

Editors Column

I Seoul You: Summer ‘22 Edition



Erin Jang
Grade 11
Troy High School



It's a must for Mooni Cafe visitors to take memorable pictures outside the building and post them on their social media. [Source: Author, Erin Jang]

With K-pop, K-food, and K-culture riding their way to popularity, it is no surprise that South Korea is bustling with people from around the world this summer. Especially with the lifting of several pandemic restrictions, more places have

opened, more events have been scheduled, and more people have been seen walking the streets in the definite summer heat.

With concerts back in session, one of the biggest events, the Waterbomb Festival, was held in Seoul from June 24 to 26. Each night, a new group of famous music artists performed while water cannons exploded and audience members fired water guns at each other and the celebrities. Zico, Sunmi, Kai, Hwasa, Jay Park, Jessi, Loco, Gray, and Hook were some of the more well-known artists at the events. In the rising humidity and heat, an ice-cold water festival was the perfect treatment.

Alongside the refreshing outdoor festival, several idol groups held concerts and fan meetings in the big cities. One of the most an-

tipicated concerts was Seventeen's Face the Sun World Tour. Starting off their tour with two days in Seoul, over 35,000 fans joined to watch them perform their most popular songs. Members from other famous groups, such as BTS, NCT, Astro, and Monsta X, attended the concert as well.

Meeting celebrities was not the only thing on everyone's to-do list this summer. Another trending activity was visiting exciting locations, one of which was the Mooni Cafe. Recently known for its spectacularly aesthetic environment, the cafe also presents pastries and shakes, all picture-worthy. The Mooni Cafe is normally filled with groups of friends in their twenties, busy hurriedly taking pictures while seated at tables or posing in front of the beautifully decorated terrace. The long waitline outside the pink door in the

overarching heat provides evidence of the cafe's increasing popularity.

As a variety of activities are in play during the summer in South Korea, many worry due to the constant rainy weather that is to come. The first day of rain arrived in the last week of June, and is expected to continue every day throughout July. The uniquely heavy rain, followed by thunder and lightning, does not stop many people from continuing their daily activities. Large numbers of people are still seen walking with their umbrellas in the pouring rain, ready to defeat the day ahead of them.

From the temperature to the big events scheduled, the people currently in Korea should expect to be on another unexpected roller coaster this summer, but one of fun and enjoyment.

Student Reporter

Come Sail Away With Me!



Summer Park
Grade 8
Harvard-Westlake School

Today is June 21, 2022, and it is chilly for a summer morning in Los Angeles. I am at the marina, attending a two-week sailing camp. You might ask - what is a sailing camp? Well, it's a place where you not only learn about sailing, but also make new friends, try new activities, and learn about the marina. The daily activities consist of classroom sessions, enthusiastic lunches filled with food and conversations, and finally games, which were competitive but fun at the same time.

I was nervous at first - suppose I couldn't sail a boat? All of these initial doubts had made me afraid of what was to come. However, to be honest, a week of sailing camp has so far been the most fun and exciting thing that I have experienced this summer.

Sailing can be difficult at first, but as you learn the techniques, you can become more confident and se-



Sail Boats at UCLA Aquatic center in Marina Del Rey, California. [Source: Author, Summer Park]

cure. Sailing is similar to math - you calculate where the wind is coming from and you point your tiller, which is the part of the boat that steers, at a specific angle in order to sail your boat. The weather did affect the sailing, but each day brought new experiences.

One disappointing aspect of the sailing camp was the pollution in the marina. Not only was there an enormous amount of trash floating in the water, but there were few fish and no coral reefs.

However, the counselors at the camp were fantastic. New friends were made that hopefully will last into the future.

The schedule was basically the same for each of the five days of the camp, which included prep time before sailing, reviewing safety rules, and of course, applying sunscreen!

Watching the water for sea life was exciting too. The water was abundant with sea birds, and the sealions were on full display.

After returning to the dock each day, we would have lunch and then proceed with game activities and making friendship bracelets. On the last day of the camping session, there was a competition between the sailing camps. It was an enjoyable time, with everyone participating and being rewarded with popsicles.

I had a wonderful time and I would highly recommend this experience for a summer activity. Not only do you learn about sailing, but you also gain new friends and a great sun tan. However, you must register beforehand - there is a waiting list.

I can tell you that it is worth the wait and cost, and I definitely plan on returning next year. Since there is also a cost to register, you might want to plan ahead and start saving. I am so pleased that I went. Take my word - do not miss this camp.

Student Reporter

My Experience Performing at Carnegie Hall



Annette Je
Grade 11
Redondo Union High School

On Wednesday, June 22, 2022, at 8:00 pm, after two long years of not having in-person practices or concerts, the Los Angeles Youth Orchestra ended their season by performing at one of the most prestigious facilities in the world, Carnegie Hall.

The Los Angeles Youth Orchestra, or LAYO, first started in 1999 with a semester-long grant from the Jewish Community Foundation, and was based at Milken Community High School of the Stephen Wise Temple. The orchestra, then known as the Los Angeles Jewish Youth Orchestra, began with Russel Steinberg, a composer and the Director of Music for the Stephen Wise Schools, and only 30 students. Skipping to 2003, the orchestra grew to have more than just Jewish musicians and totaled with 60 students from fifty Los Angeles area schools. With this change, Russel Steinberg changed the name to the Los Angeles Youth Orchestra to represent the new diversity, and the name continues today.

This summer the orchestra performed their final performance of the

season with Sibelius Symphony No. 2 in D Major, Op. 43, by Jean Sibelius, a Finnish composer. Practices for this piece started in January, with LAYO gathering every Sunday. These practices then led to three concerts before the Carnegie performance, at Barnum Hall, Ambassador Hall, and the local Encino Park. Compared to the first two halls, playing outside at Echo Park was harder due to difficulties in hearing each other because the outside sound drifted, while in a hall the sound was contained. However, even though there were difficulties, Steinberg stated that this was a concert boost, as it showed that LAYO "could play the piece in less than optimal conditions: outdoors, the heat, the difficulty hearing different sections due to the sound amplification."

Steinberg again noted how he chose to play the whole Sibelius symphony even though there was a time limit at Carnegie Hall. He emphasized the importance of performing a whole symphony rather than a movement because it would "allow us to unfold a single unified interpretation." This season was also when in-person rehearsals re-



The Los Angeles Youth Orchestra ended their performance with Sibelius Symphony No. 2 at Carnegie Hall [Source: Author, Annette Je]

started, thus adjusting was difficult. Steinberg recalled how "students had to suddenly adjust to following my baton, balancing their loudness with other instruments, and playing precisely together." Most of the LAYO members had also never played together in person, but with perseverance and determination, everything worked out.

Two days after playing at Encino park, LAYO performed at Carnegie Hall. As someone who is a young musician and a member of the orchestra, it felt incredible to play at a hall where renowned musicians from all over the world perform. My time there went by really fast, but it left a deep impression on me. One of

the things I remember about Carnegie Hall is that compared to the places I had played at back in California, the sound matched the round shape of the building. There was much more clarity and the hall brought out more of the soft and harsh tones in the music. It even added more to the audience's applause. Another enjoyment was the feeling of contentment and excitement I felt performing with my friends, and how sad it was to play the piece we practiced for six months for the last time.

Overall, the whole performance was a success, and an experience I will remember forever. I am excited for what is to come in the next season for the Los Angeles Youth Orchestra.

Student Reporter



Theo Lim
Grade 9
Crescenta Valley High School

Skateboards: Putting Complete Trust in a Piece of Wood



Skateboarding is one of the things I do on the weekends.
[Source: Author, Theo Lim]

Who knew riding a wood board with roller skate wheels would gain huge popularity? Skateboarding is one of the most “hyped” sports among the youth, currently influencing thousands of teens. It all started back in the 1950s as an alternative to surfing, and later became known as “Sidewalk Surfing.” Now it is a major sport, even having a debut in the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

The skateboard is composed of

several components. There is the deck, trucks, bearings, and wheels, where the deck’s width, truck’s material, and even the wheels can be customized by the owner’s preferences. The customizability and personalization of skateboards has made it accessible and has attracted more people wanting to get one of their own.

The first step in riding a skateboard is learning how to balance

when on it. Beginners may have a hard time, as the wobbly board can be challenging to control, but practice makes perfect. Once the board is balanced, foot placement should be adjusted as the back foot paddles the ground to accelerate. Soon you’ll be able to perform a variety of tricks on the skateboard, like hovering, flipping, and maneuvering. Start with the basics, an Ollie, which is a combination of lifting the board up and leveling it mid-air. Then, add flicking and spinning to it to perform different kinds of tricks, such as Kickflips and Pop-Shuvits.

Although skateboarding is mostly about riding, it is not just a sport anymore. Unlike other sports that insist on teams and organizations, there is freedom, community, and spirit in skateboarding. There are no rules or

restrictions, and there is no limit to what a skater can do. The number of separate parks for skating, “Skateparks,” is increasing, and as the use of social media and the Internet has increased; it has become easier for skaters to share moments and tutorials, influencing more and more people. Finally, there is a spirit that skateboard riders share— they gather as one, share spots, and build communities. This spirit allows skateboarding to be considered a new culture.

Many the Skaters describe their experience as thrilling and exciting. “Whenever I go out and skate, I feel refreshed”, says a Skater, Justin Kim. If you’re looking for a fun activity to do during the summer, I recommend you try skateboarding, as it will be a very fresh experience.

Editors Column

How to Spend Your Time While in Lake Tahoe



Jaemin Kwak
Grade 11
Torrey Pines High School

As school has ended in most states, many may wonder how they should spend their time. Everyone seeks to have a perfect vacation with close friends and family. To have this ideal time, you not only need delicious food and relaxation but also the vacation must be cost-worthy and manageable. For this summer, taking a quick trip to Lake Tahoe, and using a boat to ride around in, can help create many memorable moments with friends and family.

You can borrow a boat for yourself, and spend plenty of time creating enjoyable moments while riding around all of Lake Tahoe. Although renting a boat may sound very odd after mentioning a cost-worthy and manageable vacation, it works in this case. With only \$400, you can get a speed boat that can fit up to 12 people for 6 hours, and lets you experience something much more worth than the money you spend.



Being on a boat in Lake Tahoe is a great way to spend time with friends and family this summer.
[Source: Author, Jaemin Kwak]

As someone who has experienced riding in one of these boats, let me tell you that it is worth it when creating great memories to remember with family and friends. The boat itself is very fancy and clean. You can relax while receiving the hot California sunlight, or you can rest in the cool shade underneath the cover. Adding to this, you can bring food onto the boat, allowing for parties

and meals with everyone after you spend time in the water. Having delicious food and spending time with the people you love is what vacation is all about after all.

The boat also comes with a tube on the back, which allows both kids and adults to ride behind the while the boat speeds across the lake. It may seem slow at first, but it not only goes fast, it can also drift

and create huge waves making the tubing in the back an exciting experience. Other water activities are an option too. You can swim in the fresh cold water to cool down from the hot California weather, or use snorkels to look down and explore the bottom of Lake Tahoe.

After spending time on the lake, and it is time for you to return to the boat, you can still finish your trip with much more. You can go to the sandy shore and enjoy time in the lake, or even wait until night and watch the beautiful sunset. Afterward, you can eat a simple dinner or even move to a close restaurant to end the day with a great meal.

In all, I recommend everyone who gets the chance and has the time, to drive to Lake Tahoe and experience what I think is “an unforgettable trip” with the people you love and leave with a memorable moment.

Student Reporter

K-Pop Photocards: A Unique Fan Culture



Lumi Lee
Grade 11
The Buckley School

What is the most important component of a physical album? If you thought CDs, K-pop fans might have a different answer. Photocards, which are paper photos of idols included in most K-pop albums, are, to many fans, precious collectibles that are often valued higher than the album itself.

The inclusion of photocards in K-pop albums was unheard of before Girls Generation featured them in their 2010 album “Oh!”. Since then, these have become a standard component of a K-pop album, and photocard collecting has gradually become popularized within the K-pop fan community. The popularity of K-pop photocard collecting has engendered interesting fan culture distinctive to K-pop, such as top-kku, short for top loader decorating, or taking yejeol-shots, which are photos of restaurant meals next to photocards. Kaelyn, 18, a K-pop fan and photocard collector, believes photocard collecting is an accessible hobby that allows fun experiences that “bring small joys to everyday life.”



Photocards of NCT Haechan are just some of the ones collected by K-pop fans
[Source: Author, Lumi Lee]

The prominence of the photocard culture also manifests in the thriving photocard market. Fans connect through shopping websites or social media, notably Twitter, to trade, sell, and buy photocards. Listed photocards are usually more expensive than the album they came from, and prices can go as high as over a thousand dollars. A part being more expensive than its whole may seem counterintuitive, but within the K-pop consumer body, this is well enabled by the way companies sell albums. Typically, each album has a range of available photocards, but only one ran-

dom card is included per album. Together with the popularized collecting culture, this feature of unpredictability has encouraged fans to make bulk purchases, opening dozens of albums until they get their desired photocard. In such cases, once fans obtain the photocard from an album, the rest becomes unwanted and usually ends up as waste.

Many fans are aware of the environmental impact these mass purchases spurred by photocard culture can have. Kaelyn says, “I believe there is a necessity for the entertainment companies to put in the

effort to bring about a new industry culture that implements more eco-friendly album sale tactics.”

Several entertainment companies have recognized this problem and responded with solutions. For example, with the aim of alleviating environmental pollution, SM Entertainment produced their boy group NCT Dream’s most recent album using FSC, Forest Stewardship Council, certified paper, soy-based ink that decomposes in nature more easily than its traditional counterpart, and UV coating free of volatile organic compounds. Another example is IST Entertainment and their boy group Victon’s two latest albums. The company provided a “platform album” option for the fans, a version of the album that is not physical but available on an app. The photocard, however, would be delivered to fans with each album purchase. These are starting steps, and hopefully, more change will take place to allow for sustainable indulgence in K-pop and its unique fan culture.