

Student Reporter

Marine Waste Is Coming Back to Us



Haeun Cho  
Grade 11  
Juniper Christian School



Two fishermen are filtering out plastic bags and shrimp, which is needed due to severe pollution.  
[Source: Author, Haeun Cho]

Microplastics and other marine wastes from the Han River and the sea are threatening the lives of fishermen and ports in Ganghwado, South Korea. Massive amounts of water waste are released from Seoul and flow through the Han

River until it reaches nets used for shrimping in Ganghwado port. Half of the drawn shrimp nets are filled with plastic bags and other waste materials.

In the last 5 years, the amount of plastic waste has been significantly increasing and reached up to 62 tons. According to the Environmental Basic Survey at the Mouth of the Han River, Ganghwado and nearby areas had the highest amount of microplastics, at 6.12 per 1 . The survey showed that the concentration of marine pollutants was far more serious around the upper areas of the Han River.

Marine wastes are washed away by currents and waves, floating around the coast and sinking on the seafloor. These can be categorized by where they occurred (land, sea, and overseas), and

about 68% of marine wastes in South Korea are estimated to be coming from the land.

The government has taken some actions to resolve these issues. During rainy seasons in summer, hundreds of meters of nets are installed across the Han River to filter out the garbage. The nets filter out the trash that was washed off from the shore. However, this is a temporary resolution that will not solve the whole issue of marine pollution.

The Youth Environment Volunteer Organization, now, youth action, has visited one of the small ports in Ganghwado to monitor the site and make campaigns through social media and other platforms to help clean up the area. Hundreds of thousands of trash items were found, from fishing

rods to snack wrappers produced before the 1990s. Student activists have witnessed fishermen using fans to sort out plastic bags and fish. The odor was still serious in the winter, while stench from trash became more severe during summertime, with flies and maggots appearing in the area.

The ports in Ganghwado that were before abundant with fish are now causing deep worries for many fishermen. Ten ports in Ganghwado that were once the center of trade and vibrant with fishery have now disappeared or lost their functions as ports. In a hope to make a plastic-free-ocean, fishermen and student activists from Now, youth action are expecting to increase social attention in revision of the Marine Waste Management Act and Fisheries Act.

Student Reporter

Bringing Light to the Darkness of Cancer



Joshua Kim  
Grade 10  
Ed W. Clark High School

Cancer tops headlines, infamous for leaving people with heartaches and endless tears. I am fortunate to say that I have never had to cope with the diagnosis of cancer for myself or my family members. However, cancer is prevalent in conversations with my friends and their families. Thus, I attended Light The Night with Clark High School's (CHS) Key Club to widen my awareness of cancer's impact and to support those who have been affected by it.

When I first arrived at CSN's West Charleston campus parking lot, I was able to meet up with all of my friends. Surrounding me were organizations participating in collecting money to fund cancer research and provide financial assistance to families affected by cancer.

Before the main part of the



A cancer walk around CSN campus, where supporters hold lanterns high to light the darkness of cancer.  
[Source: Author, Joshua Kim]

event, everyone was encouraged to take a lantern from one of the booths. Those with red lanterns came to support the event, those with yellow lanterns came to the event in honor of someone who had passed away from cancer, and

those with white lanterns were fighting or had beaten cancer.

As I moved from booth to booth I was able to gather necklaces and toys with the theme of cancer support. The encounters and emotional talks I had with individuals at each booth, on the other hand, were far more valuable. When approaching those with yellow and white lanterns, I was curious about their cancer experiences. Despite the fact that the talks I heard were different and emotional, I learned something I never anticipated discovering.

When individuals holding white and yellow lanterns talked about cancer, they talked with more joy than sorrow. Yes, tears streamed down their faces, and every word that came out of their mouths carried sadness, but they

possessed qualities that I didn't expect them to show. They possessed something more powerful than any emotion: hope. They were soft-spoken, gracious, and unconditionally hopeful. It was unlike anything I'd ever witnessed.

When the event drew to a close, everyone gathered and began walking around campus. It was like an army marching into war, yet it wasn't filled with anger and weapons drawn. It was a march full of love, with lanterns held aloft to illuminate the night.

Everyone faces their own battles. However, it is important that you don't lose hope. I invite you to attend a charity event to help support the battle against any disease or illness. You'll be surrounded by people who are lighting their darkest battles with hope.

Student Reporter

A Youth Choir helps LA Celebrate its Rich Diversity



Tyler Park  
Grade 9  
Harvard-Westlake School

Being one of the most culturally and ethnically abundant cities in the world, Los Angeles, California has a lot to offer when it comes to diversity. Compared to the 76.3% of white people in the United States, according to the 2019 Consensus Bureau, only 52.1% of citizens are of the white race in Los Angeles. People from more than 140 countries, speaking 224 different identified languages, currently call Los Angeles home; another astounding testament to Los Angeles's cultural diversity. This year on December 24th, our city shared an abundance of holiday spirit and cultural heterogeneity in the Emmy Award-Winning L.A. County Holiday Celebration.

Despite lacking an audience present in the theater due to the unanticipated strains of the Omicron variant, the performances did not lack the enthusiasm and magical ambiance the Holiday Celebration is known for. Each performance had its own unique and special quality that was very interesting and inspiring towards

many people including myself. People of all ages, genders, and races sang and danced together in unison, creating an unforgettable and moving performance.

In addition to giving the viewers a magical experience, the performances - which were broadcasted on PBS SoCal - also gave multiple small musical ensembles and groups the opportunity to perform live on a larger scale. One of those smaller organizations, the Young Angels Korean-American Choir, performed for the first time at this event, and were able to distinguish themselves with the unique implementation of traditional Korean instruments within a contemporary orchestra and choir. The choir consisted of Korean-American students of various ages, ranging from 5 to 18 years old, making it one of the many performances to include a wide mixture of ages. The younger choir members were able to gain a lot from this experience and develop performance sophistication.



Young Angels Choir Performance at the 62nd LA County Holiday Celebration  
[Source: Soyun Kim]

In particular, a 12-year-old choir member in the Young Angels Choir, Summer Park stated, "The performance was really fun! I have been doing choir for a long time now and this is the biggest thing we've ever done, so yeah, it was really scary but fun at the same time! One thing that was really special was to get to meet all the other musicians and learn about their backgrounds. It was really nice to be surrounded and supported by these musicians who were like me in the sense that they represented their cultural identity.

Another thing I've improved in after the performance is managing my stage fright. Now I feel confident to perform even if there are a lot of viewers."

The L.A. Holiday Celebration is not only a great entertaining and learning experience for viewers but it is also a way for musicians to take the next step in their journey as performers on a larger platform. Especially during these times of uncertainty and division, the celebration is a great way for joy and unity to be spread throughout L.A.



Student Reporter

Adjusting to Face the school In Person



Jaemin Kwak  
Grade 10  
Torrey Pines High School



Caption A: Experiencing real high school was such an interesting and new experience.  
[Source: Author, Jaemin Kwak]

As Covid 19 hit in 2020 March, many of our lives changed. For students, the whole 2020-2021 school year was taken mostly on-line, and those who are part of the class of 2024, including myself, “missed” their freshman year of high school. After a horrendous year of losing a part of their high school experience, sophomore year came.

A lot had changed for my first in-person school year before, and

some of these changes were very worrying for me. One thing was the starting time of school. This year’s in-person school started an hour earlier than last year’s online school. Since classes were online, for at least most of the days, I usually woke up 10-20 minutes before school since we were at home. But now, I actually had to wake up much earlier and get fully ready to go to school. Another thing that really worried me was getting to see new people. Since I

moved to San Diego at the beginning of freshman year, I did not get to see many people and make as many friends since it was on-line. Although I had met some people through the online meets and swim team, it still was one of the worries of going into in-person high school.

Although there were many stressful things, I got through my first actual semester of high school with good grades and a great experience. Even though I was worried about going to a new school without many friends, I found a lot of people who were similar to me and found friends who had common interests. I also took my first in-person AP class, which I thought was going to be very difficult, but I ended up getting an A in. It was a very tough time trying to get good grades

and make new friends in my first actual year of high school, but I ended up succeeding.

After experiencing real high school, I would like to give some tips on how to go through it. One of the most important things to do is to get involved in activities. I made many friends through the science olympiad club and orchestra. These activities let us who were separated for a year meet each other and become a community. Another thing you can do is manage your sleep schedule. At first, I struggled a bit, but having a good sleep schedule made me do better in school and have a clear mind.

It was so refreshing to go back to in-person learning and meet many people. I hope others had a great time going back to school and meeting new people as well.

Student Reporter

New Year, New Creations



Sae-Eun Lee  
Grade 12  
Northview High School

As the beginning of the 2022 year unravels, people may be searching for new year resolutions to commit to. Promises of self-development open doors to a variety of endeavors, from eating a healthier diet and exercising more to spending less time on technology and reducing procrastination. Although the new year has already begun, one extra resolution to add to the list is art. When people think of art, some may be overwhelmed by the materials and skills needed, but many kinds of art are actually very simple.

For example, calligraphy is a great way to relieve stress, with the satisfying strokes of pen and colors that come to life on paper. It can be a great idea to write inspirational quotes, names of friends and family, and personal thoughts in calligraphy. Decorating journals, albums, or scrapbooks with calligraphy writing can also add a touch of unboxed creativity with every turn of the page. Christina Lee,



Clay charms and figurines can be made with polymer clay and baked in an oven.  
[Source: Author, Sae-Eun Lee]

a student from Northview High School, writes in her calligraphy notebook during her free time. “It puts my mind away from my worries and seems to take me to my own peaceful world,” she says.

Another great way to exercise one’s creativity is through clay art. With the flexible clay material, a multitude of things can be made: mini charms, mugs, clay jewelry, flower vases, and figurines. Since most people don’t have kilns to

harden regular clay, easier alternatives can be used instead. Air-dry clay is the simplest clay to work with for beginners. A different type of clay that can also easily be used is polymer clay. Polymer clay is not the usual clay made of earthy material but is instead made of a plastic base. This type of clay can be baked in an oven or cured under a UV lamp with a UV resin coating.

Aside from the fulfilling prod-

ucts of art are also the mental health benefits they provide. Engaging in creative activities and connecting our imagination with reality through art activates the reward center of our brain, resulting in a pleasurable feeling. Creating art can also be a therapeutic process that lowers stress and anxiety and allows people to focus deeply. Losing oneself to art can release tension and result in a relaxed state of mind that can be mentally healing.

Another benefit to creating art is the break it gives people from technology. On average, people spend seven hours on technology every day, which can be harmful to the body and subject people to mindlessly wandering from tab to tab on their phones. Instead of letting precious time slip through the fingers, leisure time can be spent in a productive yet stress-relieving way that becomes pleasurable experiences to look forward to.

Student Reporter

Trends of 2021 Lends A Hand To 2022



Erin Jang  
Grade 11  
Troy High School

Leaving the past behind, the planet begins a new year amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Wrapping up 2021, families, however, find methods to remain close to what was a normal life, prior to the pandemic.

The number of positive cases continues to increase throughout many countries, particularly due to the Omicron variant. Despite the alarming numbers, people begin to show confidence rather than fear that they have the ability to overcome the virus.

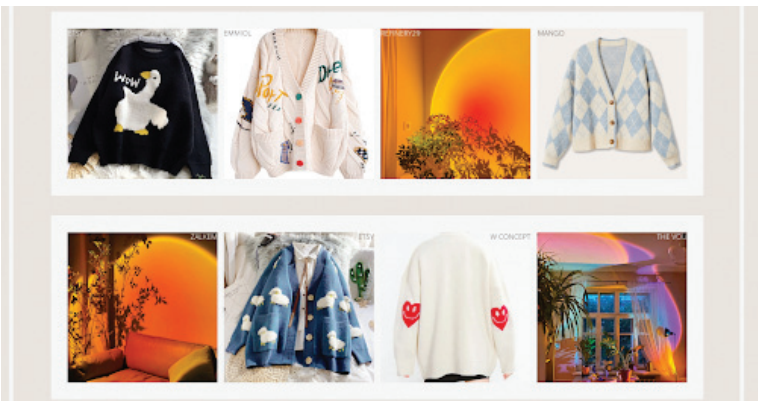
With being over two years into the pandemic, people hold on to the daily things that bring self-happiness. Whilst law restrictions for events and locations are still in play, trends continue to exist and become the focus for many.

A number of trends circle society across a variety of platforms.

The top categories include fashion, dance, books, and other small activities. The most popular and easy-to-use application is TikTok, a video-focused social networking service. For young adults, especially, the app continuously gains users as new and different trends surface repeatedly.

There are a few trends that have lasted throughout the last few months of 2021 and are to remain for the new year. One prominent item is the sunset lamp, which provides a bedroom with a sunset vibe through warm orange and yellow colors. The lamp replaces the previously popular LED light strips, offering its own numerous colors.

In fashion, the rising trend centers around “ugly” sweaters. This came from the idea of ugly Christmas sweaters, specifically



Different styles of sweaters and cardigans span across the internet throughout a variety of clothing websites. Pictures of sunset lamps adding flare to a room inspire more people to buy one for their own.  
[Source: Erin Jang]

designed knit sweaters, and are rapidly gaining attention. These sweaters mix and match with a number of different colors, which gives one an interesting, yet unique, look. Additional pins and patches can be placed on the clothing, increasing its originality.

“I noticed that many clothing stores at nearby malls and shopping centers displayed these

types of sweaters,” local resident Amy Jang said. “At first glance, I thought they were very interesting and bold, but it gradually became an item I wanted to buy and wear.”

Besides the trends introduced above, the diversity of trends increasingly expands and the new year welcomes these to grow further among people of all generations.