

# ART PORTFOLIO

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Allen Jiang

Bellaire High School

Carillon Yearbook

In a few years, I'll look back at the yearbooks I've helped produce. I'll remember my role as not only an artist, but also an editor-- not two separate titles, but actually one in the same. Bellaire Carillon has given me the opportunity to use my art skills to amplify other artists and writers, including myself.

The connection between art and writing was never something I really pondered until I joined the yearbook staff. I soon learned that art is inseparable from good journalism. The way the headlines are placed, the way fonts can convey a certain mood, the way photos and text are arranged to draw the viewer's attention to a certain focal point-- all of it is intentional. All this was overwhelming to process at first, but the more I notice patterns in everyday life, the more my observation becomes second nature and the more my visual library expands.

Being on Carillon has taught me that not everything is a competition. Sometimes the best thing to do is cooperate with others. It's not a battle between writer and designer or illustrator; what I can do should enable others to reach higher heights and vice versa. The challenge of time restraints and requests for illustrations I would never draw otherwise has forced me to adapt. Though my co-journalists may not realize it, I am grateful for their push and critique, which has turned me into a better artist and worker throughout the years.

- Allen Jiang

# HEAT WAVE

During July 2023, Houston was hit by a heatwave with record high temperatures, putting many outdoor activities in disarray. In this spread, I wanted to emphasize that feverish heat by using red-orange colors in the illustrations of the clouds and our school building on the bottom of the page. I enjoyed blending the cartoony, organic clouds with the more rigid, blocky architecture to create a cohesive spread.



## band tans

"The tans started showing about a week or two into band camp. We would go out in the mornings for 15 to 30 minutes a day and slowly worked up to two hours a day."

It was crazy hot. As soon as you stepped outside, you started to sweat immediately, especially when we were out there for two hours a day. The tan was the worst right where your shirt or socks cut off. I had a really bad sock tan. I wore Neutrogena sunscreen which did help with the tans but it was really hard to spread."

Sophie Hall<sup>18</sup>

"I had the worst tan lines on my arms and around my ankles. At first, I would wear sunscreen every day, but it took too long to apply it to all the places you needed it, so I stopped applying it. The sunscreen definitely helped a lot. I did not see myself getting that tan until after I stopped wearing it. Wearing high socks and leggings that covered more of your body was suggested but because of the heat, most of us wore tank tops which made the tans even worse."

Valeria Flores<sup>19</sup>

>> In an attempt to cool off, varsity football defensive end Marshall Smith<sup>20</sup> takes a breather on the sidelines in a game against Elkins. "This year had been an all-time heat index," Smith said. "The boys were more tired than usual. The heat and humidity had gotten to us, especially in games right after school."

PHOTO BY RILEY REXFORD

>> Band stops for a quick water break after their halftime performance warmup. "We had these massive, multi-gallon Igloo water coolers that we brought to the practices and games," Samuel Deng<sup>21</sup> said. "Throughout practice, we would refill our personal water jugs to cool off and stay hydrated."

PHOTO BY RILEY REXFORD

>> Raising money at the choir car wash, Victoria Wakefield<sup>22</sup> takes a water bottle from Christian Ferrufino<sup>23</sup>. "It was extremely hot that day," Wakefield said. "I was in the direct sun, holding up a sign for the cars driving by. It was not until it was unbearably hot that I went back to the car wash to be around the water. I had to drink three or four bottles of water, and when it was over, I immediately went home and took a three-hour nap."

PHOTO BY RILEY REXFORD

>> In the stands, Belles Emily Vaughan<sup>24</sup> and Addison Berger<sup>25</sup> fan themselves off at yet another blistering football game. "We got the fans from a HISD induction that Belles performed at earlier in the year," Berger said. "We had never had any sort of fan before, but those were pretty helpful, especially when it got really hot at games. They also folded up into mini discs."

PHOTO BY RILEY REXFORD



## Houston weather reaches new Fahren-heights

Being part of the Houston Zoo Crew had always been a rewarding job, but this summer's work came at a price. Amidst the sweltering heat wave, one that reached a searing height of 109 F, volunteers felt like caged animals more than the caged animals themselves.

"There were not many guests around during the hottest hours," Ethan He<sup>26</sup> said. "Most animals were inside or hidden in the shade. Sometimes we had to cut visits short and go indoors with the kids we were supposed to guide."

Not all volunteers were treated equal though. Shreyas Sinha<sup>27</sup>, more often than not, was refused the privilege of air conditioning. "The worst part was touring

outdoor habitats," Sinha said. "I was stuck talking about sea lions in the blazing weather with a water bottle that ran out in thirty minutes. I thought I was going delirious."

Unfortunately, some people did not even have water bottles which led to some serious complications.

"Someone on my team passed out in front of the guests," Sinha said. "Thankfully, the Zoo Rangers were quick to call help to the scene."

Though the accident was frightening, He admitted that the facility was not at fault.

"The admin always emphasized that you should take a break if you felt feverish or uncomfortable," He said. "They always warned us: hydrate or die-drate."



# heatwave

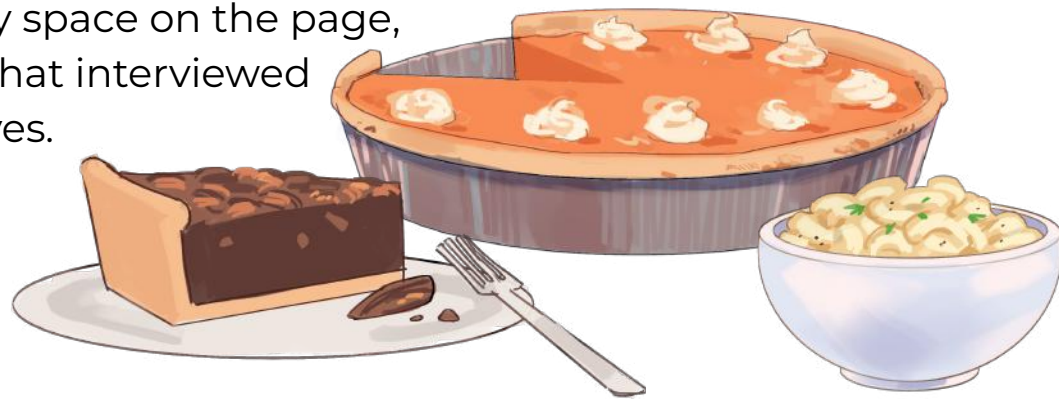
## HITS H-TOWN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALLEN JIANG



# THANKSGIVING

One of our yearbook's main elements was the line sprawling across every page, and I wanted to use this line's full potential for the Thanksgiving spread by incorporating it with illustrations. On the left page, I drew falling leaves to fit the autumn theme, and on the right, I continued using orange and neutral colors to tie the spread together. The food illustrations were not only used to fill the empty space on the page, but also to depict the meals that interviewed students had made themselves.



# FULL-FILLING *thanksgiving*

## Best Buddies host Friendsgiving buffet

Thanksgiving was a time for many people to have fun with their friends through "Friendsgiving." **Katelyn Ta<sup>9</sup>**, president of the Best Buddies Club, decided to bring this concept to her club members by pairing friends together.

"The Best Buddies Club was the world's largest nonprofit focused on ending the stigma and structural inequality that the disabled face," Ta said. "To facilitate that, we created peer matches at our Friendsgiving."

Vice president **Claire Bradford<sup>10</sup>** helped organize the event as well, especially because she had personal stakes on the line.

"I was passionate about not only serving those with disabilities, but also recognizing that they were super cool people that I would've loved to be friends with," Bradford said. "Though I was exposed to autism all my life through my brother, Best Buddies helped me better understand a wider spectrum of neurodivergency."

However, many life skills students at Bellaire were isolated from the rest of the student body. Thus, the Friendsgiving was meant to be more than just a quick announcement; it was also a chance for members to socialize.

"We planned a lunch event for

Thanksgiving because it would be easily accessible for everyone," Ta said. "In fact, even people I had never seen before stopped by."

In order to work around a tight budget, Ta leveraged her connections with H-E-B to help fund the event.

"We used the gift cards to buy cupcakes and pumpkin pies," Ta said. "It wasn't a potluck, so we were surprised when so many people brought their own treats to share."

The club welcomed snacks from members and teachers such as cookies, sweet tarts, chips and the main course, pizza.

"It was so busy that the event was held in three classrooms," Ta said. "One room was for watching a movie, and the other two were for Beyblade battles and games like Jenga and Uno."

The Friendsgiving was only one of many events that the Best Buddies had in line, but it was still a valuable contribution to the club's mission of bridging the gap between students with and without disabilities.

"I was glad to bring awareness to this community," Bradford said. "Most of all, I was thankful for Best Buddies for giving me this chance to make a positive impact."

## COOKING UP MEMORIES

"I started cooking since my dad wasn't always home and because my mom wasn't the best cook. I had traditional Chinese parents, so we didn't celebrate Thanksgiving. Even so, I still made food because I was going to lots of Friendsgivings. I made mac and cheese for one and pumpkin pie for the other. However, I was prouder of my macaroni and cheese because it was the first time I tried making it."

Keith Luo<sup>10</sup>



"For Thanksgiving, I ate green beans, mashed potatoes and turkey. I baked pecan pie on my own, which came out a little too gooey, but it still tasted really good. I didn't bake anything else, but I ate Mexican dishes and brought a type of cake called flan. Everyone in the family contributed to the potluck. I also went over to a friend's place on that day, but I was mostly just there for the leftovers."

Obed Reyes<sup>10</sup>



At a Friendsgiving party, **Gerardo Limon<sup>10</sup>** surveys the catalogue of food. "I brought pork chops, salsa verde and Mexican rice," Limon said. "After we ate, we talked and went outside to play!" PHOTO COURTESY OF CHLOE LIN

While he plays "Voting," **Travis Vu<sup>10</sup>** shows off his points. "We voted for which player was best described by the cards/prompts," Vu said. "I got to know people at the Friendsgiving better!" PHOTO COURTESY OF JUSTINE LAN

Celebrating the holiday, **Sophie Colburn<sup>10</sup>** enjoys a meal with her friends. "I brought Sprites to **Rilina Tran<sup>10</sup>**! Friendsgiving," Colburn said. "There, my friends and I built Legos, gingerbread houses and watched movies." PHOTO COURTESY OF RILINA TRAN

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALLEN JIANG



# AUTOMOBILES

This was a student life spread about people who had interest in cars. I used the swoopy line in a dynamic way to imply the motion of the illustration of the car, which I drew based on a brand that was mentioned in one of the interviews. The graph on the left page also has small illustrations of cars drawn by me to mimic the look of competing brand name cars speeding down a racetrack.



RACE  
TO  
THE  
TOP



11.2% Toyota



8.4% BMW



15.9% Mercedes



13.1% Porsche

from a survey of 107 students on their favorite car

## IDEAL AUTOMOBILE

PHOTOS BY SIMON TRAN

"My interest in vehicles started with a toy car when I was younger. From there, the hobby evolved from card games to real-life racing to learning about car mechanics. I collected car posters and other decorations for my room. It probably wasn't going to happen, but I wanted to eventually become an actual racer. I even had my own ATV that I got to work on, but the car I actually wanted was the Ford Shelby GT 500 Mustang."

**Arvin Rahmatian<sup>®</sup>**

"My initial interest in cars came from a combination of the boredom of quarantine and 'Cars,' the Disney film. From there, I started doing research on vehicles and collected things such as Lego cars. My dream car was the McLaren F1. I wanted to try it out because it was supposedly the ultimate driver's experience as it had a very unique feature: one seat in the middle, prioritizing the driver instead of the passengers. Sadly, though, at around \$20 million, it was a dream that wasn't very attainable."

**Joseph Kim<sup>®</sup>**



## GETTING *strategical* WITH *vehicles*

### Gearheads and artists bond over Houston's Art Car Parade

Houston's Art Car Parade was the only place where you could see cars in the shape of dinosaurs, cars that looked like pom poms, cars with spreadable wings — cars that looked like anything except a car. The Art Car Festival was known for being the city's largest free public event, featuring over 250 submissions annually, a number that Bellaire's Art Car Club hoped to contribute to.

"The Art Car Parade took place in the downtown area, and I liked biking down there whenever it was that time of the year to watch from the bayou," **Alara Bozkurt<sup>®</sup>** said. "I thought it was amazing how people could come up with such bizarre, wacky ideas for their car designs. It was a great opportunity to spend time with friends and family alike

and participate in this special part of Houston's culture without having to pay a penny."

The club was run by two ambitious sophomores. Like Bozkurt, they admired the beauty and influence of art cars and their creators, and they wanted to climb closer to the stage.

"My co-president, **Aria Jin<sup>®</sup>**, had an art car show at her elementary school, so we knew it was a major event," **Cathryn Vera<sup>®</sup>** said. "When we found out it wasn't at a school as big as Bellaire, we were surprised. After learning how successful the Art Car Club was 20 years ago at Bellaire, our leadership team decided to revive it."

**Belsey Ferguson<sup>®</sup>**, a new member of the club, was also drawn in by the club's unique concept.

"I actually lived right next to someone who made art cars," he said.

"Although they

recycled the same zebra design every year, their work was still inspiring to me."

Diverging in paths from some other art car veterans, members of the club this year wanted to try something completely new, connecting their project to a deeper theme to spread a message.

"We wanted to tell a story about a girl who made paper cranes to help cope with her cancer," Vera said. "We would take a car and turn it into a giant paper crane. Our goal was to make a thousand paper cranes to donate to the hospital."

Even people with little to no experience with the making and culture of art cars were moved by this endeavor. Ferguson, who was initially dragged into the club by his friends, ended up feeling like he had a responsibility to fulfill.

"I didn't really know what I signed up for, but I did know these people wanted to help a cause," Ferguson said. "And who didn't want to help kids with cancer?"

# HISD TAKEOVER

Houston Independent School District (HISD) was recently taken over by the Texas Education Industry (TEA), a controversial move that upset students, teachers and parents alike. I was assigned to draw a visual that doubles as a headline for this page, as the editor did not have enough photos to work off of. The illustration is a metaphor for the transition from traditionally autonomous HISD educational practices to new state enforced rules; “HISD” is overgrown with vines and rusted, almost hidden, while “TEA” is polished and shiny.



## PUSH FOR *protest*



continued from page 8

"To standardize anything across all of education was where it started going really, really, really wrong," Teacher 2 said.

Teacher 2 further expressed their concerns about teachers' declining autonomy within their own classrooms. "I would never want to walk into somebody else's class and tell them they have to teach the way I do," they said. "There was a lack of honoring the expertise of the person that you chose to put in charge of that classroom. All of the mandates and scripts were really signs of fear-based leadership."

In spite of all these challenges, they believed that there was hope for the future of Bellaire.

"We needed to make sure that it was clear to those in power: this was unacceptable," Teacher 2 said, "but we would not allow it to stay this way."

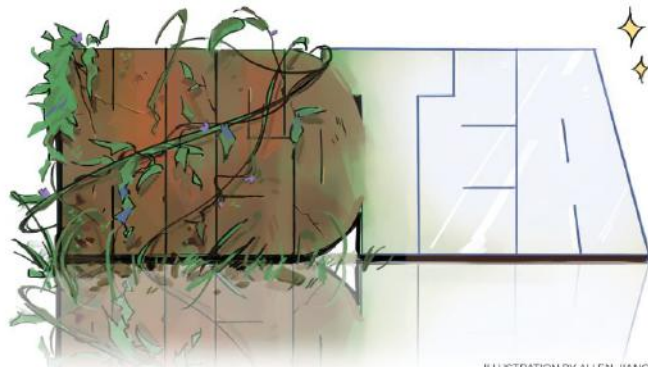


ILLUSTRATION BY ALLEN JIANG

274 SCHOOLS IN HISD  
57 NES-ALIGNED SCHOOLS  
28 NES SCHOOLS

A "New Education System" (NES) school is one that follows a model with extended school hours, a pre-scripted curriculum, staffing and master schedule. Under this model, campuses are prioritized and regularly observed by district staff.



## MILES AND *tribulations*

**August 7, 2019**

TEA accuses HISD's locally elected school board of misconduct.

**August 19, 2019**

HISD responds to TEA takeover attempt with a lawsuit, labeling it as unconstitutional.

**January 13, 2023**

Texas Supreme Court rules in favor of TEA, allowing the state to assume HISD oversight.

**March 15, 2023**

TEA officially confirms its plans to replace the HISD school board and superintendent.

**August 15, 2019**

Wheatley High fails to meet Texas education standards for a seventh year in a row.

**January 8, 2020**

State judge passes a temporary injunction against TEA, blocking the takeover.

**March 1, 2023**

Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner publicizes TEA plans to take over all of HISD.

**June 1, 2023**

TEA Takeover officially begins; the new HISD superintendent is announced as Mike Miles.



<< After a brief lesson, Juliana Millis<sup>4</sup> and Seyedehsara Shaker<sup>5</sup> turn and talk to discuss United States history. "The strategies were helpful for me to understand what we learned since I could learn what my partner thought and get her insight," said Mills. "Though, they could be annoying sometimes. There were a lot of them."

PHOTO BY RILEY REXFORD



< During James Gunno's Spanish class, Sydney Nguyen<sup>6</sup> and Laila Haikdi<sup>7</sup> practice conjugating verbs on a whiteboard as a district-mandated multiple response strategy. "It was a helpful way of self-correcting," Nguyen said. "Instead of getting graded, you could see what you needed and work with classmates to help each other."

PHOTO BY ANASTASIA SHIH

ILLUSTRATION BY KATHERINE KEENAN

# TRUMP'S TRIAL



I was assigned to draw former President Donald Trump for the index of the yearbook, where certain letters represent events throughout the year. For context, Trump's mugshot was taken, and it was quite a big deal for everyone, regardless of their political affiliation. My strength lies in portraits, so I enjoyed replicating the mugshot and did my best to capture his likeness.

