

Student Reporter



David Han
Grade 10
Woodbridge High School

E-Bikes are Vehicles? E-Bike Permits In My Community



Student looks both ways before crossing the road, helping to prevent E-Bike accidents.

[Source: Author, David Han]

In a time of technological and environmental change, E-Bikes are appearing everywhere in our communities. This new and trending mode of transportation helps people travel from point A to B while decreasing fuel use and carbon emissions. With there being con-

stant news reports about our degrading environment, it seems like this eco-friendly mode of transportation is the perfect alternative.

However, the situation is not all that pretty. During 2023, in Irvine alone, there were reports of 83 traffic collisions involving e-bikes, an estimated 200% increase from 2020 (Ficarola 2023). Moreover, 59% of the bicycle collisions in Irvine in 2022 involved a juvenile, and 86% of all e-bike collisions last year occurred less than 1000 yards from a school. These statistics show how the widespread conversion to E-Bikes has led to an increase in accidents due to the high speeds and the lack of responsible owners. Without legislative action, further risks to families and citizens are imposed.

A lack of responsibility arises mainly due to how easy it is to obtain an E-Bike, only requiring a one-time payment. After purchase,

there is no safety guide to teach people how to properly ride and obey traffic laws. Despite their age, students are also able to purchase bikes that go above 20 mph, nearing the speed limits of many roads and streets. Additionally, with their only form of production being a helmet, it makes sense as to why the crash rate of E-Bikes has significantly grown.

It is because of these things that the city of Irvine has made changes to rules surrounding E-Bike use and ownership. For instance, in my school district, Irvine Unified School District, there is a mandatory E-Vehicle Safety and Registration Program that partners with the Irvine Police Department in order to bring safety and educational presentations to students and parents. In the presentations, students learn about E-Bike types, laws, helmet safety, and safety procedures in exchange for a parking permit that

they can attach to their bikes.

The new regulations and mandatory permits are an educational tool for students but also lead the way for more questions and concerns. For instance, educational methods do not ensure that students will follow road rules and regulations without supervision. Also, students may still drive recklessly and dangerously in order to run from the police and avoid fines, causing more accidents. Furthermore, is it ethical to compare road vehicles and E-Bikes under the same rules? What about families who are economically unable to pay for the fines?

While questions and flaws are still visible in the program, many parents and students believe this is the right step to create a safer community and prevent accidents. After all, a fine is but a minor scratch compared to a life-ending crash.

Student Reporter



Rachel Chung
Grade 11
Archer School for Girls

Being Present in Wyoming

Sometimes in life, we find it easy to stay within the bounds of what we find “comfortable” and get sucked into a cycle of losing track of things that are important to us. Two weeks ago, I had the opportunity to reflect and learn to be present with myself and the world around me.

On August 26th, my junior class went on 2 plane rides and then a bus ride to Lander, Wyoming, where we would be backpacking through the backcountry. At first, people in my grade, including myself, had second-thoughts about this trip and how much it would really impact us like others said it would. However, no matter how much we tried to prepare ourselves by hearing the opinions of previous participants, we’d have to make our own experiences and judge them for ourselves.

Starting on the first day of the trip, we quickly realized the responsi-



The view from our sunrise hike at Moon Lake in the Wind River Range during the Archer School for Girls Wyoming field trip.

[Source: Author, Rachel Chung]

bility and leadership we needed in hiking, cooking, and guiding our groups through the trails. A mixture of hiking many miles a day, carrying heavy backpacks, and having unexpected curveballs, like stormy weather, took a great mental toll on all students who attended the trip. However, we spent time cooking together, learning in outdoor classes, and were able to deeply bond with each other through our day-to-day conversations. At the end of the day,

the hard moments made our victories into core memories we will always remember.

On day three of our trip, we hiked 5 miles to a lake called “Moon Lake.” Our two days here were, in my opinion, the highlights of the trip. We had opportunities to star-gaze, go on a sunrise hike, and swim in the lake. While we were at this location, we also took part in a solo activity, where

we spent two hours alone on the mountain. My spot overlooked the lake, and it prompted me to reflect on what I had learned on this trip. One thing was to have better reactions to situations that could be frustrating or upsetting by taking a step back and reflecting on what is in my control. Secondly, I realized that with enough ambition and drive, you can do things no matter how hard they may be. On our sunrise hike, we woke up at 5 a.m. to quickly climb over logs in creeks and scale rocks in order to be able to watch the sunrise on time. It was a difficult task, but it was also the most rewarding activity we had done on that trip.

Although this trip was very challenging, it was also the most gratifying and grounding experience I’ve ever had. It was the most present I had ever been, with the world, my friends and instructors around me, and myself.

Student Reporter



Jenna Kim
Grade 10
Pacifica Christian High School

Lost Canyon Retreat

The 2023 school year at Pacifica Christian High School has commenced with an annual, all-school retreat. The tranquil nature and peaceful sermons at Lost Canyon, juxtaposed with exhilarating games, rivalries between school teams, and comical skit nights, make the perfect retreat for the high school class.

Before the retreat, students were separated into four different school color teams: the Blue, Purple, Pink, and Yellow teams. The first competition consisted of a hallway decoration contest and a witty pep rally representing one’s team’s colors and theme. The Pink team had a Barbie theme and created a life-size Mattel photoshoot, brought Barbie houses for the hallway, and memorized the Barbie movie dance for their pep rally. With a legacy of winning the hallway contest, Pink had victory once more but was unable to beat Blue in their rally. And thus ended the first competition.

After our at-school competitions, we traveled to Arizona for the main retreat at Lost Canyon,

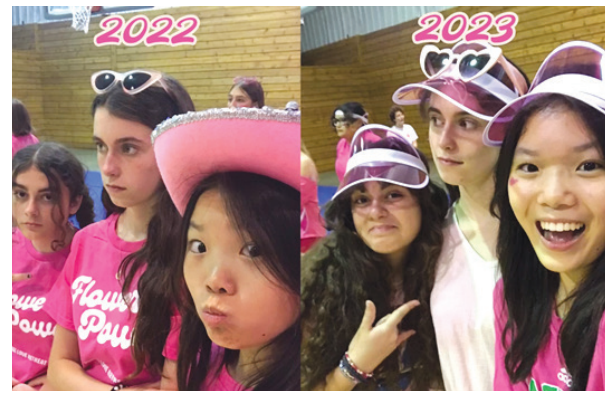
Young Life Camp. An eight-hour bus ride later, the school landed in Lost Canyon Camp, for the long-awaited school retreat. There, as mentioned, were three messages, or sermons, on the Gospel, followed by three talks with peers in one’s cabin. The first message was that God sees oneself as ‘very good’; a Hebrew saying for ‘very good’. The second message was that though God had declared and created us as very good, we had chosen to separate ourselves from this goodness instead of reciprocating the love that had been provided for us, thus heading toward death. Lastly was the sermon on the good news: that though humanity had broken its ties with the good God and deserved death, God had been gracious and provided His Son, Jesus, to die on the Cross for one’s sins, giving us a path to living a perfect life. After these messages, students spent time with their cabinmates and new friends under the stars, giving them time to reflect on these sermons. When touching on deeper thoughts on our circumstances, hurt, and what we had come to believe of God, there were

many tears shed between cabinmates, and relationships deepened.

In contrast with these heartfelt conversations, there were three days of competitions between the school teams where we played ball, field, and water games. On the first night, teams competed against each other in dodgeball tournaments, relay races, and food challenges. Some of the funniest food contests were when students were given a pack of gum and had to chew all of them and make a bubble in the quickest time, as well as another student having to do the classic speed chugging coke contest. The next day, ready to get messy, students dressed in team colors or white shirts to compete in the field

games: color wars, tug of wars, mud spins, and water balloon fights. Lastly, with the most points tied to it, were the water tournaments, including watermelon passes, scavenger hunts, and water jostling. In addition to these main events, there were more minor amusements on stage, with lip-sync battles, musical chairs, and teacher skits.

With all these competitions, only one team could win, and Yellow took first place! With their theme of the Smiley Face and their competitive nature, paired with grace to their competitors, Yellow’s team pride stole the 2023 retreat trophy. Despite the Pink team being in second place, one feels that the win for them is just on the horizon.



Students at the 2022 Lost Canyon retreat verses them in 2023.

[Source: Author, Jenna Kim]

Student Reporter

The New COVID-19 Variant : BA.2.86



Jiseong Yoo
Grade 10
Sunny Hills High School

Covid-19 is a virus that started on January 20th in the United States. The virus has caused an enormous number of deaths all over the world throughout the past 3 years. While talks about Covid-19 and cases are not heard of as often nowadays, there are still thousands of people catching the virus. In the past years, there were a few Covid-19 variants, including Alpha, Beta, and Omicron. These variants cause the health departments to create new and more effective vaccines, and recently there has been another version going around. BA.2.86 is the name of this new variant, with not much being known about it yet. According to Yale Medicine, this variant may be something to worry about. With 30 more mutations than the variant Omicron, BA.2.86 is more likely to enter the human cell.

BA.2.86 first appeared in Denmark in late July and in early August of 2023 in the United States. The CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention) states

this new variant may be more effective than other variants in infecting people who already had Covid-19 or the vaccination. There has been an increase in cases caused by the number of kids and staff returning to school. According to CNN, Covid-19 cases are increasing by 10 percent. Fortunately, there hasn't been a rise in deaths caused by the coronavirus.

What are health departments and scientists doing about this new variant? Pfizer has been talking about a new vaccination. The new vaccine, according to Dr. Scott Gottlieb, will be effective in preventing infection from the new variant. He also mentions that these vaccines will be covered by health insurance companies. For those who do not have insurance, the vaccines will be available in the health department the first day it is released to the public.

Inside Florida Atlantic University, professors test how effective masks are by seeing how far parti-



Covid is back, and now some people are wearing masks again. But what kind of masks really protect us against coughs? [Source: Author, Jiseong Yoo]

cles from coughs go while the person is wearing a mask. The results are more surprising than most people would expect. Without a mask, the cough can reach up to 12 feet, double the recommended feet for social distancing. Professors have tested several masks, like the standard mask worn by most, single-layered bandanas, and the N95 or the KN 95 mask. All of the first masks leaked out and, therefore, were not effective, but masks like KN 95 or N95 were shown to

prevent lots of the germs from spreading. Instead of the standard blue masks everyone wears, people should try to wear the more effective masks like KN 95 and N95.

Since there is a new variant out, it is important to stay safe. Taking precautions, like wearing types of masks that keep germs from spreading or getting a new vaccination, can help keep the spread to a minimum. So be careful out there, and stay safe.

Student Reporter

No Kids Zones, Decreasing Children's Future



Subeen Yu
Grade 8
Juniper Christian School

Imagine you are enjoying your meal, and suddenly one parent changes a child's diaper that shows and smells of poop. These kinds of immoral actions show people's decreased morality, and countless shops and restaurants are facing a crisis of victims not visiting the restaurant. The No Kids Zone was initiated when their children or parents had acted immorally in public areas, and are distinct areas where children are not allowed. No Kids Zones must disappear, though, since it limits a child's ability in society. Some children might also be segregated for no reason due to their parents. Moreover, negative actions will be passed down to the next generations.

Children must have experience from society to understand the current world situation. For instance, if a child has never visited a restaurant due to No Kids Zones, when they do, they might be afraid to order things since the child



One cafe in Unjeong, Korea allows only kids who are at least 13 years old to enter. [Source: Author, Subeen Yu]

has never experienced it before. Furthermore, not all kids are the same. Children who know how to socialize might feel segregated if they are separated from adults due to their peer's unethical behaviors.

Undoubtedly, when the baby's mother changed a diaper, it was the parent's immoral behavior, not the baby's. Shop owners must

allow all kids to come into the shop to show that they care about the children. For the kid's future, owners must treat them equally as they do adults. By being fair, kids will consider society as a sweet place. Moreover, parents must be educated and be responsible for having a baby. Respecting people around them makes a better society.

Similarly, persecuting Christians was a negative action that had been passed down for generations. As time passes, treating kids unfairly will worsen. Adults might have negative childhood memories; thus, they might do the same thing to the next generation. People also have to acknowledge that the parents are also blocked, since they move together. To not feel segregated, people might not even have babies anymore. Opening the heart that has scars that older generations have left is important since it makes the world a better place, and cures the broken heart.

No Kids Zones limits the children's role in society. Moreover, some children might be segregated due to their parents. In addition, negative influences will pass down to later generations if the No Kids Zones do not disappear. It is encouraged for everyone to open the heart for kids, and widen their roles in society.

Student Reporter

The Purpose of the Griffith Observatory



Ethan Chang
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Stockdale High School

High on a slope overlooking Mount Hollywood sits the Griffith Observatory. This observatory has become a popular tourist attraction due to its position overlooking downtown Los Angeles and being located near the iconic Hollywood Sign, as well as its extensive catalog of scientific displays related to astronomy. The construction of this observatory was largely due to immense funding from the building's namesake, Griffith J. Griffith, a famed and controversial American industrialist and philanthropist, who also ensured that admissions should be free since the finalization and opening of the building in 1935.

Starting its construction on December 16, 1896, Griffith purposely funded the creation of the observatory with the main goal of allowing astronomical studies to be witnessed and accessible to the general public, which corresponds with the building's

location near downtown L.A. This was opposed to the prevailing idea of the 1800s and early 1900s that all observatories must be located on isolated mountaintops manned only by scientists. Griffith's view on how the public should also involve themselves with astronomy was achieved mainly through the Zeiss refractor telescope, which has since earned the distinction of the most viewed telescope in the world, with over 7 million viewers.

Aside from the Zeiss telescope contained in the east dome of the building, the Art Deco-designed observatory also contains a triple-beam solar telescope in its west dome and exhibits which are all related to the study of astronomy. Such exhibits include a model Solar system and eclipses and the GPO-1 Tesla coil created in 1910 by American engineer Earle Ovington. Guests outside are greeted with the Astronomers Monument



Outside the Griffith Observatory with the Astronomers Monument. [Source: Author, Ethan Chang]

sculpture dedicated to six of the greatest astronomers in world history: Hipparchus, Nicholas Copernicus, Galileo Galilei, Johannes Kepler, Isaac Newton, and William Herschel. Over the years following its opening, the observatory was used for various purposes by the U.S. government such as training pilots in WWII and astronauts in the 1960s for the Apollo program. The site later underwent an immense \$93 million renovation in the early 2000s,

which included expanding the building underground, replacing the aging planetarium dome, including models relating to astronomy, and updating much of the technology under the supervision of Dr. E.C. Krupp.

Today, the Griffith Observatory still stands as one of L.A.'s most well-known attractions, whether through photo shoots or the plethora of astronomical knowledge it contains within its foundation.