



VALLEY LIFE: LOCAL CAFE
THIS PACOIMA BASED CAFE USES THEIR PROFITS TO HELP VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING.



OPINION: PROOF
REQUIRING PROOF OF VACCINATION AT BARS, CAFES AND RESTAURANTS IS A VIOLATION.

Enrollment continues to decline

Community colleges across the state struggle to retain students, as the clock runs out on hold harmless safety net.

ISAAC DEKTOR
NEWS EDITOR

Valley College's enrollment decline indicates a statewide trend that was addressed on Monday by California's community college system board of governors.

The 116 schools in California's community college system saw a decline of 318,800 students or nearly 15 percent between 2019-20 and 2020-21 according to a memo prepared for the board of governors. Valley reported a loss of 2,944 students over the last two school years, a trend that is mirrored throughout the district. The headcount drop will not affect California Community Colleges' state aid but may impact adjunct faculty, according to Edsource.

Part-time adjunct faculty are usually hired for a few semesters before they continue to work in the industry that they have been hired to teach in. Stephanie Goldman, acting executive director of the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges, said some faculty will lose their jobs due to the enrollment decline.

"The part-timers who maybe have worked at a certain district for decades are going to start to lose out," said Goldman. "They got fewer people enrolling in classes and the first ones to go are going to be the part-time faculty."

When enrollment declines, part-time adjunct faculty are the



EMPTY- Few students remain in the outdoor cafeteria seating, which is largely vacant after a sparsley attended ASU club day concluded.

most affected employees due to their shorter contracts that are based on class availability. With a smaller headcount, the demand for classes will decline and the need for part-time adjuncts will shrink with it.

Districts are funded based on the metric of full-time equivalent students, which is calculated by dividing the total course credits being taken by all students by a full-time course load of 12 units.

State funding for community colleges is partially based on enrollment, but districts with enrollment decline are fund-

ed based on older and higher enrollment numbers. These protections are called "hold harmless," and were extended until 2025 in the state's latest budget. California also has protections in place that allow colleges to use old enrollment data during times of emergency such as a pandemic.

Valley College president Barry Gribbons said that "hold harmless" and other protections have bought schools some time, but if current trends continue, the state could be in trouble.

"There won't be any fiscal impact for California Community

Colleges for a couple of years because the state has put provisions in place to stabilize funding," said Gribbons "That said, we do have to work on bringing our enrollment back for the next couple of years prior to those provisions ending."

Gribbons also said that Valley is developing a marketing strategy in order to drive up enrollment.

"Presumably [the marketing strategy] would include social media, advertising, direct mail pieces and it could also include other forms of advertising like radio ads, cable ads, bus stop

signs and billboards," said the college president. "But first we have to get the draft planned and finalized."

Legislators approved \$20 million in one-time funds for colleges to invest in methods to increase enrollment and retention of students.

According to the Public Policy Institute of California, demand for college degree carrying workers will exceed supply by 2030 due to a rising need and slow growth.

New faculty coming to Valley

EDWARD SEGAL
STAFF WRITER

Valley College will hire 10 new staff members using state and federal funds awarded to the Los Angeles Community College District, according to Valley's budget committee.

The committee unanimously agreed on the motion, which will hire eight professors and two counselors. According to co-Chair Howard Levine, Valley will look to hire as soon as possible, with the new staff beginning as early as fall 2022. According to Inside Higher Ed, the state Legislature proposed to spend \$170 million on 2,000 full-time faculty members for community colleges in the state.

Levine says it's imperative to hire these professors quickly, since many colleges in the state will receive the money.

"We will be fighting other colleges for recruiting individuals," said the budget committee co-chair. "If we wait until May to post [the job], then we lose a lot of potential candidates."

The new professors will teach courses such as anatomy, manufacturing and English as a Second Language, according to Valley President Barry Gribbons. In addition, the college may look to hire an 11th professor to teach dual enrollment classes in ethnic studies.

"If we are able to resolve articulation issues and help our local high schools meet the new graduation requirements they have, we anticipate a large increase in demand for ethnic studies in the dual enrollment program," said Gribbons.

Dual enrollment classes were a big factor in keeping the college stable during the pandemic, as class numbers rose by 10 percent from the previous year, according to the committee.

Some members of the budget committee said that it is difficult to advocate for hiring during a pandemic, when less students are enrolling than usual.

"Given our budget situation and enrollment, we probably would not be in a place where we could argue for hiring very many faculty," said psychology professor Ruby Christian-Brougham, referring to the decline in enrollment because of the pandemic.

The money for the staff comes in permanent funds, but does not cover cost-of-living adjustments, or benefits meant to counteract inflation, for each of the hired faculty members. According to Levine, the college itself will be covering that expense for each staff member.

The hiring comes as the California Community College system plans for 75 percent of classes to be instructed by full-time professors. According to Cal Matters, only 59 percent of courses in the state are taught by full-time instructors. The Academic Senate for California Community Colleges states that these professors provide many benefits that part-time staff do not, such as availability outside the classroom and greater involvement in their department and school.

Together with expanding dual enrollment, the hiring of full-time faculty is part of the budget committee's larger plan to help the college recover from the blows dealt by the pandemic.

Fall Final Schedule

DAY CLASSES								
Day and Date Of Final Exam	MONDAY DEC 13			TUESDAY DEC 14				
Time of Exam	6:30am - 8:30am	9:30am - 11:30am	12:30pm - 2:30pm	6:30am - 8:30am	9:30am - 11:30am	12:30pm - 2:30pm		
Normal Class Schedule	6:30 – 7:55 MW	9:40 – 10:50 MTWTh	1:30 – 2:40 MTWTh	6:30 – 7:55 TTh	9:40 – 11:05 TTh	1:30 – 2:40 TTh		
	6:45 – 7:55 MTWTh	9:40 – 11:05 MW	1:30 – 2:55 MW		9:40 – 10:55 TThF	1:30 – 2:45 TThF		
		9:40 – 10:55 MWF	1:30 – 2:45 MWTh		9:40 – 12:10 TTh	1:30 – 4:00 TTh		
		9:40 – 12:10 MW	1:30 – 4:00 MW					
Day and Date Of Final Exam	WEDNESDAY DEC 15			THURSDAY DEC 16				
Time of Exam	8:00am - 10:00am	10:30am - 12:30pm	1:00pm - 3:00pm	8:00am - 10:00am	10:30am - 12:30pm	1:00pm - 3:00pm		
Normal Class Schedule	8:15 – 9:25 MTWTh	11:35 – 1:00 MTWTh	2:20 – 3:30 MTWTh	7:45 – 9:10 TTh	11:35 – 1:00 TTh	1:30 – 3:40 TTh		
	7:45 – 9:00 MW	11:35 – 1:00 MW	2:40 – 4:05 MW	7:45 – 8:50 TThF	11:20 – 1:00 TThF	1:45 – 3:00 TThF		
	7:45 – 9:10 MWF	11:35 – 1:05 MWF		7:45 – 10:00 TTh	11:35 – 2:20 TTh			
	7:45 – 10:00 MW	11:35 – 2:20 MW						
EVENING CLASSES								
CLASSES MEETING AT 3 PM OR BEFORE 5 PM			CLASSES MEETING AT 5 PM OR BEFORE 6 PM			CLASSES MEETING AT OR AFTER 6 PM		
Class Meets	Exam Date	Time	Class Meets	Exam Date	Time	Class Meets	Exam Date	Time
M	M Dec 13	4 – 6pm	M	M Dec 13	4:30 – 6:30pm	M	M Dec 13	7 – 9pm
T	T Dec 14	4 – 6pm	T	T Dec 14	4:30 – 6:30pm	T	T Dec 14	7 – 9pm
W	W Dec 15	4 – 6pm	W	W Dec 15	4:30 – 6:30pm	W	W Dec 15	7 – 9pm
Th	Th Dec 16	4 – 6pm	Th	Th Dec 16	4:30 – 6:30pm	Th	Th Dec 16	7 – 9pm
MW	M Dec 13	4 6pm	MW	W Dec 15	4:30 6:30pm	MW	M Dec 13	7 9pm
TTh	T Dec 14	4 – 6pm	TTh	Th Dec 16	4:30 – 6:30pm	TTh	T Dec 14	7 – 9pm

In the event of a conflict, speak with your instructor to schedule an alternate time to take the final.

To use the schedule:

- Locate the day and hour of your class on the grid.
- Days of the week are abbreviated M T W Th F for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

Finals for the fall semester are from Monday, Dec. 13 to Saturday, Dec. 18.

Friday classes will have their final on Friday, Dec. 17 during their regularly scheduled class meeting.

Saturday classes will have their final on Saturday, Dec. 18 during their regularly scheduled class meeting.

Final examinations will be held on the day and time scheduled and in the regularly assigned classrooms.

Except for classes of less-than-semester length, the last day of regular instruction is Sunday, Dec. 12.

IMPORTANT INFO

The Academic Resource Center is offering events to help students prepare for final exams. Workshops will be held online via Zoom and in person in the Library & Academic Resource Center. Check lavc.edu for more details.

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

Follow up-to-date campus news and events on Twitter @ValleyStarNews

“Red (Taylor’s Version)” is good for the soul and good for Taylor

The re-recording of Taylor Swift’s 2012 album “Red” is a reclamation effort that has succeeded along with new tracks and an extended version of “All Too Well.”

BENJAMIN ROYER
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Taylor Swift leaps directly into the deep end with a 30-track album, embracing the creation of her original album “Red,” but this time, “Taylor’s Version” has cultivated a new and modern listen.

Released seven months prior, “Fearless (Taylor’s Version)” started Taylor Swift’s journey to claim each album as her own. Now, released on Nov. 12, “Red (Taylor’s Version)” is the second of six new album recordings that the 11-time Grammy Awards winner will record over the next few years. After mega-producer Scooter Braun sold the master rights to Swift’s first six albums for \$300 million in November 2020, Swift reintroduced her records with her own sound. Recreating all of her original tracks from scratch, she uses today’s techniques to generate a cleaner sound. With songs such as “All Too Well (10 minute version),” “Treacherous” and From The Vault track “I Bet You Think About Me” shining on the album, Swift goes back to her country roots with more passion behind her voice than ever before.

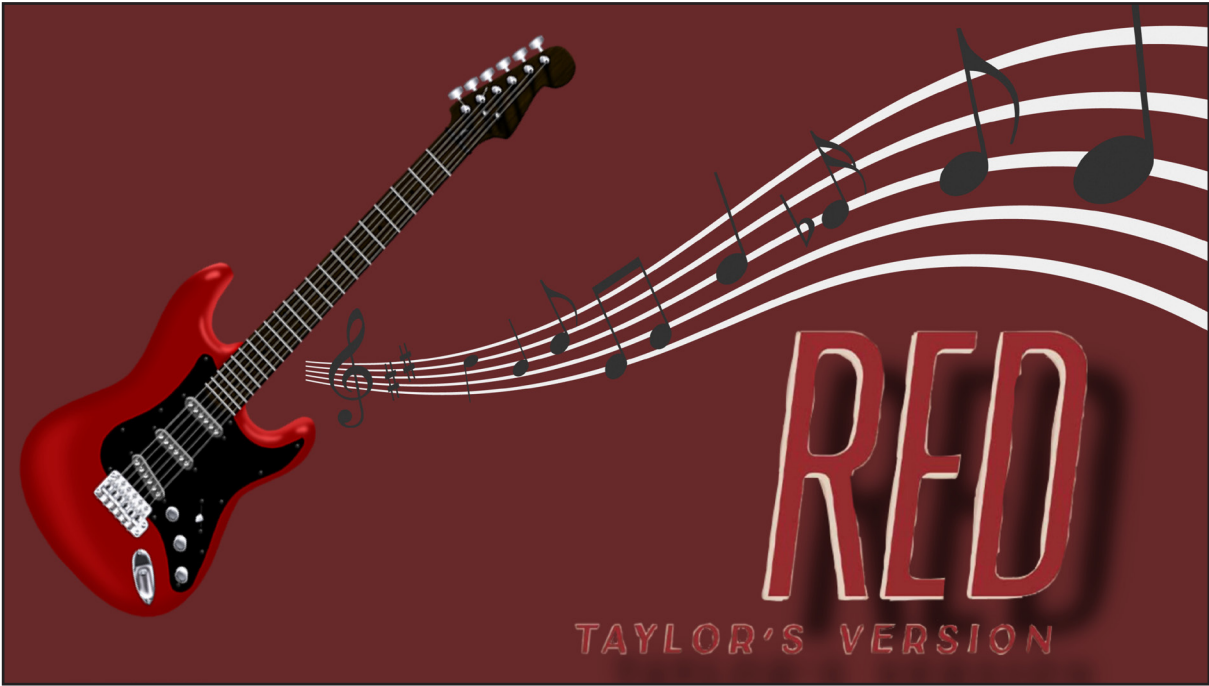
The production value on the album can be heard with every

track’s nuance compared to the prior version. The mix of Swift’s crisp vocals can be heard on the opener, “State of Grace” - which takes lyrics such as, “This is a state of grace/This is the worthwhile fight/Love is a ruthless game/Unless you play it good and right” to a grander level with annunciation beyond key in the crafting of the song.

Taking an album from nine years prior and formulating it on her own takes courage and will stand the test of time.

The use of “Bleachers” Jack Antonoff and “Big Red Machine’s” Aaron Dessner production skills were ever evident in the “From The Vault” tracks. Dessner’s soft folk sound was powerful on “Better Man,” while Antonoff’s connection with Swift helped elevate the original version of “All Too Well” to the closing and prolonged “All Too Well (10 minute version)” version.

On the 10 minute track, which prolongs the story that Swift set in the previous



GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION | NATALIE METCALF

RED- Taylor Swift released her 2012 album “Red” last month to critical acclaim.

five-minute rendition, “All Too Well” grows stronger with some of pop artist’s legendary lyricism. The addition of “You kept me like a secret/But I kept you like an oath” may be one of her most thought-provoking lyrics and a combo guarantees self-proclaimed “Swifties” will talk about it for months on end. Not to mention, the short film starring Dylan O’Brien and Sadie Sink that was released alongside the album. The story-filled video was a creative piece of art

considering neither O’Brien nor Sink said a single word.

All the good, however, comes with some mediocre changes. In an attempt to make her six-time platinum single “We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together” improved, the value of the track regressed, making it possibly the worst on the album. In the chorus, the “we” of “We are never ever, ever getting back together” turned into distract-ing, high and comedic noise instead of remaining a strong

part of the catchy chorus.

The aforementioned distraction was the only blip on the record, which was a pleasant revelation considering Swift was reimagining a multitude of songs. The rest of the tracks provided beautifully finished moments such as “Treacherous” and the lyrics “This hope is treacherous/This daydream is dangerous.” The addition of “Ronan” - a song based on the blog of a mother who lost her 3-year-old son was an emotional

track that can tug at the heart of any listener. Swift received permission to record the track for the new album and it prospers with tear-jerking words attached to gentle backing music.

Swift now owning this record makes it tough to tear down something she is proud of. Taking an album from nine years prior and formulating it on her own takes courage and will stand the test of time. Attaching nine new tracks to the album is refreshing and modernizes the songs instead of it being a rehash of her older early 2010’s sound.

To enjoy what Swift has released, there is not a need to be a fan, but any casual music listener can appreciate what she set out to accomplish.

While the album does not feature a full slate of new tunes, Swift reached out and confirmed what was already known: “Red” is a masterpiece.

VALLEY’S STARS

★★★★★

Worth the listen

Available on music streaming services and in stores

Giving their best shot: TK Coffee advocates for change

The Pacoima-based cafe goes beyond the bean by helping victims of human trafficking in partnership with their nonprofit organization Justice 180.



PHOTOS BY JEREMY RUIZ | VALLEY STAR

BREW (ABOVE) - Co-owner Hannah Groen (R), attends to a customer purchasing lattes at Talitha Koum Coffee Co.

COFFEE (RIGHT) - Bags of freshly roasted single-origin coffee sourced from East African and Central American countries are displayed alongside promotional material for their non-profit.

JEREMY RUIZ
ISAAK DEKTOR
STAFF WRITERS

A new Valley cafe aims to provide a quality cup of coffee and uplift the community by helping survivors of human trafficking recover.

Opening their doors in Pacoima only months before COVID-19 lockdowns began, Talitha Koum Coffee Company had their work cut out for them.

The cafe displays a doubleshot of core values - both a deep appreciation of coffee and a dedication to social justice.

Talitha Koum, which translates to “little girl, arise” in the ancient semitic language Aramaic, represents owners Jenny and Robert Barber’s mission statement for their cafe. The Barbers poured their love of coffee into their need for change in the world by funding their nonprofit organization, Justice 180—a nonprofit ministry focused on rehabilitating victims

of human trafficking back into society.

Hannah Groen, co-owner of TK Coffee, emphasized the importance of the mission behind the coffee.

“We can be a good reference for them as they go through the program of Justice 180,” said Groen. “TK Coffee itself is the springboard to what we hope for the future with the non-profit Justice 180.”

Through TK Coffee, Justice 180 is able to provide jobs for victims of human trafficking, which serves as a starting point to further their goals and fund its programming. The nonprofit is also considering expanding beyond coffee.

From humble beginnings using a simple popcorn kettle to roast beans, Robert Barber now provides specialty single-origin coffee sourced from Central American and East African countries.

Jenny Barber advocates for the mission beyond the bean.

“Fighting human trafficking has always been entwined in Jenny’s story,” reads TK Coffee Co’s website. “From a young age, she felt the need to bring freedom to women and men in modern-day slavery. Jenny’s

heart for justice has led her to where she is now.”

The unique mom and pop shop takes pride in its identity. TK Coffee is committed to serving its community, pushing their slogan “Arise Pacoima.” The cafe offers 10 percent discount to students, with the added benefit of supporting the prevention of human trafficking.

The roastery displays a doubleshot of core values - both a deep appreciation of coffee and a dedication to social justice.

“In ignorance, I probably could have lived a happy life, but knowing the way these people are treated, I can’t do it anymore,” said Groen. “I will never be able to unsee the things that I have seen. That passion has just continued to grow and it is what continues to get me to keep going.”

THE FACTS

Single origin coffee is grown and sourced from a single traceable location, which ensures transparency.

VALLEY VIEW |

How do you feel about presenting vaccine proof at the door before entering a business?

TEXT BY ISAAC DEKTOR

PHOTOS BY JEREMY RUIZ



“I believe customers should be given the chance on whether or not they are vaccinated. Requiring every restaurant in a county to present that takes a little bit of freedom away.”

- IVAN CABRERA, 19, BUSINESS MANAGEMENT



“It is honestly nerve-racking. You are going to be presented with someone who’s not going to be okay with it. They are gonna go full on emotion rather than logic.”

- KAYLA RANGEL, 18, PSYCHOLOGY



“To me it’s not really a big deal at all. I’ve never felt afraid or anything like that about COVID. The thought of ‘oh I feel so safe around others who are vaccinated’ compared to like those that are unvaccinated - I have never felt anything like that.”

- PEDRO CARRILLO, 24, MEDIA ARTS



“[At Concerts] they are providing full proof of vaccination at the door before you even buy the ticket. It does feel a lot safer, actually.”

- JOSEPH MARTINEZ, 23, BROADCASTING, RADIO, TELEVISION AND FILM

“Licorice Pizza” review: A cinematic Valentine to young love and the Valley

Director and screenwriter Paul Thomas Anderson delivers a new vision for the romantics and dreamers of the world.



PHOTO COURTESY | BRON STUDIOS
FORD- Cooper Hoffman (left) and Alana Haim (right) star in director Paul Thomas Anderson’s most recent theatrical release, “Licorice Pizza.”

MATTHEW ROYER
POLITICAL EDITOR

Hustling to belong in a world that has passed you by. While he does not yet know it, this is the task Gary Valentine (Cooper Hoffman) faces in Paul Thomas Anderson’s ever-charming “Licorice Pizza.”

Valentine, an actor, has just exited his prime, but the problem with this is that he is 15 years old. Growing a few inches taller and with acne starting to appear, he is no longer the cute kid who could star in movies and television. A self-starter, Valentine develops new ploys for himself, always looking for the next big thing. It is like Valentine has a light bulb going off above his head at all times. 1973 has planted Valentine in a precarious position, full of ideas but needing the inspiration to push him in the right direction.

Enter, Alana Kane (Alana Haim).

Kane, a photographer’s assistant, struggles similarly to Valentine. Much older than Valentine, stuck in her older sisters’ (Danielle Haim and Este Haim) spotlight and failing to meet her ex-Israeli Defensive Forces father’s expectations, Kane stumbles upon Valentine

in a meet-cute. Valentine is instantly attracted to her and strikes at the opportunity to court Kane. With disregard for their age difference, Valentine attempts to show Kane his maturity based on his years of experience in the film industry.

A modern take on the romantic comedy, Anderson draws inspiration from his own experiences growing up in the San Fernando Valley to set the scene. As the setting for the film in both plot and geography, the Valley is romanticized to feel like a character itself.

While noting Valentine’s apparent interest, Kane uses this as an opportunity to boost her status in the professional world somehow, launching a start to her next chapter to prove to her father that she is not a failure.

“Licorice Pizza” places the acting newcomers in Hoffman, son of the late Philip Seymour

Hoffman, and Haim with a group of acting veterans who all seem to find a place to shine. Bradley Cooper gives a lustrous supporting performance as Jon Peters but does not take away from the rest of the cast, showing how brilliant Hoffman and Haim are for rookies when paired with tenured actors. Performers including Sean Penn, Tom Waits and Benny Safdie (as longtime LA councilman Joel Wachs) also display their skills flawlessly, making the film even more enjoyable for moviegoers.

Haim, in particular, delivers a year’s best showing. Despite her greenness to the acting profession, Haim is a clear awards contender. Her notable performance as Kane leads the audience to believe that she is experienced, despite this being her first film. With eyes in theaters glued to the screen, Haim feels like a Valley girl, somebody everyone already knows but also still manages to hide a few secrets along the way.

On the other hand, Hoffman comes across as new, but that is not a bad thing. His portrayal of Valentine is a gift for audience members; Hoffman’s youthfulness carries the role into something more, especially when considering his

romantic endeavors in the film.

A modern take on the romantic comedy, Anderson draws inspiration from his own experiences growing up in the San Fernando Valley to set the scene. As the setting for the film in both plot and geography, the Valley is romanticized to feel like a character itself. Local restaurants and bars in Encino are featured, like the long-gone “Tail o’ Cock” and the still-standing “Cupid’s Hot Dogs” are both focal locations for the experience. While the film’s tone will deeply resonate with audiences familiar with the area, they will also not alienate viewers from elsewhere. Anderson’s love for the area is evident.

Based in the ‘70s, Anderson’s film enjoys a free-flowing sense of youthfulness in the air. The craze of disco has yet to die down, Charles Manson has come and passed, everyone seems to know each other and most characters treat one another as equals — even if our leads do not think so themselves.

Compared to Anderson’s previous work about the San Fernando Valley, like 1999’s “Magnolia,” there is a sense of purity in “Licorice Pizza” that is new for the audience. While his prior offerings focused on



MATTHEW ROYER | VALLEY STAR
FILM- “Licorice Pizza” is being screened at Regency Village Theatre in Westwood before wide-theatrcial release on Dec. 26.

the state of the human condition and the complex problems individuals face, in 2021, the Valley native maintains the state of a dream, providing audiences with characters to root for, proving that there is good in the world.

Anderson is currently screening the film at the Regency Village Theatre in Westwood. In its main room, audiences can see the film in 70MM with a reservation or invitation. Closer to its release of Dec. 26, moviegoers will have another opportunity to screen the movie on film, this time at Quentin Tarantino’s Beverly Cinema in Mid-City.

If “Magnolia” is Anderson

displaying the darker and grittier side of the Valley, then “Licorice Pizza” is Anderson finally letting it all out for the audience to see, writing a love letter to show who and what shaped him as a person.

VALLEY’S STARS

★★★★★

Rated R

Must see movie

Now playing at the Regency Village Theatre in Westwood

the

VALLEY

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Bring your vax card, your day depends on it

No shirt, no shoes, no proof of vaccinatnion, no service. Angelenos must now abide by the strictest vaccine mandates in the U.S.

MARCOS FRANCO
MANAGING EDITOR

Enjoying a meal in public while catching up with friends and family should not be determined by your vaccination status. Requiring proof at the door is not only a nuisance, but also intrusive to personal information.

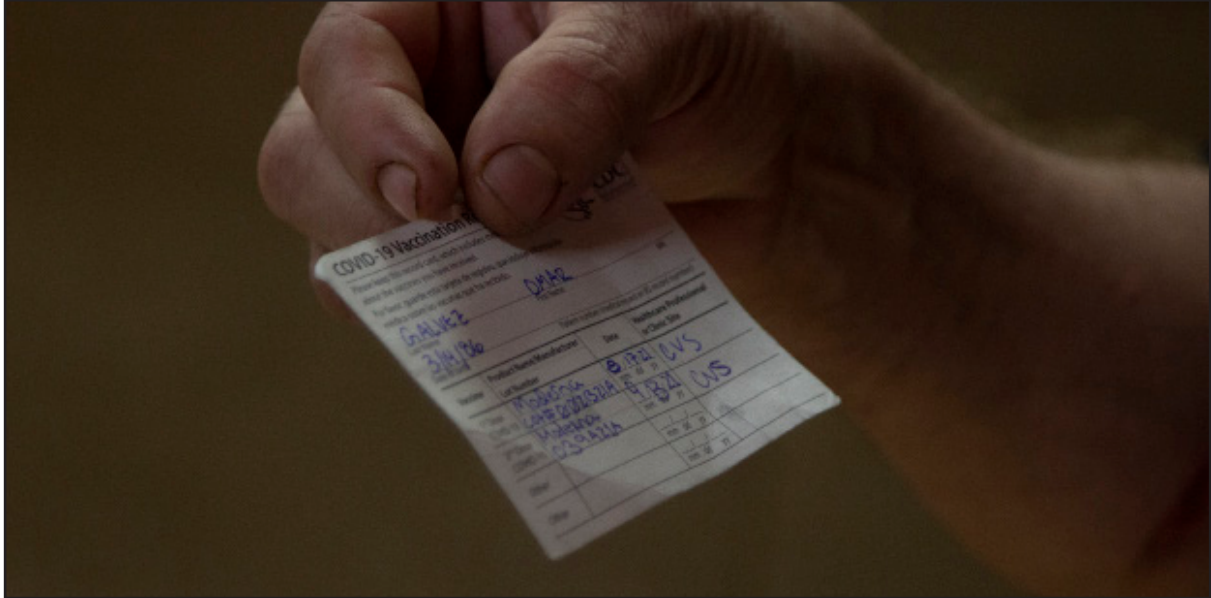
As Los Angeles County begins to enforce proof of vaccination to enter restaurants, bars, gyms and coffee shops, people should not be forced to share their vaccination records to lead a normal life. The county adopted SafePassLA on Nov. 8 which requires patrons to share proof of immunization against COVID in order to enter most businesses. The initiative originally included malls and shopping centers on the list but was revised by City Council since it would be difficult to enforce a mandate at all entrances of a mall. The county began cracking down on businesses Tuesday who do not comply with the order, fining them \$1,000 for the second offense, and increasing by the thousands thereafter. Passing the responsibility of enforcing vaccination status onto employees is a lazy and ineffective method on local lawmaker's part.

Although the FDA announced emergency use

authorization of the Pfizer vaccine for children ages 5 -11 in late October, the mandate will not apply to kids under 12 years old. The Pfizer vaccine was fully approved by the FDA on Aug. 23 and is still the only brand to be given the green light. While both Pfizer and Moderna doses have proven to be up to 95 percent effective at preventing the virus, mask wearing will still be enforced despite workers confirming full vaccination at the door, questioning the protection the vaccine offers.

According to the CDC, Immunization Information Systems (IIS) are computer programs protected under state law, preventing vaccine records from being shared without patient approval. While records are disclosed by patrons themselves prior to entering a business, they have no choice but to share that personal information with employees if they want to grab a quick meal or drink, an unfair obligation to abide by.

When first made widely available to the public in January, COVID-19 vaccines were a promising end to the pandemic but even after nearly 200 million Americans have been fully vaccinated, the country is still not out of the woods. When first elected to office, President Joe Biden mapped out his goal to distribute 100 million vac-



AVA ROSATE | THE VALLEY STAR

PROOF - Rancherito's restaurnt on Woodman Avenue checks a customer's vaccination card on Tuesday.

cine doses within his first 100 days in office. By April, Biden surpassed that target, doubling his promise with more than 200 million doses administered in the United States. Although the news came as a relief to the American people, the country is still distant from reaching herd immunity — which would require at least 70 percent of the U.S. population to be fully inoculated against the virus according to Mayo Clinic. So far 60 percent of the U.S. population has been

fully vaccinated.

In a recent publicity stunt that caught the attention of internet users, 22 year-old Italian college student Andrea Colonna tattooed his personal COVID-19 immunization QR code on his bicep. Although the tattoo can be interpreted as being foolish or in poor judgement, it may have been a reasonable decision in the modern day that will serve as a readily accessible vaccine record forfeiture to business owners.

Unfortunately after more than 20 months of being inconvenienced by and adapting to the pandemic, lawmakers have yet to lead the country to the finish line. Phone, wallet, keys and proof of vaccination are the new checklist for ensuring an obstacle-free day before leaving the house. Vaccine records are private and personal health information and the need to share those records with a doorman or restaurant employee is a breach of privacy.

Rittenhouse verdict proves the U.S. needs change

After a reckless attempt to subdue a protest and shooting three people, Rittenhouse should have been found guilty by the jury.

EDWARD SEGAL
STAFF WRITER

Acquitting a man who went out of his way to kill two people and shoot another in a public area is a recipe for the destruction of the country as we know it. Even if Kyle Rittenhouse's two killings are justified, his shooting of Grosskreutz should have at least rendered a guilty verdict on the charge of reckless endangerment, maybe even attempted murder.

The unrest in Kenosha began after police shot Jacob Blake, a 29 year-old black man in August 2020, leaving him paralyzed from the waist down. The protests brought arson throughout the city, which included burning three garbage trucks that were used to block the entrance to the Kenosha County Courthouse, according to USA Today.

With civil unrest spread across the city, Rittenhouse decided it was his job to try and keep the protests peaceful.

Rittenhouse travelled to Kenosha from his home in Antioch Illinois about 20 miles away in order to, as he said, defend the town from violent protesters. The teenager, 17 years old at the time, said that he shot Joseph Rosenbaum for threatening to kill him and grabbing his gun, and Anthony Huber for attacking him with a skateboard, according to NBC. Rittenhouse said that the third

person he shot and wounded, Gaige Grosskreutz, pointed a pistol at his head. Grosskreutz, who was there to provide first aid, testified that he was raising his hands in an effort to surrender.

The jury allowed Rittenhouse to get away with murder after deciding he killed two people and injured another in response to them attacking him, as stated by the National Public Radio.

Lumen Learning defines self-defense through several elements. One of the elements pertains to the force with which the person who was attacked defended themselves. Rittenhouse had a chance while running to shoot in the air to scare the assailants first, and if that did not work, he could have tried shooting them in an appendage.

The final element is that the initial attack must have been unprovoked. Bringing a semi-automatic rifle to a protest is enough provocation to warrant being attacked, at least subdued.

What Rittenhouse did is reckless. Any sane person going into the streets with a semiautomatic rifle should expect to be attacked and subdued.

Not only did Rittenhouse disregard human safety, but he was also under the legal age of 18 to buy a gun in Wisconsin, though he was old enough to carry one for hunting purposes, according to the Giffords Law Center.

The Illinois man faced two

charges of first-degree recklessly endangering safety, which is punishable by 12.5 years in prison, with an additional five years due to his use of a dangerous weapon, as stated on the AP News. He should have been found guilty on at least one of those charges for carrying an assault weapon and shooting someone who did not present a threat.

This case has been compared to that of Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old black man who was killed in South Georgia by three people who believed him to be guilty of breaking into people's houses in the area. According to the New York Times, the trio was found guilty on murder charges because a video was found showing them chasing Arbery. In the Rittenhouse case, a similar video was found, but it showed Rittenhouse being chased by Rosenbaum, followed by the Illinois man turning around and firing at his pursuer.

The main question that must be asked in these cases is who provoked whom. In the Arbery case, it was clear that the shooters chased him based on their suspicion that he was guilty. Rittenhouse, on the other hand, was chased because people saw him with a semiautomatic weapon. He was not protecting his own property and shot the victims in public after putting himself in that situation by bringing a gun to the protest. In both cases, the shooters provoked the victims, though in different



PHOTO COURTESY | DONKEYHOTKEY

CARICATURE - Eighteen year-old defendant Kyle Rittenhouse was acquitted by jurors on all five charges against him on Nov. 19.

ways, warranting a guilty verdict.

Morally, both sets of shooters felt obligated to protect their town, but did it the wrong way. Legally, it is unclear as to what is self-defense, though they had no grounds on which to shoot Arbery at the moment, and Rittenhouse could have handled the situation differently.

While it is understandable for a person to be found innocent after killing two individuals if they attacked first, it is imperative that some form of punishment is levied if that person shot another individual who wasn't

attacking, and put themselves in that situation by brandishing a semiautomatic weapon in the streets.

The United States is in the middle of a crisis as the social injustice the nation was founded on has finally boiled over. Going out of one's way to play vigilante against protesters the way Rittenhouse did in Wisconsin is not the way to solve the country's problems.

At least one guilty verdict on the charge of reckless endangerment would have been the appropriate decision.

Marvel Studios strives for quantity over of quality

After Disney Plus Day, the Marvel Cinematic Universe expands thier catalog with more of the same superhero storyline.



PHOTO COURTESY | MARVEL STUDIOS
voiced by actor Tom Hiddleston.

NATALIE METCALF
STAFF WRITER

There are going to be 15 new Marvel Cinematic Universe shows coming to Disney+ next year, which means one thing: superhero overload.

Disney+ released the titles for 15 new shows with first looks on "Moonlight," "She/Hulk," and "Ms.Marvel," along with second seasons of "What if..."

and "Loki." But these are just three of the new shows that are streaming next year. With an abundance of new Marvel content, the studio might want to focus on a couple of shows rather than a fleet. The amount of content might end up confusing or disappointing viewers.

"The Marvel universe on Disney+ has no limits," according to the "Marvel Studios' 2021 Disney+ Day Special."

In order to make quality con-

tent for viewers there should be a limit to the amount of shows created for the streaming service.

The fandom has high hopes for the new content, but these new shows will bring in a superhero overload. Marvel Studios plans on adding new superheroes such as Agatha Harkness from "Wandavision,"and the female version of the Hulk in "She-Hulk." Audiences will also see the return of Nick

Fury (Samuel L. Jackson) and Talos (Ben Mendelsohn) from "Captain Marvel" in "Secret Invasion." Then a whole new generation of heroes are going to fight against a zombie apocalypse in "Marvel Zombies." And this is just to name a few.

The studio is releasing too much content in little time. Since the fandom is making so much content, future content in the MCU will start to look cheap and not what fans are accustomed to. As of right now, the quality in these new shows such as plot, acting, cinematography and set design is unknown.

According to Statista, in August the MCU made about \$23 billion. Considering the amount of new content that is going to be added to Disney+ in the next year, Marvel Studios desperately wants to continue this trend of being the highest grossing film and series franchise worldwide.

Instead of spamming viewers with an abundance of mediocre content, the studio should focus on delivering fans top tier content every once in a while. Marvel is in a hurry to make money, rather than satisfying viewers with enjoyable and high-

er quality shows.

With the whopping 15 shows slated for streaming next year, MCU should find that quality is better than quantity.

After the disappointment of Marvel's "Eternals," with only making \$71 million in the box office opening weekend, the titles that Disney+ just released means that the MCU could be heading for a rough patch with an overload of content.

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.



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GOT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

Letters to the editor can be submitted online at www.thevalleystarnews.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.

Seven Monarchs named to the All-Pacific League team

Selected by the league’s coaches, Valley College football has two players on the First-Team and five on the Second-Team.



Valley Star | File Photo by Arevik Saroyan
TALEEM THOMPSON, Monarchs sophomore offensive linebacker, at Monarch Stadium. Thompson previously was named in the second team offense when he played for Pierce College in 2019.

EDWARD SEGAL
STAFF WRITER

In a season that was defined by health and homecoming, the Monarchs pulled through and saw seven players named to a Pacific League all-conference team, led by tight end Dupree Fuller, Jr. and offensive lineman Taleem Thompson on the offensive First-Team.

After getting off to a rocky start this season, losing the first three games by double digits, Valley football (3-7, 2-3 SCFA Pacific) ended its season by claiming the Victory Bell and seeing Fuller Jr. and Thompson make the All-Pacific League First-Team for the offensive side of the honors. Additionally, quarterback Isaiah Johnson and utility man Vicente Zepeda received offensive Second-Team recognition, and outside linebacker Elijah Hudson, kick returner JaLani Ellison and cornerback Don Harrell made the defensive second team.

“They were the ones that showed up and came prepared for work and did everything that was expected of them,” said coach Lester Towns. “It does not reflect the guys that didn’t get all conference that had the talent to be all conference, but for the guys that made all conference, they deserved it, they earned it, it’s their award.”

Fuller Jr. ended the season second in receiving yards per game with 74.4 and tied with Santa Monica’s Tariq Brown for second in touchdowns this season with six, enough to be unanimously selected for a spot on the first-team.

“When I get the ball, I always think first down or touchdown, that’s always my mentality,” said Fuller Jr. “With that as my mentality, I broke a lot of tackles and never went down with my person.”

The biggest lesson Fuller Jr. said he will take with him as he looks for a university to play football for next fall is to play every game like it’s his last.

“Just take advantage of your time and always give 100% effort,” said Fuller. “You never know when it’s going to be your last snap or your last play.”

“It does not reflect the guys that didn’t get all conference .. but for the guys that made all conference, they deserved it, they earned it, it’s their award.”

- Football Head Coach
Lester Towns

While players like Fuller Jr. showed up on the statsheet by gaining yards and scoring touch-



Valley Star | Photograph by Ava Rosate
DUPREE FULLER JR., Monarchs sophomore wide receiver, holds up most valuable player award after their victory against Pierce College. Fuller Jr. led the season with 744 receiving yards and six touchdowns.

downs, it would have been a way more difficult task without players like Thompson being there to clear the path for them.

“I learned [that] no matter how anything’s going, just do your part to the fullest. said Thompson. “Do whatever you can to assist your team in any way that you can, and regardless of any outside experiences, just stay focused and keep pushing and keep perfecting your craft.”

The sophomore offensive lineman, who made the second team for Pierce College in 2019, did the work that was necessary to pave the way for his teammates to shine.

“For me to get [on the] first team this year, that means a lot,” said Thompson. “It seems that I improved, at least in the eyes of other coaches.”

After starting to play the sport when he was four years old, the offensive lineman is looking at several colleges across the nation that he would like to take his talents to.

The other players on the

all-conference teams should not be overlooked.

Johnson, initially a fourth string quarterback, was fifth in passing touchdowns with nine and tied for fourth in rushing touchdowns with four. Hudson was tied for eighth in sacks on the season with four. Ellison received an 18-yard pass to set up the winning touchdown against Santa Barbara, and got the stop on fourth down to secure the win against Harbor College. Zepeda averaged 28 yards per game for 253 yards on the season. Harrell had nine tackles in six games.

“The guys that got all-conference [should] be happy, be blessed that [they] got all-conference, but the work doesn’t stop here,” said Towns. “[This accolade] is one tool that the guys who made the all conference team will use to help them get recruited, but I think the ultimate goal is them getting out of here.”

Monarchs fall to Lasers

After responding to each blow dealt by Irvine Valley College in the first half, the Monarchs fell apart in a disastrous second half.

EDWARD SEGAL
STAFF WRITER

Irvine women’s basketball showed up ready to fight Tuesday on Valley’s home court, stealing the show in a third quarter that saw the Lasers outscore the Monarchs 22-6 on 69% shooting.

After keeping the game close in the first half, the Monarchs (2-2) failed to keep up with the high-volume scoring of the Lasers (5-1) in the third quarter. For the second straight game, the Monarchs’ struggle to find consistency on the offensive end prevented them from staying in the game. The 14 points scored in the third-quarter from Lasers forward Sarah Matossian led to the Lady Monarchs’ downfall this time.

“Losing is part of it,” said Monarchs Assistant Coach Rafael Camacho, emphasizing

the journey over one game. “What you get from [the game] is as important as [the result].”

Throughout the first half, the Monarchs responded to each of the Lasers’ punches, cutting an 8-point second-quarter deficit to one, but the chain of events that ended the first half gave the Lasers all the momentum they would need to finish the game.

When the Monarchs went on a 7-0 run in the second quarter, they looked ready to take control. Down 27-26 with under three minutes left in the first half, Valley conceded a wide open three-pointer to Laser guard Jessica Suruor.

On the other end, Valley guard and forward Jordyn Jiron responded with a three-point shot to make it a one-point game again. Suruor then knocked down another triple to beat the shot clock, keeping the

Monarchs at bay. With less than one minute left, Jiron buried a three, but Suruor responded with one more to give her team a four-point halftime lead.

“It came down to effort, and the ability to stay focused and play at a high intensity both mentally and physically,”

- Women’s Basketball
Assistant Coach
Rafael Camacho

Fittingly, both Jiron and Suruor wear the number three.

What killed the Monarchs is that the offense that saved them in the second quarter did not show up in the third. Valley shot 23% from the field and grabbed two rebounds, compared to Irvine’s 69% shooting and 10 rebounds.

“It came down to effort, and the ability to stay focused and play at a high intensity both mentally and physically,” said Camacho.

While it was Suruor who caught fire in the second quarter, Matossian put the team on her back in the third and put the Lasers up by over 20. With a statline of seven rebounds, three steals and 14 points in the third quarter, the freshman could not be stopped, and Valley could not respond.

In addition to their lack of scoring in the third, the Monarchs suffered from an

inability to keep possession of the ball, ending the game with 21 turnovers, their season high. The Lasers had 18 themselves, but did a better job of capitalizing on those of the Monarchs.

Valley had three players finish with 10 points, those being Jiron, freshman forward Chellsiea Benitez, and sophomore guard Brianna Torres.

“Think of the mission. Realize where you’re heading,” said Camacho, emphasizing the little things the team can improve on. “It may look like it’s just running around but what you do when you run is very important.”

UP NEXT

San Joaquin Delta at College of the Sequoias

Dec. 2 @ 3pm

MONARCHS RESULTS

FOOTBALL

58	VALLEY		
9	PIERCE		

Overall W-L	3-7	Streak	Won 1
PCT	0.300	Home	3-2
Overall Ranking	5th	Away	0-5

2021-22 CCCAA FOOTBALL STANDINGS

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

	GP	W	L	PCT
Antelope Valley	5	5	0	1.000
Santa Barbara	5	3	2	0.600
Moorpark	4	2	2	0.500
LA Valley	5	2	3	0.400
Santa Monica	4	1	3	0.250
Pierce	3	0	3	0.000

MEN’S WATERPOLO

MONARCHS TOOK FOURTH PLACE IN WSC TOURNAMENT

Overall W-L	8-14	Streak	Lost 1
PCT	0.365	Home	2-1
Overall Ranking	4th	Away	2-0

2021-22 CCCAA MEN’S WATER POLO STANDINGS

WESTERN STATE CONFERENCE GAMES

	GP	W	L	PCT
Cuesta	6	6	0	1.000
Ventura	6	4	2	0.667
LA Valley	6	3	3	0.500
Citrus	7	2	5	0.286
Santa Monica	5	0	5	0.000

MEN’S BASKETBALL

GAME AGAINST VENTURA POSTPONED. NO MAKE-UP DATE ANNOUNCED.

Overall W-L	0-5	Streak	Lost 5
PCT	0.000	Home	0-2
Overall Ranking	8th	Away	0-0

Next:

Wild West Shootout

LA Southwest at West LA College
Dec. 2 @ 1pm

Santa Barbara Classic

Pasadena City at Santa Barbara College
Dec. 9 @ 3pm

WOMEN’S BASKETBALL

48	VALLEY		
72	IRVINE VALLEY		

Overall W-L	2-2	Streak	Lost 2
PCT	.500	Home	2-2
Overall Ranking	7th	Away	0-0

Next:

College of the Sequoias Tournament

San Joaquin Delta at College of the Sequoias
Dec. 2 @ 3pm

Moorpark College Crossover

Palomar College at Moorpark College
Dec. 18 @ 12:30pm

WOMEN’S SOCCER

0	VALLEY		
1	SANTA MONICA		

Overall W-L-T	4-14-2	Streak	Lost 5
PCT	0.250	Home	0-10-1
Overall Ranking	7th	Away	4-4-1

2021-22 CCCAA WOMEN’S SOCCER STANDINGS

WESTERN STATE-SOUTH CONFERENCE GAMES

	GP	W	L	T	PCT
Canyons	12	10	1	1	0.875
Antelope Valley	12	8	2	2	0.750
Citrus	12	6	3	3	0.625
Santa Monica	12	4	3	5	0.542
West LA	12	4	7	1	0.375
LA Valley	12	2	9	1	0.208
Bakersfield	12	1	10	1	0.125
Glendale	0	0	0	0	0.000

WOMEN’S WATER POLO

LADY MONARCHS LOST BOTH WSC TOURNAMENT GAMES

Overall W-L	9-11	Streak	Lost 2
PCT	0.450	Home	5-0
Overall Ranking	5th	Away	2-3

2021-22 CCCAA WOMEN’S WATER POLO STANDINGS

WESTERN STATE CONFERENCE GAMES

	GP	W	L	PCT
Santa Barbara	7	7	0	1.000
Ventura	7	5	2	0.714
Citrus	7	5	2	0.571
LA Valley	8	3	5	0.375
Santa Monica	6	1	5	0.167
Cuesta	0	0	0	0.000
LA Pierce	5	0	5	0.000



Valley Star | Luis Flores



Valley Star | Luis Flores

(L-R) Crew members Otto Rivas and Alex Alvarado tie a Christmas tree to the roof of a customer's vehicle

Business manager for Santa & Sons Christmas Trees, Mischa Brittin, walks out of the mobile office setup in Parking Lot G.



Valley Star | Ryan Beauchamp

Reality TV camera operator, Janette Staub, 36, browses the Santa and Son's Christmas Trees in Parking Lot G. The trees, along with their seasonal workers, hail from Oregon each year to sell their product on the Valley College campus. After 21 years at Valley the lot now features a virtual and contactless shopping experience as a pandemic accommodation

Environmental effects coupled with delivery chain delays leave holiday tree sellers with low inventory

Short Supply

By Isaac Dektor
News Editor

While the country grapples with supply chain and environmental issues, for Valley College, festive firs have never been closer. Christmas tree supply will be lower this year than in years prior due to supply chain issues and climate change according to CNBC. Demand for Christmas trees is expected to rise due to larger gatherings over the holidays following increased vaccination rates. Some environmental and economic experts believe there could be a shortage of trees this season. Valley College students and members of the local community can pick up their trees from Santa and Sons, which is hosting their Christmas tree sale in lot "G" this year. Customers can hear Christmas music softly playing out of speakers set up at the entrance, in a lot ornamented with three trailers, two of which serve as living quarters for the staff that traveled in from Oregon. The third trailer operates as an office for the staff and is painted a blue gradient with red curtains over the windows. A merry Santa Claus painted on the office smiles over customers browsing the hundreds

of trees in the lot. In addition to being open for in-person shopping, Santa and Sons is offering a virtual shopping experience called U-Pick Webcam Service this Holiday season. The Christmas tree lot is providing consumers with a contactless way of shopping, emphasizing the company's commitment to safety amid the pandemic. Supplied by their environmentally certified tree farm located near the base of the Cascade Mountains in Oregon, Santa and Sons was named one of the best Christmas tree lots in Los Angeles by LA Magazine multiple times, most recently in 2020. Katherine Svoboda is a resident of Los Angeles and has worked for Santa and Sons for 27 years. "I like [Nordmann Firs] because it looks like there's snow on them," Svoboda said while pointing out the waxy quality of the trees that makes them more durable than other firs.

Santa and Sons opened their lot to customers last week and will operate until they sell out of trees.



Valley Star | Luis Flores

Santa and Sons Christmas Trees owner Mark Rohlfs walks among the variety of trees grown in multiple locations in the foothills of the Cascade Range mountains in Oregon last Monday.