

HASSOUN IS MORE THAN JUST KIM K

by Liat Rubin
Editor-in-Chief

Senior **Ronda Hassoun** is fierce in every meaning of the word. She presents herself with commanding confidence and a killer smile. A dynamic mixture of pursuits, passions, and opinions, Hassoun is like no one else.

Hassoun has always lived a very colorful life with a vibrant culture. As a daughter of Syrian parents, she has experienced rich Arabic culture and has grown to love all it has contributed to in her life. It is because of her Syrian heritage that Hassoun claims dancing as one of her greatest passions. Dancing is a large part of Syrian culture, and Hassoun has gained experience performing classic Arabic dances at parties and family events. Her passion for dancing has extended to all genres of music, including her favorite, hip hop. To articulate dancing's appeal, Hassoun answered simply: "No matter what mood I am in, dancing makes me happy." She added that "dancing is a way for me to express my love for music," another passion in Hassoun's life.

As a music enthusiast, Hassoun is notorious for blasting Nicki Minaj in her car as she rolls out of the senior lot in style. Although her main genres of interest are hip hop/rap and R&B, she is knowledgeable of most genres. Hassoun's sister, LGHS alumna **Zena Hassoun**, introduced her to much of her music. Among her early musical interests were Usher's Confessions Part Two and anything by T-Pain or Destiny's Child. She also loved "Chris Breezy" (Chris Brown), but only pre-Rihanna.

Her current idols are musical powerhouses Nicki Minaj and Beyoncé. One of Hassoun's favorite things about both women is how "powerful" they are: "They just say 'I'm gonna do me!' and don't care what anyone thinks. I try to do the same." When asked about her favorite Minaj songs, Hassoun credited "Want Some More" as her favorite song to rap, but "All Things Go for when 'things get real.'" When asked about her favorite Beyoncé songs, Hassoun responded that sometimes she is in a "Partition mood," and sometimes, if she's driving on a rainy day and feeling a little sentimental, she will listen to Yoncé classic, "If I Were a Boy."

Beyond its cultural influences, Hassoun's Syrian heritage has shaped her identity as a political activist and volunteer. Hassoun and her family used to travel to Syria every summer, where she would cherish her time with family and friends. After the Arab Spring in 2011, her parents deemed the journey



courtesy R. Hassoun

too dangerous. More and more summer trips were missed and Hassoun came to realize that things would never be the same. She has struggled with the reality of having the country she loves become almost unrecognizable and completely unreachable: "The Syria I knew is gone, I don't know if I'll ever be able to go back to it and that's really difficult for me."

Hassoun found herself feeling frustrated with her comfortable and safe lifestyle, so horribly juxtaposed to the pain experienced by those in the country she once knew so well. She said, "There was no difference between me and the people suffering. It's just not fair that I am so privileged that I don't have to experience any of that; they just don't deserve it."

Last summer, when her mother was invited to a Syrian-American Medical Society conference in Turkey, Hassoun finally got a chance to make a tangible impact on those in need. She and her sister joined their mother at the conference and contributed to its social service initiative. They spent two weeks tending to refugee orphans in a small camp near the border between Turkey and Syria and gained first-hand experience with the harsh realities of extreme political turmoil.

Her experience helped Hassoun realize that all she wants to do with her life is "be there for those kids." After observing the trauma-stricken children's need for therapists, Hassoun became interested in studying psychology in college. No matter what profession she decides to pursue, Hassoun said, "I just want to help people."

When she isn't dancing to some classic Yoncé or volunteering with Syrian refugees, Hassoun is being mistaken for Kim Kardashian, social media icon and reality show star. Hassoun has recently come to the conclusion that although she does like Kim's style and agrees that the resemblance is uncanny, she doesn't think the two are equal in terms of intelligence. Hassoun elaborated by giving a signature hairflip and saying, "I'm more than a pretty face." Although Kardashian is not her idol, Hassoun does respect her for her confidence.

Only Hassoun, with her dynamic personality, makes an article on dancing, Syrian refugees, and Kim Kardashian possible. She is smart, passionate, and indefinitely fabulous.

Zukin betrays Bell

by Dakota Rogers
Sports Editor

Junior **Jack Zukin** has been wielding his good looks and charm to adapt and prosper at his new school, LGHS. Zukin can be easily recognized by his trademark spiked hair. When asked about the secret behind his hair, Zukin revealed that he "uses hair gel once, and then doesn't shower."

Zukin transferred from Bellarmine during the second semester of this year and is enjoying the new atmosphere at Los Gatos. Zukin discussed his amazement at the drastic change in environment from private to public school when asked about his first day at LGHS, stating, "It was my first day at LG and this girl and guy were arguing, and the girl said 'If you don't leave me alone, I'll get my parole officer to come down on your a**'" Zukin's culture shock comes from the wildly different types of students at Los Gatos. Zukin specifically commented that, "the girls here are better looking than the ones at Bell."

Zukin complained about the differences among the quality of classrooms and school supplies at Los Gatos compared to Bellarmine. New desks, chairs and bathrooms made the sparkling clean Bellarmine campus seem perfect. However, this only encouraged some particularly vile vandalism. Many students at LG are familiar with the infamous poop phantom, but in fact the poop phantom's devastation was not limited to only Los Gatos High School. The poop phantom was also active at Bellarmine, Zukin stated, and this led to boys at school resorting to using the girls bathroom.

Outside of school Zukin is an active baseball player and an avid Yankees fan. Zukin played on the Bellarmine baseball team and is now a Wildcat player. Zukin is one of four POs, or pitchers only, on the team and consider his fellow POs as brothers. However, Zukin cannot play until April 6 due to CCS rules regarding

transfers. Regarding his career as a Yankees fan, Zukin stated, "Oh, I love the Yankees. I'm the ultimate bandwagon fan." Zukin is also a hard-working student and focused academic. At Bellarmine Zukin wrote for the school newspaper and will be joining the EL Gato staff next year. He also used to be apart of Model UN, in which students act as delegates from various countries and reenact UN discussions. He excelled at this and even was awarded best delegate at the Stanford conference.

Zukin is a new student at LG getting used to using the men's bathrooms (the women's bathrooms at Bell are preferred because they are cleaner). He is adapting well to LG and is thriving among his fellow students as he perseveres through junior year.



photos courtesy J. Zukin

Wolfgang has killer style

by Charlotte Pla
Humor Editor

With name like his, freshman **Wolfgang Schoenberger** has quite the standard to live up to. Easily overlooked, Schoenberger stands 5'2" and has yet to break triple digits with his weight. He is constantly reminded of his height by his friends, but doesn't let his size define what he does. Schoenberger joined the school's wrestling team and enjoys being top dog of his weight class. He describes having his hand raised at the end of a victorious wrestling match as "indescribable" and says that "it shows how well hard work ways off. Especially if I'm wrestling someone bigger than me." And yes, he has wrestled a girl before, and yes, he did win. "She had nine pounds on me too," recounts Schoenberger.

Upon first glance, Schoenberger impresses with his style. A likely outfit for Schoenberger to be found in would be dark jeans with a forest green sweater layered over a t-shirt, and on his feet, "fake Jordans." Schoenberger explained how he affords all of his designer clothing and shoes: he orders imitation, or replica, designer products. So the shoes he had been wearing were imitations of Nike Air Jordans that he had ordered from China. "My style is spoiled, rich white kid," says Schoenberger, and he pulls it off well. One of his favorite brands is Zara because "they have high quality products but good prices." Schoenberger reinvented his style when he got tired of wearing his P.E. clothes to school in middle school, "Yeah that was rock bottom. I figured I had to lose the bowl cut too."



courtesy W. Schoenberger

When Schoenberger isn't on the wrestling mat or shopping for replica clothing, he can be found knocking flies from their living cultures outside of Honors Biology. He manages to maintain an impressive grade in the difficult course all while balancing other academics, wrestling, and speech and debate. "Yes they make suits that fit me," says Schoenberger, referring to the required attire for speech and debate tournaments. He wasted no time getting involved his freshmen year and looks forward to AP opportunities his sophomore year.

Other interests of Schoenberger's include Pulp Fiction, Game of Thrones, spicy Thai curry, and Kanye West. He described Kanye West as an idol and innovator of our generation. But Kanye West's life isn't the only current event Schoenberger follows. "ISIS sucks, man," says Schoenberger when asked about his views on the international issues of today.

Schoenberger looks forward to his future high school career and keeping up with Kanye as he, hopefully, breaks those triple digits in weight and can officially stop hearing the "short jokes."

FOWLER SPREADS THE GOSPEL OF JAZZ

by Ruth Murai
Web Editor-in-Chief

Senior **Lewis Fowler** is not the type to demand attention. He sits in his classes quietly, observant and curious. He does not wear his heart upon his long-sleeved t-shirts, which are nearly always pushed up to his elbows, but instead his passion exists inside himself, escaping in the music of his saxophone.

Fowler began playing the saxophone five years ago, following in the footsteps of a friend. What began as a simple pastime quickly turned into a "serious thing." Fowler draws his inspiration from an array of saxophonists, but most recently he has been listening to Kenny Garrett and Phil Woods. A four-year member of the LGHS Marching Band and Jazz Band, Fowler now hopes to continue his musical passion in college, where he plans to major in jazz studies. Fowler aspires to "end up with a professorship at a college or a university. That's the end goal. I want to share the love." Fowler also has an interest in playing the saxophone professionally but says, "That's hard, you know. I'd probably end up poor and homeless."

Besides the saxophone, Fowler also plays the clarinet, piano, and most recently the flute. His clarinet has the distinction of being his only instrument with a name, affectionately and creatively dubbed, "Clary."

Fowler's band career at LGHS recently came to a close as the marching band season ended. Although he admitted that no tears were shed as the season

finished, Fowler said, "I liked being able to do a sport in a community." Although some would argue differently, Fowler is an intense advocate of supporting marching band's status as an athletic activity; he says, "We put in just as many hours, if not more. We put in just as much work. It's outside. It's a sport."

Although much of his passion is invested in his music, Fowler's other joy in life is food. When asked what his favorite food is, Fowler simply replied, "I just love food." In summation of his two main passions in life, Fowler says that if he could bring three things to a desert island that would be, "a piano, my saxophone, and a burrito shop would be nice."

Fowler is a man of simple pleasures. He loves his Netflix (specifically House of Cards), his La Vic's orange sauce, and of course his saxophone. If it seems like Fowler lacks outward emotion, all you have to do is hear him play. "I'm not very expressive, but I need some way to show passion. [Playing saxophone] is very expressive." Senior **Shannon Jimenez** says of her close friend, "Lewis is a goofy, sweet, adventurous, hilarious weirdo once he comes out of his shell. Anyone who doesn't know Lewis well is really missing out."

With an eighth-grade sister on her way to high school as Fowler is on his way out, Fowler has much to reflect upon in offering advice for conquering LGHS. His first piece of advice to incoming freshmen is "stop being annoying," but beyond that, Fowler says, "cherish your time. Four years seems like a



courtesy L. Fowler