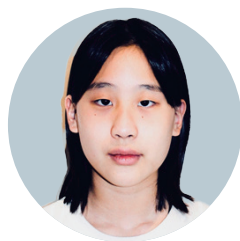


Editors Reporter

Halloween Horror Nights: One Last Time



Claire Lee
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The iconic Universal Studios globe is illuminated in red, reflecting the horrors of Halloween Horror Nights after hours.
[Source: Author, Claire Lee]

Electrifying fumes of the opening “scaremony” filled the air, welcoming my final entrance to Universal Studios’ Halloween Horror Nights--HHN--the close to a yearly tradition. The familiar sounds of shrieks and chainsaws echoed in the distance, though with a sense of heaviness this

time around. This year was different from the ones before. It would be my last time attending the event before graduation would set my high school friends and me on our own ways.

To anyone unfamiliar with HHN, Horror Nights is an an-

nual event hosted by Universal Studios, living up to its name as a frightening and unforgettable experience. From late August to early November, the entire park is transformed into a terror zone, with actors, themed haunted houses, and scare zones scattered throughout. This year’s HHN featured famous blockbuster movies like Five Nights at Freddy’s, Fallout, and Jason Universe, some of which entered the event for the first time. Another popular attraction was Terrifier, a gore-filled slasher film, featuring Art the Clown, a mad serial killer. With Hollywood opting for a “wet path,” a route involving mist and splashes to enhance the experience, on this maze, the attraction felt undoubtedly immersive, as if I were in a scene from the film. Along this trail, those brave enough to pass through were met with splashes of water, appearing blood-like under the ominous lighting. All of these walk-through houses made this last experience thrilling, yet exciting: a moment to look back upon for years forth.

Beneath the fear and thrills, HHN has been memorable for more than just the scares. It carries a feeling of nostalgia, of cherished moments spent with friends, embracing how we’ve all grown and

changed. So, regardless of how scared or reluctant I might be, I always find myself tracing back to this event, keeping a tradition alive. Beginning in my freshman year of high school, I’ve embraced the Halloween spirit at Horror Nights every year of my journey. If I’ve learned one thing, it’s that no matter how many years go by, I’ll still be engulfed by fear, but at least I’ll be surrounded by those I care about. A friend who accompanied me to Universal Studios expressed that “[I] hadn’t expected this moment to come this quickly. I hope that we’ll still be able to enjoy Horror Nights even though high school is ending.”

As my friends and I walked down the final aisle leading to the park’s exit, I turned back to hear waning screams. The iconic Universal globe glowed red as the park grew empty and silent. Even though our exhausted walk through City Walk was silent, we collectively felt a variety of emotions. This final Horror Nights was not only the end of high school, but also the end of an era.

Though our paths remain unclear and we have yet to make our own major life decisions, I hope that distance will not keep us apart in the future, and that this will not be our last HHN.

Student Reporter

A Retreat; Both Spiritually And Physically



Toby Shin
Grade 7
Granada Hills Charter Middle School

When I first arrived at the mountaintop at 11 P.M., the only thing I could think about was getting a good five hours of sleep. But there was no way I could’ve predicted the journey that would soon ensue over the next two days.

When my parents first informed me of the church retreat I was to attend, I wasn’t very ecstatic. I was afraid that I would end up a social outcast without anyone to hang out with, so I ran from the idea. But my parents had other plans. My mother wished I could experience the ‘joys and excitement’ of the ‘social event of the season.’ I ignored all her suggestions, which I later found out weren’t genuine suggestions. She had signed me up and forced me unwillingly to go to the retreat. I wasn’t happy about it.

During my second day of the retreat, I woke up early in the morning and found myself heading off to breakfast with my cabin-mates. One perk of the early wake-up call was the hour of free time before morning service. I

played volleyball with some fellow middle schoolers and was able to get along nicely with them. Finding myself in a crowd of friends, I sat through morning service for around two hours. The day felt long, but this wasn’t so bad. I was able to make myself welcome in a

group of kids I had never met before. This helped me get through the day, and eventually, Saturday night service had arrived. Maybe I had come to the retreat as a stranger, but no matter how corny it sounds, it truly felt like I had grown to become a part of the

community that I had so desperately attempted to avoid. The late-night worship time when we could all show our excitement, the small bits of free time where I could express myself openly among others, and the early morning devotion where we all focused together. All the experiences I gained helped me become closer to not only my community, but it also helped me develop my spiritual life. It’s events like these that really let you express yourself in ways you never thought of, and it’s events like these that encourage you more than ever before.

On the last day of the retreat, I said my farewells and experienced worship together with new friends one final time. As I headed home, unexpectedly, I kept everything in my thoughts. The songs we sang at worship, ringing in my head. The wise words of our pastor, reflecting off the walls of my mind. And the conversations and laughs I shared with my newfound friends. It never left my mind, and I’m sure a fragment of it will be cemented in my head forever.



2024-2025 ‘Roots’ Retreat t-shirt with bible; these are memories of a time I may not have thought I would enjoy, but am so glad I now have.
[Source: Author, Toby Shin]

Student Reporter

Events in Koreatown: Korean Festival



Heesue Joy Shin
Grade 10
New Covenant Academy

Once a year, the community of Koreatown, California, comes together to celebrate and immerse itself in Korean culture. People of all backgrounds come to watch cultural performances, such as Mongolian, Korean, Chinese, Tibetan, and Turkic performances, as well as to enjoy the festivities. This unique and fun experience is recommended to everyone in Koreatown and other places nearby who want to celebrate Korean culture and just enjoy the community.

The 52nd LA Korean Festival is the largest Korean festival in CA. It runs from October 16 through 19, and it’s located in Seoul International Park, 3250 San Marino Street, and is open from 10 AM to 10 PM. There are all sorts of entertainment, such as food stands, performances, and stands that promote businesses. The performances aren’t only Korean dance; many other performative artists and dancers come to show off their cultures. It’s very fun to walk through the park and see what all the stalls have to offer.

Usually, people come with their friends and family to experience

the festivities, and it’s common to see members of the K-town community. Personally, I enjoy watching the performances every year, and I like to look through all of the stalls. There are a lot of businesses that you can get to know and buy from. Additionally, there are many interactive brands that give out prizes and raffle tickets. The stalls have a lot of diversity, ranging from jewelry to packaged food.

In the food stalls, there are many different Korean cuisines. This is a great way to immerse yourself in the culture. Some good stalls to look for are potato chip sticks, tteokbokki, and ice cream. There are rows of food stalls, and there’s an area where you can eat. However, you can’t bring food into the place where people go to watch the performers.

There’s a big stage where performers put on their shows, and there’s always a host who announces and keeps the crowd engaged. The festival also invites celebrities to attend and invites people to come and meet them. Also, there are giveaways sponsored by brands that the Los An-



A view of the cultural dances displayed in the Koreatown Festival.
[Source: Author, Heesue Joy Shin]

geles Korean Festival posts on its Instagram.

Some performances that I remember from last year were the Korean performance, where they did a traditional fan dance and also traditional drums. They dress in Korean traditional clothes and perform, which is cool to see. Also, I remember that there was a Japanese drum performance, which was also fun to watch. I recommend going to

see the performances at night, because it enhances the experience and makes it have a bigger impact.

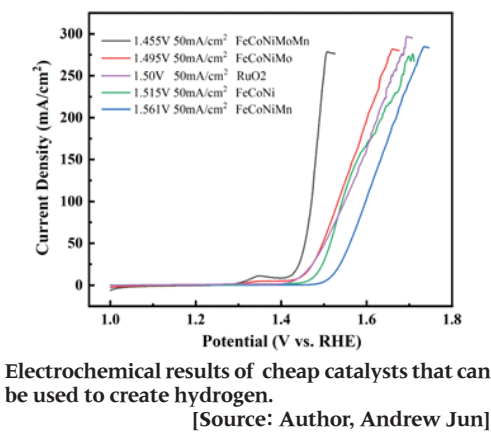
There’s no entrance fee, so you can just walk into the festival and experience all the activities that I’ve mentioned in this article. This is a great place to see Korean culture and hang out with people you love! Definitely check this event out on October 16 through 19 before it ends!

Student Reporter

The Potential of Hydrogen: A New World Awaits



Andrew Jun
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Imagine filling up your car with fuel and driving across the entire country, while leaving no trace behind in the air but a puff of water vapor. That's the promise of hydrogen. Hydrogen is the most abundant element in the universe and has long captured human curiosity in creating sustainable energy sources. As the world searches for alternatives to fossil fuels, hydrogen gas is an emerging candidate to power industries, vehicles, and even en-

tire cities. It's light, energy-dense, and versatile. Hydrogen can be used to generate power for the unimaginable, making it a key factor in the global shift toward renewable energy.

Hydrogen is not just some element in the periodic table. It is the 'universal language' for power. Hydrogen can be used to energize most infrastructures. It can power cars, buses, trains, and possibly even airplanes. Additionally, we

can use hydrogen as an energy storage, as hydrogen can capture excess electricity created from hydraulics or solar panels. Even in the heavy industrial parts of carbon emissions, hydrogen can be used for steelmaking, cement-making, and aviation sectors that are known to be hard to decarbonize.

Well, how are we going to mass-produce this hydrogen in a way that is inexpensive and energy-efficient? The best and cleanest option is green hydrogen, which comes from electrolysis, the splitting of water into hydrogen and oxygen gas. This process not only avoids greenhouse gas emissions, but we can also use renewable energy sources such as sunlight, wind, or hydraulics to create hydrogen. Other forms, such as blue hydrogen, are produced from natural gas with carbon capture technologies, also serving as a transitional option as renewable infrastructure expands.

Of course, turning hydrogen's

promise of energy into reality is not going to be easy. Producing green hydrogen at a large scale remains inefficient, and storing and transporting the gas requires specialized infrastructures, which companies are not willing to invest in yet. Safety concerns, although often overstated, must also be addressed to build public trust. Yet despite these challenges, the idea is growing. Governments are investing billions of dollars in hydrogen research, and companies around the world are racing to build the technologies and supply chains needed to bring it into everyday use.

As the world looks for different ways to a carbon-free future, hydrogen is emerging as more than just an alternative fuel. It represents a vision of energy that is cleaner, more flexible, and capable of powering everything from cars and homes to factories and cities. The idea of hydrogen taking over is only beginning, but its potential to reshape the global energy landscape is undeniable.

Student Reporter

Starbucks Is Signing; What Do You Think?



Hajoon Song
Grade 12
International School of Beijing

Recently, many companies around the world are trying very hard to make their businesses easily accessible to the public and to embrace a wide variety of people.

Starbucks is one of the leading companies in the world. Beyond a simple coffee chain, Starbucks has provided special spaces for deaf people to actively participate in social activities. It is a prime example of practicing diversity and social responsibility by hiring deaf employees and actively supporting them to work and communicate with other deaf employees through its Starbucks sign language branch.

Starbucks' first sign language branch opened in Washington, D.C. in 2018. Most of its employees are proficient in American Sign Language (ASL), and they are different from regular Starbucks branches in that they have a digital order screen and an order system using simple sign language. Through this, it has become a space where not only deaf customers but also general customers can experience inclusive communication, and it is helping to steadily increase sign language



Starbucks has multiple locations around the world, known as Signing Stores, that cater to the deaf and hard of hearing.
[Source: Author, Hajoon Song]

branches in various major cities in the United States.

This model has spread beyond the United States to China. At Starbucks - sign language branches in major Chinese cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Chengdu, and Guangzhou, most of their employees are deaf and communicate with customers using easy

and simple Chinese sign language (CSL). Digital order screens and visual guidance systems allow customers to order smoothly for the first time, and some branches operate regular programs to help ordinary customers learn and experience basic CSL.

These points go beyond providing simple convenience and

provide dignity, independence, and a sense of belonging to deaf employees. In addition, customers who visit often feel moved and inspired when they see the employees, and through the experience of accessing sign language without difficulty in their daily lives, they break the stereotypes about the deaf and feel the importance of inclusive communication.

Starbucks' attempt at this kind of business does not just end with its unique mindset, but also serves as a model for other global companies. The key to inclusion is to create a space where anyone can feel valued beyond just meeting legal needs. The success story of Starbucks' Sure branch shows how businesses can build strong bonds with communities while contributing to social change.

In other words, Starbucks' sign language branch is not just a coffee shop. It is a living example of how businesses can realize inclusion and communication by combining commercial activities and social responsibility. We hope that more companies will actively attempt this model in the future.

Student Reporter

The Development of the Universal Flu Vaccine



Yejoon Choi
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The influenza virus, a seasonal danger that returns despite the continuous development of new vaccines, may come to an end. Rapid developments and breakthroughs in the biomedical field have paved the way for creating a solution to the constant and elusive mutations of the influenza virus.

The primary reason behind seasonal vaccinations against the influenza virus is that many current flu vaccines rely on predicting the mutations of new strains and trying to stimulate the release of antibodies aimed at protein "heads" attached to the virus. The estimation and prediction of a highly mutable protein on the virus necessitate frequent vaccinations. Additionally, there remains the possibility of ineffectiveness in the vaccine when cultured based on incorrect predictions.

Additionally, these unique properties of influenza cause limitations in its vaccines compared to those of many other viruses. The influenza viruses are capable of infecting birds, pigs, and other wildlife. When vaccines eradicate

the outbreak of the infectious strain, the flu that remains in different animals can constantly mutate and evolve to become utterly immune to the prior vaccine. This property of influenza makes it extremely difficult to find a universal cure.

However, advancements in biomedical technology appear to offer a possible solution to the ongoing dilemma of influenza's persistence. This novel technology uses the mRNA platform to form antibodies against the hemagglutinin protein. Its proposed universal properties derive from specific differences between the conventional vaccines that are presently used and this mRNA vaccine. First, current vaccines use a form of the "head" of the hemagglutinin protein that is prone to mutations rather than activating an immune response against the hemagglutinin stalk, which is less variable between strains of the flu. Additionally, rather than allowing our body to utilize the natural immune response that comes with such proteins, we are using lipid-coated mRNA to express proteins that are recognized by our adaptive immune



The seasonal flu shots administered at pharmacies may come to an end with the development of a universal flu vaccine. However, the dangers and side effects associated with this technology may pose a concern for public health.
[Source: Author, Yejoon Choi]

cells, primarily the T-cells. Once the mRNA vaccine enters those cells, the immune system could then create antibodies designed against the "stems" of the proteins, specifically hemagglutinin,

on the flu virus, creating a more definitive and long-lasting solution against the virus.

Despite these benefits, the casualties resulting from the COVID-19 virus's mRNA-based vaccine seem to indicate that the dangers of this novel technology may outweigh its potential effectiveness. The mRNA vaccines administered to the public were associated with adverse side effects. Studies in India showed that of the countless inflammatory responses to the novel vaccine, some suffered from anaphylaxis, antibody-developed enhancements of the virus, and even death. With such downsides and side effects accompanying this technology, it is questionable whether this will truly be the ultimate solution against the influenza virus.

The vaccines can be optimistically viewed as the perfect solution to the dilemma posed by the influenza virus. However, these novel mRNA-based technologies should be approached with a healthy dose of skepticism to avoid the consequences that came with the COVID-19 vaccine.