew him out to Atlanta, Georgia, for an interview with musical artist Usher. After connecting with Usher, Bieber signed his first record deal with Island Records and immediately hit the ground running.



In November 2009, his first album, *My World*, was released. Sure enough, it instantly went platinum—one million units sold—with top-tier songs like "One Time" and "Favorite Girl" paving the way. Then, he announced his second album, *My World 2.0*, less than a year later. This album, though, stole the show with the world-renowned song "Baby" featuring Ludacris. From then on, Bieber's career blasted through the 2010s with multiple releases, including the 2015 electronic song "Where Are Ü Now." Sadly, in 2019, Bieber announced a personal leave from the business due to drug abuse as a coping mechanism.

This departure did not last long, as his next two albums, *Changes* and *Justice*, dropped in early 2020 and 2021. Both peaked at the top of the Billboard charts for multiple weeks and featured collaborations with artists such as Kid Laroi, Giveon, and Daniel Caesar. Quickly thereafter, he dropped another EP and an extended version of *Justice*, both of which conquered the charts again. He was also nominated for 8 Grammys in 2022 for his works, but did not win any. Following the Grammys, he went on tour but had to cut it short due to being diagnosed with Ramsay Hunt syndrome. Since then, his public presence has been erratic, but with his new 2025 albums, *Swag* and *Swag II*, the future looks bright for all Beliebers.

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ENCINITAS, FRIDAY, MAY 1ST, 2026



Day 3 - Karol G: Born in Colombia, Karol G (Carolina Giraldo Navarro) grew up in a musically inclined family. Her father, specifically, had a strong influence on her love of music. As a musician, he would bring home instruments for her, and once she was old enough, he took her on stage with him. Not long after, she began performing solo, which led her to participate in the Colombian version of X-Factor, El Factor X, in 2006. Shortly after, she signed her first contract with Flamingo Records and Diamond Music at 14. She quickly released her first single, “En La Playa”;

however, it was difficult to gain traction in the male-dominated reggaeton genre. Over the next few years, she and her father searched for a different path, but they struggled, especially with record labels and sexual propositions. For her own well-being, she continued working on her music alone while studying at the University of Antioquia.

Then, after a break, she signed with Universal Music Latino in 2016. This partnership led to a collaboration with Bad Bunny, which radically changed her support. In 2017, her debut album, Unstoppable, soared to second place on the Latin Albums charts and was later awarded Best New Artist at the 2018 Latin Grammys, followed by her second album, Ocean. Her success that year did not end, as her song “Tusa” with Nicki Minaj ranked No.1 on Billboard Hot Latin Songs—the first time for a woman since 2016.

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, she continued working on her third album, and a song titled “Bichota,” meaning

“empowered, strong woman.” Since the song’s release, Karol has felt more intertwined with her music. She then won Best Reggaeton Performance at the Latin Grammy Awards, setting another precedent for women in reggaeton. In 2023, her fourth album, Mañana Será Bonito, came out, and this time, she won her first mainstream Grammy nomination for the song “TQG” with Shakira. Since then, a documentary and album have been released, setting the stage for the next part of her career.



By Zoe Br.

This semester, the Senior class is taking Economics with Frida LeBreton and Jessi Brown. For students enrolled in honors, this class is an opportunity to run a business. This business can be basically anything, and the project involves creating a concept, a pitch deck, a survey to collect data, actual products to sell, and eventually presenting it to a panel of entrepreneurs. So, what is everyone doing?

Senior Businesses

Fae Tea by Ella Stocker and Koa

Barton—An eco-friendly loose-leaf tea company for all of the drink lovers; “it’s not fate, it’s Fae Tea.”

Pacific Light Photography by

Luke Wachtel—A “photography practice that focuses on delivering high-quality, affordable photos with a fast turnaround.”

Strive Fit by Elsie Williams—A

“remote personal training service” helping you to build “confidence” and “motivation” in your fitness journey.

ABZ Baking by Mia Bresnan,

Beatrix Monday Yankus, and Zoe Baxter—A “protein ‘mugcake’ style baking product made with organic ingredients, with an eco-conscious twist.

Teens Hauling by Zack Hub-

bell—A “locally owned junk removal [and] hauling company [run] by students with the goal of helping out our community while disposing junk in an eco-conscious way.”

Little Flame by Alana Millikan

and Thea Hillyard—A natural wax and scent candle company aiming to bring healthier, environmentally friendly candles to the Grauer community.

Zig-Zag Cutting Boards by Zoe

Brisbois, Augie Keatinge, and Gacin Noguchi—An end-grain cutting board company offering a multitude of sizes, custom engraving, and board bundles.

If you’re looking for a gift for Mother’s Day—which is coming up on May 10th—these might be a good option. You can either contact the business owners directly or reach out to me, and I will put you in contact with them.



ENCINITAS, FRIDAY, MAT 1ST, 2026

Project Hail Mary: Amaze Amaze Amaze

By Beatrice M.Y.

Since its release on March 20th, fans of science fiction have flocked to theaters to see the highly anticipated film adaptation of Project Hail Mary. The book was originally released in 2021 by Andy Weir, who previously found success in science fiction with his 2011 novel *The Martian*. Fans of the genre eagerly anticipated his new release as soon as it was announced. In this novel, Weir showed a slightly different side of his writing style. In contrast to *The Martian*, *Project Hail Mary* blends humor with emotional depth, making its serious moments even more impactful.

When news of the adaptation dropped, fans of the books were excited and apprehensive. The book toed such a delicate line between comedy and tragedy; how could that magic be captured on the screen? Of course, there was another question about how this movie would be adapted: for the

majority of the book, the lead isn't speaking. All dialogue is internal. How would the internal conflict translate into a film? Casting Ryan Gosling as Ryland Grace helped address this challenge. His performance relies heavily on subtle expression and emotion rather than excessive dialogue or movement.

A spoiler-free synopsis to those that need it: Ryland Grace wakes up aboard a spaceship with no memory of where he is or why he is there. All he knows is that his two comrades, who were meant to journey with him, have passed away during their travels. Now completely alone, Grace must uncover his identity and why he has been sent out on this mission.

Throughout the film, Grace experiences a mental tug-of-war. He struggles with his mission while being pulled by memories of his life on Earth, knowing he may nev-

er return. The ability to learn who Grace is alongside him brings the audience closer to the character. This effect is amplified by the fact that he is the only human presence on screen for much of the story.

A notable aspect of the film's production is its reliance on practical effects rather than CGI. This choice gives the film a more science fiction feel, reminiscent of *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* through the similar, comforting aesthetics.

Overall, the fans have spoken. With a 94% rating on Rotten Tomatoes, *Project Hail Mary* had cemented itself in science fiction history. From laughing until your stomach hurts to crying your eyes out, then laughing hysterically once again, *Project Hail Mary*, Andy Weir, and the tale of Ryan Gosling have captured the audience's hearts.

Gucci at the Crossroads: Demna's Cultural Reset

By Leyton G.

At his latest fashion show during Paris fashion week, Demna, a Georgian fashion designer, proved that a runway can function as more than a presentation of clothes, but rather a reset button disguised as a nightclub memory. Demna focused on dramatic staging or conceptual overload; Demna focused on something far more precise: casting. Demna set out to bring figures such as Kate Moss, Nettspend, and Fakemink. He connected a narrative that bridges generations, aesthetics, and modes of influence. The result was a show that felt less like a runway and more like a new phase that Gucci is stepping into, while still paying homage to the brand's identity.

Kate Moss's presence anchored the show in Gucci's legacy of effortless, almost untouchable glamour. As one of the most recognizable figures in fashion history, she carries a certain essence that draws attraction and interest. Kate poses as a reminder of the brand's roots in sleek, confident sensuality. In contrast, Nettspend,

a U.S.-based rapper, brought an entirely different kind of energy and essence, one shaped by internet culture and the underground music scene. As an emerging artist tied to digital platforms and youth-driven aesthetics, his inclusion signaled Demna's awareness that modern fashion influence no longer flows from the top down, but instead moves laterally through music, social media, and underground scenes.



Fakemink, a UK-based rapper, meanwhile, pushed this idea even further, representing a collective approach to fashion that challenges the traditional notion of a single creative authority. Their presence suggested a future where fashion is less about individual designers and more about communities, collaboration, and shared influence. Together, these three forces created a deliberate tension that defined the show's impact. By placing a supermodel of the past alongside a rising figure of the digital present and a collective representing the future, Demna positioned Gucci at the center of a cultural intersection. This creates an approach that reflects a broader shift within fashion as well as the music industry. Ultimately, the show demonstrated that Gucci's new direction is not about choosing between past and future, but about merging them. With Demna leading the charge on this, I have no doubt he will once again shock the beautiful world of fashion.

ENCINITAS, FRIDAY, MAT 1ST, 2026

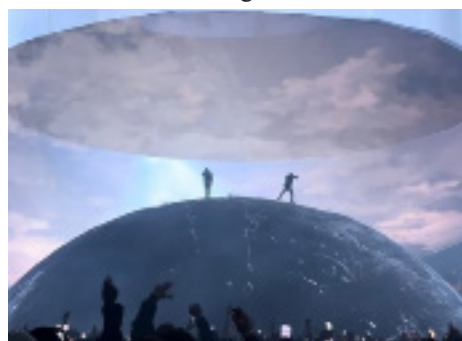
Bigger Than Music: Ye's SoFi Stadium Reckoning and New Album

By Leyton G.

Ye (formerly known as Kanye West) has shocked the world once again this past weekend. Ye performed his first major U.S. performance since 2021, backing the release of his latest album, *Bully*. Avid music lovers have been waiting around two years for *Bully* to be released; however, Ye has been curating something far bigger than just an album. He is positioning himself to become the most recognized artist worldwide.

To understand how Ye has re-emerged into a mainstream audience, we have to go back to 2024. Ye had lost major brand deals, gone through a divorce with his former wife, Kim Kardashian, had struggled with bipolar disorder and mental health issues, and had been in the media for making antisemitic remarks. Ye's world was crumbling around him, so *Bully* was a sort of reset button for him. Ye's creative process for *Bully* was chaotic, constantly reworked, and many songs were scrapped and redone. Although *Bully* was released on March 28, 2026, Ye has tested songs through a live album approach. Instead of disappearing into a studio, Ye tested music in real-time listening events and let public

reaction influence direction; this blurred the line between performance and production. While working on his album, Ye lived in Italy for a while to work on his artistic tone, as well as in Saudi Arabia, where he built temporary studio setups and worked with many different collaborators, and stayed isolated from U.S. media. The creation of *Bully* mirrored Ye's own restless movement across the globe.



When Ye announced that he would be performing at SoFi Stadium, many were excited, yet many were also appalled. Ye had released songs condemning Nazism and Adolf Hitler. Although he later took down these songs and apologized to the Jewish community, as well as Rabbi Yoshiyahu Yosef Pinto, many believe that it is

simply not enough. Despite that, he ended up selling out SoFi Stadium both nights and would go on to shock the world once again. Ye would not only perform his latest album, but also many of his hit songs such as *Runaway*, *Heartless*, *Flashing Lights*, *All Falls Down*, and many more. Something that shocked many fans was that Ye did not just perform on a regular stage. The set design was created to be a dome that Ye stood upon, while a series of lights projected onto it, making it have an appearance of the Earth. It put Ye, literally, on top of the world.

Ye shocked fans by having an entourage of musicians join him during his performance. This included Lauryn Hill, Travis Scott, CeeLo Green, Don Toliver, and North West (Ye's daughter). This was also one of the highest-grossing live events ever, grossing around \$33 million dollars. Although this concert, in hindsight, was a huge success for Ye and the world of music, many are still having a hard time separating the art from the artist. Many believe that Ye is on a cultural comeback, while many others would rather see him crash and burn. Only time will tell.

24 Hours, 3 Shows

By MJ C.

During Spring break, I decided to spend 24 hours doing something both questionable and extremely brain-rotting, but entertaining: binge-watching three reality TV shows and giving you all my honest review. My lineup included *The Secret Lives of Mormon Wives*, *Love Island USA*, and *Dance Moms*. By the end of it, I was so emotionally invested, slightly confused, and fully convinced that none of these people can function in the real world.

Starting with *The Secret Lives of Mormon Wives*, I was immediately sucked into this show and their lives. Everything appears so pristine and polished on the outside, but secretly, everything is messy underneath. The show is full of drama, secrets, and very intense "her or me" friendships. What stood out most was how quick-

ly things escalated. One minute, everyone is smiling, and the next, there's so much tension you could practically feel it through the screen. My rating: 5/5. It is definitely the most binge-worthy show I have ever watched, and if you like an unpredictable drama, this is for you.

Next up was *Love Island USA*, which, honestly, is more of a social experiment disguised as a dating show. The pace is fast, which I enjoyed, and relationships change constantly, and everyone seems to either be in love or in a love triangle within hours of meeting each other. What made it fun was how easy it was to get attached to certain people while simultaneously begging them to make better decisions than to get with that guy. My rating: 4.5/5. It is the kind of show you tell yourself you will

watch one episode of, only to finish the season that same day.

Finally, *Dance Moms* brought a completely different energy. Instead of dating drama, you get intense competition, high-pressure dancing, and one of the most iconic coaches in reality TV history. Watching the kids perform while the moms argue and scream at each other in the background is both stressful and hard to look away from. My rating: 4/5. It is chaotic, frantic, and somehow still inspiring.

Overall, the binge was probably a waste of my time, but I loved every second of it. Reality TV is unpredictable, addictive, and of course, superior to any other shows. If you are looking for something entertaining, these three shows definitely deserve a spot on your must-watch list!

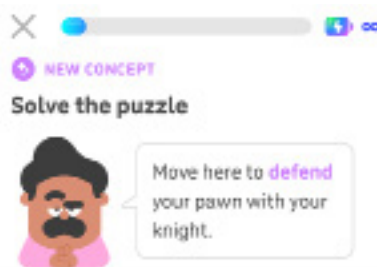
ENCINITAS, FRIDAY, MAY 1ST, 2026

+15XP For Reading This Article

By Zoe Ba.

Online learning has existed since the 1960s, although the “modernized” form most people associate it with only emerged after online universities became accredited in the 1990s. However, it was following the COVID-19 pandemic that digital learning grew significantly in popularity. After being forced to use platforms such as Zoom and Google Classroom, the newer generation of students and teachers became well acquainted with the support online resources could provide. Suddenly, learning was no longer tethered to what was introduced by the teacher. People could learn about a wide range of topics through YouTube videos or expand upon what they already knew via Khan Academy lessons.

Digitalized learning did not simply disappear once people were reintroduced to the physical classroom: quiz platforms such as Kahoot, Quizlet Live, and Gimkit began



to make an appearance in lesson plans. It is widely believed that students are more attentive when learning is interactive and engaging. Does this leave room for a future in which learning is no longer done through lectures and discussions but rather through entertaining games? It does appear that this could become a reality.

Already popular after its launch in 2012, Duolingo experienced a significant increase in popularity during the pandemic, more than doubling its initial number of users. It is estimated that, as of 2026, the app

has reached 500 million downloads. Aside from being a free and accessible platform, users claim that the game-style interface and its almost threatening and humorous notifications make learning that much more fun and immersive. This raises the question as to whether subjects beyond language could be taught in a similar manner. Duolingo has certainly already pondered this idea, especially considering it has begun to teach math topics up to Algebraic Graphing (commonly taught in 12th grade) in addition to music and chess.

Inspired by this trend, learning games have grown prosperous, with apps such as Cobby (for coding), Prodigy (for math), and NoRedInk (for English) expanding their influence. Regardless of whether these resources are integrated into the classroom, they are a great way to reinforce what is being taught and get some practice in!

Humans back on Moon

By Zack H.

For the first time in more than 50 years, humans have traveled beyond Earth's orbit. With the successful launch of Artemis II, NASA has officially begun a new era of space exploration, sending astronauts farther into space than any crew has since the 1970s. The mission represents a historic moment. The last time humans journeyed toward the Moon was during the Apollo 17 mission in 1972.



Since then, human spaceflight has remained relatively close to Earth, with missions focused on orbiting laboratories such as the International Space Station. While robotic missions continued to explore the solar system, the idea of humans returning to deep space was a distant goal until now. Led by NASA, the Artemis program was designed to return humans to the Moon. Artemis II marked the program's first crewed

mission, bringing four astronauts on a journey around the Moon and back to Earth. Unlike the Apollo missions, which focused on short-term exploration, Artemis aims to build a long-term human presence on the Moon and eventually support missions to Mars. The astronauts traveled aboard the Orion spacecraft, a next-generation capsule built for deep space exploration. The spacecraft was launched using the most powerful rocket NASA has ever engineered, the Space Launch System. Artemis II followed the successful Artemis I mission, which completed an uncrewed journey around the Moon in 2022. That mission showed that the Orion spacecraft and Space Launch System could survive the extreme conditions of deep space. During the mission, the crew conducted a series of tests to evaluate life support systems, navigation, and communication while orbiting the Moon. These tests are essential for future launches such as Artemis III, which plans to include the first woman and the first person of color to walk on the Moon, highlighting a more inclusive future for space exploration. Private companies, including SpaceX, are working alongside NASA to develop technologies

that will support future missions, including lunar landers and the development of systems for long-term sustainability.



For today's generation, Artemis II is more than just another space mission; it is a moment that reconnects humanity with one of its greatest achievements. While the Apollo missions once inspired millions, they are now part of history. Artemis brings that same sense of excitement back to life, offering people the chance to witness deep space exploration as it happens. The successful completion of Artemis II proves that humanity is ready to return to the Moon and lay the groundwork for future missions. Artemis II is not just a return; it is a beginning that could one day take humans even farther, including to Mars.

Just a Little Sweet Treat Please...pt. 2

By MJ C.

It happened again. I just couldn't help it. I found another DELICIOUS cookie recipe, and much like my fellow late-night snack lovers, this hunt for a quick, comforting dessert was worth the lack of sleep. Recently, I decided to switch things up from my usual chocolate chip routine and give peanut butter cookies another shot to impress me, except this time, I wanted something simple and classic. So, I asked ChatGPT to create the perfect peanut butter cookie recipe for me, and going in, I wasn't expecting much, but I was pleasantly surprised.

After gathering everything from my kitchen (which thankfully wasn't much), I got started. The process was very straightforward and did not include any overly complicated steps or ingredients, which already made this recipe all the more appealing to me. If you are like me and do not want to spend hours baking in the middle of the night, then this recipe is one you need.

By Luke W.

The ocean is going to be hotter than average this summer. This seems like a non-issue. Why would I be concerned about a warmer ocean? The effects a warmer ocean can have on the global atmosphere can be catastrophic. An El Niño is expected to form this year. But not a normal one, a super one. But what really is a super El Niño?



Recipe/Instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees

In one bowl, add...

½ cup butter (softened, not melted)

½ cup white sugar

½ cup brown sugar

Mix until smooth and creamy

In the same bowl, add...

1 egg

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ cup creamy peanut butter

Mix until fully combined

Add dry ingredients...

1 ¼ cups flour

¾ teaspoon baking soda

¼ teaspoon salt

Mix until just combined (don't overmix!)

Roll the dough into small balls and place on a baking sheet

Use a fork to press down in a crisscross pattern gently

Bake for 9–11 minutes - Makes about 12–15 cookies

Let them cool before serving



When I pulled these cookies out of the oven, the smell of warm peanut butter made me fall in love. They had that perfect golden color with slightly crispy edges and a soft, melt-in-your-mouth center. The classic fork gave them that homemade feel, and the flavor was exactly what you would want in a peanut butter cookie: sweet, salty, and perfectly balanced. I genuinely did not expect a recipe I got by asking ChatGPT to turn out this good, but these cookies completely proved me wrong! Enjoy!

Super El Niño

An El Niño is a normal weather pattern that occurs every few years when the temperature of the Pacific Ocean is 0.5 degrees Celsius above the long-term average. It can shift weather patterns and cause stronger winter storms, flooding, and drought in some parts of the world. This is normal throughout the world, just fluctuating weather. This year is different; the super El Niño will bring extreme weather throughout the foreseeable future.

It is predicted that if this El Niño starts in the summer, as it is expected to, it will turbocharge summer temperatures. Throughout the United States, temperatures will be much higher. This March was one of the hottest on record. This trend is likely to persist.

On the bright side, the Atlantic is likely to have fewer hurricanes. The Atlantic is known for brewing major storms

during hurricane season. During this weather pattern, there are fewer hurricanes, and the ones that form are weaker.



For Southern California in particular, we will have a hotter summer and then a cooler winter. We will also most likely get more precipitation than normal next winter.

As climate change continues to affect our weather patterns every year, it is important to stay informed. This weather can directly affect many Americans' day-to-day lives. Stay safe!

ENCINITAS, FRIDAY, MAT 1ST, 2026

The Truth About the Iranian Conflict Pt. 2

By Sadie S.M.



Starting where we left off, in the last few years, Iranian forces have continued to avoid the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) regulations. In doing so, it enabled them to advance Shiite members by arming and training them through its Quds Force—the international arm of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). They also exerted their power outside of their country by supporting similar militant groups in the Middle East. Their external efforts range from aiding the Palestinian Hamas group to advancing armed drones in Lebanon. Due to these actions and spending over a billion dollars on terrorist financing, the United States of America firmly considers Iran as the top state of terrorism; however, nothing significant occurred, and things plateaued for a few years.



2023 marked a new year of change for this conflict, and not a pleasant one. After October 7, 2023, when Hamas troops invaded Israel, a new debacle unfolded, revisiting past tensions between the groups

and their allies—U.S.-backed Israel, Iran-backed Palestine. Then, what started as friction turned into real issues as Iran sent in troops to back Palestine's effort. These events did not stay within the Gaza Strip, though, as Iran began to bomb Israeli and U.S. contacts in Syria and Iraq. On the other hand, the U.S. was not sitting still either. On October 26, U.S. officials ordered air strikes on the Iranian military facilities. Both sides kept this minor, or minor in the sense of the time, aggression consistent, but that all changed very quickly.



After three months of back-and-forth action, the attacks between Israel and Iran became less indirect and more direct. On April 1, 2024, Israel supposedly orchestrated a strike on the Iranian consular building in Damascus, Syria, which killed two generals and five other military superiors. Infuriated by this, Iran responded with over three hundred drones and missiles, which marked the first time Iran had specifically targeted Israel. Fast forward a few months to when the Hamas leader, Yahya Sinwar, was killed, and Iran unleashed a new reign of missiles. Instead of standing by, Israel launched a counter-attack on a few specific Iranian locations: air defenses and missile factories. The year closed out with little achievement for Iran due to friction between Hamas, the main Iranian militia, and Israel. This brief breath of fresh air was only temporary, as President Trump was reelected in late 2024, which reinstated an identical maximum pressure program against Iran. This was the first time the relationship be-

tween the two countries had been talked about since the U.S.'s departure from the JCPOA in 2018. Additionally, throughout this time, Israel held a firm anti-JCPOA perspective by asserting that Iranian nuclear programs would directly impact Israel's power in the region.

Now, the stage is set for the scene that unraveled last year. On June 12, 2025, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) brought light to Iran's disobedience of non-proliferation obligations—a series of rules created in 1968 that aim to disrupt the spread of nuclear weapons. In response, Iran admitted to opening a secret uranium development site. This prompted Israel to launch a series of military attacks against Iran; specifically, the strike ambushed nuclear facilities and factories, senior military officials, and nuclear scientists. In return, Iran's Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi stated this was "an act of war," according to *cfr.org*. With no further delay, Iran began firing back at Israel with drones and missiles. At this point, Trump only endorsed the actions of Israel and expressed his openness to destabilizing the Iranian regime.



A week later, the U.S. immersed itself in the conflict by attacking three Iranian nuclear sites on June 21st. This may seem surprising considering coverage of the war began a few months ago, not a year ago. From then on, the disputes have been quite consistent, and the negative consequences of war from both parties continue to grow beyond expectation.

Meta and YouTube Lose Landmark Social Media Addiction Trial

By Sara L.



This week, the court deemed Meta and YouTube responsible for the intentionally addictive design of their platforms. The case had focused on mental health and younger users, and throughout the trial, several other countries announced bans. Lawyers argued that the infinite scroll design and algorithm can lead to negative effects, especially on young minds. This is similar

to lawsuits against tobacco companies, as the businesses were held responsible for selling the addictive products. TikTok and Snapchat were also originally involved in the lawsuit; however, they settled before the trial started. The verdict required Meta to pay 4.2 million and YouTube to pay 1.8 million in damages.

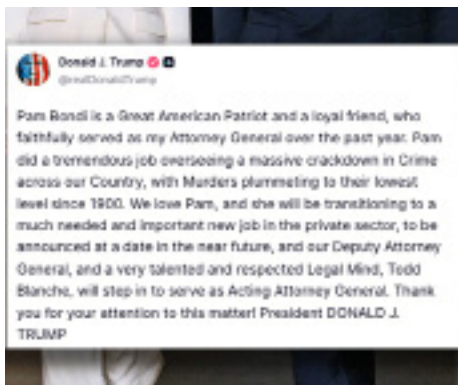
Countries around the world are taking action against social media, led by Australia's decisive action on social media last year. Other countries have recently announced similar restrictions and bans. Globally, governments are beginning to treat social media less neutrally and more as a danger that can affect public well-being. The U.S. trial verdict only adds to this

momentum, as the court challenges Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act, which protects platforms from being held responsible for user-generated content. With this Act under question, tech companies may need to redesign their platforms and revisit their approach. As the government reconsiders the role social media plays in the lives of younger users, teenagers around the world follow developments closely.



Pam Bondi Fired

By Sara L.



Donald Trump has fired Attorney General Pam Bondi, another major shock in his administration and testament to the internal instability of his leadership team. Bondi was the nation's top law enforcement official and had developed tensions with Trump due to her approach to several high-profile issues, including the Epstein files. However, Bondi is not the first or only cabinet member to be dismissed: just last month, Trump fired Kristi Noem from her position as Secretary of Homeland Security. Bondi's ousting, so closely following Noem's, only succeeds in highlighting the evident challenges and tension within the administration.

The role of Attorney General is one of the most powerful positions in the government, as it is responsible for overseeing the Department of Justice and enforcing federal laws; therefore, changes in this position have major impacts on legal matters, as well as national policy. For example, Bondi's sudden departure raises questions about what direction the Justice Department will take moving forward. The department is expected to operate separately from political influence, with its decision-making process clearly separated from political pressure and influence. However, Bondi's removal is highly political, leading critics to question the traditional

independence of the department. Changes in leadership at this level can impact which cases take priority and how laws are enforced throughout the country.

Looking ahead, attention will shift to who Bondi's replacement will be, as well as the changes that they will bring. A new attorney general would have the power to reshape the department's priorities, possibly affecting a wide range of cases and laws, from criminal prosecution to national policy.

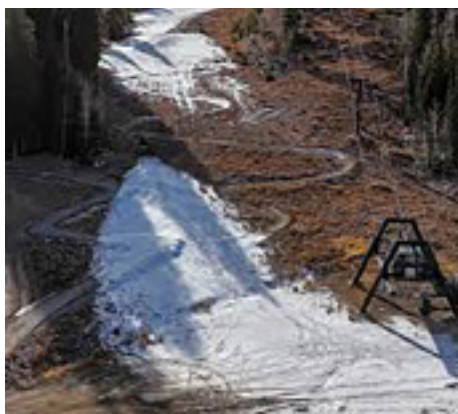
ENCINITAS, FRIDAY, MAY 1ST, 2026

Snowpack

By Luke W.

Avid western mountaineers are bummed. For lack of a better word, the 25/26 ski season sucked. Across the West Coast, unseasonably high temperatures and dry weather patterns prevailed for most of the season. This caused many popular resorts to delay openings and close early.

The season was supposed to begin in late November at most western resorts. It looked like it was going to be a promising season in October, when substantial amounts of snowfall occurred in the mountain ranges. It already looked like winter in many resorts. But then a heat wave struck the west, and it melted. All of it. All that was left was mud, and the beginning of an incredibly dry season. Snow didn't fall until the end of November in many mountains.



Even the snow that fell was abysmal. This led to resorts postponing their openings.

Once the season officially started, snow began to fall in small, slow bursts. Oftentimes, it would melt shortly after it hit the ground. The only places that were actu-

ally accumulating snow were the northern Rockies, such as Jackson Hole, Banff, and Whistler. They were consistently getting snow, whereas most of the West was still dry.

This pattern largely continued throughout the season. Resorts would get snow, then the snow would melt away. This season also claimed the title for the earliest snowpack melt on record. Resorts are losing snowpack quickly, and some are recording 70-degree temperatures.

This season has definitely been questionable. But it is always fun to hop on the slopes and get away from your day-to-day life. Hopefully, next season is better. But, nonetheless, great memories were made this season!

The Relationship Between Athletes, Fans, and Federations

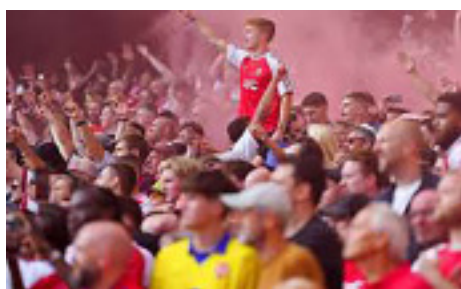
By Zoe Br.



In sports there is a delicate relationship between athletes, fans, and federations. Each wants what is "best" for the sport; however, these "best"s do not always line up. The athletes want improvements made to improve safety, add interest, develop with the times, and make the sport more exciting for themselves and the fans so they keep getting to do what they love. The fans want a lot of the same things; they have fallen in love with watching something, become attached to athletes, and often want more of the cool things they are seeing. The federations have the most complicated role in this trio, aiming for the organization and pleasure of both athletes and fans, while also making enough profit to continue the events into the future.

This is of course, if everything works the way it should. All too often,

though, some part of this system is not playing fair. Some athletes are only in it for the fame, cheat, take performance enhancing drugs, or treat other parties involved very poorly. There will always be overbearing, parasocial, or toxic fans who start pointless fights, exploit that athletes are



public figures, or become downright stalker-esq. And federations can easily trade attentive management for dangerous, depleting greed, abusing their power to create more of a spectacle, draw in new fans, and pocket more money. Over the decades—and probably centuries before—there have been countless sporting scandals involving athletes, fans, and federations.

The Winter Olympics have a bit of a history of being plagued by scandal, but the 2002 bribing of the Internation-

al Olympic Committee by the Salt Lake City Olympic Bid Committee is one of the worst. The committee did decide to host the games in Salt Lake City that year, but the incident caused several committee members to resign and several IOC members to be expelled.

The Fédération Internationale de Football Association has had its own slew of scandals. The most prominent of these being the 2015 FIFA corruption scandal which involved two-dozen high-ranking officials and how they were bribed to put the 2018 World Cup in Russia and the 2022 World Cup in Qatar. The Qatar incident was particularly bad, estimated to have been more than millions of dollars, as well as causing the deaths of several construction workers.



ENCINITAS, FRIDAY, MAY 1ST, 2026

The Fortune of the Lawrence Estate

By Beatrix M.Y. & Zoe Ba.

Chapter 2

The whistle of the tea kettle pierced the tense silence. Turning my body away from the out-of-place debutante sitting rigid on the wooden chair, I grabbed two mugs from the drying rack next to the sink.

“What do you think?” Her voice was hardly audible over the wave of thoughts crashing against my skull.

What did I think? Why, I hardly stopped thinking. After letting her in, only mere moments before, she informed me that my true assignment was not uncovering a murder, but rather exposing the secrets the Lawrence family had long kept under wraps. I had had my suspicions for a while now. You could always tell the difference between inherited wealth and dirty wealth, and the Lawrence family’s money reeked.

“Lemon or chamomile?” I asked in lieu of a response, opening yet another cabinet.

A soft sigh escaped her lips. “Don’t you know I’m serious?”

“As am I,” I said, the steam of boiling water hitting my eyes. Her answer would be chamomile, a soothing tea for a not-so-soothing woman. I placed the mug in front of her. “Now tell me what you know.” She pursed her lips, the red lipstick she put on just barely staining her chin from the pressure.

“There’s this warehouse my father always goes to, or he orders things from. I’m not sure which.” Evelyn pulled out a slip of paper from her pocket and slid it the short distance between us. “My father— He always deflects when I ask him about it.” I picked up the receipt. The address was just barely visible, having been covered with black marker. “There must be hundreds of those receipts.” She brought the cup of tea to her lips and blew cold air over the rising steam. “Of that, I am most certain.” I brought the paper into the light. Under the light bulb’s glare, the original print

was clear as day.

“4122 West Glare Ave,” I muttered. Where had I seen it before? Because I had seen it. Recently, in fact. On a sign? No... Definitely not on paper. But the words, spoken aloud, were familiar. It wasn’t a matter of where I had seen it. It was the question of where I had heard it. We sat in silence for only a moment. Jameson.

.....

The moonshine illuminated the streets as Evelyn’s kitten heels clicked incessantly on the cobblestone we strode down. Jameson lived in a hut on the edge of town, somewhere police were unlikely to be, and local organizations circulated crime. Not big enough to pack a punch against the rings out in the city, but they were dangerous on a good day, murderous on a bad one. I rarely questioned where Jameson got his information - but it wasn’t a long shot to assume he had connections in places I did not need to venture to myself.

“So,” Evelyn said, breaking the sharp silence that had fallen between us. “When are we going to talk about this?” “I think we’ve talked about a lot tonight. What could you possibly mean by that?”

“Y-you. You’re a woman. And your name definitely isn’t Will. I did a lot of research before coming to you. Now it seems null and void.”

“I am a woman, and your research isn’t wrong. I am not impersonating anyone; I have simply lived by this name for as long as I can remember.”

“You don’t think you were.. Withholding information?”

“You are still here, working with me. I don’t see that it made much of a difference.”

“You’re right. I believe my family is,” she paused a second, “I don’t know what they are. You are the only person I have told, so yes, I would have appreciated the honesty, but I’m stuck with you

for now.”

“Honesty? I can give you that easily. My name is Willow, creative, I know, my last name is still Blaine. I’m not tricking you, it’s protection. It’s harder for people to track me down if they start their search on the wrong foot.” A half-truth, but from the way her jaw seemed to relax, she had accepted it.

“Good, that’s good.” She shoved her hands deeper into the pockets of a fur coat.

“Glad we could wrap that up quickly. We’re here.” The building that stood in front of us barely stood, and a harsh, mildew scent hit me as soon as I swung open the door. We ascended the rickety stairs, climbing up to his apartment. I knocked twice and was greeted with astounding silence.

“It isn’t unreasonable for him to be asleep, you know.” Evelyn pointed out after my third attempt.

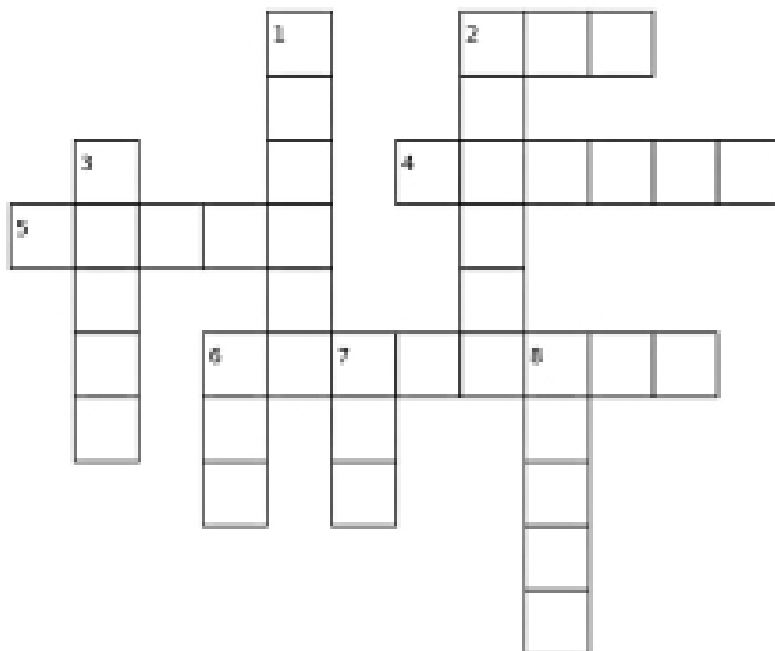
“Believe it or not, this isn’t the first late-night stop I’ve made.” I reached for the handle, surprised when it gave way. I pushed the door open.

“Jameson?” He should never have left his door unlocked; it was unlike him. I stepped into the room. Evelyn, behind me, switched on the lights. The place was in complete disarray; his coat hanger had been thrown to the floor, broken dishes were strewn across the kitchen, and the couch was punctured with bullet holes. Heart sprinting, I took off to his bedroom, but that was barren and wrecked, too. Evelyn’s sudden hand on my shoulder drew me out of my mind, rushing through every possible scenario.

“Will-Willow. I found this in his coat pocket.” With shaking hands, she showed me. The paper was crumpled, and crimson blood was splattered over half of it, but the messy scrawl was unmistakable.

4122 West Glare Ave.

Crossword Puzzle

**Down:**

1. a festive party or celebration
2. the Mexican city where the battle was fought
3. a spicy dip or lively dance
6. the month Cinco de Mayo is in
7. a color of the Mexican flag
8. the Spanish word for "five"

Across:

2. a type of Mexican bread
4. the country that celebrates Cinco de Mayo
5. a popular Mexican food in a shell
6. a traditional Mexican band

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Co-Editor-in-Chief



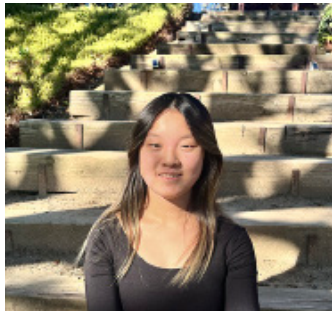
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