

## Editors Column



**Hannah Lee**  
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## Electric Bikes: Wonderful or Controversial?



Many bikers commonly tend to stick to the main road, which can cause injuries if a crash were to occur. [Source: Author, Hannah Lee]

Electric bikes. Possibly one of the fastest and most efficient ways to get to school, considering that they are easy to store, don't take up a lot of space in the garage, and operate at quite high speeds, enabling transportation to become easier. Electric bikes are normally not very cheap, but in the long run, they may feel worth it as, for some, they are used on a day-to-day basis. However, even such simple modes of transportation come with their own issues.

Many bikers tend to ride on the same road as cars, and this issue is even more common with bikes that are electric. Although it is important for electric bikes to stay in the lane designated for transportation related to bikes, many who own electric bikes end up swerving into the normal lanes, which could be threatening for both cars, buses, and bikes. For the safety of all, it would be proper for each method of transportation to use specified lanes.

The cost of these electric bikes is also higher than regular bikes, which could be a downside to many. They can cost twice the amount of regular bikes, and if they break down or become damaged from the batteries they contain, this could add to the amount of cost required to adjust the bike.

This method of transportation is surely easier to utilize and takes less energy to ride over tra-

ditional bikes- they are faster and require less strength from the person, overall becoming a popular choice for transportation. Especially for those who live in areas where bikes are commonly utilized, such as colleges, may find this option to be more helpful. Where buildings may be far from each other, making use of bikes is helpful and a simple way to move from one place to another.

However, electric bikes are certainly an environmentally friendly way of transportation, as they do not produce any harmful emissions. These bikes also help to maintain a daily dose of cardio, which is a daily form of exercise that we may not otherwise have time in our day for, or it would be a two-in-one deal: getting from one place to another, and getting some exercise in! With these health benefits, electric bikes do seem like a good option.

There are many pros and cons to utilizing an electric bike- but as long as we are in the regulations of the law, there is not much that can go wrong, or be extremely out of place. If the rules set for electric bikes are kept (proper maintenance, staying within bike lanes, and trying to stay off sidewalks that are jumbled with crowds of people), electric bikes have proven to have many benefits for a great number of people.

## Student Reporter

## Inside the Biomedical Engineering Society Conference



**Aspen Lee**  
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It is commonly known that high school students around the globe are constantly working to take a step into their future careers, and attending conferences or events is a start to this. As leaves began to change colors in Baltimore, Maryland, researchers, universities, and students came to the Baltimore Convention Center to participate in the Biomedical Engineering Society's Annual Conference (BMES). Not only was this an opportunity to present high-quality research in this field, but this conference also created a space to connect with professionals and search for the best-fitting next steps for individuals.

Over the course of four days, 60+ universities and biotech companies set up booths beside the large presenting areas. High school students, undergraduates, and various others viewed the multiple options to pursue a career in biomedical engineering, and during the many sessions, they were able to showcase their research and conclusions to all who visited. Varying from topics on the Controlled Appetite of



A group of high school students from San Diego, CA, with their advisor before presenting their summer research at the BMES Conference. [Source: Emma Lee]

Fruit Flies to the Molecular Study of T-cells, every single poster presented contained information and research that could make anyone a growing expert on a given topic.

A group of high school students from San Diego, CA, had the chance to fly to the East Coast and attend this conference, for it also had a High School Poster

Expo. This expo was set up solely for individuals in grades 10-12 to demonstrate their findings from programs, individual labs, or literature reviews. In hopes of gaining experience presenting scientific information and being exposed to different universities that they could potentially attend, the 30+ students were able to converse

with different schools: Yale, USC, Boston University, Princeton, and more at their booths or in front of their posters. These moments of interaction included questions regarding the biomedical engineering programs at the different schools, research opportunities, or in-depth scientific conversations about the research performed and conclusions supported. Besides the short discussions, some students were able to connect on a deeper level and receive guidance in applying to schools, and many were given the chance to learn about the topic they studied from an advanced perspective, for example, from a professor.

Other than the interactions, presentations, and talk sessions outside of the poster areas, all of BMES was an unforgettable experience for many. High school junior Abbie Q., mentioned, that "Being able to talk with a variety of different admissions officers and researchers was amazing, but I am so grateful and proud to have presented my research and heard from undergraduate students who are on the path that I hope to go on."

## Student Reporter

## Cox Farms: A Seasonal Fall Festival



**Kaylyn Yu**  
Grade 10  
Chantilly High School

Cox Farms has been located in Virginia for over 45 years, originally beginning in Vienna and eventually transferring to Centreville. Although their Fall Festival is the main appeal of the farm, they also have a popular corner market open at specific times throughout the year. As the festival is such a popular attraction during the fall time, many families around the area visit the farm every fall, from September to November.

Although everyone has their favorites, Cox Farms' most famous attraction remains the classic Hayrides, a 20-minute long wagon ride that plows through the farm's natural terrain and is merged by a group of staff that brings a neat act together. Another memorable part of the festival is the Foamhenge monument, an accurate model of the Stonehenge built entirely out of styrofoam. Tourists love to catch pictures with the iconic station of massive blocks of painted foam. The extensive number of slides is also a considerable feature. There are a total of seven slides, each with a different twist and placed on natural hills. A distinctive trademark everyone relishes are the free apples and cider from the farm that comes with the entrance fee of \$15. The local market by this station also sells numerous farm goods, including the favorite apple cider donuts



Cox Farms shows off a great diversity of fun slides, like this Castle Slide. [Source: Author, Kaylyn Yu]



The Corner Market in Cox Farms displays pumpkin sales, allowing one free of charge per visitor. [Source: Author, Kaylyn Yu]

and kettle corn. Other major activities, like the Music Stage, which features individual bands, and the Cornundrum maze, are also adored by visitors.

A Halloween twist to the festival is the Fields of Fear, which is open between 7:30-11:00 pm. The farm adjusts to focus on the spooky theme with newly dressed actors waiting to frighten bold adventurers. The main events are the Dark Side Hayride, a thrilling form of the standard Hayrides, and the Cornnightmare, a trail designed to give a more mature audience some fun.

The prospect of working at Cox Farms thrilled many teens. Eva Xie, a sophomore in high school, recounted her experience: "I chose to work at Cox Farms after my friend mentioned job opportunities for employees as young as 14-years old. My experience was very positive; I met new friends and got to express myself. My coworkers and I performed skits and interacted with customers on the Hayrides. I would highly recommend this job to others because the positions cover many varieties, such as customer service and entertainment."

Harshini Kandukuri, a sophomore in high school, reviewed her visit to the festival. "I had a lot of fun with my friends at Cox Farms. There were a lot of different activities that we could do, with all the fun slides."

This seasonal fall festival is a great way to spend your autumn days cherishing vintage scenery in the world of Cox Farms. Despite being designed for a younger generation, anyone can enjoy the festival with the same delight. With its success these past years, Cox Farms is sure to stand for many more years to come.

Editors Column

## Study in Style: Gorgeous L.A. Cafes to Visit



**Alexis Choi**  
Grade 12  
South High School



Visit About Time, a unique cafe in Los Angeles, for your next study session!  
[Source: Author, Alexis Choi]

For many high school students, studying can feel like an endless burden, with stress and burn-out lurking just around the corner. With an entire school year filled with tests, projects, and homework, there's no escaping it—studying is an inevitable task. However, a simple method to combat the monotony and repetition of this task is to change the environment. Studying in a new, unique setting can help break the tedious routine and add some flavor to the learning process! Here are some cafes in Los Angeles that are perfect for students of every type.

For an even more unique cafe, try visiting Café Loft on W 6th St. This is truly a spot that draws in customers for its distinctive atmosphere. Not only does it offer an expansive menu of flavorful drinks and desserts, like the Charcoal Latte and famous Basque Cheesecakes, but visitors also love the artsy, cozy ambiance with plenty of seating. With a darker color scheme, the cafe sports

About Time is a cafe located on Wilshire Boulevard. The rustic

exterior contains a gorgeous interior with a mix of vintage and boho-style decor. The cafe itself has two floors: a spacious, high-ceilinging lower level and a cozier upper floor for quieter, more intense studying. There is also a private outdoor courtyard with a plethora of puffy chairs and fire pits. Aside from the cafe's layout, About Time attracts customers with its unique menu of Asian-inspired drinks and desserts, including Korean corn lattes, ube pound cake, and toasty bagels. Unlike most other cafes, About Time is pet-friendly and also stays open until 1 A.M. on weekdays (12 A.M. on Sundays)—perfect for late-night study sessions! Though the seats fill up rather quickly and the food is slightly higher-priced than other coffee shops in the vicinity, About Time is definitely worth visiting for a fresh study mood.

checkerboard floors, jewel-toned walls, and faint disco lights—a charming environment to concentrate on your studies!

Finally, Alchemist Coffee Project has two stores in Los Angeles, with a third opening in Culver City this fall. Located on Hobart Boulevard and Vermont Avenue, Alchemist is a trendy, retro-style cafe fit for anyone who enjoys delicious coffee and a calm, productive atmosphere. The cafe has hints of industrial decor, with naked lightbulbs and marble countertops. One of the signature drinks is the Iced Duo Tea Latte (half latte, half milk tea) for \$6. Although some find the valet parking to be a negative aspect, it isn't a bad deal for long-time studiers, who can enjoy 7+ hours of delicious drinks, outlets, fast Wi-Fi, nice music, and a fancy bathroom. This highly popular cafe attracts customers all day, and you will find yourself surrounded by individuals varying in age and occupation, but all working equally hard.

Studying is difficult and it can be beneficial to treat yourself to a day in a nice cafe! Though seemingly simple, this is the perfect way to refresh the mind (while still being productive)! Visit any of these unique study spots in L.A. for your next study session.

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Student Reporter

## Instruments: More Than Just Noise



**Sander Im**  
Grade 12  
Rise Kohyang High School

Often challenging to describe – sound is a phenomenon experienced daily, yet we tend to undermine its value and importance. However, we should not forget how humans have channeled sound in impressive ways apart from speech, one of the most creative ways being music. Instruments can be seen throughout various times in history, even with the oldest civilizations having instrumental music to some extent. Today, music is more accessible and with greater diversity. A skill once only adopted by a handful is now a common recreational activity. Is there a motive to play music today? The reasons can vary from leisure to widely observed health benefits.

The most common reason to play an instrument is simply because it's enjoyable. Modern society has granted us more free time than ever, which was once a luxury reserved only for the affluent. With this extra time, many people often decide to learn to play an instrument because the concept appeals to them, with most long-term players continuing out of passion. Various aspects make an instrument fun. While the learning curve can be challenging, the reward is worthwhile, and some individuals even enjoy the process of learning. If you find an instrument that interests you, it is highly recommended that you try it out. It is very possible to discover a passion that you can invest hundreds and even thousands of hours into.



Instruments are vastly unique; there is most likely one that suits you.  
[Source: Author, Sander Im]

er a passion that you can invest hundreds and even thousands of hours into.

Apart from an activity that

can be rewarding and meaningful for many years, there has been increased discussion on how playing an instrument benefits us both physically and mentally. The most obvious health benefit is reduced stress. Various organizations have done studies and concluded that playing an instrument and even listening to music has shown a decrease in stress. This makes sense since most musicians play out of love and enjoyment. For musicians, music provides a form of rest and a healthy method of destress. Music has also been viewed to improve skills such as memory and hand-eye coordination through constant repetition and practice, as your body and mind require more of these with progressively harder songs.

Music is truly impressive, as there is so much joy and benefit from making noise. While there can be various factors that are discouraging, it can be comforting to know that learning an instrument is an activity where you can choose the pace. An instrument can be casual fun or the biggest passion in your life. Whatever you prefer, an instrument can provide many benefits as well as possibly create a genuine passion that you may pursue for your life.

Student Reporter

## Is Golf Really Just an Elderly Sport?



**Jiyeon Hwang**  
Grade 12  
John Marshall High School

Golf. It's a sport often considered an extensive sport and is associated with older people. While it is no lie that golf equipment can be expensive, it is not just a privileged sport that elderly people play. In the past, there was a preconceived image of golf as expensive, and that it was associated with the more upper-class individuals, giving it an air of elitism. However, this is not as true anymore because golf is adapting to appeal to broader audiences. There are other forms of golf, such as minigolf, which is a fun activity to do when hanging out with friends, or Topgolf, a sports entertainment complex. The latter is a driving range that provides clubs for people to play a more casual type of golf with friends, which everyone can enjoy. Additionally, you can find more golf courses that are shorter and ones that don't enforce the proper dress code that the more traditional courses do, making it more casual. These are some options that help break this image of golf being this proper, formal sport that only rich people play.

Another deterrent that may prevent more people from playing is that golf can be a frustrating sport in general. It requires precision, patience, and a strong mental mindset. Golf is a sport where

your technique is more important than your physical body. It is due to these reasons that many beginners may leave feeling disappointed at first. I especially succumbed to these mistakes when I began playing golf, for I initially had started playing the sport because I thought it wouldn't be as physically taxing compared to other sports and PE.

In the beginning, I failed to acknowledge the skills, such as patience and consistency, that were necessary to be a good golfer. I was not paying detailed attention to the ways that even a twist in my wrist could cause inaccurate shots or that my left arm was not parallel to the ground. I fell into this greed of wanting to hit the ball far, but my technique and mindset were all wrong. I went in with a negative, fixed mindset, blaming everything but myself. But as I played more, I started making small improvements, often by accident or luck. Over time, I found golf truly enjoyable. Golf has this charm; it's what keeps me playing the sport despite the frustrating setbacks. I might not be playing my best, but as soon as I hit one good shot, all the practice seems worth it. Small wins, such as being able to consistently hit the ball straight, made me want



Author Jiyeon, swinging down onto the golf ball.  
[Source: Golf Coach, John Lee]

to see how much more I could improve. Slowly, I came to the realization that what held me back was myself.

Golf has taught me so many skills, such as patience, mental fortitude, grit, and so much more.

It has made me a better person, which is why I would recommend others to just try picking up any type of sport. Not only is it an enjoyable way to move your body, but you never know what you could learn from playing.