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A Publication of the Analy High School Journalism Club

# WEST COUNTY WORLD

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westcountyworld.org



## Whose house? Our House! Our AHS and Golden State Warriors! WARRIORRRRS!!!



The Analy High School Band plays during the half time show at the Golden State Warriors game against the Phoenix Suns on November 4th, 2025.

By Elia DelMonte

Band kids are always busy with something. You've probably heard of the school's bands, maybe you've even seen them play at the football games or during a rally or concert. This year, the school's instrumental music department has been extremely busy. We've juggled playing at SSU, hosting the Analy Band Wagon's Fall Music Festival, mentoring at the Cazadero Music Jumpstart Camp, playing at multiple home football games, being a part of the Drama Club's Sherlock Holmes performance, preparing for performances in and out of school, and balancing our academic and social lives. The cherry on top of this busy schedule was the opportunity the concert and symphonic bands had to go perform during the half time show at the Golden State Warriors game against the Phoenix Suns on November 4th, 2025. It was a lot of work to get to that exceptional performance on that basketball court.

As a consequence it was a lot of work for me to figure out how to capture this incredible experience on a piece of paper. But I don't care how we got here, and the hard work we put in was definitely worth it. This experience meant a lot to us, and I am honored to share this story with you.

To get to that moment on the court a lot of work went on both in and out of the band room. While the musicians were auditioning for the performance in flashy but hot and tight marching uniforms, the Analy Band Wagon put in a lot of work to organize this experience. They worked hard to sell tickets, communicate with the Chase Center, and communicate with parents and students to ensure that the experience would be a success. I speak for all the participants of this trip when I say thank you to the Analy Band Wagon and the parents for making this trip possible.

Turn to Band Performance >>> Page 4

## Community >>>

### A page from Analy's past

How a new museum project sheds light on Analy's history through student writing

By Lawson Gaylord

Analy's student newspaper has always been a valuable outlet of student writing: student's opinions, concerns, dreams, and ambitions. However, today, we can get a glimpse of what Analy students were thinking about in the past. Over the past several months, volunteers at the West County Museum in Sebastopol have been working on a special, Analy-themed project: documenting and digitizing historical copies of the Analy student newspaper.

The West County Museum, which is run by the Western Sonoma County Historical Society, is a quaint little building on South Main Street, in downtown Sebastopol. Located in the building that once was the town's railroad depot, the museum has history ingrained in its very walls.

Inside, volunteers organize countless artifacts from Sebastopol's history, including collections of the *Sebastopol Times* newspapers, old railroad relics, posters from apple fairs long ago, and now, a nearly complete collection of the Analy student newspaper dating back to 1921. "It's our job to maintain and grow a collection of historic artifacts from the community," the museum's director Donna Pittman says, noting that it is their job to "tell the story of our town."

Turn to Museum >>> Page 5



The West County Museum, where old Analy students newspapers are being digitized. Photo by Donna Pittman.

Check out the special-feature Holiday Headquarters section inside on page 3!

## Speeding toward success

Through hard work and dedication, this year's Analy Cross Country team became one of the most accomplished in school history.



Analy's Varsity Boys at the start of a race. Photo by Lawson Gaylord.

By Lawson Gaylord, Soleil Vanden Heuvel, Luke McKnight, Skyler Freedomberg, and Elia DelMonte

This year's Cross Country season will be one to remember. With some of the fastest times ever run, placing on the podium at the league championship, and runners pushing through tough workouts all season long, this year's team was absolutely phenomenal.

Turn to Cross Country >>> Page 8

## Sports >>>

### A return to playoff glory

Analy's 2025 varsity football team returns to playoff-level competition

By Declan Goodson

Following a disappointing 3-7 season in 2024, the Analy varsity football team bounced back with a respectable 6-4 regular season, and a playoff berth against back-to-back state champions, St Vincent De Paul College Prep.

Analy's team had high hopes coming into the 2025 season. With a roster of many standout seniors, the Tigers got rolling immediately during spring training. With practices beginning in June, the team was ready to show off their skills at preseason events like Own the Line Summer Lineman Camp, where 8 of our Tiger lineman showed up to compete, with Senior Center/Defensive Lineman Orion Green even being named MVP of the whole event. The Tigers competed in a couple of passing tournaments against other teams as well. At these events, the Tigers showed up and fought. They competed well, but it was clear that there was still room to improve as summer practices ended. A couple weeks before the first game kicked off, the Tigers represented Analy at a 4-team scrimmage at San Rafael High School. There, though no scores were kept, the fight put up by the squad showed that this season was not going to be a repeat of the year prior, and the Tigers had the grit to go far.

Turn to Football >>> Page 7

# Staff

Publisher **Lawson Gaylord**

## EDITORIAL

Editor-In-Chief **Lawson Gaylord**  
 Editing and Layout **Keira McKnight**  
 Editing and Layout **Elizabeth Hare**  
 Layout Design **Elia DelMonte**

## CONTRIBUTORS

### Staff Writers

Diana Lazaro, Kasie Coupe, Alli Dannenbring, Elia Delmonte, Harper Kolanek, Soleil Vanden Heuvel, Newen Eliscu-Saraza, Jonah Caron, Elizabeth Hare, Gabriela White, Zaira Pacheco Gomez, Lawson Gaylord, Skyler Freedenburg, Luke McKnight, Declan Goodson

### Staff Photographer

Declan Goodson

### Puzzles and Games

Keira McKnight, Luke McKnight, Elizabeth Hare

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 Advertising **Lawson Gaylord**

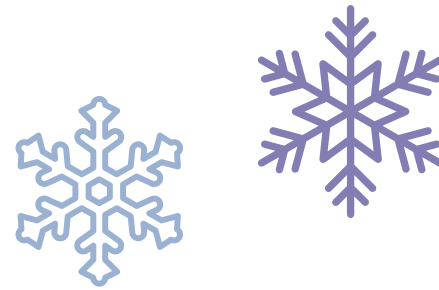
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 Club Advisor **John Grech**

# Editor's Note



Happy holidays, Analy! As we step into this holiday season, I am so excited to present our Winter Issue of West County World. Looking back on this past edition, I realize just how many people made this publication possible. From our fabulous writers, to our dedicated photographer (thanks Declan!) to our local advertisers and the Kiwanis Club who cover the cost of every issue, we could not have done this without you. Thank you to everyone who contributed, supported, or encouraged us. And, of course, thank you to our amazing advisor Mr. Grech, for every word of wisdom you shared.

Winter is a time of reflection, and as we prepare for the new year, I think it's important to look back and see how far each of us has come. Think back on that warm August day when we stepped foot on campus again after summer. For some of you, that was your first experience of high school. What has changed since then? For our newspaper team, it was adapting to the whirlwind of journalism, finding our voice, and creating some phenomenal writing.

But the holiday season is not just about looking back. This is a great time to reflect on this past semester, and make goals for the new one. What do you want to accomplish? Maybe you want to get better grades, make varsity on your sports team, or just survive until summer. Here at West County World, we want to continue creating a welcoming outlet for students to share their voices. If you have an article idea, a suggestion, or just want to join in on the fun, don't hesitate to reach out. We are always looking for more diverse stories - from students, for students.

Best wishes for a wonderful season ahead,

Lawson Gaylord  
 Journalism Club Director, Editor-In-Chief  
 lgayl588@wscuhd.org

*Want to join Journalism Club?*

*Have a story worth sharing?*

*Want to participate in the creation of your school newspaper?*

**Join us!** Wednesdays at Lunch in Mr. Grech's room (Annex 6)

Also join our Google Classroom! Class Code: 3abjxfw4

For submissions, letters to the editor, or to submit questions or comments, please use the link on our website.

Follow us on Instagram @analy\_journalism to stay up to date on everything Analy journalism and West County World related.

WEST COUNTY WORLD is the student run newspaper of Analy High School in Sebastopol, CA. Four issues of student writing are published each year both in print and on a student-maintained website. Copies of the newspaper can be found around the Analy campus as well as in the broader Sebastopol area in local businesses, the library, and public gathering locations. The newspaper has a total readership of over 5000.

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# Holiday Headquarters

## The story behind Uggs

*How Brian Smith founded  
our favorite winter brand*

By Diana Lazaro

Uggs are known for their cozy, wooly, and stylish design during the fall and winter. These reasons make them the perfect snug shoe staple. Did you know that the Ugg brand was initially made for surfers? Australian accounting student and surfer, Brian Smith founded Ugg during the 70s. He quit his accounting career because he felt the need to do something else. While meditating he noticed that surfers like himself needed to find a way to stay warm post surfing. Sheepskin boots were ideal to keep surfers warm so that is how Smith got his idea. Smith took out a loan to head to California where he marketed his sheepskin boots. Woolskin boots did not exist in America so he wanted Americans to give his boots a try. At first, it was hard to market his product in California because consumers were unaware of the materials used and their durability. After three years, lots of advertising and not giving up on his product, sales grew rapidly in America. Uggs gained popularity during the 2000s because of celebrity endorsements and their relaxed, comfortable style. Today in 2025, Uggs still remain popular especially when the temperatures drop and now come in a variety of different styles that still provide comfort and warmth.

## Hot chocolate and its chemistry

*How simple ingredients use  
their complex structures to  
make hot chocolate!*

By Diana Lazaro

Dropping temperatures have us basking in the warmth of the fireplace and the sudden urge to eat candy canes. Another fun winter treat we tend to enjoy is hot chocolate topped with whipped cream and marshmallows since it, beyond doubt, brings a sense of nostalgia after a single sip. It brings joy to pour and stir the creamy milk into the chocolate powder but what is the secret behind this whimsical process? Thanks to science, particularly chemistry, many daily procedures are made possible. Hot chocolate powders are usually alkalized meaning that the cocoa beans were made less acidic so it tastes sweeter and the chocolate becomes a rich brown color. When watching the chocolate powder and milk fuse you are witnessing a physical change, when the powder is mixing in milk the solid particles distribute into the liquid creating a solution. The chemical composition of the chocolate powder and milk does not change which makes this a physical change, not a chemical one. Some prefer to use hot water to make their hot chocolate and this provides the energy needed for the molecules to move faster and for the chocolate powder to dissolve quicker. The next time you make a hot chocolate you will know about the chemistry that occurs during the making of it.

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## The season of giving?

*The differences between gifting and giving.*

By Skyler Freedenburg

Why do most people feel the need to give gifts? This question can be traced back to prehistoric times, where early humans would exchange items to form alliances. Since then, gift giving has evolved and become more widespread. Many American holidays now involve the expectation of a present. However, if a gift is expected, is it really a gift? A gift is something that is given willingly to someone without payment. However, is the gift given willingly if society expects you to give the gift? Is there no payment if you are expecting it to benefit you? Overall, this means that something that is given as a present may not actually be a gift.

Gift giving has not just become more widespread over time; the reasons to give a gift have changed. Originally, gifts were exchanged to spread peace between two people. It then changed so that gift-giving is a religious or cultural practice. People in places like ancient Greece would give gifts to their gods or as charity, because that was what their community and culture expected. During the Industrial Revolution, mass production became possible. This resulted in cheaper and more standardized gifts. This also caused large corporations to start marketing and promoting their products as gifts, and to make holidays like Christmas and Valentine's Day more focused on gift-giving. As American society became more focused on the pursuit of money, the holidays and presents became more focused on money. When shopping malls and the internet made gifts even more accessible and advertised the holiday season has become even more focused on purchasing and giving gifts.

There is a difference between giving and gifting. To give something is a much broader term, meaning to freely transfer the ownership of something. This can apply to physical gifts, but also to your time or your kindness. A gift is something that you can give, but it is specifically about physical things. This does not mean that gifting something is worse than giving something, it just means that there is less you can gift than there is you can give.

There is a reason that the holiday season is called the "season of giving", and not the season of gifting. At its core, the season is not just about buying and giving gifts; it is also about giving and spreading kindness and time. This means that although corporations may urge you to purchase gifts based on their monetary value, you can try and give something that is significant specifically to the person you are gifting it to. The most valuable thing you have is your time, so you can share that gift with others.

The holidays were not always about buying things for others; many holidays originated as religious days to come together, rest, and feast. Although you should give what you want to give, you also should remember what the holidays were about before they became materialistic.

The point I am trying to make is that the holidays are about more than just exchanging gifts; they are about being generous and relaxing with your friends, your family, or your community. My suggestion is to focus on giving something of yours to others, not on the superficial pursuit of social clout. You can control what the holidays mean to you, so you can decide how they will influence you.



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Sebastopol Youth Sports

Natalie McNamara  
Publisher

# Student Life



**Band Performance**  
Continued from Page 1

Even if you are like me and don't follow basketball, you would still have had such a fun time at the Chase Center. There were flashing lights, music playing, and a spirited atmosphere with Warrior fans decked out in blue and gold, cheering "WARRIORRRS" followed by an echo of more fans cheering "WARRIORRRS". The positive culture hyped us up for both the game and the performance. We found our seats and enjoyed the pregame entertainment with food, drinks, the announcers, the cheerleaders, and watching the opposing team warm up. When the Golden State Warriors ran out, the energy got turned up from a 10 to an 11. The game was extremely fun to watch even if you don't understand the rules of basketball.

We enjoyed the first two quarters of the game before all congregating together at portal 58 to head down to where the performers get ready to perform. We got to watch the Golden State Warriors Dance Company rehearse while setting up our instruments and getting our uniforms together. The ushers and the other performers were extremely kind. Their supportive attitude definitely helped ease our nerves. The best part about this moment was being able to see the Phoenix Suns walk off the court when the second half ended, walking less than six feet away from where we were lined up waiting. "Seeing everyone's faces when the other team's players came off the court for halftime was so funny," 11th grader and Drum-Major Catherine Miles explained when asked about the experience. "Those players are so tall."

The performance was definitely the best part of the night though. We lined up on the court, and were welcomed with hundreds of people cheering for us as we played a combination of two common pieces from our football games, "Eye of the Tiger," arranged by Victor López and transitioned to "Iron Man," arranged by Dave Henning. We worked extremely hard on making these pieces perfect for the performance, and now we were finally watching our hard work pay off. Because of our locked in focus, the performance flew by. On finishing the songs we were greeted with more applause and cheers. We left the court with ushers, announcers, and other performers congratulating us. At that moment we felt very proud of ourselves.

Everyone thought the trip was a success, and are hoping it's not the last. 10th grader and Saxophone player Katie Cogliando says "I'd love to do a trip like this again." Catherine Miles agrees saying, "Heck yes. Sign me up for the next one." I think the reason this experience was so successful was everyone's commitment to preparing for this. We worked hard, while also having positive, upbeat energy throughout the entire experience. It felt like we were one big team. Another thing that made this trip so special was the amount of Analy staff that came and supported us. Mrs. Siebert was an extremely helpful and supportive chaperone that came with us on the trip. And many band members were excited to see Mrs. McClelland and others wandering the chase center, enjoying the game, and supporting their band. A big thank you to the whole school, both members who attended the game and those who supported back at home. Your love for the band and support throughout this experience means the world to us. We were hopeful this experience would represent Analy in a positive way as well as show teachers and classmates back at school how passionate and talented the musicians and artists in the school are. "How many people at Analy can say they've played a halftime show for a famous NBA team?" Catherine Miles exclaims. "Band kids are fire!"

## Sebastopol FFA Fall Semester Recap



By Kasie Coupe

Greenhand Leadership Conference

On October 1st, 16 of our first year, freshman members took a leap into FFA and attended the California FFA Greenhand Leadership Conference! They got into the 3-circle mode, while having tons of fun and meeting new friends from all over the North Coast FFA region. Shoutout to our girl Roz who won the "Outstanding Pilot" for the pink group. Thank you to the California FFA staff for teaching and hyping us up all day and thank you to Petaluma FFA for hosting.

SRJC Shone Farm Fall Festival

On October 8th, the Santa Rosa Junior College's Shone Farm Campus held their annual Fall Festival. We thank all of our members who came out and volunteered their time at this event, as well as all the families who helped out and not only supported Sebastopol FFA, but Shone Farm as well. We had a successful sold out fundraiser, thank you SRJC for this wonderful opportunity.

### Tri-Tip BBQ

On Tuesday, October 14th, we held our annual Fall Tri-Tip Drive-Thru BBQ! Thank you to everyone who ordered and volunteered to make this fundraiser possible - it was a huge success! The profits from this event will help fund our members attending the 98th Annual FFA National Convention. A special thank you goes out to our generous sponsors and donors: Oliver's Market (Santa Rosa), Franco American Bread, and Trader Joe's for helping make this event possible. We'd also like to give a big shoutout to our amazing BBQ crew - Arnold King, Shannon Jurek, and Ben Campanile, for their hard work and dedication in making this event run as smoothly as it did. We truly appreciate everyone's support and look forward to our future fundraisers and events!

### Opening/Closing Public Speaking Contest

On October 16th, Sebastopol FFA participated in the 2025 Sonoma FFA Section Opening & Closing Ceremonies in Cloverdale. Thank you to the Cloverdale Citrus Fair, the Lions Club, all of the judges, advisors, and parents for hosting, driving, coaching, and volunteering their time to make this a successful contest. Here is some individual and team recognition from this contest!

1st Place Novice Team: Brayden, Kasen, Lucas, Kevin, Katelyn and Freddy.

1st Place Advanced Team: Bailey, Clare, Elaina, Ellie, Lauren, and Ava.

Outstanding Novice Treasurer: Kevin Campanile

Outstanding Advanced President: Bailey Cassady

Outstanding Advanced Treasurer: Georgia Miller

Outstanding Advanced Reporter: Lauren Brady

Outstanding Advanced Sentinel: Ava Anderson

Congratulations to all of our speakers!

### Showcase Night

On October 23rd, Sebastopol FFA participated in Analy's annual showcase night. We had a blast meeting all of the families who came and got to learn all about what Sebastopol FFA does, as well as learn about various other wonderful programs that Analy High School offers. Thank you to all of our members who volunteered and represented our program, go Tigers!

### Steel Day - Agriculture Mechanics

On October 24, four of our students attended Steel Day hosted by Metal Works in Oroville, California! Students had the opportunity to gain hands on experience and explore the welding industry in action, throughout the day, they were about to build their own project, see automated equipment demonstrations, work alongside rig welders, welds using FCAW-G and SMAAW processes, watch a live demonstration of a steel structure assembly, meet with industry experts and tour the Metal Works facility. A big thank you to Metal Works and everyone who helped make this incredible learning experience possible for our students!

### National Convention

The week of October 27th, until November 2nd, we had 5 current members and 2 previous members attend the 98th FFA National Convention - Gracie Ascoop, Angelo Escutia, Ian Huffaker, John Justus and Kevin Campanile were our current members gaining new knowledge and wonderful experiences, and Alex Justs and Hannah Campanile were our previous members earning their American Degree. This convention was located in Indianapolis CA and our members were able to go on multiple industry tours about various different agricultural fields, such as dairy production, swine production, crop rotation, equine sciences, and even aquaculture! They also had the opportunity to explore the Giant College and Career. Members Ian and Angelo were able to meet at least one student from every state, and Puerto Rico! Overall, the outcome of this convention had multiple positive responses, spending one long week (including Halloween) all together. Big thank you to Ms. King for devoting your time to take these kids on another successful trip, we truly appreciate your dedication and passion for your students.

### Sock Drive

From October 28th - November 11th, we held an ongoing sock drive for members to have the opportunity to receive community service activity points, which they will need for their FFA curriculum. Not only do they get the benefit of community service points, but they get to give back to those in need. Thank you to all the members who donated socks. They will be well loved!



Sebastopol FFA Opening/Closing Contest.

### **Fall FFA Continued...** SRJC Agriculture Field Trip

Sebastopol FFA's advanced animal science class had the opportunity to vaccinate lambs and kids this morning at the Santa Rosa Junior College. They had so much fun learning about different medication and injection types. We wanted to give a huge thank you to Santa Rosa Ag Ambassadors for providing us with such an amazing, fun, hands-on experience.

### **CDE/LDE Teams**

Sebastopol FFA offers various different opportunities in order to get public speaking, future readiness, responsibility, and determination built into young development. For LDE's (Leadership Development Event) there are many different contests. The FFA Creed, written by E.M. Tiffany, is a speaking contest that primarily works on memorization and dedication. This competition is only offered to freshman or first year members in FFA. Prepared Public Speaking is a contest that uses the ability to take agriculture knowledge and personal experiences to combine them into a memorized speech, which must be 6-8 minutes long. Members will present their organized manuscript to a panel of judges. This is available for juniors or third year members. Job Interview is a future ready contest that simulates real world processes of applying for jobs in agriculture industries. Members will need to create a resume and cover letter along with their completely filled out job application to the job they are applying for. Impromptu is a speaking contest that tests how accessible and fast your thought process of delivering knowledge is. The members will be given 3 unknown topics, and choose one to deliver a 2 minute speech on whichever topic they choose - on the spot - and after delivering their speech the judges will ask follow up questions related to their topic. Lastly, extemporaneous is a contest where members must deliver a 4-6 minute speech on a topic they are assigned, with 30 minutes to research and memorize their speech, they are then asked up to 5 minutes worth of follow up questions afterwards. All of these contests work different future ready skills, it's an opportunity to grow your leadership development skills and use them in real world situations. Results will be reported in the next article, and on our Sebastopol FFA instagram page!

Sebastopol FFA offers many CDE's (Career Development Experiences) for members. These competitions help work different skills through different hands-on experiences that members take away and are able to use throughout different activities that their future holds. Livestock Judging is a competition that works evaluation, decision and memorization skills. Grapevine Pruning is a competition that uses practical knowledge converted into hands on activity. Members have limited time to prune a specific number of grapevines according to the industry standards. After the practical exam, members will then take a written knowledge based test to show true understanding of the vines and their purpose. A newly added CDE Team to Sebastopol FFA this year is our Floriculture CDE Team! This team will be learning in depth knowledge about flowers, weeds, and plants - their knowledge will be tested on paper, in the garden, and through tools, and scenarios. As well as making floral arrangements, labeling anatomy of flowers, and more.

# Community Corner



A historical image of the train depot that now houses the West County Museum. Photo courtesy of Western Sonoma County Historical Society.

### **Museum** Continued from Page 1

The current project for the museum is digitizing the student newspapers - which requires both community effort to locate historical newspapers and also scanning every page of every issue, so it can be viewed online. Mary Dodgion, the museum's archivist, explains this process. "The equipment we are using is on loan from newspapers.com and includes a digital camera with overhead mount equipment, 2 high LED light pads, and a laptop with photo shooting software." Effectively, they are using a camera mounted above a table, rather than a traditional scanner, as it makes the process much quicker.

However, even just getting the newspapers proved to be a struggle. Dodgion explains how "We were given a big chunk of papers from Loretta Castleberry. She happened to be at the right place at the right time, when she found that the newspapers were headed to the dumpster." Castleberry brought the stack of newspapers straight to the museum. "I inventoried them by dates and knew more existed and wanted to fill it in. By word of mouth we began looking for the missing issues," Dodgion said.

Eventually, this word of mouth reached our current Analy newspaper team, which publishes West County World. After a bit of searching, and the help of Analy social science teacher Rachel Ambrose, two old boxes of newspapers were located. Upon bringing them to the museum and a bit of inventorying, the museum was able to significantly increase their collection. They still are missing quite a few, but after the combined work of many community members, the museum has been able to put together a significant collection of Analy newspapers.

Now, the papers will be digitized and uploaded online so people from across our community can view them. "The goal of the project is to make all of the high school newspapers available to the public," Dodgion said. The newspapers, which have had five names over the years (*The Analyan*, *Blue Prints*, *Analy Independent*, *Tiger Times*, and *West County World*), will be available for anyone to read online as soon as the digitization process is finished.

The Analy Newspaper is and always has been a vital part of our community. It holds countless students' voices, opinions, and dreams. And by reading and understanding our past, we can prepare ourselves for the future.



The special digitization equipment used to scan and preserve the old student newspaper. Photo by Lawson Gaylord.

## Russian River West County Health Centers: Community Events

By Kasie Coupe



West County Health Center + West County Teen Clinic representing at Guerneville Elementary School Community Engagement Fair

On Saturday, October 25th, Guerneville Elementary School hosted their annual Community Engagement Fair. Ana Puga Flores and Kasie Coupe were our Russian River West County Health Centers representatives joined by Alexandra Swan and Meghan Lazzarini who represented the West County Health Centers Teen Clinic. We are proud to show our hard work and dedication to our community since there is a lot of hard work that goes on behind the scenes and not many opportunities to shine, so we want to give Guerneville Elementary, and all who made this event possible, a huge thank you for inviting us to shine. Connecting with our community is beyond presenting ourselves at events, but rather taking genuine time to connect, understand and support our patients; this event allows us to accomplish these goals thoroughly.

### Spooky Block Party

On Friday, October 31st, our Russian River West County Health Centers was one of the many people handing out fun treats on Halloween! Going hand-in-hand with our Switch Witch event, we handed out toothbrushes, dental goodies, and Xylitol candy to the children. Overall, this night was extremely fun and beneficial to children to promote healthy and still, delicious alternatives for Halloween. We appreciate Ana Puga Flores for stepping in and making this event run as smoothly as it did. All of the children and families that stopped by our booth are truly appreciated, we hope you had a spooky Halloween!

### Switch Witch

In the spirit of Halloween, our Russian River and Sebastopol West County Health Centers participated in a yearly event called Switch Witch. This event allows a healthy - yet fun, alternative for children. After the week of Halloween, we open it up on November 3rd-7th for patients to come to our Sebastopol and Guerneville Clinics to switch out their typical Halloween candy for stickers, a healthy candy alternative, books, toys, toothbrushes, and dental goodies. This ongoing community engagement event not only succeeds in our goal in making valuable connections with our patients and community but also ensures we are making beneficial contributions to healthy choices in our diets, even when a holiday tempts us.

### Family Dinner: Cooking In Community

On November 18th our Russian River West County Health Centers hosted a Family Night Dinner. We proudly worked alongside Food for Thought and River to Coast to be able to plan and execute this night as we imagined, thank you to all of our sponsors and partners who made this event possible. We wanted to thank all of the outstanding cooks who took the time out of their day to be able to prep and cook, we couldn't have done it without you! We also wanted to show our gratitude and appreciation to all the families that came together to have a wonderful meal. Russian River resides in rural Sonoma County, often not having access to the same resources as more urban areas, but if our community continues to come together and connect, we demonstrate that smaller communities can still thrive. These types of events are not something that we take lightly; we take it to heart. Seeing families come together for a meal, watching new connections and authentic relationships flourish, and most importantly, sitting down together as a community; knowing that we are the future.

Community News: Come see the Sebastopol Ballet Nutcracker! Analy High School, December 20th and 21st at 11am and 4pm both days.

# Current Events



## The Future of the Democratic Party

*What can the 2025 elections tell us, and what is the party's path forward towards the midterms and 2028*

By Newén Eliscu-Saraza

On November 5, 2024, millions of people were horrified as Trump handily won all seven swing states, and the presidency. But November 6 was even more important—anti-Trumpers had mainly negative reactions to his victory, but their reasoning for why Kamala lost soon became clear, showing the true state of the party.

The election also revealed a deep split in the party. An article by The Nation reveals that centrists and moderates argued that the party had become too progressive, focusing too much on culture war issues and was too far to the left. Progressives, meanwhile, found the party's messaging unexciting and disconnected from reality, which caused voters to stay home.

From there, the Democratic Party's schism deepened further. As Trump's presidency progressed and many people's views on him soured, the Democratic Party leadership had many chances to reframe itself. During the government shutdown in October, for example, SNAP benefits were the main focus: Democrats wanted to extend them, but Republicans wouldn't hear of it. In the end, 8 Democratic senators caved and voted to pass the fiscal bill, which did not have SNAP benefits at all. The Israel-Palestine conflict was another hugely important issue: many people who had voted for Joe Biden didn't vote for Kamala Harris in 2024, documents an article from *Middle East Eye*. However, the issue that won Donald Trump the presidency in 2024 and that the Democratic Party has been criticized for was the economy, with many voters being frustrated that economic gains on paper hadn't materialized in their day-to-day lives, according to an article in *Vox*.

So when voters went to the polls on November 4th just a few weeks ago, what changed?

Well, a lot, actually.

The New York mayoral election, for starters. Zohran Mamdani, a democratic socialist, won against Andrew Cuomo, the scandal-ridden former governor of New York, running as an independent and endorsed by Trump; and Curtis Sliwa, the Republican candidate positioning himself as a political outsider. His campaign modeled after those of Bernie Sanders in 2016 and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez in 2018: a campaign of left-wing economic populism hugely critical of the influence of billionaires in politics and by not taking any money from political action committees (PACs) or corporations. In addition, he was critical of Israel's genocide in Gaza and the influence of pro-Israel PACs in politics, and pledging to arrest Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, if he goes to New York. And he ran a social media campaign that effectively resonated with New Yorkers.

In New Jersey and Virginia, the opposite happened in their gubernatorial races. The Democratic candidates in both states, Mikie Sherill and Abigail Spanberger, were centrist moderates with established records, running against candidates endorsed by Trump. They took advantage of Donald Trump's unpopularity to attack his policies, winning them a large number of voters who had voted for Trump in 2024. Despite being part of the same Democratic establishment that solidly opposed Mamdani's election, many voters resonated with their messages of affordability and healthcare. Spanberger, in particular, emphasized her role of working at the CIA in the past.

So what can the Democratic Party learn from Election Night?

First, the party needs to not back down from government fights; in other words, don't "be sellouts". In March, Congress was experiencing conflict over a funding bill, and Democrats could've used the crisis to push back against Republican ambitions for far more control over spending, especially in relation to the huge sum of money being redirected towards defense, reads an article by PBS. But Chuck Schumer led a small number of Democrats in giving in without achieving any of their demands, and this made him quite unpopular, especially among progressives. In November, at the height of the government shutdown, many Americans blamed the shutdown on Republicans since Democrats wouldn't vote to reopen the government without Medicare and SNAP benefits, according to an article by NBC. And yet 8 Democrats chose to vote to reopen the government without having achieved any of their demands. These two examples are a big part of the reason that many Democrats are tired of their party's leadership, as explained in an article by Reuters.

Second, the Democratic Party should emphasize economic issues like Medicare and affordability a lot more, without abandoning their positions on social issues like LGBTQ+ rights. The economy was the most important issue in the 2024 election according to a majority of voters, and Trump's failure to help the economy, as reported in an article by the Los Angeles Times, have put his approval rating deep underwater, at negative 13.4 points. Zohran Mamdani, as well as Sherill and Spanberger, while addressing the topic differently, capitalized on this sentiment to center their campaigns around affordability, delivering them a resounding victory. At the same time, they shouldn't abandon their positions on cultural and social issues. Democrats, according to a YouGov poll, have higher approval ratings on topics like abortion, LGBTQ+ rights, and the environment, and voters of color, women, and LGBTQ+ voters vote for Democrats in higher numbers.

Finally, they should embrace financial transparency, following in the footsteps of politicians like Bernie Sanders or Zohran Mamdani, who don't take corporate money. OpenSecrets reveals that many Americans are opposed to the influence of money in politics, especially by the ultra-rich and by super-PACs. Citizens United, the court case largely responsible for the unfiltered power of current super PACs, is one of the few issues Democrats, Republicans, and independents can agree on, with around 80% of the public opposed to the decision, as stated in a report from Roosevelt Institute stated. In fact, one thing that makes progressive candidates popular is for being opposed to billionaires and their influence, calling themselves anti-establishment, and taking as little PAC money as possible. As the population begins to embrace left-wing populism and progressivism, candidates who don't take corporate PAC money and instead rely on small donations by individuals will be able to achieve better results as opposed to being viewed as "selling out" to billionaires and CEOs.

To sum it up, the theme of Democratic politicians should be anti-establishmentism. Many people, following the Democrats' lackluster performance in 2024 and Trump's reckless second term, have little to no trust in both parties. The Democrats aren't the same as they were in 2008, when Obama became president. They can't simply rely on the votes of young people, minorities, and immigrants anymore. They need to be fighters—attend protests, block Republican legislation in Congress, visit their communities and volunteer at organizations that help their disadvantaged constituents. They need to embrace their leftism instead of trying to straddle both sides of the political compass. Because their coalition of loyal supporters might have fallen apart under Trump, but it shouldn't be gone for good.

# Opinion

## School spirit should not impede education



*How the new house system's reliance on tutorial periods for meetings is unnecessarily depriving students of valuable work time*

By Lawson Gaylord

Over the past few months, with the introduction of the house system in the name of school spirit, we have had multiple house meetings during tutorial - which is intended to be a designated time for students to do academic work. Tutorial is a potentially valuable time for students, as it is a scheduled block to complete homework, prepare for tests, or meet with clubs. However, recently it has become unreliable, as house meetings are scheduled on very short notice (sometimes day-of), so you can never be sure you will actually be able to attend tutorial on any given day. Tutorial has become a guessing game.

During an interview with some of the house leaders, it became clear that they were aware the loss of tutorial time would be an issue, but they didn't think it would create any large problems. In this meeting, they stated that many students use tutorial purely for socialization and playing games on their computers. "So we didn't think we were impeding that much... we totally understand we are, but we didn't think it was going to have that great of effect," one of the house leaders said.

While this argument is valid, it also paints a single story about tutorial that is not fair to all students. The tutorial was—and should be—a time students can count on: whether they use it to complete work or take a break from it. In the wise words of my co-editor, Elizabeth Hare, "Tutorial is there to give people the option to work; what they do with their time should be theirs to decide - period."

Tutorial is a time that students have grown accustomed to, and so when it is taken away with short notice, it causes stress. If the point of the houses is to foster joy and belonging, why are house meetings making students worry about turning in their assignments on time? I felt this firsthand, when I had planned to retake a math test during tutorial. However, the day before the test, I learned that we had a house meeting that day. It left me scrambling to find another time, and in the end required me to skip a club meeting to be able to complete my test. House meetings, though created with good intentions, have become a recipe for stress that degrades students' learning environment.

However, all of this said, there are other options. Tutorial is not the only time for house meetings. Houses could be integrated into rallies, with each competing against the others in games. Houses could host "house days" during lunch, similar to club days, with games and fundraising opportunities for the program. Tutorial is not the only time for house activities. Tutorial should always be a time for the students, and no matter how students use it, it should never be taken away from them.

# The House System: It Can't Be That Bad!



By Elizabeth Hare

The house system: Aether, Ignis, Terra, and Laguz. Sounds new, fun. And it very well could be. It seems like it could genuinely help those who need an opportunity to meet and mingle with fellow students. However, it wouldn't be fair for me, as a student representative for a house, to only discuss the great things. The house system has its pros and cons. Alli Dannenbring, Lawson Gaylord, and I, just a few weeks or so before this last paper's print and distribution, had a meeting with House Leaders regarding Dannenbring's previous article because there appeared to be some misunderstanding in the house system. During this meeting, we brought up several large issues with the house system and attempted to offer solutions. Unfortunately, we were continuously provided the excuse of "...again, this is our first year..."

The issues that are plaguing our house system are various and troublesome, but not unsolvable. Here are my problems and solutions:

**Lack of formal funds:** The houses do not have access to funds like a typical program. However, this can be solved. Similar to club day, we could have a day where each house sets up stands and sells treats and whatnot to earn funds. Aside from this, each house can also be responsible for creating their own sources of income such as bake sales. Another idea to add to this is opening fundraisers for the public to donate to at their own discretion.

**Attendance:** People are not attending house meetings, and I don't blame them. A way to encourage attendance could be more open and diverse sets of goals during the rally. For example, some students may choose to play the activities that are planned, while others may choose to study for a test with fellow house members.

**Tutorial:** I won't discuss this as Gaylord's accompanying article says it all. (Please read it!) One quote to summarize general feeling: "Tutorial has been described as a tool for student athletes and extra curricular commitments and when it's ripped away, it causes a lot of issues. At least for me, it ruined my schedule," said Eli Righetti.

**Student Interaction:** "I haven't interacted with the houses at all... I found it boring... [There is] a better use of my time," one student said, who preferred to remain anonymous. One way to fix this is to ask the students what they want to do during house rallies and meetings. Another part of this is that while some houses have student representatives, others don't. Having a student there to say "hey, this ain't it" may help gently guide activities to capture the participation of students.

**Confusion:** Some students don't even understand the house system. A way to combat this is simple. We have freshman orientation to teach incoming students about what Analy is all about. What better way to fully explain how this all works? In addition to this, similar to what Sebastopol FFA does, student representatives and house leaders can go to feeder schools and further educate and collect ideas from 8th graders as they think more and more about their up and coming high school career. It is their future.

**Teacher Participation:** Not everyone is going to agree with this system or be willing to participate. For teachers specifically, this raises problems. Students will reflect the ideas of their teachers – and that should be okay. While it is amazing there are select teachers willing to set up and coordinate the houses, it is not a bandwagon, and not everyone should be required to be considered "there for the students." There is a wide range of students. If the house system is to be drama free, let everyone, teachers or not, choose their own rate of participation in and regarding the Analy High School Houses.

Teacher Participation: Not everyone is going to agree with this system or be willing to participate. For teachers specifically, this raises problems. Students will reflect the ideas of their teachers – and that should be okay. While it is amazing there are select teachers willing to set up and coordinate the houses, it is not a bandwagon, and not everyone should be required to be on to be considered "there for the students". If the house system is to be drama free, let everyone, teachers or not, choose their own rate of participation in and regarding the Analy High School Houses.



Flags fly the colors of the four houses - Ignis, Lagooz, Terra, and Aether - during lunch. Photo by Declan Goodson.

## Sports



### **Football** Continued from page 1

Week 1 of the regular season was one of the Tigers hardest match-ups of the season at Windsor in hostile Jaguar territory, a rematch of the 2024 opener which the Tigers lost 48-7. This year, the Tigers were determined to have a different outcome, but sadly, they fell short losing 13-48, and starting the season off 0-1.

But due to more mental strength, the opening loss would not affect the team too much, as they went on to win 4 games in a row, finishing non-league play 4-1! The Tiger victories included the visiting Napa Grizzlies, 56-35, and the Petaluma Trojans, where in a close game, the Tigers snuck away with a thrilling upset for the first time in 3 years, 52-49. Many seniors said that win against Petaluma would go down as their favorite memory from the season, and even their football careers. Week 4, the Tigers hosted the visiting Piner Prospectors, determined to avenge last year's 1 point loss. The Tigers did not disappoint, and won the home thriller 49-7. Their roll would continue, as another revenge game was coming in Week 5, when they played the Kimball Jaguars at Carlson Field. In 2024, the Tigers lost a rough game 72-14, and this year, the outcome was very different. Going into halftime, the Tigers were down, but with a hard fought second half, the Tigers pulled off another upset, and left that night with a 48-34 win.



Analy High School 2025 Varsity Team. Photo courtesy of Analy High School Football Instagram, used with permission.

Entering league play, the Tigers knew the rest of the season was going to be harder, and it was. In week 6, against the Maria Carrillo Pumas, the Tigers' hot-streak ended with a tough, 35-60 loss. That loss brought many changes to the teams trajectory in further league play. During the game, the team's starting quarterback, Matthew Medina, who was on pace to have over 2200 passing yards, 500 rushing yards, and over 30 total touchdowns, got hurt, injured for the remainder of the year. Medina was not the only injury, as other vital players would also have their season cut short against Carrillo.

The devastating Week 6 losses would go on to be followed by another hard week. Week 7, was Analy's Homecoming against back-to-back state champions, St. Vincent De Paul College Prep Mustangs. Earlier that week, a major coaching change would occur, and the Tigers were faced with another challenge for that game, having to adjust to new coaches and leadership. After a long fight, the Tigers lost a hard game, in front of a large, home, and homecoming-spirited crowd, 0-49. With a hard start to league play, the Tigers were now 4-3, with only 3 more games.

The two losses were overcome as the Tigers went on to win back-to-back games, first against the Montgomery Vikings 41-12. That spark carried into week 9 when the Tigers, on Senior Night, won another great game, this time against the Santa Rosa Panthers, pushing the Tigers to 6-3, and all but guaranteeing a Tiger postseason appearance.

The Tigers last league matchup, away, was against the flashy Ukiah Wildcats who beat us 27-28 in 2024. That tough loss was used as fuel going into this game. Sadly, there was not enough fuel in the tank, as the Tigers lost their final regular season game, 13-42.

The Tigers finished their regular season 6-4, and 2-3 in league play, enough to earn the 8 seed in Division 5 North Coast Sectional Playoffs, and were going to match up against their nemesis St Vincent De Paul for a second time, who had earned the 1 seed with a 9-1 record. In a single-elimination tournament it was a must-win and this time the match-up was much closer. The Tigers kept it a one score game for most of the game, but with a late touchdown allowed, they lost their final game, 28-42.

This season, though faced with a hard ending, was overall a huge success for the program. The Tigers finished with a winning record (6-4), two wins against other great programs in their league, and a playoff match-up against one of the best teams in Northern California. After this solid season, we cannot wait to see what the Tigers will do in 2026!



## Cross Country Continued from page 1



On the girls side, the team performed fantastically and destroyed every goal that was set out for them. “Honestly, the girls squad was the heart of our team this year,” Coach Blake McDowall said. He continued, saying, “They raced with so much courage, especially at the end of the season, and proved that a small-but-mighty group can punch way above its weight.” The compassion and support the girls had for each other and the rest of the team was instrumental to the success of the squad. “Everyone’s positive attitude was a major reason for our team’s growth this season,” Coach Carole Hakstian says. The joy that was spread on the girl’s side was infectious and crafted a team bond worth remembering. Hakstian quotes with pride, “The girls’ team showed tremendous dedication all season long.” Their efforts paid off with a 3rd place at NBLs - an improvement over last year’s 4th place - in an especially competitive Oak Division.

Leading the girls team this year was a strong trio of high-level runners, composed of Team Captain Emma Wenzel James, Varsity Captain Miriam Hall, and freshman Soleil Vanden Heuvel. “The team was guided by exceptional leadership from team captain [Wenzel James], who set a high standard in both practice and competition,” Hakstian said. Wenzel James’ courage, love and determination to make the team reach their goals and exceed them went above and beyond. The Varsity squad this year consisted of Bea Katz, Priya Duong, Azalie Curran Flores, Harmonie Dannewitz and Nylah Hudgens. The girl’s team was rounded out by the incredible JV team, Adelaide Ower, Anna Blanco-Roberson, Elia DelMonte, Haley Dahm, Isabella Hernandez and Savannah Draper. Both the Varsity and JV Girl’s teams this year were packed with incredible athletes who brought energy, consistency, and confidence.



Girls Team Captian Emma Wenzel James at the start of a league race on September 26th. Photo by Lawson Gaylord.

Over to the boys team, they had what could only be described as a stellar season. “This is the best boys team that Analy has ever seen,” McDowall stated with confidence. “It was the deepest and fastest boys team in Analy history, and they raced like they really believed in each other...they were really fast and really fun. Hard to ask for more.”

The team, led by Team Captain Owen Dawson and Varsity Captain Logan Dickson, set a new school record for total team time on the Spring Lake course, and placed 2nd at the North Bay League Championships, competing against some of the best teams in the entire North Coast. Jack Stoumen, a freshman, ran the fastest freshman time ever on the course by any school, covering the course in a blazing time of 15:40. In addition to Stoumen, Quince Holman, a senior, rounded out the top four that led the team through every race. Senior Davin Jorgensen, juniors Choegyal and Songtsen Hergenrather, sophomores Jeffery Gonsalves and Jackson Tommila rounded out the boys Varsity squad.



Boys Team Captain Owen Dawson at the finish of a league race on October 1st. Photo by Lawson Gaylord.

As well as the talented Varsity crew this year, the JV team was also very successful. Hakstian notes that “the team relied on a talented crew of newcomers and returners for depth and reliable points,” and they truly thrived. Congrats to the entire 2025 JV boys squad: Aidan Berg, Amani Malisa, Anders Brenden, Benji Hegedus, Brayden MacQuarrie, Calvin Gonnella, Cody Gunzburg, Eli Mortensen, Griffen Campbell, Isaac Garcia, Isaiah Almaguer, Jack McCloud, Kosuke Cugini, Lawson Gaylord, Luke McKnight, Milo Baptista, Owen Eggleston, Rowley Morgan, Sebastian Alvarez, Skyler Freedenburg and Valerian Postiglione.

The coaches this year found achievement, change, and future goals all within reach. The support of coaches expanded this year, with Brian Gaylord and Analy mathematics teacher Johnathon Lopez joining the team as assistant coaches to help out Hakstian and McDowall. Gaylord and Lopez brought support, motivation, and positive energy to the team. All of the coaches this year were a vital part of making the team feel like family. The athletes were very thankful for everything they have done to support and coach them throughout the season.

Cross Country is not for the weak. The workouts were tough. The team pushed through competitive tri-meets against some of Analy’s biggest rivals, hill repeats, time trials, tempo-runs, and intense weather. But they seemed to pull through with grit and determination, closing out one of the best seasons Analy has seen. Everyone can agree though that the part that made the harsh running conditions and workouts worth persevering through was the supportive team spirit. Above the astonishing times and podium successes, McDowall writes, “This group made cross country a place where people wanted to be. When runners believe in each other, the fast times basically coach themselves.”

Running cross country is not just about how hard you can push yourself or how fast you can run, it is also about how much you can improve. This team improved in many ways over the course of the season, but one of the most important changes was in the way the team approached workouts and long runs. Coach Blake McDowall remarked that “Athletes learned to pace workouts based on their purpose instead of pushing hard every time... and [they] stayed dialed in on the details such as stretching, strength training, hydration and proper fueling.” Cross country is not just about running as fast as you can, you have to know how fast to run in order to improve the most.

The future looks bright for this group of runners, and the generations of runners to come. Looking ahead the team hopes to grow State Championship appearances and big race titles. Building on the hard work they’ve poured into this season, they start to get excited and work towards establishing the teams that will lead us forward. McDowall quotes, “We want to keep building depth, expand the team, and create a culture that lasts long after any of us coaches are gone.” while Hakstian says, “Looking ahead, the team’s goal is to keep building on the foundation we’ve established over the past few years. That means continuing to develop, grow stronger, gain experience, improve meet by meet and show up for one another.”

Needless to say, if you are looking for a place to challenge yourself, build lifelong memories, and be a part of an epic program that innovates growth and success, Analy’s Cross Country team is waiting for you. Coach Carole says, “It’s a chance to challenge yourself, grow stronger, build confidence and be part of a team that works hard and has fun together. You’ll meet kind and supportive teammates, make friends, and discover just how much you’re capable of when you commit to the work. No matter your experience level, there’s a place for you on this team.”

## Recipes

### Gingerbread Cookie Recipe

*Beginner friendly recipe for delicious gingerbread cookies*

**By Diana Lazaro**

What’s better than taking a bite out of a perfectly spiced and chewy gingerbread cookie while on winter break? Gingerbread cookies are a holiday classic used for gingerbread house making or to create gingerbread men. It can be tricky to make gingerbread cookies but with this recipe you will be able to master this baked good in time for the holidays. For ingredients you will need 1 cup of sugar, 1 large egg, 2 ½ cups of flour, 2 tsp of baking soda, ¾ of softened butter, ¼ cup of molasses, ½ tsp of salt, 1 tsp of cinnamon, and ½ tsp of ginger. First you want to preheat your oven and wash your hands. Now you will need a bowl and will mix your butter and sugar together until smooth then add your egg and molasses afterwards. In another bowl add the rest of the ingredients in it which are flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon, and ginger. Make sure to mix these ingredients as well. After the contents of both bowls are fully mixed, add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients to the same bowl and mix again. After a thorough mix of the wet and dry ingredients you should have made dough. With clean hands, form small balls of dough and place them onto your baking sheet. Make sure to leave some space between your rolls of dough to let them spread when baking. Finally, you should get your tray into the oven and let the cookies bake for 10-12 minutes and there you go. Let cookies cool and enjoy!

# Student Artwork



*Student Artwork by Ms. Crawford's Advanced Classes*



*Celeste C*



*Niko S*



*Liliam D*



*Korben G*



*Kayleigh T*



*Kailer C*



*Hailie R*



*Jaycee B*



*Ana A M*

# Word Search

## Winter At Analy

Words can be found in any direction (including diagonals) and can overlap each other. Use the word bank below.

O H S S N Y I F O G G Y O D E  
 G L T W R E C C O S I X U F S  
 Y D Y N W H J C C S X G S Z S  
 Y M Q S A P A D L L B V L X O  
 U C E P Z O N O X R K Z A J G  
 Q M X R K A E R B R E T N I W  
 U L L A B T E K S A B T I C J  
 U M T I C Y D C L Q N A F M P  
 R U T N Z V B O T F S Z M D H  
 F B Z S X L J C I S H B N R T  
 K E Q T P A O O V F C S K G K  
 G M N O G P H A H W K B C U N  
 K E B R O J O Q C O L D L I S  
 W G O M Q E X O C T Y K H T M  
 X A R H X N V G A H P G X X L

### Word Bank

- 1. foggy
- 2. cocoa
- 3. cold
- 4. basketball
- 5. soccer
- 6. finals
- 7. rainstorm
- 8. winterbreak

# Crossword

The crossword puzzle grid includes a snowman illustration in the center and a menorah illustration at the bottom. The grid has 10 numbered starting points for clues.

### Across

- 4. "Come on guys, we gotta \_\_\_\_\_ for finals"
- 5. winner of 11/22's Bay Area-famous "Big Game"
- 6. December's \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. big city career woman --> cozy small town Christmas with a local bachelor
- 10. team that was recently host of Analy's Student Band for a halftime performance

### Down

- 1. / 11/10/25: 50 years since this famous iron ore freighter sunk in the frigid waters of Lake Superior
- 2. Analy's 2026 Spring Musical
- 3. Chinese zodiac sign for 2026
- 7. popular holiday group gifting activity
- 9. Theme for the November Analy Dance Show

The answer keys for the puzzles are available on our website

[westcountyworld.org](http://westcountyworld.org)

7				6				5
	6		7		4		1	3
		4						6
						3	4	1
		9		1			2	
		8			3	5		9
8	9							7
	1					8		
5		7				6		

# Sudoku

