



VALLEY LIFE: HAY FEVER
THE THEATER DEPARTMENT IS SHOWING A NEW PLAY STARTING TONIGHT.



OPINION: CHANEL MILLER
THE VICTIM IN THE SEXUAL ASSAULT CASE IN STANFORD SPEAKS OUT.

Saddleridge fire shuts down Valley

High winds and close proximity to the fire lead to Valley College closing for the weekend.

SAVANNAH SIMMONS
OPINION EDITOR

The Saddleridge fire in Sylmar close the Valley College campus due to unsafe air quality caused by smoke from the blaze.

Valley sent out emails, text messages and automated phone calls Friday morning informing students that all Friday and Saturday classes were cancelled. Offices and services remained closed as well, due to the fire in the San Fernando Valley.

“My friend’s house was on fire,” said Ani Hakobyan, a Valley student. “He took a picture and sent it to me at like, 11a.m.”

Hakobyan and her friend Kristen Yengoyan were both returning from a tour of UC San Diego and San Diego State, sponsored by Valley.

“We came here in the morning and went to San Diego,” said Yengoyan. “When we came back we got the email that the campus was closed.”

Starting late at night on Oct. 10 in Sylmar, the brush fire has now burned more than 8,300 acres and damaged more than 80 structures. One man died of a heart attack and a firefighter was injured.

The combination of heavy Santa Ana winds, traveling up to 60 miles per hour, high heat and low humidity in the area created “an extremely dangerous fire”



FIRE- Firefighters putting out hot spots in Saddleridge, where the smoke from the fire had caused Valley College to close last weekend.

according to the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

The city of Porter Ranch, parts of Granada Hills and Sylmar were under a mandatory evacuation with approximately 23,000 homes and 100,000 people evacuated to neighboring cities and evacuation centers. The 5 and the 210 freeways, which both were shut down Friday, have now reopened.

More than 30 schools in the surrounding areas shut down, including Cal State Northridge, College of the Canyons, Mission College and Pierce College.

Pierce College’s Equestrian Center is playing an important role during the Saddleridge fire as a large animal evacuation center, housing 150 horses at their capacity. Hansen Dam Horse Park and the Pomona Fairplex



VALLEY STAR | MICKIE SHAW

are also taking in large animals. As of Wednesday, the fire is 46 percent contained by the more than 1,000 firefighters battling it head-on.

“In the morning you could really smell it,” said Security Officer Jerry Morales, “but now you can barely smell it.”

The Valley campus reopened on Monday sending out emails and text messages notifying stu-

dents that the air quality had improved and classes were back on. In an emergency like this fire, check the Valley website lavc.edu and [@ValleyStarNews](https://twitter.com/ValleyStarNews) for current campus closures and updates to the situation.

Solomon Smith contributed to this report.

Fire season puts state in the dark

PG&E company has preemptively cut power in 35 counties for the greater good of Northern California.

SARAH BEST
STAFF WRITER

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) shut off power in the Northern Sierra and Bay Areas as a proactive measure to prevent wildfires anticipated by weeklong dry winds and defective power lines.

The company turned off the power in a Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) on Oct. 10 shortly after midnight. It began in the Bay Area and spread to surrounding counties including Humboldt, Kern and Santa Cruz. PG&E estimated that the power would be out for roughly 48 hours before restorations would begin for schools and communi-

ties. Wind speeds reached more than 50 mph in 16 counties that were involved in the outage, any of which could have been potentially devastated by a faulty power-line induced fire.

University of California, Santa Cruz student Kelsey Sanford commented, “My friends on campus were affected by the power outage when it went off around midnight, but soon after the backup generators went on.”

This preemptive power-cut decision is an unprecedented occurrence in California. PG&E reportedly paid \$11 billion in damages for its role in the fire in Paradise, California last year. There is speculation about whether this recent shut-

off was PG&E’s tactic to raise their rates in order to make up for money lost in the Paradise fire lawsuit.

Prior to easing the blackout burden, PG&E noted that power restoration should occur within 24-48 hours of initial shut off, but disclosed that “customers should prepare for multiple-day outages.”

However, PG&E took extensive measures to minimize the imposition on the nearly 800,000 people it provides for by opening “Community Service Centers” in various locations within each county, according to the company’s Twitter. They provided basic needs such as water and electric-device charging stations.

The company revealed that nearly 100 issues were discovered in seemingly sufficient power lines during daytime inspections, and said, “It is possible that any one of these instances could have been a potential source of ignition had a PSPS not been initiated.”

On Oct. 11, PG&E released a report stating that the power for “approximately 543,000 customer has been restored” and “an ‘all clear’ decision has been extended to 34 of 35 counties impacted by the Public Safety Power Shutoff, except for Kern County.” As of Oct. 12, power has been revived to all customers.

Their website was updated every 15 minutes with maps of the impacted areas as each county was affected. Schools up north like Humboldt State University, UCSC and UC Berkeley were not only affected by the outage, but classes were canceled for a few days as well. Though some parts of each campus remained with no power, the majority were supported with back-up generators.

The university sent out emails to all staff and students notifying them of the possibility of power shutdown, which areas may be may be affected and how to prepare for it. Though Northern and Central California were expected to be most impacted by the power loss, cities as far south as Lompoc and Bakersfield were affected as well.

In spite of the widespread inconvenience caused by the power shutdown, UC Berkeley undergrad Esther Suh light-heartedly remarked that, “Students were calm and happy because this postponed our mid-terms.”

ON CAMPUS

October 19

The Career/Transfer Center is hosting a workshop for students looking to transfer to a UC at 5 p.m.

The Media Arts Department is holding a Fall 2019 Media Arts Showcase at 6 p.m. in the Mainstage Theater in the Theater Arts Building.

October 21

President Barry Gribbons will be holding an open forum from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. in Administration and Career Advancement, Room 2505.

October 22

The Career/Transfer Center is holding its annual College Fair from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Monarch Square. Over 50 colleges and universities will be participating.

The Chamber Singers Concert, conducted by Glenn Carlos, will be held in Music Recital Hall 106 at 1:30 p.m.

These features and more can be found in full @ www.thevalleystar.com



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS | BROKENSPHERE

POWER- More than 35 counties in Northern California had their power shut off by PG&E.

Three new ASU members in

The ASU gets new blood into its ranks after others left earlier in the semester.

GABRIEL ARIZON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The Executive Council voted three new members into the ASU last month, as other members vacated their positions.

On Sept. 24, the ASU voted for four students to fill in the positions of vice president, commissioner of health and safety, commissioner of political and external affairs and commissioner of social media. David Nargizyan, Leilani Alvarez, Saulo Abundis and Jonas Liatis won their respective categories unopposed (at least three candidates did not show up). However, Liatis resigned from his position soon after.

Nargizyan, a philosophy major, was a part of his high school student council for three years. His leadership experience includes being the vice president of the student body during his senior year. He is a tutor for diverted youth — those in the juvenile justice system — and contributed his graphic design skills to help various Valley College clubs with their designs.

“My two main goals are to help start the process of recycling on campus and to help return Valley College to its glory days of activism,” Nargizyan said, “back when public figures such as Bill Clinton and Angela Davis would come to visit and give speeches.”

Freshman Alvarez is a nursing major with plans to move into public health. In addition to improving student awareness of available campus health resources, her goals include creating a safer and healthier environment.

“I knew that by becoming a commissioner, I was representing the entire student population at Valley and that encourages me to be mindful of the needs of the students and to strive to fulfill their needs,” Alvarez said.

Political science major Abundis became a full-time student this year, having been part-time at Valley since 2016. His leadership experience includes founding his own club in high school — the Classy Club — helping teach etiquette to boys without fathers. His club taught skills like tying a tie and giving a firm handshake.

“I plan to ... meet with students regarding policies they think we should challenge the district on, and/or policy ideas they want to suggest,” Abundis said.

Liatis was not the only student to resign from his position this semester. Ani Apikyan, Evelyn Soriano and Angela Darpinian resigned from their position as vice president, commissioner of health and safety concerns and commissioner of fine arts, respectively. The Star reached out for comment, but none responded in time for this report. According to ASU office secretary Evelyn Pichardo, students often resign because they need to work and are unable to make time for the ASU.

“For the most part, students come in and sign up for it, but don’t understand the full commitment,” Pichardo said.

Catching “Hay Fever”

Valley transports its audience into a world of amusing drama with this play.

AIMEE MARTINEZ
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

The Valley College Theater Department delves into Cookham, England to tell the story of the eccentric Bliss family, whose varied guests experience all the antics of a retired actress, a novelist and their peculiar children.

Written by Noel Coward, the comedic play “Hay Fever” spans a weekend at the Bliss’ summer home with each member’s personal guests. Unsuspecting of the impending drama are a proper English diplomat, a shy flapper, a young boxer and a fashionable sophisticate.

Directed by Theater Professor Cathy Susan Pyles, the production stars Valley students Matthew Hawkins, Ann Kriss, Josh Lea, Quirina Medici, Enver Messano, Ewa Tonia, Vivianne Torres, Bill Wallis and Naomi Kim Yoon. The Production Stage

Manager is Jonel Hudson. The set and costumes are designed by Jennifer L. Read. Lighting design and technical direction are by Mark Svastics.

“I love this play,” said Pyles. “It’s very high society with British wit, sarcasm and fun. I’ve worked on it once before as a set designer and performed in it.”

As a fast-paced comedy, Pyle has ensured that every joke is well executed, including the timing, the appropriate gestures or the banter — all articulated in brisk British manner. In fact, the first two weeks were spent just practicing the English dialogue. The particular quirks attached to each of the nine roles must also be effectively acted in order to enhance the overall humor.

Playing the sweet flapper, Jackie Coryton, is Medici — a playwright whose three original plays premiered in Hollywood at the August festival and the Young Playwrights Festival.

“[Jackie is] very childlike, fun and oblivious. I can relate to her in a way,” said the 17 year old about her character.

Hawkins takes the role of boxer Sandy Tyrell. He has been a part of three other Valley productions such as “The Way of the World” and “Dutchman.” He hopes to transfer as a theater major to a four-year university to pursue acting.

“It’s been amazing,” said Hawkins. “I decided to do it again. Cathy’s one of the greatest acting teachers to have.”

Guardado is the assistant stage manager. He presets the stage, props and is on call for anything that might go wrong. This is his fifth Valley production.

“I just want to get as much experience as possible to work in the field,” said Guardado. “Overall, it’s been lovely and I’ve learned so much from Cathy and Jonel.”



SPECIAL TO THE STAR | ALEXANDRIANA ALONSO
PLAY- (Left to right) William Wallis, Naomi Kim Yoon and Joshua Lea act out a scene in “Hay Fever.”

Messano plays the smart yet oblivious diplomat, Richard Greatham. In previous plays, Messano worked as a director, a sound designer and a production stage manager. The 36 year old has performed with the theater department for three years now.

“I just love theater, so when the faculty puts on these shows, it’s always amazing quality,” said Messano. “This is a different experience because most of the cast is new but it’s been fun learning how all the new people behave. I hope that [the audience] sees how complicated love can be and don’t take it too seriously.”

“Hay Fever” opens Oct. 17 in the Horseshoe Theater. There will be evening performances Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and a Sunday matinee at 2 p.m. Tickets are sold for \$15 online and \$20 at the door. Students may purchase their tickets at www.brownpapertickets.com.



PHOTO COURTESY OF | WARNER BROS.
JOKER- Joaquin Phoenix is the latest to play Batman’s arch-enemy.

“Joker” is no laughing matter

“Joker” is a long, boring and painful journey through mental illness to insanity.

SAVANNAH SIMMONS
OPINION EDITOR

This latest version of “Joker” is not a movie about an evil man, maniacally laughing his way through the streets, stirring trouble and toying with Batman but a drawn-out film following one character’s evolution from a frightened, intimidated soul to an insanely violent person.

Throughout the film Joaquin Phoenix, playing Arthur Fleck, does an outstanding job of making viewers feel for his character. Fleck takes the audience on an emotional ride, through his sadness, anger and pain, as coworkers and passersby treat him like a zero.

Viewers watch the whole movie feeling empathetic for this extremely ill man facing real world problems such as mental illness, bullying and poverty because Fleck gives the audience something to connect with. It is a reflection of experiences happening around the world.

Phoenix and the cast turn in

strong performances and the set design beautifully depicts 70s New York. However, the story falls flat, as the film takes far too long for Fleck to become the Joker. For most of the two-hour film, Fleck is a normal guy, not becoming or assuming the role of Joker until the final moments of the film.

Fleck’s ramp up to his Joker persona is so slow and drawn out that it becomes exhausting to watch this poor man get beat up on and treated like garbage. The audience needs less Fleck and more Joker.

However, the first time the audience catches a glimpse of Joker standing up for himself during a subway shooting, he takes things too far and viewers know this character has cracked. Although people should have the right to stand up for themselves, capital punishment is not what was deserved but Fleck decided he would be the judge and ultimately, the executioner. In turn, the movie’s long-winding effort to feel sorry for Fleck, immediately turns into repulsion for the

Joker.

Viewers are forced to empathize with Fleck as he continues to be ridiculed, lose his job and find out the disturbing secrets of his childhood and mother. All of these things make Fleck believe he has the right to do what he has done and play the dangerous role of giving him an excuse for his horrific actions.

The audience also discovers Fleck is an unreliable narrator when scenes compare what played in his head with what initially played out on the screen. It all could have been orchestrated for viewers to be on his side and think what he did was just what he came to because of everything that happened to him in his life and throughout the film.

A character must have some kind of motive behind their madness and they are not going to do everything a logical way, it is a movie at the end of the day. But when most of these horrible acts are taking place, viewers know this character as Arthur Fleck, not Joker, and have been watching him as this battered

human for so long that it is hard to remember that this is a comic book villain.

The story is too real and relatable, especially in a time where mass killings and gun violence is extremely relevant in today’s world. According to gunviolencearchive.org, there have been 337 mass shootings as of October 2019. It would be naive to assume that at least one person in the theatre watching did not feel seen when watching Arthur Fleck’s life snowball from a meek loner to a person of cult power.

VALLEY’S STARS

★★★★

Rated R

Not Worth the \$\$\$

Now Playing

Classical pianist returns, plays again

Valley’s music department introduces the fall concert series with a piano concert.

AIMEE MARTINEZ
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Soo Biancalana stepped out onto the illuminated stage and bowed to a small audience in the dark. She sat on the black cushioned piano seat, took a moment to close her eyes and breathe. With her right hand as melody and her left hands as accompaniment, her hands danced to the keys of Bach’s Allemande and Sarabande from French Suite in G major.

This is the first performance of the Fall concert series presented by the Music Department. A couple years after her last performance at Valley College, Professor and Chair of the Music Department Christian Nova invited the Korean pianist to play again. The pieces spanned the works of composers Frederic Chopin, Claude Debussy and Samuel Barber.

It was a peaceful and joyful beginning. Her mien and body movements expressed the changing moods and rhythms

from piece to piece. In the dramatic high trills she smiled and in the calm sweet notes she swayed with bliss — eyes closed. In the slow deep notes she frowned, at times hunching over her shoulders and furrowing her brows. At the culmination of some compositions, she would linger demurely, letting the last note ring; while for others, she would finish powerfully, springing up to a stand.

After the first piece, she took off her sandal pumps, noticing how they squeaked against the pedals and proceeded barefoot. Bowing at the end of each piece, she recounted stories of the composition’s history along with her own interpretations. For Bach, it was a french dance. For Chopin, it was Paris, his illness and a yearning for his hometown. Debussy’s “Serenade” pictured the streets of Spain emanating from the serenades of a guitar. Barber’s “Cowboy Lament” was an anecdote of when Biancalana mistakenly played this story of dead cowboys at her best friend’s wedding.

Unconventional and animated, she played her notes from memory. The group — consisting mostly of students taking a music class — listened so intently, even the slightest bit of noise would have ruined the moment.

After the performance, the floor was opened to questions. There she divulged her secrets and offered her guidance. For example, technicality — being able to play the instrument — and the ability to be comfortable with the style are certain components necessary for performance. A great deal of research must be poured into the background of these composers. A musician must inquire into who they were and how that person might have felt.

“You have to dissect the piece,” said Biancalana. “Find the theme.”

Biancalana’s musicality began in her early teens as she left Seoul, Korea to come to America and pursue classical music. She has since received

a Doctorate in piano music at USC Thornton School of Music and has studied under notable instructors John Perry and Norman Krieger. Biancalana has performed all over the world, including Los Angeles at the Zipper Hall with Ronald Leonard and London Soloists Chamber Orchestra at Saint Martin in the Fields. She has taught master classes, private students and is a faculty member and judge for the Eum-Ak Journal’s Summer Festival and International Competition in Korea.

Considering her extensive musical career and exquisite performance, it was a shame so few people attended. Those who did, took time to greet her afterwards to praise her beautiful performance.

The next concert in the Music Recital Hall will feature Natalia Lipnitskaya on the guitar, on Saturday, Oct. 19.



PHOTO COURTESY OF | LOS ANGELES VALLEY COLLEGE
PIANIST- Soo Biancalana played for Valley’s first fall concert.

Student-made art gives Valley gallery a boost

Monarch-created art was on sale to the public in an effort to raise awareness and funds for the Valley College Art Gallery.

SOLOMON SMITH
MANAGING EDITOR

Monarchs gathered at the Valley College Gallery to make and sell art as part of the fundraising Monster Drawing Rally.

Different styles and mediums made the display a representative swath of the diversity on campus, last Tuesday, Oct. 8. Abstract pieces of art hung beside fantasy art, comic-style, pop-art, charcoal sketches and other styles. Students who produced the art were happy to have their works displayed and sold for a good cause.

“It was cool to see the gallery do something that actually sells student art,” said Patty, a humanities major. “That’s something that usually only happens at a workshop.”

Valley’s Art Gallery is a self-contained entity that coexists with the art department. Headed by Jenene Nagy, gallery director, the



Valley Star | Solomon Smith

FUNDRAISER- Students come together in the gallery to draw and sell their art.

program depends entirely on donations, receiving no funds from the college. Artists on the Valley staff help support the gallery by donating a portion of an endowment they receive to the gallery.

Staffing the event, putting up art, installing shows and the many other tasks needed to keep a gallery open have been done with volunteers, but the gallery has managed to accomplish large scale exhib-

its on a shoe-string budget; Black Comix, Tautline and its documentary, New Global Matriarchy, as well as student galleries and competitions are just a few of the major events the gallery has managed to

host.

Pieces were priced at \$20 and all funds collected went to the gallery. Materials were available for anyone who wanted to contribute and students were encouraged to participate. The concept of the Monster Art Rally was inspired by Southern Exposure (SoEx), a San Francisco bay area non-profit organization that has emphasized experimental and creative art forms since 1974.

“SoEx is continually evolving in response to the needs of artists and the community while engaging the public in artists work,” states Southern Exposure’s mission statement.

The gallery has made just over \$400, and the staff are hopeful that its success could lead to more fundraisers of this type. Fundraisers are also a way to reach students. Having their own art and displaying it for sale connects students to the gallery, something Nagy has tried to emphasize.

“A lot of times people may feel that the art gallery is elitists or it is not for them,” said Nagy, “but we try to do a wide range of programming to help demystify it and help people feel like they can be a part of it in different ways.”

The next display will be a multimedia piece by artist Craig Drennen called California BANDIT. Opening Oct. 30 to Dec. 5, there will also be a reception at 1 p.m. on Oct. 30. The solo display is based on Shakespeare’s least successful play, Timon of Athens. Drennen has worked on it for five years.

“With his work I’m interested in the way that failure is used, and how its not necessarily always a negative thing. With failure comes risk taking and it encourages growth,” Drennen said.

To see more of the gallery’s projects, go to their website at lavc.edu/arts/art-gallery, or Instagram @lavcartgallery.

Code Pink is now a go

Menstrual products will now be provided by the ASU at no cost.

AIMEE MARTINEZ
Valley Life Editor

The ASU office will soon be offering free sanitary napkins and tampons to any students in need.

The idea was pitched by ASU Commissioner of Student Life Maricela Garcia after a student informed her that the health office was only allowing one sanitary napkin or tampon per day. The Code Pink program was therefore proposed and approved for \$550 to supply women with a small plastic bag of three sanitary napkins or tampons. Students can get them twice a month.

Students would sign in with their student ID and specify whether they needed either a tampon or a sanitary napkin. As of right now, these products are not available in the health office, but are sold in the student store. Code Pink is set to take effect a month from now.

“The goal is to provide women with three for each day and be able to continue their education,” said Commissioner Garcia. “I just want to make sure that female students are not lim-

ited to one pad.”

On average, women go through about five to six tampons per day. According to the Washington Post, women in California pay \$7 per month for 40 years of these tampons and sanitary napkins.

“There’s probably a good portion of girls that are on their period that can’t afford these things.”
- Daisy Negrete

Over the years, concern over the accessibility of these feminine hygiene products has grown. In order to aid low income students, many menstrual activists, such as the founders of Period Equity, have pushed against the issues of the tampon tax — the sales tax on menstrual products — and period poverty — the inability to afford sanitary products, menstrual hygiene education, toilets, hand washing facilities and waste management.

Period Equity describes themselves as a “legal organization dedicated to ensuring acces-

sible, affordable and safe menstrual products.” In 2015, they partnered with Cosmopolitan to challenge the tampon tax. Since then, 11 states have already eliminated the tax, including Connecticut, New York and Massachusetts. California has temporarily exempted the tax for two years and Ohio repealed their sales tax on tampons and other hygiene products last Friday.

Earlier this year, groups of menstrual equity advocates, brought together by The United for Access campaign, wrote a letter to U.S. Secretary of Education Nancy Devos.

“Menstrual hygiene products are basic necessities, and the inability to access them affects a student’s freedom to study, be healthy and participate in society with dignity,” wrote the groups.

Next semester, Garcia will be working on the period drive to spread social awareness of the issue.

“I think [Code Pink] is a good thing,” said psychology major, Daisy Negrete. “It’s something not a lot of places do. There’s probably a good portion of girls that are on their period that can’t afford these things.”



Flickr | Marco Verch

PADS- When Code Pink takes effect, students will be able to get free sanitary napkins from the ASU.



Twentieth Century Fox | Francois Duhamel
PITT- Brad Pitt stars in this thrilling, yet slow-moving drama.

“Ad Astra,” therapy in zero gravity

Set in outer space, “Ad Astra” is grounded in real family relationships.

MICKIE SHAW
MULTIMEDIA EDITOR

Director James Gray’s subtle direction, multifaceted script and Brad Pitt’s under-stated performance create a science fiction movie that is thought provoking and mysterious while containing hair raising, frightening and thrilling action often all at the same time.

[Warning spoilers ahead!]

In the future, the hunt for extraterrestrial life is a serious endeavor. Roy McBride (Brad Pitt), a celebrated astronaut and military officer, is first seen on a giant antenna created to search for alien life. It is an enormous spire stretching from Earth into space. The view down to Earth is endless and so realistic, it can cause dizziness. While carrying out repairs on the antenna, a massive power surge strikes the Earth from outer space destroy-

ing all electrical devices and killing tens of thousands. The surge is from outer space, and Roy is recruited to try and contact his father Clifford McBride (Tommy Lee Jones) who might be the cause of the surges from space. The fate of Earth and the entire solar system is at stake if Roy fails.

“Ad Astra” is not just a sci-fi film; it is the psychological study of an adult son finally having to face his father’s legacy, his own repressed and conflicted emotions toward him and his own feelings of abandonment. While looking for his father, Roy also imagines love and recognition from his dad. “Ad Astra” is not space opera action, but a hard science fiction drama sprinkled with high intensity action.

Pitt narrates Roy’s thoughts about his father throughout the film. His low monotone voice asks if his father was broken by his last deep space mission

to find life in interstellar space and if he was going to find his father or let him go. Roy’s frozen emotional state throughout the film not only detaches him from his wife but the audience too. One never feels involved with the character, and his thoughts regarding his father at times drone on and become dull. You feel like telling Roy to get over it, and at times the audience feels like a voyeur in his therapy sessions.

Despite the quiet moments in the film, and there are many, “Ad Astra,” (Latin for “to the stars”) is mesmerizing with its vision of the future, and the depictions of Jupiter and Neptune are stunning in their realism. Every location Roy travels to has its own feel and colors. Black and white for the moon, reds and yellows for Mars and rich colors for the giant gas planets.

Even a bit of humor is present. When Roy arrives on the

moon for a flight transfer to Mars, he is greeted by a Subway sandwiches. Roy’s narration comments humans have made the moon like Earth. The action was exciting and even frightening at times. The chase scene on the moon was a thrill ride.

“Ad Astra” is well done, beautiful, thought provoking with just enough action to keep the film’s pace moving. The drama, however, is plodding and can be depressing. The audience never feels engaged, or sympathetic towards Roy. One never truly cares or connects with the characters.

Valley’s Stars

★★★★

Rated PG-13

Stream It

Now Playing

Chanel Miller is no longer silent

The once anonymous Stanford sexual assault survivor wants you to know her name.

CESIA LOPEZ
STAFF WRITER

Before the world knew her name, we knew her as “Emily Doe” the anonymous and “unconscious, intoxicated woman” of the 2015 Stanford University sexual assault case. On Sept. 22, her chin held high, the fiercely poised Chanel Miller revealed her identity and unapologetically furthered the conversation of sexual assault into the public eye.

In an interview with Bill Whitaker on “60 Minutes,” the half-Chinese 27 year old challenged a spectrum of pervasive cultural and systemic issues that were magnified in her case. From a criminal justice system that fails the most vulnerable yet affords easy sympathies to white, privileged young men, to the overall culture that places more responsibility on victims of sexual violence than on perpetrators.

“What was she doing at a frat party? This isn’t really rape. Why was she alone? She’s the predator because she’s older. Why would you ever get that drunk? It was endless,” Miller said, as she recounted the victim-blaming comments that emerged alongside news of her assault.

“I didn’t know that if a woman was drunk when the violence occurred, she wouldn’t be taken seriously. I didn’t know that if he was drunk when the violence occurred, people would offer him sympathy.”

These unproductive comments ring all too familiar to many survivors. Valley College student Jeannie Quirus, commented on the prevalent stigma that undermines and shames victims when they disclose their assault.

“It happened to me when I was victimized myself, at work,” said Quirus. “People started slut-shaming and spreading rumors about me saying that I was the problem and that it was my fault.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF I MARIAH TIFFANY MILLER- Chanel Miller came forward to talk about the culture surrounding sexual assault victims.

She contrasted the paradox presented by the same co-workers, stating, “I remember the next day, this girl was like, ‘well that’s just what he does when he goes out’ and I was like, well that’s not okay and that’s why I reported it.”

When Miller was 22 years old, she attended a party at Stanford with her younger sister who was in town visiting. The grad student’s alcohol tolerance had significantly lowered since her time at UC Santa Barbara, resulting in her blacking out. Even though the party was only 10 minutes away from her home, she was still singled out by Brock Turner.

Two Swedish grad students witnessed him on top of Miller’s unconscious body behind a dumpster, chased him when he fled and pinned him down until the cops arrived. In 2016, Turner was unanimously found guilty on three charges of sexual assault but was only sentenced to six months in a county jail — of which he served half.

“There are young men, particularly young men of color, serving longer sentences for non-violent crimes, for having a teeny-weeny bit of marijuana in their pockets,” Miller critiqued the unjust and biased systems, “and he’s just been convicted of three felonies and he’s gonna serve one month for each felony.

How can you explain that to me?”

Miller became an anonymous icon when BuzzFeed published the powerful impact statement she confronted Turner with during the sentencing — instantly going viral. Victims were united throughout the nation, even before the #MeToo wave of 2017, after reading her detailed account of the trauma she endured from both the assault and legal process. Her words drew national headlines and became a manifesto for assault survivors everywhere and a rallying cry for change.

The lenient sentencing combined with her impact statement sparked global outrage and a national debate on racial bias and class privilege. In 2018, voters recalled California Judge Aaron Persky, who gave the measly sentencing because he was concerned “prison would have a severe impact” on the convicted rapist’s future. Despite the slap on the wrist the registered sex offender received, memes of his face with descriptions of his deeds have been in steady circulation on social media for the past 4 years — ensuring we never forget.

The case (People v. Turner) influenced the California legislature to toughen sexual assault laws by imposing mandatory minimum sentencing terms

for rapists and extending the penal code’s definition of rape to include victims who are unconscious and those subjected to nonconsensual penetration of any kind.

“Rape is not a punishment for getting drunk,” Miller affirmed. “We have this really sick mindset in our culture, as if you deserve rape, if you drink to excess. You deserve a hangover, a really bad hangover. You don’t deserve to have somebody insert their body parts inside of you.”

A newfound awareness and urgency spread across colleges about campus assault, and prominent Hollywood actresses spoke publicly of workplace harassment. As well, Christine Blasey Ford delivered a brave testimony on Capitol Hill challenging the newest Supreme Court Justice. This shows that despite the narratives that aim to coerce and silence victims, their defiant voices will continue to rise and be heard.

Miller’s voice continues to empower through her memoir “Know My Name” where she reclaims her own hope and humanity by understanding and transforming her trauma, encouraging other survivors to do so as well. This continues to lead the chorus of strong voices that will emerge to oust predators and dismantle the systems that protect and enable them.

It’s time to listen to the future

Political leaders bullying teen activists is just a tactic for ignoring real issues.

SARAH BEST
STAFF WRITER

Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg addressed our country’s leaders in a recent meeting at the U.N. where her age and developmental disorder seemed to play a key role in her backlash.

It wasn’t uncommon to be told to “listen to your elders” when growing up. That is a thing of the past and now it is time to listen to the future. Thunberg’s powerful speech at the U.N’s Climate Action Summit on Sept. 23 has caused an enormous uproar in Washington, and is getting the wrong attention from our leaders. She is frequently mocked by our president and ridiculed by guests on FOX News.

A common theme in modern society is pushing the ideology that the “kids are the future” and that the fate of our nation lies within the imminent generations. If our future really does lie in the hands of today’s youth, why are political leaders ignoring and criticizing Thunberg and other young activists like her that are attempting to institute change?

Conservative podcast host, Michael Knowles, referred to climate change as a non-scientific issue that should be “led by scientists instead of a mentally ill Swedish child” during a Bloomberg editorial segment on FOX News. Thunberg has readily been forthcoming about living with Asperger’s and has often referred to it as being her superpower, according to CNN. FOX quickly proceeded to issue a half-hearted apology on behalf of Knowles, calling his bullying remarks “disgraceful.”

Though it was expected that the content of the 16 year old’s deliverance would be overlooked and practically everything else about her would be criticized, FOX News is not the only source castigating Thunberg. Tweets

from the former aide to the White House Seb Gorka read, “The adults who brainwashed this autist[ic] child should be brought up on child abuse charges.”

Our current administration ignored the pressing reality of climate issues presented in Thunberg’s speech, and Trump chose to mock her Twitter bio in a tweet that read “She seems like a very happy young girl looking forward to a bright and wonderful future. So nice to see!” As opposed to being taken seriously, she is instead being blatantly criticized for her young age and developmental disorder, both of which are out of her control.

However, not all leaders are ignoring Thunberg and the climate emergency. Mayor Pete Buttiegeg of South Bend, Indiana and California Senator Kamala Harris both agreed that leaders are “failing the youth of today” by not “taking action” with the climate calamity that future generations will have to live with.

The Trump administration and conservative leaders can not pick and choose when they want to listen to today’s youth or acknowledge their voices. They want to aid in the epidemic among young people of vaping by banning e-cigarettes. Had Thunberg ended up in the hospital due to vaping related illness, would our president still unremorsefully mock and bully? When teens like Thunberg bring up real issues, why are they not taken seriously, Mr. President?

To what extent do America’s youth have to go to in order to be taken seriously by the people in power? Today’s administration is displaying a reprehensible bullying deflection act in order to avoid the acknowledgment of climate catastrophes, among other issues, being brought to their attention by America’s future.

Supporting oppression over democracy is unacceptable

Big name companies are making the cowardly decision to side with the Chinese government rather than pro-democracy messages.

GABRIEL ARIZON
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Citizens in Hong Kong have been protesting for months for their civil liberties against the Chinese government, and people all over the internet have been showing their support for Hong Kong and its peoples’ fight for democracy. However, this past week has shown that large-scale companies and organizations sing to a different tune.

Whether it is intentional or not, entertainment and tech companies have spoken loud and clear that they would rather bend over backwards to appease an oppressive government than lose a dime over supporting human rights, and that is inexcusable.

The week started off with a now deleted tweet on Oct. 6 by Houston Rockets General Manager Daryl Morey, which was an image that read “Fight for Freedom. Stand with Hong Kong.” That single tweet caused Tencent, a Chinese telecom giant that made a \$1.5 billion deal with the NBA to exclusively air their content back in July according to The Hill, to cease airing Rockets games. The Chinese Basketball Association, headed by former Rockets player Yao Ming, cut all ties with the NBA.

The organization scrambled to make an apology, stating that it was “regrettable” that Morey’s tweet offended Chinese fans. The NBA issued another apology — this one in Chinese — that said “[Morey] has undoubtedly

seriously hurt the feelings of the Chinese basketball fans.”

However, according to the Hollywood Reporter, that phrase is similar to one of the favored propaganda terms used by Beijing’s Foreign Ministry when Western brands and peoples support the Hong Kong protests. In short, the NBA used propagandist language to try and salvage their business relationship while throwing Morey under the bus. They shamefully chose to try and save their deal rather than stand by an employee that simply supported human rights.

Speaking out in support of Hong Kong has not only affected sports, but the realm of video games as well. The free-to-play online card game, “Hearthstone,” is currently having its international tournament

called Grandmasters, where professional players compete for a prize pool of \$500,000. After one match on Oct. 6, Hong Kong player Ng Wai Chung used the post-game stream to wear goggles and a mask similar to that of the protesters and said, “Liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our age.”

Two days later, Activision Blizzard, the game’s publisher based in the U.S., removed Chung from the tournament, banned him for a year and rescinded the \$10,000 prize money he was set to receive, according to IGN. In addition, two stream casters were fired for no other apparent reason than appearing alongside Chung when he made his message.

The company stated that he had violated tournament rules.

However, considering a report by the New York Times said that Activision Blizzard earned 12 percent of its \$1.4 billion total revenue from the Asia Pacific region during the second quarter of 2019, it is far more likely that they did not want to anger one of their markets.

The punishment itself is far too excessive for the ‘crime,’ and it took days of backlash from the gaming community for the publisher to reduce Chung’s ban to six months and give him his prize money, as well as reduce the two casters’ ban to six months.

The publisher failed one of its most prominent players because it lacked the spine to stand by a message supporting the protesters fighting for their democracy. It demonstrated that

it cared more about the feelings of the Chinese government than that of actual people.

Acquiescing to the wants of the Chinese government is nothing new; Hollywood has been doing it for years. However, this recent trend of companies supporting the government at the expense of employees, fans and the people of Hong Kong is indefensible. These companies need to realize what message their decisions are sending; they do not stand for democracy if the price tag is too high. They would rather choose tyranny if they could still make a buck. The true irony here is that by choosing to side with China to save their brand, they have done even more harm.

VALLEY VIEW

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE BACKLASH AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS WHO COME FORWARD?

TEXT BY SARAH BEST

PHOTOS BY MICKIE SHAW



“I think it’s messed up to think that. They’re the victim, so you should believe what they’re saying. If what they’re saying is true, there should be no backlash.”
- DJ KING, FILM STUDIES



“I think that’s really offensive. They don’t really deserve that type of hatred, especially because clothes don’t even matter.”
- KAITLYN GONZALEZ, GRAPHIC DESIGN



“I think everyone should be respected, especially with something like that. I don’t think they have enough of a voice.”
- KYLE CORDESCO, BUSINESS



“More should be done to make them feel like they can come clean with their story.”
- HANNAH FUNCES, ARCHITECTURE



“I feel like people are just trying to find small things to help accommodate what happened. It’s a tragic thing and no one wants to admit that it happened.”
- HOVHANNES AV, UNDECIDED

EDITORS NOTE

The views expressed on this page are solely those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Valley Star, its instructors, editors, staff or those of Los Angeles Valley College, its administration, faculty, staff or students.

SPORTS ANALYSIS

Gov. Newsom says: “Show them the money”

The state of California recently passed a bill that has the potential to change the landscape of the NCAA and its student athletes.



FLICKR | PHIL ROEDER

NCAA- College athletes within the organization usually went unpaid for their activity, but that may change with this newest bill passed by California.

VICENTE VITELA
STAFF WRITER

California passed a first of its kind bill last week allowing collegiate athletes to be compensated for the use of their names and images, which could change college sports forever. California Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a bill that will go into effect in January 2023 that prohibits the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) from barring a university from competition if its athletes are compensated for the use of their name, image and likeness. Many sports analysts, as well as California state officials, believe that there will be many more states that will implement a similar bill.

“I have deep reverence, deep respect for the NCAA and college athletics,” Gov. Newsom said in a recent Los Angeles Times article. “I just think the system has been perverted, and this is fundamentally about rebalancing things. It’s about equity, it’s about fairness, and it’s about time.” Initial reaction from the NCAA deemed the decision as “unconstitutional” and NCAA president Mark Emmert said that it would turn “students into employees.” In 2017, the NCAA — a non-profit organization — reported \$1.7 billion in revenue and, with the new law set to take place, that amount of revenue could be in jeopardy. The NCAA now battles within itself over the possibility of not letting these teams compete once the bill is set to begin.

“This could be game changing and I think it will make the students want to stay in school more,” said Juan Sanchez, a Monarch athlete. The NCAA isn’t the only group that is against this new bill. Several of California’s powerful universities lobbied against the measure, including Berkeley, Stanford and USC. If these schools are deemed ineligible to compete, then they would not be allowed to compete in the college football playoffs and men’s and women’s tournaments, which can help some universities rake in up to \$100 million each year, according to cbssports.com. The ramifications of such a bill can have an impact that goes beyond the field as it has the potential to give athletes who come from a low income family a way of helping out their families

while at the same time completing their education. What this bill could also do is get rid of the “one and done” players who attend a university for one year and then decide to forego their remaining three years of eligibility and education in pursuit of money and a professional career. On the women’s side, with the exception of the WNBA and the Olympics, a women’s athletic career ends once their four years of eligibility is up. With the new bill, it can make those short four years that much more sweeter. The women have also raked in over \$6 million a year, according to businessinsider.com, for the NCAA with softball and basketball. This bill may inspire some soon to be collegiate athletes who are on the fence about division one sports to accept that challenge knowing they can get

more than an education during their tenure. After California passed the bill, many other states began discussing the outline for a similar plan of action. South Carolina, New York and Illinois have already begun to draw up plans and will present them to their respective governors within the next two years. This decision by California can not only rock the foundation of the NCAA, but it can also change the way athletes think when it comes to playing at the collegiate level. As far as the NCAA is concerned, the quicker they stop this from spreading the better, because we all know when a domino falls, others follow.



SPECIAL TO THE STAR | DALE BECK

FOOTBALL- Andrew Galvan rushes past Pierce College defenders towards the end zone.



SPECIAL TO THE STAR | DALE BECK

TOP- Defensive back Awan Parker takes down a Pierce receiver in mid-air. BOTTOM- Head Coach Lester Towns looks on while his team plays against Pierce College.



LADY MONARCHS

Women’s water polo will play against Pierce College on October 23 at 2 p.m.

Women’s soccer will play on October 18 against Antelope Valley College.

MONARCH STATS

Monarch’s water polo is 8-3 overall, winning 21-7 against Citrus College on October 9.

Lady Monarch’s soccer has a 5-5-2 record overall and 3-1 in the Western State Conference.

MEN’S FOOTBALL

Valley will be playing a home game against Chaffey College on October 19.

Valley will play an away game against Compton College on October 26.

The Valley Star

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GOT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

Letters to the editor can be sent to: editor@lavalleystar.com or submitted online at www.lavalleystar.com. Letters must be limited to 300 words and may be edited for content. Full name and contact information must be supplied in order for letters to be printed. Send by Thursday for the following week’s issue.



The Independent Student Newspaper of Los Angeles Valley College

Drawing for a cause

Text and photos by
Solomon Smith, Photo Editor

The Valley College Art Gallery invited student to make Halloween monsters

as part of a fund raiser. Students used free materials to make thier favorite monster or horror scene to be sold at the end of the day.

RIGHT- Claws and teeth are put on paper for a good cause.



ABOVE- A colorful drawing gets the final detail before being put up for sale.
BELOW- Finished pieces are mounted and prepared to be hung up by volunteers.



BELOW- Gallery Director Nagy takes a shot of student art.



ABOVE- One student works on his piece as another admires completed and labeled works for sale.