



# The Jaw

ISSUE 06

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **INSIDE SMUS**

Behind the Curtain of the SMUS Musical

*by SMUS Musical Stage Management*

Pink Shirt Day at SMUS

*by Jazmin Salvati*

Wellbeing Week: Your Daily Dose of Calm

*by Mira Wirk*

## **OPINION**

Hidden Sexism in the Olympics: The Price of Competing as a Woman

*by Byrdie Fisher-Franke*

The Art of Choosing a University

*by Youlan Li*

The Ineffectual STEM vs. Humanities Debate

*by Yuhe Pan*

## **SPORTS**

Formula 1's New Chapter Begins

*by Dev Wirk*

## **MODERN LANGUAGES**

Un super-pouvoir, c'est le multilinguisme !

*by French 12*

Llevar tu país en el corazón cuando estás lejos de casa

*by Isabel and Valentina*

我怀念的...

*by Kathryn Yi, Ricardo Chen, and Yina Ding*

# *Behind the Curtain of the SMUS Musical*

by Bronwyn Ellis

Wrapping up the 2026 SMUS musical *Les Misérables* is bittersweet. For many in the cast and crew, this is the last show, the final bow, and as stage management, we cannot be anymore proud of them as well as the other nearly 100 students that have been involved in this production. From auditions and crew applications in early September to our first time playing with the pit orchestra in December to grinding out all of act 2 in January to finally getting to the theatre a week before closing night, this show has been an absolute pleasure to work on and we hope that everyone who came to watch had an amazing time.

## **The Cast**

In September we had 43 dedicated students from grades 9-12 audition for *Les Misérables* and while not everyone could get a lead part, one of the amazing things about *Les Mis* is that there are some incredible ensemble songs for everyone to be a part of. From Master of the House to the call to join the crusade in the finale, there is not a moment in the show where there isn't something happening and it's all due to the dedicated cast.



## **The Crew**

Getting the cast ready for the stage requires a surprisingly large team of crew behind the scenes. Of course, there is the stage management team, attending each and every rehearsal, keeping the cast organized, and making sure that everyone has what they need before going on stage. The make-up and costume team make the cast look incredible and are one of the cornerstones of the production. Finally, there are the props and set designers who source all of the props for the show and build the intricate set you see on stage. The show would not be the same without every single person behind the scenes.

### **The Pit**

It wouldn't be a musical without the music. Les Miserable is a fully sung through show, meaning that the fantastic players in the pit rarely get a break and this musical wouldn't be possible without them. They are the unsung heroes and backbone of this show whose perseverance is astounding.

### **The Production Team**

And finally, the production team (aka the teachers) behind the show. Mr. McLeod has the vision and rallies everyone together to produce an incredible show year after year, this year being no different. Mrs. McLeod choreographs every single number to perfection and ensures everyone knows what they should be doing for two and a half hours. Ms. Banman helps everyone on stage execute jaw dropping harmonies and unreal high notes. Finally, Ms. Guillen is the bridge between the two worlds of singers and instrumentalists, keeping everyone together, which is certainly not an easy feat.

On behalf of stage management, we thank you for participating in this year's musical, whether you were on stage, behind the scenes, in the audience, or in the pit, you made this show happen. Finally, thank you to the McPherson Playhouse and the crew there, we had another wonderful tech and show week with everyone and we will see you all again next year. Long Live Us!

# *Pink Shirt Day at SMUS*

*by Byrdie Fisher-Franke*

Pink Shirt Day is recognized across Canada as an annual event day to raise awareness about bullying. It began in 2007 in Nova Scotia, when two senior students organized a show of support for a younger student who had been bullied for wearing a pink shirt. Since then, it has grown into a nationwide movement promoting inclusivity, kindness, and respect in schools and communities.

At SMUS, Pink Shirt Day was marked through chapels and a visible show of support across campus. Students and staff were encouraged to wear pink as a symbol of solidarity and as a way to commit to creating a safe and supportive school environment.

During Chapel, a speaker shared their personal experience with bullying: both as the bullied and as the bully. The reflection made it clear that bullying is a complicated topic. People can find themselves in different roles without fully understanding the impact of their words or actions.

Pink Shirt Day is not only about acknowledging that bullying exists, but also about recognizing the role everyone plays in preventing it. Bullying can take many forms: verbal, physical, social, and online. By dedicating a day to awareness and reflection, schools across Canada and the world create space for conversations about empathy, accountability, and respect.

While the day itself is symbolic, the goal is long term change: to build a school community where bullying is actively challenged and kindness is actively practiced. Wearing pink represents a collective commitment to that goal.

By taking part in the campaign, SMUS joined thousands of schools in reaffirming the importance of respect and inclusiveness. Pink Shirt Day serves as a reminder that creating a positive school environment is an ongoing effort that depends on awareness, compassion, and shared responsibility.

Beyond wearing pink, Pink Shirt Day encourages reflection on how everyday actions contribute to the culture of a school. Small choices, such as inviting someone into a conversation, thinking before making a joke, or speaking up when something feels wrong, can have a meaningful impact. While awareness begins with a single day, the responsibility to foster respect and inclusion continues throughout the year.

# *Wellbeing Week: Your Daily Dose of Calm*

by Mira Wirk

Next week is the SMUS Senior School Wellbeing Week where students will have dedicated time and opportunities to prioritize their health and wellness through a variety of planned activities throughout the week.

The week begins on Monday with a Morning Meditation session at 8:15 a.m. in the Sun Center Commons. This guided session will offer students a peaceful start to their day and help them approach the week with intention.

On Tuesday, the beloved PATS Therapy Dogs will be visiting at lunch. Students can spend time with the dogs, an activity known to reduce stress and boost mood. Tea will also be available at recess, providing a cozy space to unwind and connect with friends.

Half way through the week, on Wednesday, students are invited to participate in Yoga in the Quad at lunch. This session will allow all students, regardless of yoga experience, to get some fitness and release tension during the school day.



On Thursday, the Sun Center Commons will host a Spa Treatment Lunch featuring face masks. This is sure to be a fun and relaxing way to treat yourself and take a break. In addition to the daily highlights, board games and puzzles will be available every day in the Sun Center Commons.

While Wellbeing Week includes exciting daily events, its purpose extends beyond the activities. It serves as a reminder that health and wellness matters every day, and that small purposeful moments of connection and mindfulness can make a big difference.

The Wellbeing Council encourages everyone to participate and take time to care for themselves and one another.

# *Hidden Sexism in the Olympics: The Price of Competing as a Woman*

by Byrdie Fisher-Franke

At this time of the year, our classrooms routinely become riddled with discussions of the Olympics with Howard's Cafe bustling with talk of the Canadian men's hockey team, and news articles outlining every shocking and miniscule event that takes place. Due to the level of mediatisation, it is likely that we would hear women's stories especially considering the intensity that some of them uphold, but somehow they fail to surface. As we praise athlete success, we fail to acknowledge the underlying misogyny that the Olympics uphold and even feed into the mindset that there is no point in fighting for equal treatment of women in sport.

This week, the MSPN posted a news story that outlined Dutch figure skater Jutta Leederdam, and her incredible gold medal win. If you simply look up her name in Google, the first few articles that come up are about how she "unveiled" her Nike sports bra for everyone to see, and the terrific brand deal she received. After scrolling various news websites like the Toronto sun, Sports Illustrated, and The Daily Mail, it is apparently acceptable to use the words "revealed," and "flaunted," as if she was not just cooling down after her incredible performance like almost every man does post competition. The fact that her normal practice is pin pointed above her rigorous competition reveals the Olympics' sexist standards.



This outrageous uproar, however, is just the beginning of the comments made in the Olympics stadium regarding the woman competing. According to Natalie Stechyson, a senior writer and editor for CBC news, many Olympic sports commentators feel little fear in undermining women and their role in sport: "In one case, a Eurosport commentator was suspended for suggesting female swimmers were off fixing their makeup. In another, a commentator was condemned for using stereotypical cliches about housewives to describe a tennis play," Although these phrases influenced women's voices negatively, many of us are unaware of them. Apart from these somewhat niche experiences, there are bigger issues involving the language of sports commentators all around the Olympics. According to Vogue, a popular fashion and lifestyle magazine, "Researchers from Cambridge University Press found that much of the reporting language used around the competitors was sexist, with a disproportionate focus on women's appearance, clothing, and personal lives, and commonly used words including 'aged,' 'pregnant,' and 'married,' in comparison to 'fast' and 'strong' for men."

Finally, it is sad to see that Olympic uniforms will never be the same for women as they will for men specifically due to a complete lack of choice. Despite the fact that we prioritise choice as a key pillar of feminism - to wear whatever you please no matter how revealing or unrevealing - competitive sports still value looking the best, over feeling the most comfortable. According to U.S. national champion distance runner Lauren Fleshman, "[w]omen's kits should be in service to performance, mentally and physically. If this outfit was truly beneficial to physical performance, men would wear it," If these athletic kits are truly the ones that spark confidence and uplift years of unequal behavior, why are they so famously up for debate by the woman involved.

As for any systemic issue, women are not fully treated equally in many contexts, but the sporting world's reception of them is worse than ever. So as our world supposedly prioritises the voices of women to create equality, it's about time we see women paraded for their successes instead of solely recognised for their top brand deals.

# *The Art of Choosing a University*

by Youlan Li

In this article, I will share my opinions and personal experience choosing which university to apply to, and, if all goes well, eventually attend. I will also discuss some important factors to consider when making this important decision.

First, the country you want to reside in is a primary factor to consider and each country has certain benefits. If you don't want to go too far away from your home and family, staying in Canada might be ideal. If you prefer a school curriculum with more freedom to explore your interests, the United States, and possibly a liberal arts education could be a good choice. On the other hand, if you know you want to pursue a professional field such as medicine or law and want to graduate in fewer years and save yourself the post-grad application process, the United Kingdom would likely be a top choice for you. As you think about the country you will spend the next four or more years, it is beneficial to think about your career interest and which country you'll likely stay for work. A lot of the time, students would choose to stay in the same region as their university, as it's more convenient to find internships, shadowing experiences, and employment.



Relative geographic location is also a key factor. Personally, I really like Victoria's weather and I wouldn't want to be freezing in the winter, so the US Midwest and West Coast are my favorite places.



Now, let's move on to the type of school you'd like to attend. In the US, there are three major categories of universities: public universities (e.g. UC Berkeley, UCLA, and UNC Chapel Hill), private universities (e.g. Duke, UPenn, or Harvard), and private liberal arts colleges (e.g. Claremont McKenna College, Pomona, or Williams).

To decide between these categories, it is crucial to ask yourself if you like going to a school with hundreds of students sitting together in the lecture hall or if you prefer being in a very small class of around 20 students and having a very close relationship with your professors. If you're going into preprofessional fields such as finance or premed, it's incredibly important to explore the alumni network and what resources the school offers in helping you accomplish your post-grad goals.

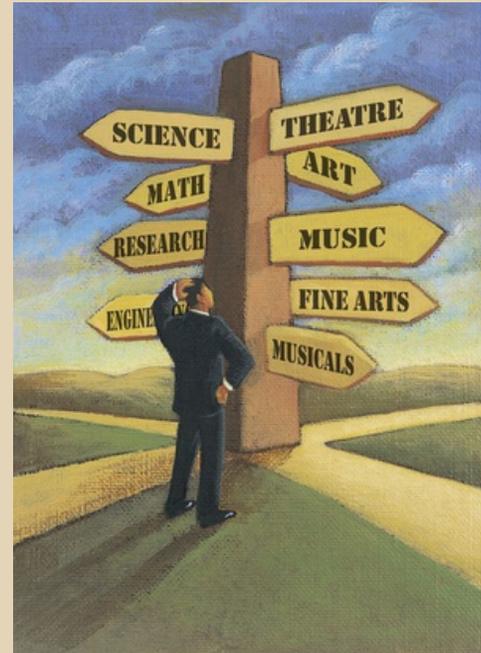
Finally, given the unstable state of the world right now it's CRUCIAL to think about what factors you value the most and what level of risk you're willing to take. I will leave you with one final note: make sure to speak with current students at your intended institution and ask about their real experiences before you commit to a school! I wish everyone the best of luck!

# *The Ineffectual STEM vs. Humanities Debate*

by Yuhe Pan

In recent years, a debate exploring a rivalry between the fields of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and humanities has emerged. The root of this conversation can be traced to the increased emphasis of STEM-related skills in our modern society, which tends to value technological and scientific advancements. As said advancements continue to develop and grow in significance to our societies, the humanities are portrayed as increasingly impractical by comparison. However, focusing only on how these two subject areas contribute to the development of society is inadequate to understanding the true value that both STEM and humanities subjects possess, and exploring the potential areas of overlap that exist between them.

On a surface level, the fields humanities and STEM could not appear more different. The humanities can be described as disciplines concerned with gaining an understanding of the human experience in the context of both individuals and societies, captured in subjects such as history, religion, philosophy, and the arts (National Humanities Center, 2018). On the other hand, STEM, consisting of the subject areas science, technology, engineering, and mathematics provide insights towards the ever-changing and complex modern world, crucial for addressing global challenges and promoting economic growth in our societies (Laquea, 2024). Though these key distinctions may isolate these fields from one another, I would argue that these apparent differences in their natures actually serve as a point of connection. While the humanities explore what it means to be human, STEM explores and influences the world in which humanity resides. Therefore, these two fields stand as two sides of the same coin: one cannot hold significance without the presence of the other. It is this understanding that renders the original debate between humanities and STEM obsolete. There should not be a question of which area of study has more value, but rather a recognition of the importance of their coexistence, emphasizing how these two fields intersect rather than differ.



It is not as though this intersection doesn't exist. Skills fostered in both subject areas tend to overlap, and knowledge acquired through both fields is often able to be applied mutually. According to an article from the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning published through Northern Illinois University, engaging in humanities subjects can develop skills such as creativity, critical thinking, and ethical-decision making—all traits which are crucial for success in the workplaces of today (Hirsch, 2025). Similarly, the technical skills developed by STEM subjects can be blended with the creative thinking fostered by humanities subjects. Subject areas that combine aspects of both fields also exist, often within the realm of the social sciences that often study human behaviors through scientific methods (Hirsch, 2025). The prevalent fusion of the fields shows that even with their differences both the humanities and STEM have valuable qualities that continue to remain relevant in our ever-shifting civilizations. As societies continue to develop, it is likely that a need for more intersections between these subject areas will arise, so long as we remain open to the possibility and continue to be curious about all aspects of the world around us.

# *Formula 1's New Chapter Begins*

*by Dev Wirk*

Hello everyone! Thanks for tuning in to read my predictions on how both F-1 championships will play out this year.

Last season, the regulations were stable and we had a fairly clear idea of who the contenders and pretenders would be. This year, however, new regulations have completely shaken up the grid, and no one truly knows which teams will emerge on top. With so many unknowns, this could be one of the most unpredictable seasons in recent Formula 1 history.

There are also new teams joining the grid, including Audi and Cadillac. As newcomers, they are widely predicted to finish toward the bottom of the standings while they build experience and develop their cars.

Here are my Constructors' Championship Predictions:

1. Mercedes
2. McLaren
3. Red Bull Racing
4. Ferrari
5. Williams
6. Audi
7. RB Visa Cash App
8. Haas
9. Alpine
10. Aston Martin
11. Cadillac



I have Mercedes winning the Constructors' Championship. There is a lot of hype and optimism surrounding the team, and I believe George Russell and Kimi Antonelli will be strong enough to consistently score points and challenge for wins.

As for my Drivers' Championship Top 10 Predictions, I have:

1. Max Verstappen (Red Bull)
2. George Russell (Mercedes)
3. Oscar Piastri (McLaren)
4. Lando Norris (McLaren)
5. Kimi Antonelli (Mercedes)
6. Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)
7. Isack Hadjar (Red Bull/RB)
8. Lewis Hamilton (Ferrari)
9. Carlos Sainz (Williams)
10. Alex Albon (Williams)



I have Max Verstappen winning the Drivers' Championship. In my opinion, he is already one of the greatest Formula 1 drivers of all time. If Red Bull provides him with a top-three car this season, I believe his consistency and ability to perform under pressure will secure him another title.

Those are my predictions for the upcoming F1 season, and, with the new regulations in place, it could be one of the most exciting and unpredictable years yet.

# Un super-pouvoir, c'est le multilinguisme !

*by French 12 students*

Il y a beaucoup de personnes talentueuses dans notre lycée: des intellectuels, des athlètes, des musiciens, des comédiens, etc. Il y a un autre talent que nous avons reconnu la semaine passée - le multilinguisme! C'est incroyable de communiquer dans une autre langue, et dans deux autres langues, c'est très impressionnant! Et il y en a parmi nous qui parlent plus de trois, quatre et cinq langues! Ça, c'est vraiment un accomplissement à célébrer. Saviez-vous que la plupart des résidents de l'internat de SMUS parlent trois langues? Et il y a trois enseignants qui parlent cinq ou plus de langues! Ça, c'est vraiment magnifique et un super-pouvoir, non?

Notre école a mené une enquête sur les langues parlées autres que l'anglais. Il y avait 421 élèves et 45 enseignants qui ont rempli l'enquête. Parmi les personnes qui ont répondu à l'enquête, la plupart des répondants parlent deux langues, mais 170 parlent trois langues (y compris l'anglais) et 47 parlent quatre ou plus de langues. Les langues les plus populaires sont le français (51 %), le mandarin (33 %), l'espagnol (27 %) et le cantonais (10 %). Au total, même si juste une personne connaît la langue, il y a 45 langues connues à notre lycée!

ET ce n'est jamais trop tard pour apprendre une nouvelle langue. Heureusement, nous offrons le mandarin, l'espagnol et le français à SMUS. Inscrivez-vous dès maintenant pour l'année prochaine! :)

Voici une photo des gens à notre lycée qui parlent anglais ET au moins trois autres langues!



# Llevar tu país en el corazón cuando estás lejos de casa

*by Valentina and Isabel*

Cada 24 de febrero, México conmemora el Día de la Bandera, una fecha dedicada a honrar uno de los símbolos más importantes de nuestra identidad nacional. Más que un acto ceremonial, esta celebración representa la historia, los valores y los ideales que han acompañado al país a lo largo del tiempo.

En México, este día suele vivirse en comunidad. Las escuelas organizan ceremonias cívicas, se entona el himno nacional y se reflexiona sobre el significado de los colores de la bandera y el escudo que la distingue. Es un momento de unidad, de memoria histórica y de reconocimiento colectivo.



Sin embargo, cuando se estudia en el extranjero, la experiencia adquiere una dimensión distinta.

Estar lejos del país de origen transforma la manera en que se perciben los símbolos nacionales. La bandera deja de ser únicamente un emblema presente en actos oficiales y se convierte en un vínculo personal con la cultura, la familia y las raíces.

En un entorno internacional, donde conviven múltiples nacionalidades e identidades, la conciencia sobre el propio origen se vuelve más profunda. Representar a México no implica solo mencionar de dónde se viene, sino transmitir valores, tradiciones y perspectivas culturales. Pequeños gestos, como explicar una festividad, compartir costumbres o hablar sobre la historia del país, se convierten en formas cotidianas de mantener viva esa conexión.

La distancia también permite valorar con mayor claridad aquello que antes podía parecer habitual. Las ceremonias escolares, los honores a la bandera y las celebraciones cívicas adquieren un nuevo significado cuando no se pueden vivir de la misma manera. Paradójicamente, es en la ausencia donde el sentido de pertenencia puede fortalecerse.

El Día de la Bandera, entonces, no solo invita a mirar el pasado histórico de México, sino también a reflexionar sobre la identidad personal. Llevar el país en el corazón significa reconocer las propias raíces mientras se crece en un contexto distinto. Significa mantener el orgullo por el origen sin dejar de aprender y enriquecerse con otras culturas.

Porque, al final, la bandera no es únicamente un símbolo que ondea en una ceremonia; es una representación viva de la historia, la unidad y la identidad que acompañan a cada mexicano, sin importar en qué parte del mundo se encuentre. importa.

# 我怀念的...

*by Ricardo Chen, Yina Ding, and Kathryn Yi*

在维多利亚的留学时光中，十一级仿佛是一道隐形的门槛，课业如山，未来的不确定性如雾般笼罩，让人不由得回首那些温暖的过往。在这个关键的转折点，我常常怀念一位从小相伴的女孩。我们从两岁起就相识，那时的我们如青梅竹马般亲密，一起在幼儿园的操场上追逐嬉戏，分享儿时的秘密与欢笑。那些日子纯真而无忧，阳光洒在我们的小身影上，仿佛永恒。

小学后，我们因选择不同的学校而分开。生活轨迹渐行渐远，本以为这份童年的友情会随着时光淡去，再无交集。没想到，两年前的圣诞节，一个意外的邀请改变了这一切。她妈妈约我出来喝咖啡，闲聊中得知她也来加拿大留学了。那一刻，惊喜如雪花般飘落。我们交换了微信，从此重拾联系。这份重逢让我感慨缘分的奇妙，跨越了省份的距离，却在异国他乡的节日里悄然拉近。

从那以后，我们的交流如春风般复苏。十年级的暑假，我们几乎每天都通话到深夜。尽管她在魁北克，我在这里，时差和距离似乎都成了装饰。我们聊起儿时的趣事，聊起各自的学校生活，那些对话带着熟悉的温暖，让孤单的留学日子多了一丝光亮。有时，我们会回忆小时候的冒险，她的声音总是带着温柔的笑意，让我感受到久违的陪伴。那段时光美好而纯粹，仿佛儿时的友情在岁月中沉淀，添上了一层成熟的理解。然而，在这些对话中，我渐渐意识到自己对她的情感已悄然生变，一种暗恋的悸动，在心底悄然萌芽，却从未说出口。那种感觉如隐秘的星光，照亮了我的夜晚，却也添了几分隐隐的惆怅。

如今，十一级的忙碌如潮水般涌来。AP课程、考试准备和社团活动充满了我的日程，我们间的联系渐渐稀疏。从每日分享到偶尔问候，生活的节奏推着我们前行。我明白，这是成长的必然，却仍忍不住怀念那些逝去的日子：儿时的无拘无束，去年暑假的深夜倾谈，那种心意相通的默契，让人回味无穷。尽管现在天各一方，我仍相信友情如细水长流，经得起时光的考验。更何况，那份暗恋如种子般埋藏，或许会在合适的季节悄然绽放。

或许在未来的某个假期，我们能再次相聚，续写新的篇章。“我怀念的是无话不说，我怀念的是一起做梦”。感谢这份缘分，让我的青春多了一份温暖与期待。在维多利亚的蓝天下，我学会了珍惜过去，也憧憬着明天。