



Photo courtesy of Jennifer Hemann

SAVE Act Poses Potential Changes to Future US Elections

BY PENELOPE COX

On February 11, 2026, the House of Representatives passed the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility Act (SAVE America Act), a focus of Donald Trump's second presidency. According to "Bipartisan Policy Center," the SAVE America Act "requires voters to provide documentary proof of citizenship at the time of registration and a photo ID at the time of voting."

The Trump administration seeks to ensure only American citizens vote in U.S. elections. The White House emphasized that the U.S. "lags behind other nations in enforcing basic and necessary election protections" ("The White House").

It is illegal for non-citizens to vote in U.S. elections, a regulation not contentious among Democrats and Republicans. However, according to "The Hill," most Democrats are against the SAVE America Act.

"The Hill" reported that multiple versions of the Act reached the Senate "but have failed to entice enough Democrats to overcome the 60-vote threshold for ending a filibuster." "Bipartisan Policy Center" stated that Democrats believe there are "easier, more cost-effective ways to improve citizenship verification that don't create new barriers for eligible voters."

According to Vote.org, the SAVE America Act's requirements would affect registered voters who have changed their legal name or moved without obtaining updated documentation. In fact, "Bipartisan Policy Center" reported around 12% of eligible voters lack [CONT. ON PG 2]

2026-2027 School Year Comes With New Expectations

BY MERRITT FELDNER

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year! Although you may be wearing the same plaid, there have been some notable changes in the Upper School.

The uniform has experienced several updates as sweatpants, slippers, flip flops and crocs are no longer allowed. Upper School Dean of Students Rachel Lowenthal noted that the changes "standardize the look of the uniform... especially given the fact that we are off campus a lot" and the school hosts many visitors and events.

Last year, the Representative Assembly (RA) introduced these differences to the student body during the first ever Uniform Fashion Show. Although beloved aspects of the uniform were missing, students promoted other variations, like the navy skirt and white polo combination. Lowenthal also

offered alternatives to sweatpants including "navy chinos, twill pants, corduroys and many more...that are more stretchy and comfortable."

RA member Lauren Hemann '27 stated that she was "surprised to hear about the no sweatpants rule" but is "excited to see the student body look more unified."

Harper Lanpher '28 expressed disappointment over the change in uniform because "having no sweatpants in the winter removes an element of comfort and convenience for student athletes in particular," but she hopes to find alternative options that provide the same effect.

Additionally, this year the parking system has changed to feature designated senior, junior and faculty parking spots. Blue markings along the main lot now indicate senior spots while parking for juniors is located near the tennis courts and track. Expressing excitement about designated parking spots, Lanpher said the set-up

"gives juniors something to look forward to."

While the new parking system solves many prior issues, parking spaces continue to be limited. Assistant Head of Upper School Kate Mitchell said she "still is trying to get people to carpool!"

Finally, the advisory system has undergone a major redesign. Now, each advisor has a group of roughly seven students from one grade.

With the goal of strengthening advisory connections, this change leads advisors to mentor the same students for four years and allows for students to remain with the same peers throughout their upper school experience.

Paige Wollenhaupt '27 said, "I appreciate that advisory is now more personal, but I do miss having two advisors because there were more perspectives to seek advice from. But I love how close the group becomes when it is fewer people!"

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the documentation that the SAVE America Act requires.

According to “NBC News,” the SAVE America Act will not affect the November midterm elections because the Senate has not passed the Act in time. Government teacher Pat McCullough acknowledged, however, that “the Act itself is not the only method politicians are using to pursue these policies.” He urged students to “keep an

eye on budget reconciliation proposals, which can get around the 60-vote hurdle in the Senate, and executive actions that are already pursuing some of the same goals.”

McCullough added, “People have a lot of things going on in their lives and remembering the details of voter registration can be one of those things you put on the back burner until it’s time to show up at the polls.” Addi-

tionally, McCullough is “not sure it will benefit either party” despite President Trump’s belief that it will favor Republicans.

McCullough advised that students be aware of where their birth certificate is, but “more fundamentally, whatever the politicians tell us, let’s just try to get as many eligible voters out to the polls as possible, no matter what their party affiliation is.”

Upperclassmen Offer Guidance for the First Weeks

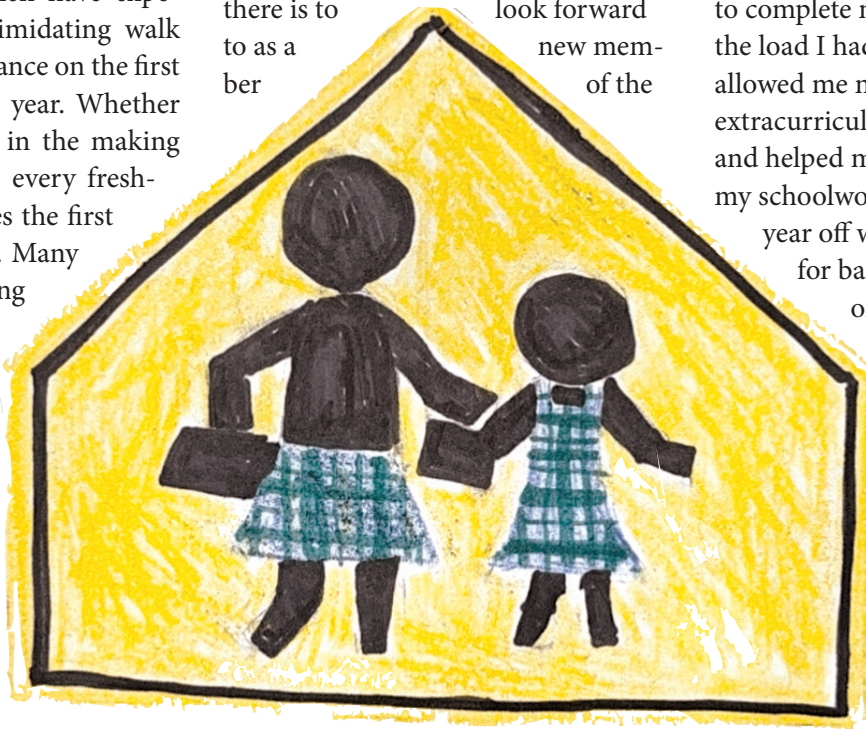
BY HARPER LANPHER

Most upperclassmen have experienced the intimidating walk through the main entrance on the first day of their freshman year. Whether they are 10-year-girls in the making or new to the school, every freshman encounters nerves the first few weeks on campus. Many worry about balancing activities, becoming overwhelmed or meeting new people. Luckily for them, the upperclassmen are here to help!

Taby Darge ’27 suggested, “Just approach the first week without stress because that will come later; just start relaxing and having fun!” Darge also shared, “As a freshman, it is your first time participating in upper school-specific traditions like Senior

Spirit Day, so get excited about that!”

It is important to remember all there is to look forward to as a new member of the



Upper School. Bridget Zimmermann ’28 gave advice on balancing various commit-

ments. She shared, “I [took] every chance I got during school hours to complete my work to help lessen the load I had to do at home. This allowed me more time to focus on extracurricular and social activities and helped me stay caught up with my schoolwork.” Starting the school year off with an effective system for balance becomes essential once the pace of the work picks up later in the year.

The most important thing to remember as a freshman is that everybody around you is willing to help. Upperclassmen have been in your position and can share wisdom to approach the year, so ninth graders should never be afraid to reach out.

Art by Merritt Feldner

How did Senior Panthers Spend their Summer?

COMPILED BY CAMPBELL ROSE KUZMUK

“In preparation for my black belt test in March, I have begun teaching the younger ranks at my dojo, meaning that most of my summer was spent either teaching or learning at the dojo. Teaching includes instructing students 4-16 years old from places such as Poland, Japan and France.”



MARIGOLD BRETT-MAJOR '27



Charlotte M. '27 at the summit of Mt. Kilimanjaro



CHARLOTTE MOUNT '27

“I reached the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro! It was so surreal to hike above the clouds and spend a week off the grid, especially when I’m usually so plugged in.”



LAUREN HEMANN '27

“I traveled with the U-18 USYNT to Bulgaria to face the U-19 Ukrainian National Team two times! I loved meeting the most amazing girls and playing at such a high level!”

“I spent three weeks in Alaska with Moondance, a program that offers adventure trips for teens all over the world. My favorite parts were either our sea kayaking portion on the Prince Williams Sound or the second-to-last day of backpacking, where we walked between two mountain ranges with beautiful weather!”



MCLEAN DANIEL '27

“I was a camp counselor this summer at the camp where I have been a camper for the past 11 summers. I also got to be an ‘atzmain’ counselor, which means I was a one-on-one counselor for a kid with special needs.”



TALIA GREEN '27

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Athletes “Establish Team Culture” at Preseason

BY ANYA HUSAIN

As a new school year begins, athletes are returning to the fields and courts for another fall sports season. While preseason can be challenging, students and coaches see it as an important time to prepare for competition and build connections with their teammates.

For many athletes, preparation begins before preseason. Varsity volleyball player Chase Herwig '27 trained by attending CorePower classes with teammates, going on runs and focusing on eating well.

Preseason is about more than physical exercise, though. “It’s an opportunity to build relationships, establish team culture, set goals and come together as a team,” Athletic Director Graham Westerberg said. Varsity volleyball player Jaida Mostafa '27 agreed and explained that preseason helps teams “strengthen our skills, build team chemistry and establish our goals.”

Teams also find ways to make the demanding preseason more enjoyable. Varsity volleyball holds an annual team sleepover, and varsity

soccer has team lunches, themed Friday practice, and fun training games. Varsity tennis players enjoy team bonding events such as Starbucks and Yogi Topi trips. Blue-White Night is another favorite

tradition, with varsity tennis player Bridget Zimmerman '28 and varsity soccer player Ella Sanai '27 both eagerly look-

ing forward to the event.

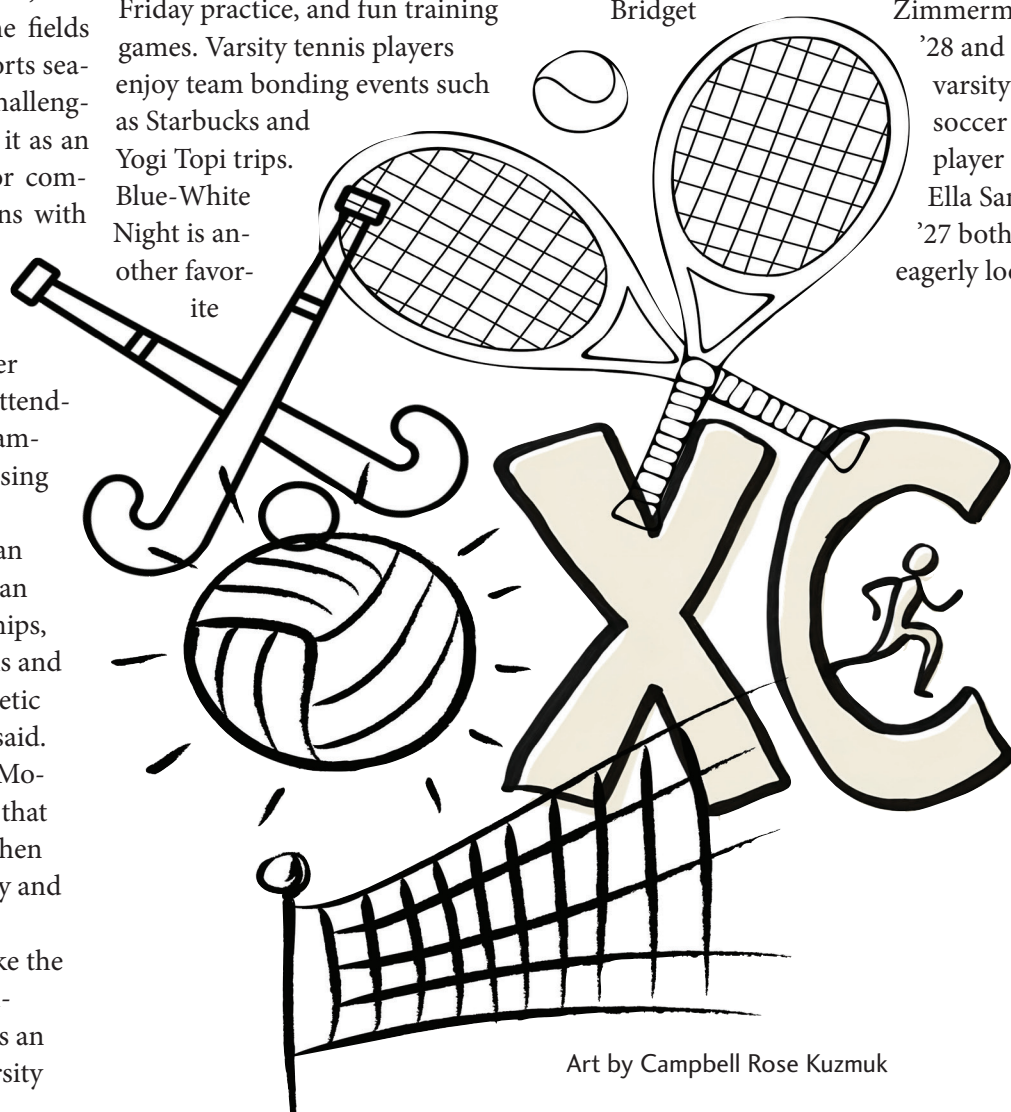
Varsity field hockey player Merritt Feldner '27 said she “has cherished the traditions of preseason, including ‘tunches’ in Bethesda Row and spirit week with themes like Wacky Wednesday and Grill Dads.”

JV soccer player Julia Weinstein '29 commented, “I love preseason because I get to have fun and spend the last part of my summer playing a sport I love with friends that I haven’t seen in a while.”

Varsity cross-country member Talia Green '27 said, “Cross-country is such a spirited group, and everyone is always pushing each other to do their best. I look forward to practices everyday.”

Regular-season games are already in full swing, with varsity volleyball pulling off wins against the Field School, varsity tennis defeating Bullis 6-1, and varsity soccer shutting out St. Mary’s Ryken in a 2-0 victory.

Athletes are anticipating more important matchups. Herwig is excited to face Stone Ridge after last year’s volleyball championship loss while Sanai is looking forward to playing Potomac.



Art by Campbell Rose Kuzmuk

World Cup 2026 Connects Soccer Fans Globally

BY BEATRICE BURWELL

The Spanish men’s National Soccer Team hoisted the FIFA World Cup Trophy proudly in the air. Spain defeated the legendary Argentina National Team 1-0 in the World Cup final. Following the female Spanish team’s win in 2023, this victory led to Spain becoming one of the first countries in history to hold both the Men’s and Women’s World Cup titles at the same time.

The FIFA World Cup is the top international soccer championship where national teams compete every four years for gold and glory. Teams play in regional competitions over three years for one out of 48 spots in the main tournament. The FIFA organization also chooses a host country, which does not have to qualify for the tournament, through a bidding process held seven to 10 years in advance.

The World Cup tournament then continues with a Group Stage, where each team plays a round of three games. Then, depending on team

outcomes, 32 teams will advance to the Knockout Stage. The tournament lasts for 39 days, concluding with the final.

In the 2026 FIFA World Cup, Canada, Mexico and the United States co-hosted the tournament. Despite inflated ticket prices, excited soccer fans from across the globe traveled long distances to cheer on their favorite players and home teams.

Varsity soccer player Elle Rasmussen '27 shared her favorite player from the tournament. She said, “I loved watching Lamine Yamal lead Spain to victory, especially considering how young he is.”

Due to the large number of games held in America, many students and soccer fans were able to attend World Cup matches. Varsity soccer player Reaves Jesmer '27 described the fun and excite-

ment of watching the United States play in the Group Stage in California. She stated,

“It was great to see the atmosphere and how sports can bring people together.”



Art by Paige Wollenhaupt

"Tomdaya" Dominates Summer Movies

BY EVERLEIGH MCCORMACK

Whether you are a history fan, superhero lover or pop-culture enthusiast, Tom Holland and Zendaya have most likely given you something to talk about this summer.

Two record-breaking movies hit the cinema: "The Odyssey" and "Spider-Man: Brand New Day." Although the two have drastically different plotlines, they have one thing in common. Both movies star Holland and Zendaya, a notable duo both on and off the screen.

According to "ELLE Magazine," the two met while filming "Spider-Man: Homecoming" in 2016. Despite ongoing rumors of a romance between them, the pair did not confirm their relationship until 2021. Then, in 2025, fans were delighted to see Zendaya wearing an engagement

ring at the Golden Globes, a revelation of their committed status.

Most recently, in June of 2026, Holland shared that they had gotten mar-

ried secretly months before the announcement. They kept their wedding secret, as they did with

their private relationship, and not many details have been released.

Moksha Jain '29

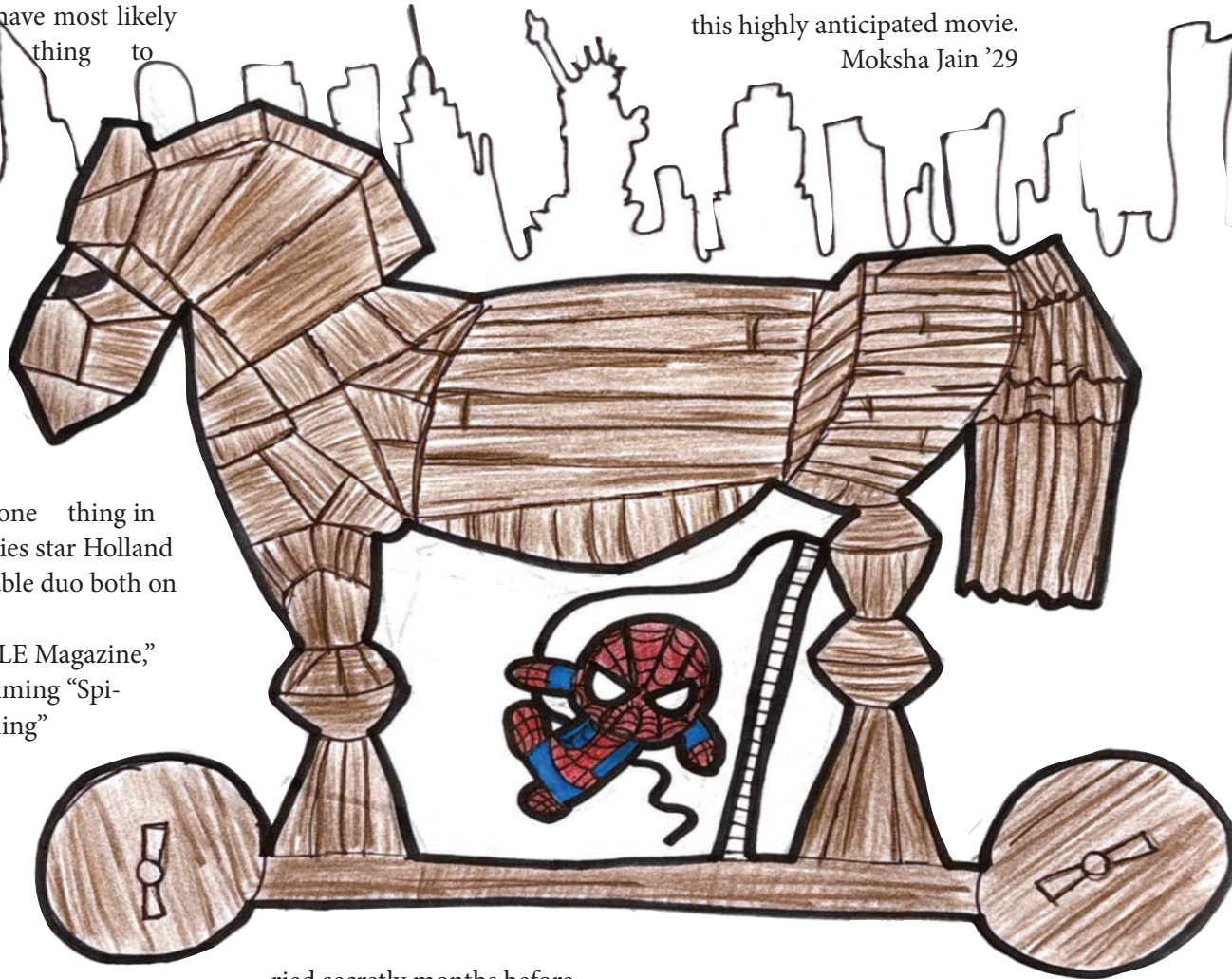
Zendaya are like mama and papa! I've watched [Spider-Man] so much, and I love it."

"Spider-Man: Brand New Day" continued the extremely popular "Spider-Man" franchise, in which Holland began starring in 2016. According to "Entertainment Weekly," "Spider-Man: Brand New Day" is the third highest-grossing movie of all time, garnering \$2.4 billion.

"The Odyssey" was the work of Christopher Nolan, a well-known director who films his movies without relying on CGI or green screens. "The Odyssey" was based on Homer's epic about Odysseus, a hero during the Trojan War. Nolan's recreation of the classic and beloved poem is the first feature film to be shot entirely in IMAX, according to "CBS News." "Entertainment Weekly" reported that "The Odyssey" has become Nolan's highest-grossing film.

Ella Sanai '27 said, "My favorite scene was when Odysseus returned to Ithaca and killed the suitors!"

Art by Julia Weinstein



called "Spider-Man" "the best movie of the summer. Tom and

Privacy Amid the Public Eye: Summer Celebrity Weddings Captivate Students

BY TABY DARGE

This summer offered many celebrity weddings. From singers like Taylor Swift to athletes such as Karl-Anthony Towns, celebrities had both lavish celebrations and intimate ceremonies while spending the summer balancing the spectacle of their public lives with the privacy of their personal ones.

Earlier this summer, when a guest leaked Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce's wedding invitations on Instagram, the couple took quick legal action. Keeping in line with her desire for privacy, as of August 2026, Swift

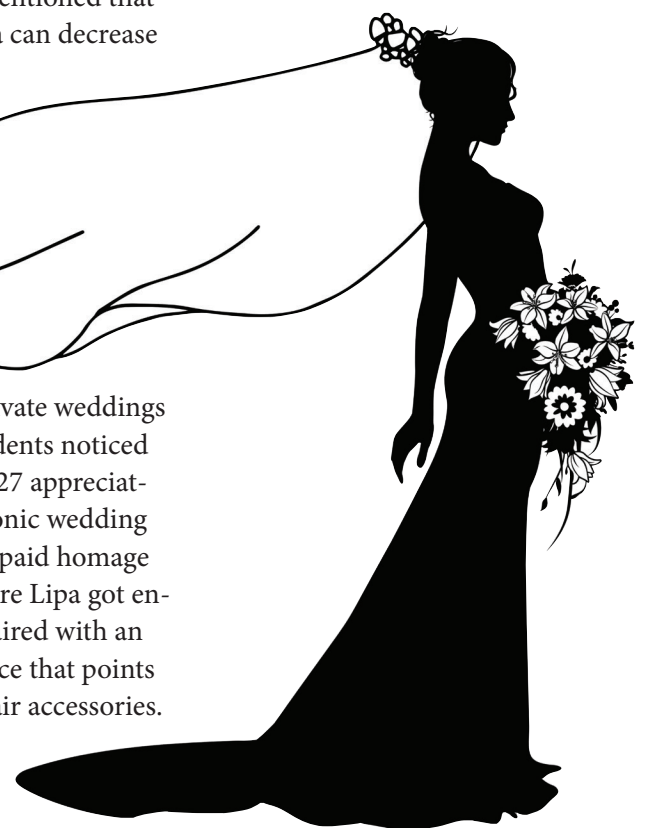
hadn't posted any photos from her ceremony.

Sabine Rana '27 said, "I understand why she hadn't posted, but I'd love to see some wedding photos." Swift wasn't the only one, however, to face privacy concerns at her wedding. Many celebrities opted for smaller weddings, like Cristiano Ronaldo and Georgina Rodríguez.

In fact, "ELLE Magazine" recently pointed out the trend of intimate ceremonies influenced by celebrity weddings this summer. "ELLE Magazine" noted themes of social media blackouts during recent weddings.

"Psychology Today" mentioned that having no social media can decrease stress levels, and perhaps the trends in celebrity weddings relate

to that finding. Beyond the private weddings this summer, some students noticed the fashion. Stella Lee '27 appreciated singer Dua Lipa's iconic wedding dress, especially how it paid homage to the Eiffel Tower, where Lipa got engaged. The dress was paired with an intricate bridal headpiece that points to a broader trend of hair accessories. Lipa had four total outfits, with the dress Lee referred to as the main wedding look.



Art by Campbell Rose Kuzmuk

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