

The latest news and updates from Preparatory Academy



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Chess team and what it takes to be on the team.

VALENTINE'S DAY: OVERRATED OR NOT?

by Valeria Casas-Ortiz, Camila Carreno, Victoria Obregon

The Valentine's holiday has been a controversial topic for a while, and people have no idea whether they should consider it a holiday at all. Saint Valentine's Day originated as a Christian feast day that honored Valentine who was martyred in the year 269, I know right, quite a while ago I mean we're talking century ago.



Preparatory Academy students enjoy the DJ's music at the Valentine's Dance. Photograph credit by Victoria Obregon-Mora.

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Valentine's Day now as we celebrate it, is known to be the celebration of love, although targeted towards many couples, most agree that it is a day in which love is expressed not only to your partners but to your friends and family. As we went around interviewing different people we realized that our initial prediction of data had been wrong. As a team, we thought that most people would say that Valentine's Day was overrated but everyone seemed to talk about how great of a holiday it was. STPA Biology teachers Mrs. Cavazos said, "I think that out of the whole year it gives you that one day where you can recognize people that you love; not necessarily just spouses or your boyfriends or girlfriends, but your friends and their friendships." On the other hand Mr. Gill, the well-known algebra teacher, said that he thought the holiday was someone overrated not because of the celebration but mostly because of the amount of commercialism, when asked who he believed the holiday was targeted towards he responded with "Uh, businesses they just want you to buy stuff it's not targeted to kids necessarily."

6th grade student, Addie Bonura, said Valentine's Day is definitely not overrated. "It's celebrated all over the world...you see decorations up everywhere and it just makes everyone feel good."

Speaking of celebration, the Valentine's Day celebration kicked off at full-speed with both a Valentine's dance and a Student-Council sponsored Candy-Gram sale. Many students dressed for the occasion and enjoyed their first STPA dance this school year. Love was definitely in the air! Love for pizza that is! Mr. Zamora, principal at Preparatory Academy, treated everyone at the dance to free pizza. Overall, the dance was a success and a much needed break from school.



Bianca Cheng, Anayed Sandoval, and Mia Sanchez pose in front of the Valentine's Dance backdrop.
Photo credit by Anayed Sandoval.

TEAM 83 WINS THE SPIRIT TORCH AT ROCK 'N' ROLL PEP RALLY

by Janitza Cruz, Valentina Delgado, and Bryanna Najera



6th Grader Emma Villarreal throws Cheetos at her teacher.
Photograph credit by preparatoryacademy.stisd.net

Spartans at Preparatory Academy had the chance to “rock out” with their teams at the “Rock-N-Roll” Pep Rally hosted by the 6th grade team on February 3rd. With the introduction of a new theme, students and staff dressed in Rockstar gear complete with band t-shirts, sunglasses, and wild hairstyles.

The pep rally featured the boys’ and girls’ basketball teams that would be participating the following Saturday at the TCSAAL Regional Tournament, as well as the tennis team who is in the midst of their season.

Additionally, Spartan Ambassadors for each grade level were announced as well as the winners of Anti-Vaping Video contest hosted by World Scholars. The first prize for the contest were 6th graders Brady Starr, Leon Miguel, and Jeffrin Thomas after the creatively filmed an anti-vaping campaign video.

Also, on the schedule at the pep rally were the Pep Rally dance squad and drumline. Both groups led the way to rally the crowd and keep everyone pumped up.



Winners of the Anti-Vaping Video contest.
Photograph credit by preparatoryacademy.stisd.net

On the pep-rally game side, the Team 83 Titans managed to rack up the most points winning the Cone Relay race and scoring 2nd in both the Cheeto Toss and Circle of Brooms. With the most outstanding teacher performance, the Titans were able to secure their win of the Spartan Spirit torch, ending the 6th grade team’s winning streak.

The next pep rally is scheduled for March 3rd and will be hosted by the 7th grade team. The theme has been set as “Battle of the Decades”. Who will win the spirit torch next?



Mr. Guerra preps Coach Muhammad for the Cheeto Toss.
Photograph credit by preparatoryacademy.stisd.net

WRAP ON SPARTAN BASKETBALL

by Natalya Padilla and Joaquin Rodriguez



Girls Spartan basketball team celebrates their Regional Championship title.
Photograph credit by preparatoryacademy.stisd.net

The Girls' Premier Basketball team has ended their record-making 2022-2023 season on Saturday, February 11, 2023 in Brownwood, Texas at the Texas Charter School Academic & Athletic League (TCSAAL) State Tournament. The team was the first in school history to make it to the state tournament, and they did so in winning fashion after a perfect 8-0 season, Regional Champion title, and Final Four finish.

The Lady Spartans faced off against Brooks Collegiate in their first state tournament game, but fell short of victory with a score of 45-23.

Top scorers for the game were Kenya Camarena with 14 points and Ava Thomas with 4 points. Assistant Coach Perla Barrientes said she was proud of the girls hard work and determination throughout the season. "Our girls' team has a lot of fight and desire in them in addition to their tremendous work ethic. We accomplished a lot this year and made school history. We have a lot to be proud of," said Coach Barrientes.

"Going to the State tournament was a good experience and fun to play. I was upset about the loss...there were a lot of tears. But, I'm looking forward to next year because I know we'll make it back to State. We'll have new 6th graders to add to our team and help us win," said Ava Thomas, 6th grade basketball player.

The boy's Premier basketball team also had a very successful season that lead to Regional runner-ups at the TCSAAL Regional game against Rising Scholars. The score was and the team finished 1st in the middle school basketball division.

The boy's MSO team were also named Regional Champions after they defeated Horizon Montessori with a score of 31-24. Top scorers for the game were Oscar Garcia with 12 points and Schwartzaffel Gordon with 10 points.



Spartan basketball team celebrate with their Regional Runner-up trophy.
Photograph credit by preparatoryacademy.stisd.net

MOST ANTICIPATED AT THE MOVIES

by Zeyad Allen and Desirae Gonzalez

Lights! Camera! Action! What newly released or upcoming movies are Spartans most looking forward to this spring season? The Oracle polled 6th-8th grade students to get their feedback on what to watch and what to skip.

First up in the releases is Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantimania. Marvel has begun releasing films for Phase 4 of their Marvel Cinematic Universe. Viewers are eager to see how the newest villain Kang the Conqueror

will play out in the latest film as well as find out more how the Quantum Realm can possibly connect to the Multi-verse. This film opens up February 17th.

Speaking of Marvel, the final movie in the Guardians of the Galaxy saga is set to open up on May 5th in all theaters. Fans have eagerly awaited the final installment since it has been 5 years since the last movie came out. In this newest film, viewers will find out whether Gamora will rejoin the Guardians, Rocket's backstory, and who Adam Warlock is. From jokes to awesome music, this film is sure to earn at the box office.



Photo from Marvel.com



Photo from thesupermariobros.movie

If super heroes aren't your thing, perhaps Super Mario is. Chris Pratt, who also happens to be Star Lord in Guardians of the Galaxy, will play the beloved Mario in The Super Mario Bros. movie. Many critics are not to sure whether they agree with Chris Pratt in this role with his questionable Italian accent, but since most Super Mario characters are nostalgic and beloved, it should be entertaining nonetheless.

Rounding out the movie releases for spring, are Creed III, Scream VI (Yes, another one!), Shazam! Fury of the Gods, and Dungeons & Dragons: Honor Among Thieves. Overall, this spring movie season should be interesting.

SPARTANS IN THE WEEKEND

by *Julissa Saenz & Sunakhi Sahoo*

Piles of homework, tests to cram for, meetings and practice for extra-curriculars. This is the daily life of the average student at STPA. The school day ends at 4pm, but with so much on everyone's schedule, many don't see "free time" until well after 8pm. "I usually have to stay for one of my club meetings like UIL; sometimes I have tutorial or I just work in the library on my homework or study. So, by the time I get home, it's like 6:30pm at the earliest," said a 6th grade student, Emma Villarreal.

With little time to spare during the week, many kids at STPA live for the weekends where they finally get a chance to unwind and relax with their friends. So what exactly do STPA students do for fun, or where are the best places to gather? We polled students at STPA to find out what the best places are to visit. Many recommended trampoline parks like Helium or other event places like Main Event or Fantasy Skate Land. Another popular hangout spot was of course, La Plaza Mall. One student said, "I like to go to the mall with friends. We shop, walk around, drink coffee, just hang out." Other popular choices included going to the movies or hanging out at friends' or family members' homes. As far as what keeps students busy in their downtime, many seem to catch up on hobbies. 8th grader, Emily Tan said, "I like baking and cooking," while 8th grader Natalia Lopez-Gomez said, "I enjoy reading and watching TV."

No matter what your interests or hobbies may be, students recommend just spending time with others in your spare time. 8th grader Mariah Rand said, "I recommend to try to find a new show to watch or play a board game with your family." Seems like the point is to unwind, relax, and kick back before another week begins at STPA.



Fantasy Skateland in McAllen, Tx.
Photograph credit by fantasyskatelandcener.com



Helium Trampoline Park in McAllen, Tx
Photograph credit by heliumtrampolineparktx.com

SPOTLIGHT ON: CHESS

by Auron Mares & Nathan Cardona

The Chess team at STPA is open to all students in grades 6th-8th. Tryouts are first held at the start of the year. Players range from beginner level to advanced and compete within their skill-level throughout the year. Sponsors for the team are Mr. Alberto Gonzalez and Ms. Norma Martinez. The team meets weekly on Tuesdays in the library. We interviewed one of the sponsors and one of members, and they both described the game of chess as “A game of strategy and planning ahead that is also a lot of fun.”

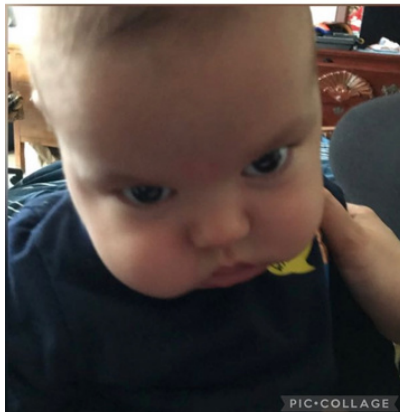
6th grade student, Malik Abdullah said, “I like playing chess because it helps me to problem solve when I’m in a difficult situation. The team at STPA is really fun because everyone is as passionate as I am about chess. The tournaments are also fun because we play, eat, and get to hang out with friends.”

The team will be headed to the State Tournament this weekend at the McAllen Convention Center. They will play against other middle schoolers across the state of Texas. There are 3 divisions to compete in one is Middle School Champ, Middle School JV, and Middle School Novice. Sponsor, Mr. Gonzalez, said, “I like to see the progression of how the students do they go from beginner advance and helps with critical thinking.”

MUSINGS

by Kaleb Lowy and Christopher Leo

POV: THE TEACHER DOESN'T BELIEVE YOUR DOG ATE YOUR HOMEWORK



When your sibling takes
your leftover takeout food



THE ORACLE STAFF

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