



VALLEY LIFE: CYRANO REVIEW  
PETER DINKLAGE STARS IN THE 2022 FILM THAT DELIVERS A NEW TAKE ON AN OLD TALE.



SPORTS: BASEBALL  
VALLEY COLLEGE DEFEATED PIERCE COLLEGE 7-3 SATURDAY MORNING.

# Angelenos advocate for Ukraine

Protestors gathered outside the CNN building on Monday night to show their support for Ukraine.

NATALIE METCALF AND  
ALUA KARATAY  
STAFF WRITERS

At the corner of Cahuenga and Sunset Boulevard on Feb. 28, over 150 Los Angeles residents protested the war in Ukraine and Putin's actions over the past week.

Outside the CNN building in Hollywood, activists gathered in support of Ukraine for a seventh day of opposing the troops of the Russian Federation. Protestors waved the country's flag, chanting "shield the sky" and "stop the war" while hugging each other and singing the Ukrainian national anthem. Demonstrators blasted Ukrainian music through loudspeakers and drivers showed their support by honking. The Van Gogh Museum across the street passed out sunflowers – Ukraine's national flower.

"We need NATO to hear us. We need to shield the sky," said Juila Vlasenko, the event organizer. "[Russia is] bombing our oil base, they captured our nuclear plants and made them their army bases, and they also shot our natural gas pipeline [which] affected air all over Europe."

Vlasenko was born in Ukraine and with family and friends still in Kyiv, she has watched the war closely.

The "Shield the Sky" protest demands immediate action from NATO, an intergovernmental military alliance between 30 countries. As a partner country, Ukraine could eventually become a part of the organization. The demonstration called for a no-fly zone in Ukraine and immediate action from NATO and U.S. bombers, fighters, interceptors and air-to-air systems.

Ukraine's no-fly zone over the country would require NATO to possibly engage with Russian aircrafts flying in restricted airspace according to Former NATO

Commander Phillip Breedlove.

According to Polish Minister of Defense Mariusz Blaszchak, Poland sent Ukraine a convoy of ammunition trucks to help the warring nation defend itself.

Russian President Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24, launching a coordinated strike across the country consisting of various munitions such as cruise missiles and heavy artillery. Putin put his nuclear arsenal on high alert the next Sunday, threatening that "whoever tries to hinder us" will see consequences "you have never seen in history."

This year, Russia has 5,977 nuclear warheads in its inventory. According to The Bulletin of the Atomic Arsenal, 1,588 of those missiles are deployed on heavy bomber bases. Russia and the U.S. own almost 90 percent of the world's nuclear warheads.

"Throughout our history, we've learned this lesson when dictators do not pay a price for their aggression, they cause more chaos," said President Joe Biden in his State of the Union Address on Tuesday night.

The combined number of civilian and military casualties in Ukraine as of Feb. 27 is 367 deaths and 1,684 injured. According to the UN, more than 800,000 Ukrainian refugees have fled during Russia's invasion. As of Wednesday, 453,000 refugees arrived in Poland. Russia reported 500 of their soldiers dead.

Protestor Oleksander Straukov has two children in Ukraine right now, an eight-year-old and a 12-year-old.

"[We are here] to make a statement," said Straukov. "We want the government to help Ukraine."

Russia's neighbor to the west, Belarus, has prepared its troops on high alert. Meanwhile, countries continue to impose sanctions against the Russian Federation. In Biden's



PROTEST- A peaceful protest organized to support Ukraine against Russia's aggression was held at the corner of Sunset and Cahuenga in Hollywood.

address on Tuesday, he stated that the U.S. sky will be closed for Russian aircrafts.

The 46th president announced a second package of sanctions against Russia in a week due to its invasion of Ukraine. The first package, adopted after Russia recognized the self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk republics, was more likely to be moderate, the second included more stringent sanctions.

"[Ukrainians] need support from everyone," said protestor Oleksandr Melskyi. "We just want the world to know the truth and unite against Russia."



SPEAKER- Event organizer Julia Vlasenko was the main speaker at the peaceful protest against Russia's invasion on Monday night.

## "Crimes of opportunity" at Valley College

Three possible incidents of stolen chromebooks were reported last month following a slew of other crimes.

ISAAC DEKTOR  
MANAGING EDITOR

The chromebook scanner in the Business-Journalism building was stolen earlier this week and three additional reports possibly refer to stolen laptops, following a spree of unrelated petty crimes.

A thief attempted to steal the scanning station chromebook from a corridor in BJ Monday afternoon, but the

crime was interrupted by a student who walked by, causing the perpetrator to flee the scene. Then, on Wednesday morning, the laptop was missing. The Valley College Sheriff department reported an incident of grand theft and two burglaries — theft of the chromebooks could be classified as either.

Security Officer Romero noted that crime rates are going up. "That's what's going on

right now — it's crimes of opportunity," said Romero. "We can be patrolling and you never know when people come out of the woodwork."

**Seven crimes were reported on campus in January, including the copper theft: three incidents of petty theft, three vandalism and one instance of "exhibiting a weapon in a threatening manner."**

Copper piping connecting Media Arts to its air conditioning unit was stolen early last month in a spree of seven unconnected petty crimes, some of which remain unsolved. "It's a hot commodity nowadays and they try to take anything they can sell," said Security Officer Romero. Older buildings such as

Campus Center, where Media Arts is located, are connected to external AC units through copper pipes. The copper is particularly vulnerable as thieves do not have to break into the building itself. Valley's Sheriff Security Officer Romero estimated the copper piping to be eight feet in length and half an inch in diameter. Copper sells for roughly \$4.5 per pound — depending on the specific kind of copper, the thieves could make approximately \$64.

Last semester, the Valley College Sheriff's department ramped up patrols to deter crime, increasing personnel at each school and reassigning "rovers," who were mandated to move between schools based on need.

According to the crime blotter in the sheriff's office at Valley, seven crimes were reported on campus in January, including the copper theft: three incidents of petty theft, three vandalism and one instance of "exhibiting a weapon in a threatening manner." A crime is classified as petty theft when less than \$950 worth of goods are stolen. One of the reported vandalism refers to an incident in which perpetrators graffitied the fourth floor of the parking garage. Additionally,

copper tubing was vandalized in or outside of Media Arts two days before the piping was stolen from the same building.

As previously reported by the Star, a vandal broke into the Campus Center Building in the final days of the fall semester. The unidentified perpetrator shattered windows and damaged tarps that were set up to protect the asbestos-ridden building from corrosion caused by a pipe burst in September 2020.

The average crime rate in the district is roughly 143 percent over for violent crime and 50 percent over for property crimes. The overall figure is driven up by Los Angeles Southwest and Los Angeles Trade-Tech colleges, which have violent crime rates three and a half and six times over the national average, respectively.

According to Security Officer Romero, the Board of Trustees are scheduled to vote on a new five-year contract in March between the Los Angeles Sheriff's department and the district following its second six-month extension.

## Two ASU initiatives move to vote

ISAAC DEKTOR  
MANAGING EDITOR

The future of ASU monthly stipends and bias in official executive council processes will be in the hands of Valley College students this upcoming spring election.

Following a controversial appointment process last fall, ASU formed a subcommittee that wrote an amendment requiring members and candidates to disclose any familial or romantic ties to council members during appointment and impeachment processes. Failure to do so could lead to impeachment. The amendment committee consisted of President Sandra Sanchez, Vice President Shoshana Cassell, Commissioner of Political Affairs Kai Haaland, Commissioner of Social Media Emily Gutierrez (sp) and Parliamentarian Kimberly Perez-Solis. The anti-bias amendment passed by a margin of four to one, with Ethan Shalom voting against the legislation.

Kai Haaland, one of the five amendment committee members, explained the reasoning behind the anti-bias legislation.

"We were trying to protect the integrity of the appointment process," said Haaland. "It was too complicated to restrict friends; it's hard to define. We decided to focus on family or romantic relationships because those are both reasons for obvious bias."

Haaland commented on the impetus for the amendment - allegations of bias among executive council members during last semester's appointment process.

"I think that's all behind us," said Haaland. "It [anti-bias amendment] passed the executive council voting process and now it's in the students hands. If it gets voted in, it's not going to affect sitting members."

The Stipend reform amendment, which passed unanimously, is an initiative pushed by Emily Gutierrez, who no longer sits on the executive council. If passed by Valley students, ASU executive council members will receive \$250 monthly stipends for fall and spring semesters, and \$100 dollars for winter and summer. This is a \$150 and \$20 monthly raise, respectively.

See "ASU" on page 2

### IMPORTANT DATES

#### March 7

Valley will offer a free COVID-19 test clinic on March 7 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Engineering building, room 100.

#### March 8

Valley is celebrating International Womens Day via Zoom from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. For more information, visit [lavc.edu](http://lavc.edu)

These features and more can be found in full @ [www.thevalleystarnews.com](http://www.thevalleystarnews.com)

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



SHERIFF- (L-R) Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputies Coleman and Saldivar stand in a parking lot near the Valley College sheriff's station while they discuss daily activities.



## Jim Fenwick, former Valley College athletic director dies at 69

Working four decades at Valley, Fenwick coached different eras of the football program and oversaw athletics until his retirement.



VALLEY STAR | AVA ROSATE  
ICON- Jim Fenwick served as athletic director from 2012-2020. Photo from December 2020.

BENJAMIN ROYER  
SPORTS EDITOR

Jim Fenwick, who coached Valley College football intermittently throughout four decades and was athletic director from 2012 to 2020, died on Feb. 17. He was 69.

Fenwick, who retired as athletic director in 2020, was in his second battle with Leukemia before he passed.

Fenwick spent 12 years coaching football at Valley. From 1987 to 1988, 1991 to 1996 and 2009 to 2012, Fenwick oversaw the program. Starting in 1991, he was the head coach for the Monarchs. Fenwick was promoted to athletic director following his final four-year stint as a coach, holding the title from 2012 until his retirement.

"It was a tremendous loss," said Athletic Director Dave Malas, who took over for Fenwick after holding interim status in 2021. "Not just for Valley College, but the San Fernando Valley and the entire valley. I have been in the valley for 20 years, been at Valley [College] for 18 years now. He is a hall-of-fame coach and a hall-of-fame person. It was devastating. He was a great athletic director to work for. I got to be with him as a peer and as a colleague when we were both coaching. It is a tough loss."

Fenwick coached numerous teams at multiple levels of college football throughout his 46-year career. Fenwick started his post-playing career as head coach

at Pierce College (1981-1986). After being the Brahmas' coach, Fenwick moved to Valley in 1986 due to Prop 13, which shuffled teachers around the district.

**"...He just had an incredible impact on all of us at the college. He was such a nice, kind, genuine, generous, wise person and we all miss him. It's just a tremendous loss for the campus community."**

*- Barry Gribbons, president of Valley College*

Following his first three years in Valley Glen, the legend moved on to coach in CSUN's football program. He also spent time at the University of New Mexico, Miami University (OH), the University of Pacific and Occidental College — taking assistant roles such as running backs coach, special teams coach, quarterbacks coach and offensive coordinator.

Returning to Valley in 1991, Fenwick coached the Monarchs until 1996 and had a 50-15 record during his five years in charge. He was rewarded with the coach

of the year honor in 1994. In 1997, he returned to CSUN, leading the Division I program as their head coach, but only spent one year in charge of the Matadors. Fenwick traveled up north in 1999 and was head coach at Eastern Oregon through 2005.

"Jim was an amazing person, said Valley President Barry Gribbons. "He had an incredible impact on our athletics program, from his time coaching football to when he was the athletic director. But even beyond that he just had an incredible impact on all of us at the college. He was such a nice, kind, genuine, generous, wise person and we all miss him. It's just a tremendous loss for the campus community."

Diagnosed with Leukemia 18 years ago, Fenwick's family rallied around him through his first battle with the disease.

His son, Casey, donated bone marrow and sent Fenwick's cancer into remission. He was cleared as cancer-free in 2005. However, in November, the LA Times reported that the illness had returned. According to the article, Fenwick received another bone marrow transplant from his granddaughter, Kyleigha.

Fenwick is survived by his wife, Gayle, sons Casey and Tyler and his five grandchildren.

A memorial service is planned for March 15 at Our Lady of the Lourdes Church in Northridge. Starting at 11:30 a.m., Fenwick's family invites "loved ones, family members and colleagues" to attend and remember the life of the Valley icon.

## Free community college introduced in the state legislature

Assemblymember Miguel Santiago submitted a bill to the state houses which would expand California Promise.

MATTHEW ROYER  
NEWS EDITOR

Free community college may be on the horizon for California residents.

Assemblymember Miguel Santiago (D-Los Angeles) introduced AB-2266, also known as "Free Community College For All," to legislators at the state Capitol on Feb. 17. Announcing the bill alongside Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis and Assemblymember Mike Fong (D-Monterey Park), Santiago looks to expand California Promise, which offers free tuition to eligible students throughout the state.

"Community college changed my life," said the assemblymember in a press conference streamed on Facebook Watch. "Educating communities empowers communities, plain and simple. That is why we are expanding [Promise] to provide two years of free tuition to all full-time community college students, regardless of if they are a first-time or returning student."

Currently, to be eligible for California Promise, students

must be high school graduates, not have taken any college credits (unless taken concurrently with high school) and match the financial aid requirements for free tuition, according to Valley College Promise.

Promise is known as Santiago's flagship legislation. In 2017, the former LACCD Board of Trustees president introduced AB-19, which established California Promise. Later in 2019, the assemblymember introduced AB-2, which expanded Promise to a two-year program. The 2022 version of the bill looks to expand the program to every student in the state, no matter their financial or educational status, as long as they are a high school graduate or completed an equivalent.

"The LACCD College Promise Program has experienced unparalleled success, with higher overall rates of completion and persistence among mostly first-generation students," said LACCD Chancellor Francisco C. Rodriguez in a district press release.

"This bill expands much-needed access to higher education, keeps college affordable for working families, and accelerates the



PHOTO COURTESY OF LACCD  
FREE - Assemblymember Miguel Santiago announced his new bill AB-2266 at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College on Feb. 17.

journey to a no-cost Associates degree for all full-time students, keeping California globally competitive in an inclusive economy."

In 2016, Valley was featured in the launch of LA College Promise, the prototype of the statewide program introduced by Santiago

in Sacramento. The presentation was shown to the second Lady at the time Jill Biden, who now in concurrence with being First Lady is still an active community college professor.

As of Fall 2021, six percent of students at Valley are Prom-

ise students. For more information visit <https://lavc.edu/promise/The-Promise-at-LAVC.aspx> or email [promise@lavc.edu](mailto:promise@lavc.edu).

## Los Angeles lifts indoor-mask mandate

Face-coverings can now be taken off for vaccinated individuals, but at Valley College, airways will remain covered.

MATTHEW ROYER  
NEWS EDITOR

Los Angeles County allows vaccinated citizens to go maskless in doors, following in the footsteps of California, which rolled back its mandate last week.

On Friday, Mayor Eric Garcetti announced a shift of policy citywide, following suit with the state and CDC. Under the city's latest guidelines, individuals in Los Angeles County can ditch masks indoors if they can prove vaccination status to the establishment they are visiting. While the policy comes under the trust of an honor code for businesses and citizens alike, this is not the first time Los Angeles has lifted its indoor mask mandate. According to LA Eater, the city lifted the guidelines last June but quickly re-established them after the rise of the Delta variant of COVID-19 in July. On Thursday, LA Public Health Director Barbara Ferer spoke on the changes.

"This allows, in places where you're verifying that people are either fully vaccinated or they



FLICKR | TOBIAS WOLFF  
INDOOR- Face-coverings can now be taken-off indoors in Los Angeles-based establishments.

have that negative test result, that then it's a safer environment where those who are fully vaccinated can go ahead and [remove] their masks," said Ferer

according to CBS 2 Los Angeles.

While changes were made citywide to the mandate, as of now, shifts in LACCD's strategy towards the pandemic will

seem to come on another occasion. On Friday, the district sent a mass email to students titled, "Your Health and Safety is our Top Priority," reiterating

the current policies put in place for students and faculty alike.

"All students must continue to wear disposable, surgical-style masks (available for free at the colleges) or the N-series respirators whenever you are indoors at any college building," read the district-wide email. "This may change soon and we will notify you as soon as possible of further changes."

The other two policies the message noted were keeping up with Cleared4 and uploading immunization records, including the booster-shot mandate, of which students must upload evidence to Cleared4 by Mar. 14.

Students who cannot yet receive their booster or have district-approved medical or religious exemptions must submit weekly proof of negative COVID-19 test results in order to continue in-person or hybrid classes.

According to CBS 2 Los Angeles, masks are still required indoors in certain locations statewide, such as some schools, hospitals, nursing homes, buses, trains and airports.

items in the spring election, giving students the final say.

ASU is accepting applications for potential candidates intending to run in the upcoming spring election, which will be held from April 25 to May 1. The deadline to apply is March 27. Election results will be posted May 6.

Both amendments will appear as additional ballot

## ASU

### From page 1

ASU President Sandra Sanchez explained that the stipend reform, if passed by Valley students, will not be a raise for current council members as the amendment will not

take effect until next semester.

"Most students in community college work part-time or even full-time - so having a little bit more money for our students who are interested in joining a student government position while they are working - it will just ease their mind knowing they can expect a higher stipend," said Sanchez.

ASU members who choose

to work during the winter and summer semesters receive a far smaller stipend than in spring and fall because less students attend classes, leaving less work for council members.

Lauren Lucas, Commissioner of Ethnic and Cultural Affairs, spoke about the benefits of stipend reform. "It will bring more students

## BRIEFS

### Late start classes are available for students

As enrollment remains low due to COVID-19, Valley College is offering a plethora of late start classes starting April 11 for the spring semester.

According to Manager of Public Relations Jennifer Borucki, Valley is offering 172 late start classes, with the majority of them offered online for the second eight week session. Science, english, math, humanities, art, lifelong learning and social science departments are all adding late start classes. In the science department there are nine class options including Biology 003, Anthropology 101, Anthropology 102 and 111 being offered asynchronously. The English Department provides 25 choices online. There are seven math classes open. The math department has a Math 262 available for enrollment right now for anyone interested in taking Calculus. Humanities has added Anthropology of Religion online. For Art, there are 19 courses. In social science, there are 43 open enrollments. Even dance and yoga are being offered online part of lifelong learning starting on April 11.

The class schedule and catalog has the full list of courses offered for those looking to enroll in a late-start class.

- ISABELLA VODOS  
STAFF WRITER

### Book Vouchers up to \$600 are available through Financial Aid Programs

Valley College students enrolled in EOPS and other support programs that offer financial support can receive between \$100 to \$600 for book vouchers.

EOPS is a state funded program that supports students who are experiencing financial challenges and need educational assistance. EOPS students can get book vouchers by following eligibility requirements, which includes having graduated from high school with a GPA below 2.5. They also must have a low income quantity and qualify for the California College Promise Grant, as well as enrolling in at least 12 units. The deadline to apply is Feb. 27.

Additionally, book grants through the Dream Center and Promise program are still available for students enrolled in those programs.

- ISABELLA VODOS  
STAFF WRITER

### Valley scholarships available to a wide variety of students

Ninety-five scholarships are available for Monarchs this spring, ranging from those meant to assist first-year students, to those who were formerly incarcerated.

This year, the college's foundation has \$165,000 set aside to award to students. Scholarships are given to those who display certain GPA requirements, excel in specific courses or even display a desired quality. Funds given from the foundation come from "independent donors, [Valley] alumni, and the campus community." While individual deadlines vary, most scholarships close on March 21.

Many students are eligible for a scholarship given the unique qualifications. The Moxie Scholarship awards a non-traditional or returning student who displays determination while studying at Valley. The freshman scholarship benefits first-year students. There is even the Second, Third, Fourth chance scholarship, which awards a student who was previously incarcerated.

Some individual scholarships reward Monarchs for excelling in a specific course, such as the Accounting, Anatomy or Business Administration scholarships. To qualify, students must complete the listed course. These differ from the awards given to students who excel in a course, which will only award a student who received an A in the course.

To apply, students must log in to their student portal and click on the "Scholarship" tile. Those who have any questions are urged to visit the Foundation Office in ACA in room 2201. Remote students can call the office at (818) 947-2619.

- CASSANDRA NAVA  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF



# Avery Pohl: The resident mean girl of “General Hospital”

Second year student Avery Pohl pursues her business degree while working as a full-time actress on ABC’s daytime soap opera “General Hospital.”

NATALIE METCALF  
STAFF WRITER

Avery Pohl’s arms are crossed and her piercing blue eyes narrow into a camera everyday, as she balances being a full-time actress and part-time student at Valley College.

**“I’ve sat in the make-up chair doing school before. I’ve been in Zoom lectures, reading lines.”**  
*- Avery Pohl, business major*

The 20-year-old actress attends Valley as a business major, while also filming and starring on ABC’s daytime soap opera “General Hospital.”

Since the summer of 2021, Pohl has filmed 61 episodes of the long-standing soap opera as “Esme Prince.” The business major manages her time between a rigorous filming schedule and taking business law and sociology of human sexualities. “I’ve sat in the make-up chair doing school before. I’ve been in Zoom lectures, [while] reading lines,” said Pohl, in reference to finishing school work while on set. With “General Hospital” being on television since 1963, the actress says working on a show that has aired for 59 years is unlike other set experiences. Cast and crew members are closer, as they have worked on the show for most of their life. The daytime soap opera produces a new episode every night, requiring an abundance of filming and long hours. Last week, Pohl filmed 10 episodes, which she didn’t even know was possible.

“We shoot 100 [or more] pages everyday,” said Pohl. Whereas shows that stream on Netflix, HBO Max, and Disney+ only shoot 10 to 12 pages a day. “A soap opera is a very different filming environment from [other] film and television just because of the sheer quantity of work that we have to get done.” Pohl has learned to “put in her work” before she goes to set. The part-time student admits there are some challenging days when balancing school and acting full-time. “I think it’s just all about time management,” said Pohl. “I have a pretty sporadic schedule. Sometimes you work those 14 hour days, go home, and take some quizzes.” The actress was a full-time student at Valley, before booking the role of Esme Prince. After being cast, she decided to take her time receiving her associates degree. Pohl’s

favorite class is her sociology course, because she enjoys viewing topics from a societal point of view. With her business degree, the actress would eventually like to start a nonprofit. Growing up as a child model, Pohl acted in her first commercial when she was five years old. Then at eight-years-old, the actress booked her first film called “Sound of My Voice” (2011). After only working on the set for two days, she knew that acting was something she wanted to pursue. Pohl sent in a self tape when she first auditioned for “General Hospital.” A couple weeks later, the part-time student received a callback and was cast in the role less than 24 hours later. Before going in to shoot, she only received a one line description of her character. “I just sort of took the scripts I was given and tried to do my best with them,” said Pohl. “I

work with an [acting] coach named Holly and she was super helpful in helping me build the character from the ground up.”



VALLEY STAR | JEREMY RUIZ  
POHL - Avery Pohl, second-year business major at Valley, stars in “General Hospital.”

As the actress familiarized herself with her character, she was able to decipher who Esme was. Pohl recently received backstory on her character. The young actress was glad that she “filled in the blanks” for Esme and presented continuity to the role she has been working on for eight months. Pohl’s character succeeds in bringing teen audiences to the soap opera, as well as making plots more dramatic by having a talent for trouble. In recent episodes, Esme finds herself in a love triangle with Spencer Cassadine (Nicholas Chavez) and Trina Robinson (Sydney Mikayla). “Esme’s a handful, she is very charming at first and then you sort of realize that she’s maybe not super stable,” said the soap opera star. “She has a lot of tendencies to stir the pot and make sure that everyone is kept on their toes.”

# Short in stature but giant in heart, Cyrano is a big-screen beau-

Joe Wright’s 2022 re-telling of the classic 18th-century true story expands the tale’s grandeur but falls in its musical polish.

MATTHEW ROYER  
NEWS EDITOR

Opting for dwarfism instead of the classic engorged facial features, Cyrano de Bergerac and viewers have to wrestle with a bigger challenge than just “becoming handsome.” “Cyrano” (2022), directed by period-piece master Joe Wright, best known for 2007’s “Pride and Prejudice,” tackles a new look at an overtold epic. Adapted from the 2018 stage musical, Cyrano (Peter Dinklage) is a talented French military man born with dwarfism. The titular character has taken up many talents those around him would not expect from a man of his size. Whether it is his skills as a duelist or his way with words as a poet, Cyrano can hold his own with almost anyone, but his most colossal battle is one of love. Enter Roxanne (Haley Bennett), a beautiful woman who has been courted by De Guiche (Ben Mendohlsn), the local Duke. While Cyrano has pined over his friend Roxanne



PHOTO COURTESY OF MGM STUDIOS  
CYRANO - Peter Dinklage (middle) and Kelvin Harrison Jr. (right) star in 2021’s Academy Award nominated “Cyrano.”

for years, he has given himself an oath “to love her from afar,” however, this comes to a halt when Roxanne falls for Christian de Neuvillette (Kelvin Harrison Jr.), a guard in his regiment. With Cyrano’s help, Christian uses his leader’s poetry to woo Roxanne, but instead of drifting away, this only brings Cyrano closer to Roxanne. While every frame of the film

comes across as a well-thought-out painting, the real star of the experience is the emotion and strength in the acting. Reprising their roles from the off-broadway stage musical, Dinklage and Bennett have tremendous chemistry as the two leads. The former in particular embraces the role of the man who makes up for his size with his words, doing the best he can with the

material, commanding every scene crafted by screenwriter Erica Schmidt. Supporting lead Harrison Jr. allows the film to find its rhythm, especially once the ‘musical’ finds its place. The love triangle only represented by Cyrano’s thoughts can still be understood through the actors’ undertones. ‘Reading between the lines,’ while a played-out concept, can be done through the mannerisms and temper portrayed throughout. While being nominated for two Golden Globes — “Best Motion Picture - Musical or Comedy” and “Best Actor in a Motion Picture - Musical or Comedy” — the only category the film is nominated for at the Academy Awards is costume design. Costume designers Massimo Cantini Parrini and Jacqueline Durran help dress every character to match a specific time and feeling depending on the scene. With scenes shot in locations such as a grand theater or even the battles of the Thirty Years’ War between France and Spain, every outfit matches its set

brilliantly, even taking creative liberties by adding more pizzazz to details shown on screen.

**Beautiful but not perfect, “Cyrano” should be seen for its acting and to help frame yet another opinion of this polarizing film.**

While some filmgoers may be seeing the movie for the music or its acting, a musical is nothing without its choreography. In most musicals, dance or movement can only be seen within the film’s musical numbers. Joe Wright instead features a free-flowing, almost interpretive dance number throughout all three acts of the film. Each line or song can be matched up alongside a change of pace or movement that not only looks beautiful but advances the plot alongside it.

While music should be the star of “Cyrano,” it is almost the complete opposite. Using preestablished lyrics from the stage musical, the composition and score crafted by Grammy-nominated twin brothers Aaron Dessner and Bryce Dessner, members of rock band The National, can feel somewhat unpolished and leave viewers feeling they have missed a piece of the puzzle. While this is the coarse style of The National and their music, it may not be perfect for a movie-musical. This can be felt especially in the score’s repetition; however, this does help create a sense of unease in the most critical moments of the plot. Beautiful but not perfect, “Cyrano” should be seen for its acting and to help frame yet another opinion of this polarizing film.

VALLEY’S STARS

★★★★☆☆

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# Online classes not viable alternative to face-to-face instruction

As Valley College gins up its online curriculum in order to meet student demand, the college’s standard of education is in jeopardy.

ISAAC DEKTOR  
MANAGING EDITOR

There are two ways a college professor can run synchronous online courses meeting via zoom: lecture throughout the duration of the class only stopping for questions, or tolerate the inevitable challenges that arise in the virtual classroom. Student demand is driving up Valley College's online courses at the expense of the traditional community-college experience due to technological obstacles. Online classes increased by over 40 percent over the last two years. While the transition to remote education was understandable to meet students' needs at the start of the pandemic, the trend continues - online classes dominate the curriculum as classrooms remain deserted. While this trend is understandable to meet student needs, it is a short term solution that will cause a long term problem — decline in the quality of education. This decline is caused by technological obstacles that eat away at valuable class time while decreasing accessibility for individuals who are not technologically savvy. Not everyone is good with computers. Technological fluency is natural for those who grew up with the ability to Google anything and get an answer. All a young person needs to find out the capital of Ukraine is a smartphone and Wi-Fi, but ask one to find the American People's Encyclopedia using

the dewey decimal system and they will likely be at a loss. The internet's complete integration into daily life has been a rapid process. On average, baby boomers and older Generation X individuals have a much harder time navigating their way through cyberspace, much like a younger person would probably get lost in a library's bookshelves. Many students and professors find themselves at a disadvantage when behind a computer screen — what is so natural for people who grew up using computers and smartphones can be a complete headache for those who are learning the new medium on the go. The technological barrier can even rise to the level of discrimination in some cases when inaccessible computer programs could violate the Americans With Disabilities Act. In fact, a group of blind students won a case against the district and an appeal in federal court last year claiming, among other things, that “computer applications were not accessible to them because they did not function properly with screen-reading software,” according to Disability Rights California. There are hundred of synchronous courses listed in Valley's spring 2022 calendar. There is an inevitable delay when a professor asks for student participation in an online class that would not happen in person. Most students mute their microphones as a professor is talking, and when called on, take a few extra moments to move their

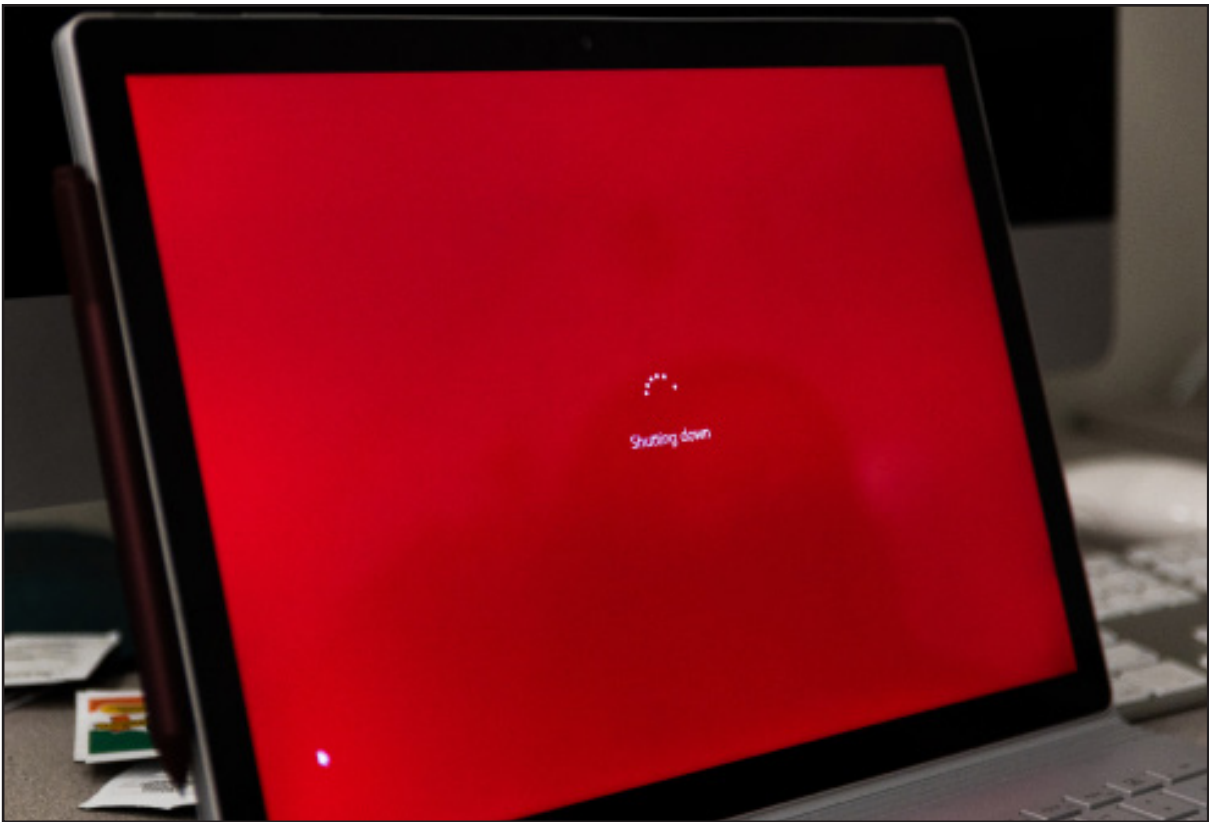


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION | JEREMY RUIZ

OFFLINE - Valley must revert to a primarily in-person community college to deliver quality education.

cursor to the unmute button. This tiny delay, when multiplied across Valley's entire internet curriculum, is astronomical. Many professors do not require students to turn on their cameras. Without knowing if a student is present, it is common for a professor to waste time by calling on someone that is either absent or preoccupied, which is typical due to the passive nature of remote learning. This is no one's fault. Online is just not an adequate substitute for the physical classroom if it means attending classes from home. Susan Singer, who resigned last year after teaching at Valley for 35 years, told the Star that she would still be teaching if the pandemic had not happened. “I loved teaching, interacting with the students and making a difference in their lives,” said

Singer. “Converting to online instruction changed all of that for me. It became very impersonal.” In some circumstances an online class may suffice in lieu of face-to-face, many courses are elevated through student participation, something that is hobbled by the challenges of teaching to Zoom tiles. Additionally, the inaccessibility of technology for many students can lead to discrimination.

# Joe Biden, keep your promise, keep our troops home

With war underway in Eastern Europe, the United States should support its allies while keeping the country’s men and women safe.

MATTHEW ROYER  
NEWS EDITOR

It is too late to prevent war from erupting between Russia and Ukraine. However, President Joe Biden needs to keep his promise and minimize American lives that would be lost if the country decides to join the war. Vladimir Putin, Russian president, signed a decree on Monday granting independence to the eastern separatist regions of Ukraine according to Politico, confirming an invasion of the nation. With the strongman later sending troops in and launching strikes in an attempt to siege Ukraine's major cities, including the capital of Kyiv, this action not only showed Putin's true intentions but struck a nerve through the geopolitical landscape. European figureheads such as French President Emanuel Macron, who met with the Russian leader multiple times earlier that week, readjusted his initiatives for European peace following Putin's imperial actions. Meanwhile, in the United States sat Biden, who brought an end to American involvement in the War of Afghanistan last year, appearing to do everything in his power to keep American troops out of the emerging conflict just north of the Balkans. “Our forces are not and will not be engaged in a conflict with Russia in Ukraine,” said the commander-in-chief on Thursday.



GRAPHIC ILLUSTRATION | MATTHEW ROYER

PEACE - Joe Biden must keep his promise and keep American troops at home amid tensions in Europe.

“Our forces are not going to Europe to fight in Ukraine, but to defend our NATO allies and reassure those allies in the East.” The United States has an opportunity to prevent Russian imperialism from reclaiming its former soviet territory without a single American troop stepping foot in Ukraine - through the use of sanctions. An example of this is Germany halting progress on the Nord Stream 2 pipeline after being pressured by NATO and the United States to do so, which will hit Russia where it hurts, its economy. According to the LA Times, the U.S. has decided not to further sanction Russia on its

oil due to a worry for rising gas prices and oil scarcity in Europe; however, Biden announced economic sanctions aimed at oligarchs close to Putin on Friday. Soldiers in the American military come from various backgrounds. Of course, many Americans choose to enlist en masse after high school, seeking either a sense of pride in defending their country or a chance at a better life. Seen even on the campus of Valley College, recruiters promote the military to students as they spread the word of free education and career that can come with their enlistment. But unfortunately, a better life is not a guarantee, as what comes

with enlistment is the risk of going to war for the country. If Americans are inserted into the conflict, part of the risk is PTSD. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, military members who fought in recent campaigns such as Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom have an 11 to 20 percent chance of having PTSD-related incidents in a given year. While there are only so many sanctions and offerings of strategic support that can be made, the youngest militarily eligible Americans today have only known a country of war.

Born shortly before or after the events of 9/11, these citizens have seen their country at war for their entire lives. Biden has the opportunity to not fall into the same trap that so many before him have stepped into. Even if hope seems lost, the United States needs to find any possible diplomatic solution and focus on working with European allies and others across the globe to secure stability between Russia and its neighbors. Biden has to carry out every option before American lives are put in danger. Even then, if it does get to that point, American involvement could escalate the conflict into a war more akin to World War III than a military squabble in Eastern Europe.

## 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.

## VALLEY VIEW | DO YOU THINK AMERICA IS DOING ENOUGH IN THE WAR IN UKRAINE? TEXT BY NATALIE METCALF PHOTOS BY JOSE CALLEJAS



“A clear way for America to do something about the war in Ukraine is to be collaborative in terms of going alongside the United Nations. The United States should not partake in this alone. That would cause even more harm than it should.”

- DIEGO SANCHEZ, FRESHMAN RESPIRATORY THERAPY



“We're aiding in a way that won't hurt us and we're aiding in a way that won't get us too involved to where Putin puts it on us and we have to go to war. All things considered I think the US is doing what they can at the moment.”

- ANGEL RODRIGUEZ FRESHMAN NURSING



“In my view no. I think America could be doing better negotiating and helping Ukraine, making a peace treaty with Russia.”

- JACOB GOMEZ FRESHMAN NURSING



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## GOT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

Letters to the editor can be submitted online at [www.thevalleystarnews.com](http://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.





Valley Star | Ava Rosate

HVAC technicians work on the Student Union Skybox ventilation and air conditioning systems at 2 a.m. on Friday. The technicians have been upkeeping the vents in each building since the Fall semester.



Valley Star | Ava Rosate

Tucked away in the newly renovated Allied Health and Sciences building, a taxidermy display sits behind a brightly lit window. The encased fauna include sea turtles, predatory birds and big cats.



Valley Star | Ava Rosate

The theatre departments stage in use sign stays lit after campus hours have come to a close.



Valley Star | Ava Rosate

Sheriff cars are seen patrolling the perimeters of the campus in the early hours of Monday.



Valley Star | Ava Rosate

The coyotes that frequent the campus are known to dart around the school and approach students and staff. They appear at sundown and travel together, making their way from the Metro Station on Burbank to the vacant lot adjacent to the Business Journalism building.



Valley Star | Griffin O'Rourke

As night falls on Valley College, a tabby cat hides behind a tree outside of the Business Journalism building.

# Campus after dark

Ava Rosate  
Photo Editor

When the final lectures come to an end, students leave the classrooms while vehicles flee the parking lot. With the abrupt desertion an unfamiliar eeriness sets upon Valley College. The crisp air that layers the campus flows through the empty walkways - a stark contrast to the

usual bustle of Valley life. Common occupants that roam the campus after hours are wildlife, construction men, sheriffs, and the occasional transient. Piercing sounds of sirens and the occasional coyote howl break the silence of the desolate campus.



Valley Star | Ava Rosate

A bench sits beneath the illumination offered by a lamp post near the Campus Center.



The Monarchs defeat the Brahmas 7-3 as their offense comes alive

Freshman left fielder Dorian Asher provided three runs for Valley, helping prevent a three-game losing streak.

NICHOLAS OROZCO  
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

The Monarchs’ offense awoke in a San Fernando Valley showdown against the Brahmas, scoring early and often.

Following two losses on Thursday and Friday, Valley College baseball (9-5) returned to the win column on Saturday morning, defeating Pierce College 7-3. Consistency returned on offense, with 12 hits and seven runs lifting the Monarchs to victory. Freshman left fielder Dorian Asher finished the game hitting 2-4 with a home run and three RBIs – carrying Valley with his bat.

“It feels amazing,” said Asher about his performance at the plate. “It’s a huge confidence boost for sure, just gotta have [good at-bats] and carry it over through next week.”

At Monarch Field, a moment of silence was held before the game honoring the late Jim Fenwick. Fenwick coached football for both Valley and Pierce, as well as becoming Monarchs’ athletic director late in his career. He passed away earlier this month at the age of 69.

After recognizing the Valley legend and his impact on the community, the game began.

The Monarchs jumped to a substantial lead in the bottom of the third and gave a run-cushion for Valley’s pitchers to work with.

Freshman shortstop Maddox Latta hit an RBI single into left field, scoring freshman first baseman Tyler Olivas from third to place the first run on the board. Freshman pitcher/designated hitter Joshua Wood continued the rally, hitting a single



VALLEY STAR | GRIFFIN O’ROURKE

CELEBRATE (ABOVE) - Valley College players Manolo Tafolla (left) and Joshua Wood (right) congratulate freshman left fielder Dorian Asher (center) after he hit a three-run home run against Pierce College on Saturday.



LAUNCHED (BELOW) - Monarchs' left fielder Dorian Asher follows through on a swing, resulting in a three run-home run against Pierce College on Saturday. Asher's home run gave Valley College a 6-0 lead in the bottom of the fifth.

and advancing to second off of an error by the Brahmas’ left fielder.

With runners in scoring position, freshman third baseman Lee Brandzel hit a ground ball single through the left side, scoring Latta to increase the advantage to two.

Freshman second baseman Manolo Tafolla finished the scoring, with a line drive single into right field, scoring Wood

and allowing the Monarchs to enter the fourth with a 3-0 lead.

In the bottom of the fifth, Asher tallied on, hitting a two-run home run, his first of the season. The moonshot

brought Wood home after he reached on an infield single.

The Monarchs scored again in the bottom of the sixth. Asher hit a single through the left side, scoring Latta from third,

expanding Valley’s lead to six.

Freshman center fielder Jackson Lapiner hit a stand up triple in the bottom of the seventh, scoring freshman right fielder Yeonwon Jeong who reached two at-bats earlier after being hit by a pitch.

Wood combined with freshman pitcher Andrew Howe to throw six scoreless innings and set up the Monarchs comfortably heading into the final frames.

“Coming into today, we were 0-2 [this week],” said coach Dave Mallas. “We wanted a big, strong outing from our starting pitcher [Joshua] Wood. It was his first start of the season and he was able to do well... Our pitchers are our strength and [Andrew] Howe has not had a bad performance yet.”

The Brahmas were able to cut into Valley’s lead with a three-spot in the top of the eighth. A solo home run from Pierce’s utility player Brent Swearingen and a two-RBI single off the bat of Pierce’s first baseman Mitch Kurtz cut the deficit to four.

However, their scoring was for naught as Lapiner took the mound and shut down the Brahmas in the top of the ninth, giving the Monarchs their ninth win.

NEXT GAMES

- March 3 vs Irvine Valley
- March 8 vs Canyons
- March 10 @ Canyons
- March 12 vs Canyons

Valley remains scoreless in doubleheader against San Diego Mesa

Leaving multiple runners in scoring position, the Monarchs were unable to go the distance and wound up losing 7-0 and 5-0, respectively.

EDWARD SEGAL  
VALLEY LIFE EDITOR

Going scoreless through 13 innings, the Monarchs showcased their inconsistency as they dropped both legs of the doubleheader against the Olympians.

Valley College softball (2-11) lost twice by a cumulative score of 12-0 on Friday, displaying their empty offense and struggles on defense. Besides the home runs, most of the scoring by San Diego Mesa College (6-6-1) was unearned. The Monarchs had five errors and eight wild pitches total through both matches.

“Be aggressive, be smart, be agile, be athletic,” assistant coach Brianna Velasquez told the team after the game. “We’re here every night for you. You have no excuses.”

San Diego Mesa struck quickly, hitting a single on their first at-bat and watching the runner advance to second on a wild pitch. Two sacrifice

bunts later, the Olympians brought the runner home.

Three singles loaded the bases with two outs as the Olympians looked to take a commanding lead, but a groundout saved the Monarchs from that fate.

In the top of the second, two singles for San Diego Mesa and two more wild pitches on Valley’s end, allowed the Olympians to bring home another run, pushing the Monarchs in a hole they have struggled to dig out of all season. This was amplified when Olympians’ infielder Ambria Guye hit a two-run home run in the fourth to make the score 4-0.

Valley had three opportunities to decrease the Olympians’ lead throughout the first four frames thanks to wild pitches putting the Monarchs in scoring position, but failed to string together hits to drive in runs.

More Monarchs’ mistakes led to the deficit growing to seven as the mercy rule came into effect, ending

game one after six frames.

“Our defense has to be more engaged,” said assistant coach Andrea Contreras. “We have to get less errors and more hits.”

The second game started in similar fashion as wild pitches led to Olympian runners stealing bases. This led to another two-run home run past the left field wall by reigning Pacific Coast Conference athlete of the week catcher/infielder Carissa Topolinski.

In the bottom of the second, freshman pitcher Jessica Lopez gave the Monarchs life with a double to the centerfield wall. She advanced to third on a sacrifice bunt from sophomore centerfielder Elizabeth Flores, but the Olympians again put the Monarchs away before she could score.

Freshman shortstop Tña Carbajal made it to third after hitting a double and proceeding on a sacrifice bunt, but the Olympians grabbed two

more outs to end the inning.

The Monarchs played all seven innings in game two, but lost 5-0 after several failed opportunities with runners in scoring position.

To add injury to insult, sophomore outfielder Elizabeth Flores went down in pain after sliding into an Olympian infielder when she attempted to advance to third. The outfielder will be evaluated on a day-to-day basis as she joins the injury list with shortstop Caitlyn Pineda, who suffered a pulled hamstring against Rio Hondo College.

“You win together, you lose together,” said coach Greg Venger. “We’re really just trying to get prepared for the conference, and we have another two weeks to do that.”

On March 3, the Monarchs will travel to Allan Hancock College, looking to prevent their second loss to the Bulldogs of 2022.



TOSS - Monarchs' pitcher Isabel Ward came in as reliever during their game against San Diego Mesa College on Friday.



BAT (LEFT) - Monarchs' catcher Isabel Flores hits during their game against San Diego Mesa College on Friday.

GAMEPLAN (RIGHT) - Valley College's infield regrouped between batters during their game against San Diego Mesa College on Friday.