

## LGHS students should show more respect to their custodial staff

by Hyuntae Byun  
Editor-in Chief

There are many things that LGHS students take for granted: the monthly publication of this newspaper, Mr. Hughes' constantly beaming face and bright personality, and the field hockey team's propensity to emerge victorious against any school to name just a few. Among all of the aspects of the school that students take for granted, however, arguably the most overlooked is the custodial and maintenance staff. This is ironic, given that the maintenance crew serves a vital and fundamental function by ensuring that students have a clean learning environment.

The fact that the contributions of the maintenance crew are so frequently ignored by students is reflective of a general lack of understanding about the magnitude and scope of the crew's responsibilities. In addition to tending to classrooms and restrooms, the crew facilitates special school events by aiding in setup and cleanup functions. To a large extent, the success of student activities is predicated upon the crew's labors.

Given that the student body of LGHS borders the two thousand mark and that the campus consists of dozens of classrooms, the fact that a small team of eight full-time employees and one part-time employee effectively fulfills the school's afterschool caretaking needs is in itself astonishing. That this team does so while also balancing daily work orders and receiving minimal recognition from students is admirable.

It's easy to disregard the fact that every day from 4 pm to midnight, this evening team is hard at work cleaning and setting up for the next day. From 5:30 am, a different morning shift comes to school a full two and a half hours before classes officially begin in order to ensure that the school is ready for students and to address any problems that arise during the normal school cycle. For this reason, students should make a more conscious effort to acknowledge and appreciate the significant role that the maintenance staff plays in running the school.

Furthermore, students should refrain from participating in activities that impose a greater burden on the custodial staff.

For some, this may seem like a contradiction. After all, the crew is here for the purposes of cleaning up after us, isn't it? By leaving behind messes, we are effectively justifying their

employment, aren't we?

Ignoring the self-centered nature of this mindset, there are logical reasons why students should be more careful to clean up after themselves whenever possible. **Ricardo Alas**, the current lead evening custodian and an LGHS employee of 19 years, states that it is important to recognize that "the maintenance staff does not just clean up. I know that nobody notices this, but we spend a lot of time doing setups. I would say that sometimes we spend practically 60 percent of our time doing setups. It would be nice if students did not rely on the knowledge that we will always be there to clean up for them. Really, it's true that the administration pays us to clean,

to spend an exorbitant amount of time resolving unprecedented problems, it detracts from its resources, which could be allocated towards supporting other student activities. The maintenance staff plays a role in nearly every aspect of student life; as Alas notes, "When you see football games, we are in charge of all of the set up for them. When it's basketball, it's the same. We have to set up so that when everyone - the students, the coaches - shows up, everything is ready."

As such, students are often the victims of their own disruption.



S. Sullivan

but they have to know that our job is not just to come clean up the bathrooms and classrooms. They have to know that our jobs also include setting up for events. If students were conscious about this, it would make our jobs easier."

In short, whenever the custodial team has

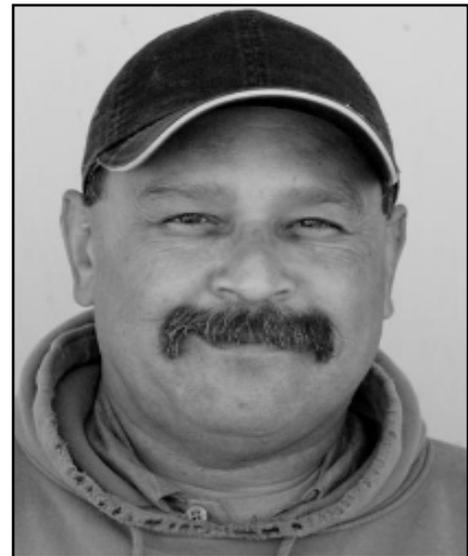
active activities. The custodial staff is the group that has to clean up graffiti or general vandalism, and when it has to redirect manpower and time to do so, it diminishes its ability to provide services for other students.

Furthermore, for the past few years the school population has expanded rapidly, whereas the custodial staff has not grown to keep up. Alas gives his insight, saying that "The way this school is growing,

the amount of work is growing. You know, I have a philosophy about this. Most students have families - younger brothers, younger sisters. I would think that if I had a younger brother or a younger sister, I would want to take care of the school because I would want it to be preserved for my younger sibling and I would not wreck the school. Sometimes I see kids kicking the wall and making holes in the wall, and I always think that if I had siblings, I would not want to cause damage because doing so would also be damaging for my legacy."

Alas is proud of the fact that he is part of the custodial staff. When asked to make a distinction between janitors and custodians, he responded that "a janitor is a person who takes care of small things. A custodian is a person who takes care of larger things." Indeed, the custodians are such an integral aspect of the school that it is difficult to imagine an LGHS without them. Conversely, it is easy to forget that they are even here.

Custodialism, if performed correctly, tends to blend into the background and only gets brought into the spotlight when flaws arise. At its best, it is seamless and goes more or less unnoticed. Nevertheless, it is time for students to recognize the central role that the LGHS custodial staff plays in the school. Students should show respect by picking up after themselves whenever possible and by acknowledging the custodians and thanking them personally.



CUSTODIANS: John Guerra is the head of maintenance.

## DECEMBER 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 Freshman Guided Conversation Spring Musical Auditions 2:30 PM (Theater)	3 Spring Musical Auditions 2:30 PM (Theater) College Information Night 7 PM (LGHS)	4 Spring Musical Callbacks 2:30 PM (Theater)	5
6 Hanukkah Begins	7	8 Wildcat Shootout (Large Gym) Winter Choral Concert 6 PM (Theater)	9 Wildcat Shootout (Large Gym)	10 Wildcat Shootout (Large Gym) Winter Instrumental Concert 6 PM (Theater)	11 Wildcat Shootout (Large Gym)	12
13	14 Hanukkah Ends	15 1st Semester Finals Periods 1, 3, 7	16 1st Semester Finals Periods 2, 4	17 1st Semester Finals Periods 5, 6	18 Staff Work Day (No Classes)	19
20	21 December Break	22 December Break	23 December Break	24 December Break	25 December Break	26 December Break
27 December Break	28 December Break	29 December Break	30 December Break	31 December Break		

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