

THE RAIDAR

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March Editorial: Spring Break in Hong Kong

So March it is, how time does fly! Well, the big thing in March for everyone is the week-long break in the second semester; some people might already have plans for what they want to do or where they want to go. This is no doubt a great opportunity for us students to catch a breath from the fast-paced schedule, so don't spend all your time buried in textbooks (though, let's be honest, few people actually do). Instead, use this time to reconnect with your parents and the people you care about; that is the best way to spend your time.

For my March break, I took an extra week off to return to Hong Kong with my parents. The primary goal of this trip was to visit my 4 grandparents, who are already in their mid-70s and 80s. Thankfully, they are in good health, and of course, I hope they will continue to be. Since this is the season for appreciation, I thought it would be wonderful to share the first few days of my Hong Kong itinerary with you.

Day 1:

To even get to Hong Kong, we had to take two connecting flights through Vancouver and Toronto—three flights in total. We spent around 25 hours either on planes or in layovers at airports. Yes, it was very rigorous, and at times I felt like my face was bloated due to sleep deprivation, but that was not even the worst part. We basically spent our first day

sitting on planes and watching movies. Our final flight to Hong Kong took 14 hours, and it was even delayed for an hour before takeoff.

I had to sit still for 15 hours straight! Although the flight attendants were very nice and offered drinks and food frequently, to be frank, the chicken was fairly salty, and the sandwiches were dry. The flight was only so bad because I had trouble trying to fall asleep in a sitting posture, but some people basically slept through the entire 15 hours from the moment we got on the plane (huge respect to them, by the way). To pass the time, I watched two great movies directed by Martin Scorsese: *Casino* and *Goodfellas*. They were absolutely top-notch biographical films, but very violent.



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Day 2:

We didn't really have a lot of planning for this trip, so there was plenty of flexibility, and many of our decisions were quite spontaneous. We went to Hollywood Road in the Central area for our first stop. The street was once ranked as one of the top 10 most charming streets in the world. Indeed, it was a blend of Chinese and Western elements; for instance, wall paintings of Marilyn Monroe and Charlie Chaplin, old Chinese buildings and stores, and art exhibitions. It wasn't the first time I had been there. In fact, I used to go to school there, so there was certainly a surge of familiarity and a sense of home as I walked down the street. My mum and I got some fresh sugarcane juice and sugarcane cake, and they were absolutely delicious. I think it was the fresh taste of sugarcane that made it so natural and sweet while still being free of the usual processed and artificial sugars. We also went on the Mid-Levels escalators, and along the way, there were plenty of bakeries selling different kinds of baked goods from various cultures, like French, Italian, and American. We didn't bother stopping because the queue at the bakery was humongous, so there was no point. In the evening, my mum and I went to the New Territories to see my grandparents. I had a deep conversation with them about what course I should take in university, while slurping boiling hot noodles in a spicy broth. The entire experience was me listening to them and simultaneously trying to feel my tongue again.

We got to bed at around 11 pm, and I immediately fell asleep.

Day 3:

Spring in Hong Kong did not feel like spring. If anything, it felt more like a pre-summer preparation period. In case you don't know, Hong Kong is known for its scorching hot summers. So I

guess it is quite nice to still be able to feel a little spring breeze before the city turns into a tropical forest. We didn't do much today. For lunch, we met up with my other grandmother and ate at a Taiwanese restaurant. I got to catch up on all the news about my family and how everyone had been doing, so overall it was a great experience, plus seeing my grandmother is always rather enjoyable. We were still experiencing some jet lag, so we decided to spend the evening taking a nap, which turned out to be the right decision. We even went to bed early before starting another pleasant day on our trip.

Day 4:

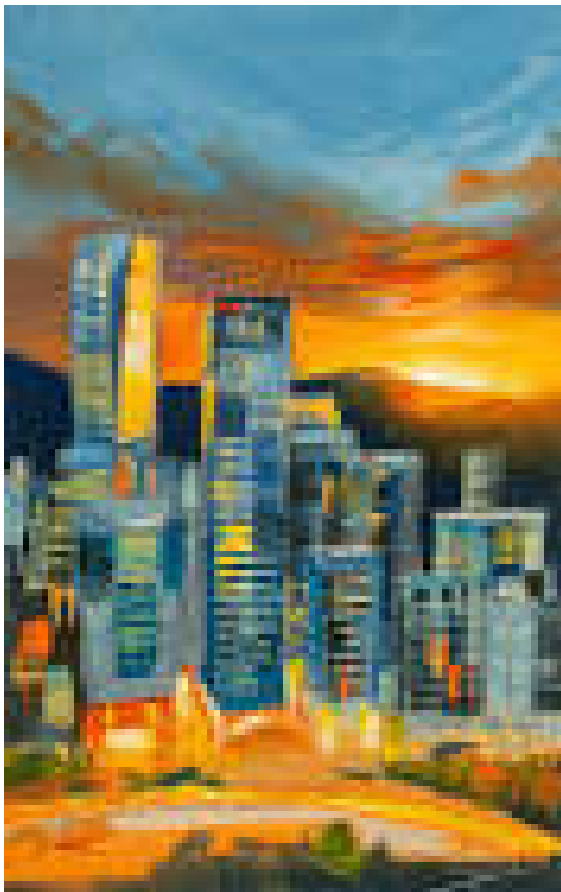
This will be the final day I document in the newspaper, as I figured you might not find 20 pages of a travel journal intriguing if I continued talking about how much fun I had over the last few days. My mum and I went to Tseung Kwan O in the morning for breakfast. It was far from where we were staying, but I had always known that there were a lot of shopping malls and fun places in that area. We spent four hours wandering around the mall and looking at the adorable merchandise in different stores. I had to stop myself from grabbing everything I liked off the shelves because if I kept spending so much money, I would have nothing left for the rest of the trip.



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I bought two special editions of Doraemon comic books, and my mum got a new Japanese-style wallet. We had sushi for lunch, and oh my lord, I ordered so much that there was food all over the table: grilled salmon, squid nigiri, tuna nigiri, crab stick, and some other random fish. Pretty crazy, don't you think? In the evening, I talked my mum into going to Lai Chi Kok for absolutely no reason. I had heard it was a nice spot to get food, and the shopping malls there were less "commercial" than most in Hong Kong. There were many local handmade products, and although they were expensive, we had fun just looking around and admiring the delicacy of the crafts.

To wrap up the day, I had Korean cheese kimbap. What a great day!



March Editorial: Saint Patrick's Day

Saint Patrick's Day is among the most influential Christian holidays in the world. Commonly associated with the color green, this religious holiday holds cultural significance in the United States, Ireland, and more. But what is the origin of this holiday? We know that Saint Patrick is a saint in Christianity; however, there are well over 10,000 saints that exist to date. What makes Saint Patrick so special? This article will provide everything you need to know to understand this illustrious holiday.

Contrary to popular belief, St. Patrick was not born in Ireland. In the fifth century, Patrick was born in Roman-occupied Britain. The destiny of Patrick and Ireland converged when he was sixteen; Patrick was tragically kidnapped from the island of Ireland. Unbeknownst to his abductors, this boy will change the fate of Ireland forever. At the time, Ireland was dominated by the Druid Religion; the rapidly expanding influence of Christianity had not yet reached the distant island. Patrick served as the apostle of the Irish people. Patrick would escape his captivity and learn to become a priest in Britain. He then voluntarily returned to the island of Ireland, where he dedicated his life to spreading the Christian belief. His efforts turned out to be a massive success; Ireland was converted to Christianity. In celebration of his contribution to Irish Christianity, Patrick was canonized as a saint, and his legacy was commemorated annually by the Irish people. The day of his passing was named Saint Patrick's Day.

Apart from recorded history, several legends became widely known regarding St. Patrick. The

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The most famous of which is the Shamrock. The shamrock is a three-leaf clover that is the national symbol of Ireland. The legend states that St. Patrick used the shamrock as an explanation for the Holy Trinity — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. He managed to convert a non-believer using this clever analogy. Other myths include his resurrection of 33 people from the dead and his ability to spawn a herd of pigs through prayers. St. Patrick was also thought to have driven all snakes in Ireland into the ocean, resulting in their extinction on the island.

Nevertheless, although St. Patrick's Day originated in Ireland, the holiday traditions were established in America. On March 17, 1600, a St. Patrick's Day celebration was held in the Spanish colony of Florida. A year later, the first St. Patrick's Day Parade was held. The true popularisation of the holiday began a century later, in 1762. Irish soldiers who served the British Empire held a massive parade in New York City in honour of their heritage. Irish patriotism rapidly spread across America in the following decades. By 1851, the New York Irish aid societies decided to hold a united and official parade. The New York City St. Patrick's Day Parade still stands today as the oldest and largest parade in the United States.

But why did this holiday develop in the U.S. and not in any other country in the world? Well, this all began in 1845, during the Great Potato Famine in Ireland. Over a million Irish immigrants swarmed into the United States. These immigrants faced poverty and discrimination due to their Catholic beliefs. Such prejudice inspired unity amongst the Irish Americans.



They chose to go against the greater population and celebrate their heritage despite the judgment of the general public. As time elapsed, resentment against the Irish population declined; St. Patrick's Day, along with several other cultural events, became integrated into American culture. Apart from the United States, St. Patrick's Day is celebrated in many other parts of the world. In Ireland, the holiday still retained its original religious nature. In fact, before 1970, Irish law demanded the closure of pubs on St. Patrick's Day. Knowing the significance of the Irish drinking culture, this mandate fully demonstrates how seriously the Irish treat this religious holiday.



In Canada, St. Patrick's Day is also widely celebrated. In Newfoundland and Labrador, St. Patrick's Day is a government holiday. Other countries such as Australia, Japan, Singapore, and Russia also hold large celebrations on Saint Patrick's Day.

Thus concludes this comprehensive overview of Saint Patrick's Day. This article certainly does not explain all aspects of this amazing holiday. The Raidar Newspaper encourages you to explore these other interesting aspects. Only through research and investigation could we understand our culture and heritage. Perhaps as we lie back and enjoy the awesome holidays that await us, it is beneficial to make even a single Google search. Even the smallest step toward understanding our culture could make a massive difference.

By: Tomas Wang - Editor-in-chief

Skating on Her Own Terms: Alysa Liu's Comeback at the 2026 Milano Cortina Winter Olympics

The 2026 Milano Cortina Winter Olympics left us with many memorable moments. Whether you're a fan of sports or not, every year the Olympics gathers tons of people to watch athletes compete against each other while rooting for their home country to win the gold. This year, figure skating seems to be taking over the internet ever since American figure skater Alysa Liu put herself in the spotlight after winning 2 gold medals for the US shortly after coming back from her retirement. Even though Liu isn't new to competition, this time the public became captivated by her fresh, unique style, confidence, and, more so, by the way she is bringing awareness of athletes' mental health into figure skating.

Alysa Liu began skating at age 5, by age 13 she broke the record as the youngest U.S champion, and by age 16 she became the youngest US figure skater to compete in the Olympics. Liu was already one of the best figure skaters in the world, placing herself on the podium in many competitions; however, in 2022, shortly after winning bronze for the USA team, she announced her retirement from the sport. Alyssa Liu posted on her Instagram how she was going to "be moving on in [her] life". In that moment, her whole life had revolved around skating and fulfilling the expectations of the public, which ended up making her lose passion for the sport. Alyssa Liu drifted away completely from the sport, focusing instead on friends, family, and her life as a Psychology student at UCLA.

After almost 2 years of not skating at all, Liu made up her mind in 2024. With her "newfound perspective," she decided to plan her comeback, but this time on her own terms. It was improbable that she would succeed, or so her coach, Phillip

DiGuglielmo scoffed at her, saying, "Why would you do this to yourself?" However, after negotiating, he was on board with the comeback as well. Alysa decided this time she would be carefree of the results, training only as much as she felt like, and skating out of passion. From choosing her own music to wearing the clothes she liked, Liu also wanted to be involved with every decision surrounding her programs. In a sport as demanding as figure skating is, it would seem her new attitude wouldn't bring her anywhere; instead, the 2026 Olympics proved everyone wrong. Liu rediscovered her love for skating and demonstrated she wasn't doing it for the gold anymore: every time she was on stage, she smiled proudly, out of the enjoyment she truly had performing. Ironically and in contrast with other skaters who took great pressure on themselves and couldn't meet expectations, this authenticity to come back as her true self won her not only one but two gold medals for the U.S, both in women's singles and team event.



Drawing By Zairah Morales Cano – Editor/Illustrator

Skating on Her Own Terms

Following her victory, she became a global sensation by performing “Stateside” by Pinkpantheress in the Olympics gala event, a program which quickly became viral on social media. Undoubtedly, Liu’s use of songs by popular artists in her programs, combined with her unique striped hair, frenulum piercing, and energetic personality, is drawing the eyes of the public and allowing her to connect with the younger generations, collecting many fans around the world. Alysa has stated many times that while she is proud of her recent accomplishments, she won’t put skating as her priority anymore and will “keep on skating just for the fun of it,” putting her own health and that of her close ones first. Alysa Liu has become a popular example of how it is okay to step back and take time to rediscover and take care of yourself, and be able to come back even stronger.

By Zairah Morales Cano – Editor/Illustrator



March Editorial: The Science of Spring

Spring is one of the most magical and exciting times of the year, in my opinion. Spring is the sign of renovation, a sign that everything is waking up again, the weather gets warmer, and summer is just around the corner. But what do we really know about spring? How do the flowers just magically reappear again? Why does everything go back to life after being dead for months during the wintertime? Well, you might have wondered why all of these things happen, or at least it has crossed your mind, but you never really searched for the reason for it. Together, let’s learn what really happens in spring.

First of all, let’s take a look at the flowers, one of the main symbols of spring. In winter, most flowers go into a resting phase to survive the cold, similar to how bears hibernate. While the part of the plant above the ground might look dead, the roots are usually alive and waiting for spring. Shorter days and colder temperatures tell plants to stop growing, stop flowering, and rest, so they store their energy in their roots. When spring arrives, flowers wake up from their long winter sleep and begin a period of rapid growth and blooming, often appearing to burst into life almost overnight. The warmer weather, increased rain, and longer daylight hours trigger them to move from a dormant state into a flurry of activity, with many pushing through the soil to form buds and petals. It is very similar to what happens with trees, as we see them losing their leaves in fall, they shed leaves to save water, stop growing, and turn starch into sugar, acting as a natural antifreeze. Their metabolism slows significantly, and they store nutrients in their roots to patiently wait for spring. Trees enter a

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state of "dormancy" (similar to hibernation) to survive cold and lack of food, and when spring arrives, trees break their winter dormancy as buds swell and burst, revealing new leaves and shoots. The leaves start to produce chlorophyll and begin photosynthesis to create food for the growing season. But you know who also wakes up from a sleep state during spring? Animals. Hibernating animals like chipmunks and bears wake up, migratory birds return, and many species give birth to young, so it's a pretty busy season for nesting and feeding. But, animals are not the only busy ones; with warmer temperatures, there is more activity for humans. People often start spring cleaning, gardening, and planting crops, and it's also the time for holidays like Easter. So we see that spring is a new beginning, we see that new opportunities are coming, and a new stage begins.

By: Manuela Castellanos Arce - Editor

Short Story: Spring Fever

Spring arrived early that year, with an unseasonably warm Saturday in mid-March. The snowmelt still clung to the edges of the paths, but the sun was strong enough to make the air smell like wet bark and thawing earth. Kids were out in T-shirts and shorts they'd regret by evening, but nobody was worried about later. Everyone just wanted to enjoy the first warm day of the year. Dogs rolled in mud, then splattered everyone, shaking it off; birds sang in the trees. Spring fever was everywhere.

From across the park, Liam spotted her: Olivia Tremblay, sitting with two friends at a picnic table. Her blonde hair was braided into two neat plaits, her glasses tucked into the pocket of the black cardigan draped over her blue, flowered shirt. She was laughing at something one of the girls had said, the sound carrying just enough for Liam to catch the shape of it. She looked so carefree that he found himself smiling too, all the way on the far side of the park, before he realized he was doing it.

She had moved to his school last year and sat in front of him in math. They'd gotten along well enough—passing comments, shared worksheets, the occasional joke—and Liam had been quietly pleased that the pretty new girl seemed to like talking to him. He'd liked her for a while now, though he'd never done anything about it. They were friendly classmates, nothing more. As he watched her across the park, she looked up and caught his gaze. She waved, and he started to wave back before instantly regretting it and trying to turn the motion into a stretch.

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Shouts and wild laughter broke through the birdsong as a large group of kids came running through the park, arguing and roughhousing. They were all yelling about who had “climbed the highest last year” and who was going to beat the record this time. They jostled and shoved each other as they made a straight line for the biggest maple in the park — the one shading the picnic table where Olivia and her friends sat.

One of them, Dave, spotted Liam and threw up a hand. “Yo, Liam! We’re doing a climbing competition! You in?”

Liam hesitated for half a second, then jumped to his feet. Why not? Better to look like part of something than the guy standing alone, especially with Olivia watching.

“Sure, man. Which tree?”

Dave stared at him like he’d asked where the sky was. “Dude, seriously? The big maple. What other tree would you climb?”

Liam jogged over to join the group, which had already gathered in a loose clump around the tree. Dave gave him a fist bump, and they both turned to watch the first few climbers make their attempts. Liam was acutely aware of Olivia and her friends behind him. He stood awkwardly, suddenly unsure how to shift his weight or where to put his hands. He kept his eyes fixed on the tree, hoping he looked normal.

The first climber was Mateo, a short kid who made up for it in volume. He jumped to catch the first branch and neatly pulled himself onto it. From there, he moved quickly, climbing from limb to limb until he reached a point where the next

branch was just out of reach.

“Jump for it!” someone yelled from below.

“Are you crazy?” Mateo shot back. “I don’t have a death wish. This is my spot.” He took out his pocketknife and carved a crude M into the trunk before climbing back down to cheers and groans.

More boys tried, some slipping off the first branch, some chickening out halfway, but only a few made it as high as Mateo. None got higher. Eventually, Dave’s turn came.

“These guys suck,” he said cockily to Liam. “I’ll beat the lot of them, no sweat.”



He jogged to the tree and launched himself upward, his wiry limbs finding holds with practiced ease. Higher and higher he went, until he reached the spot where Mateo had carved his mark. Dave looked down at the crowd and laughed.

“Light work! You guys ready for the new record?”

He grabbed the branch above him and kept climbing. A few more branches, each thinner than the last, and he was well past the point where falling meant a bruised ego instead of a broken

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bone. He knew it too—his movements slowed, his weight shifting more carefully. When one branch bent ominously under him, he stopped.

“Yeah, that’s enough,” he said under his breath.

Bracing himself with one arm around the trunk, he stood on the sturdiest part of the branch and carved his initials well above Mateo’s. Then he climbed back down to a chorus of cheers and claps.

“Beat that!” he said triumphantly, grinning at the group still waiting their turn.

A few more boys made their climbs, with varying degrees of success. One slipped off the first branch and tried to pretend he’d jumped down on purpose. Another made it halfway up before freezing and climbing back down, humiliated. A third reached Mateo’s spot, hesitated, and decided that was “high enough.” The crowd whooped and jeered in equal measure, the noise rising and falling with each attempt.

Before long, the crowd had thinned. The eager ones had gone, and the cautious ones had backed out. People started looking around for who was next.

Liam felt the shift before anyone said anything. Heads turned toward him, and a path through the group opened up. Dave nudged him with an elbow.

“Your turn, man.”

Liam swallowed, suddenly aware of the sun on his neck, the rough bark ahead of him, and Olivia somewhere behind him, watching.

Determined not to mess this up, he marched to the first branch and swung himself up. He grabbed the next and pulled himself higher. Limb after limb, higher and higher, his arms began to burn as he climbed. He reached Mateo’s spot and looked down.

The distance to the ground was dizzying. The crowd was below—friends cheering, rivals jeering. And Olivia, watching with undivided attention. His stomach tightened. This was high enough, wasn’t it? Only Dave had gone higher. But *Dave had gone higher*. And Olivia was watching.

He couldn’t stop here.

He reached for the next branch.

Slowly now, careful with every shift of weight, he continued to climb. One branch higher. Then another. Another. The limbs creaked beneath him, making his stomach flip. One more, and he had reached Dave’s record.

Holding on to the trunk for dear life, Liam looked down. A fall from this height would mean a long trip to the hospital—and that was if he was lucky. The crowd below was cheering together now, excited that someone had matched the record. A chant rose through the park: “High-er! High-er! HIGH-ER!”

Liam imagined climbing down after breaking the record, the crowd cheering around him, the bragging rights at school, the feeling of having beaten everyone. Most of all, he imagined the look on Olivia’s face. The branches were thin, but he could do this. He had to. Olivia was worth it.

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He grabbed the next branch, slowly and carefully, and pulled himself up. The limb creaked under him. He climbed onto the next. A gust of wind shook the tree, and he hugged the trunk, heart hammering. When the gust passed, he reached again.

“One more,” he muttered. “One more and then I’m done.”

Slowly, carefully, absolutely determined, he reached for the final branch and shifted his weight onto it.

The branch snapped.
By: Garion Laird - Editor



By: Vaughn Abucay - Illustrator