

FOX TALES *Quarterly*

A STUDENT PUBLICATION



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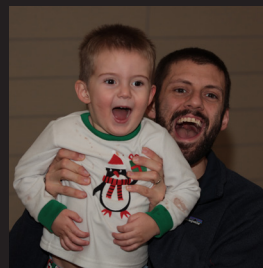
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Ceiling Tile Painting Event Showcases Diverse Student Body and Clubs



By Laila Golla

The Diversity Council's ceiling tile painting event was a HUGE success. It was held after the half day on November 6th with the goal to showcase the diversity of the student body and the multitude of Fox Chapel Area High School clubs. This year's theme was "Who am I?" and 29 clubs participated!

The event included pizza and other delicious food, upbeat music, and amazing drinks. Each club was given the opportunity to pick up their tile early and work on it, but even if you did not, you still had the opportunity to make a great tile! Each tile was so unique and creative, and there were definitely quite a few advanced-level artists

in attendance. Some of us, like myself, made our best effort and still had so much fun.

After the event, there was a link for all students at the high school to vote for their favorite tile. The winning club got a prize of \$100, and the next two runners up each got \$50 for their efforts. Congrats to the Color Guard for winning first place, and the Tapestry and Asian Cultural Club for being runner-ups! This was the second annual ceiling tile event that the Diversity Council held, and it was such an incredible opportunity for school unity as well as an event that is so enjoyable.



Fall Play Brings Home Award Nominations

By Annalese Bartolacci

Renee Liberto as adult production staff, assisted by the student production staff in stage managers Kaylee Dunham and Lily Cannon, costume coordinator Sofia Liberto, sound crew Ben Fiedler, Elias Zeiner, Hannah Liu, and Aristia Laing, lighting crew Camden Krotine, Isabelle Gongaware, and Hannah Liu, set construction team Lily Cannon, Elyse Ritchie, Angelina Terranella, Ava McCaffrey, Caterina Wu, Landon Funk, Stephen Provenzano, and John Finch, stage crew Kaylee Dunham, Lily Cannon, Sofia Liberto, Aristia Laing, hair and makeup crew Hannah Liu, Carolyn Caracciolo, Lilith Bohin, and Akiyah Waters, poster artist Kaylee Dunham and Mya Wilson, and program designer Kaylee Dunham.

Fox Chapel Area received 12 nominations in Prime Stage Theatre's Fourth Annual High School Drama Awards, for students nominated for their performances and/or involvement in the play. Those nominated are junior Lincoln Marshal in the best actor category, senior Sophia Rike in the best actress category, junior Noah Miller in the best supporting actor category, junior Marina

Dunham in the best supporting actress category, senior Kaylee Dunham in the best student stage manager category and the best student program/poster design and/or fabrication category, senior Sofia Liberto in the best student prop design and/or fabrication category and the best student costume design and/or fabrication category, and senior Carolyn Caracciolo in the best student makeup design and/or application

category. Additionally, *The Man Who Came to Dinner* was nominated in the best student scenic design and/or fabrication category, in the best student backstage run crew category, and in the best overall production category. The awards ceremony will be held January 29, 2024, at Prime Stage's New Hazlett Theater where the winners will be announced. Congratulations to everyone involved and good luck to those nominated for an award!



Early this November, the Fox Chapel Area Drama Club presented their fall play, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*. The lively comedic satire tells the tale of Sheridan Whiteside (Lincoln Marshal), a famous radio personality who slips and falls on the steps of the Stanley family home in small town Ohio on his way to dinner with them. Confined to the household while he recovers from his injuries, Whiteside's brief stay turns into a nightmare for the Stanleys as he takes over, torturing them with his demands, outrageous behavior, and unsolicited remarks. A slew of eccentric visitors including ex-convicts, causes even more disruption. Maggie Cutler (Sophia Rike), his loyal secretary, and his meek nurse Miss Preen (Marina Dunham), attempt to curb his antics and demands, although unsuccessfully. He even interferes with the budding romance between Maggie and a local reporter, Bert Jefferson (Lincoln Baldwin). As he holds court, the household devolves into madness, and the other characters are thrown into a series of comical misunderstandings.

The production of this classic took weeks of practice and hard work by many students and teachers. The cast, in addition to those above, featured Ben Werner, Vie Filar, Stella

Hays, John McGough, Colette Walter, Noah Miller, Miguel Quercia Marcano, Grace Gouwens, Kyra Gdovichin, Faye Muller, Erin Stein, Joseph Weber, Joseph Seifried, Kathryn Price, Margaret Hays, and Dayna Mullan. Additionally, the show could not have been possible without stage director Kristiann Josephs, set construction director Joe Gass, costume and prop director Marybeth Dixon, lighting and sound director Ben Murray, and concessions director



Fall Play, continued...

Even after the final curtain has closed on a show, drama at FC is very much a rewarding experience for the students involved, leaving them with friendships and memories that last much longer than the run of the show. Lincoln Marshal, who plays Sheridan Whiteside, believes that “the best part about acting at FC is the people you meet. From our professional director Kristiann Josephs, to all the cast and crew. These people are some of the most amazing that I’ve ever known.”

Like any production, the fall play had its challenges: stage manager Kaylee Dunham recalled that due to a late school start, there was a time crunch on the production, but actress Sophia Rike described “how much fun it was to see it come together.”

Colette Walter, who played Harriet Stanley agreed. “So much of what we did on stage happened by accident in rehearsal or just happened naturally, and it was amazing watching it all come together.”

“Playing the part of Maggie was a new experience for me,” says Sophia, “and I loved every minute of it, especially

when I got to play off of some other really amazing actors on stage. Just the way all these eccentric people interact with each other creates a really unique experience. There’s a ton of excitement to be had and many moments of pure hilarity.” *The Man who Came to Dinner* is certainly not lacking in comedy, and the ability of the actors to bring the humor out of the script is a highlight for many. Lincoln shares this sentiment, saying, “my favorite characters had to be my assistant Maggie Cutler, played by Sophia Rike, and Harriet Stanley, played by Colette Walter.

These two brought so much life to the stage and thinking

back, I can’t keep myself from laughing.” He continues with, “I think my favorite part of the play was when Lorraine, played by Kyra Gdovichin, was trapped in a sarcophagus at the end of the show. It was one of the funniest parts of the show!” Colette’s favorite part of the show was “just laughing backstage with everyone - there’s a contagious feeling of welcome and warmth with that cast.”

Both Lincoln and Sofia are veteran actors, and would encourage anyone interested in acting or production to get involved. Sofia, a senior this year, explains, “There are so many wonderful opportunities to perform here at the high school! If you want to pursue acting, especially in college, it’s important that you take full advantage of all the fantastic opportunities you have here.” For Lincoln, acting is about the community. “I’ve made so many long and lasting friendships, and performing a show with them is something I’ll never forget.”





New Year Reflections ...and Resolutions

By Sienna Siegel

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

It's officially 2024 and there is so much to look forward to! The Olympics will take place in Paris, France, the next presidential election is in November, our seniors will graduate, and so much more will happen! Before we get too far ahead of ourselves, let's reflect on the major pop culture, and life events that occurred in 2023:

- Prince Harry published his book *Spare*, leaking all of the Royal family's dirty secrets and disputes.
- LeBron James surpassed 38,000 NBA career points.
- Novack Djokovic (men's tennis player) won his 10th Australian Open, equalling his 22nd Grand Slam title.
- Tom Brady (actually) retired as the greatest NFL quarterback of all time. At age of 45 after a 23 year-long career and 7 Super Bowl titles.
- The 65th annual Grammy Awards took place where Beyonce broke the record for most Grammy wins with her 32nd Grammy award.
- Rihanna performed at the super bowl, being her first live performance in six years, while pregnant.
- The Kansas City Chiefs beat the Philadelphia Eagles 38-35 in the Super Bowl, and Patrick Mahomes was the MVP.
- Taylor Swift's Eras tour began on March 17th in Glendale Arizona, and it was a battle to find tickets.
- Artificial intelligence quickly progressed and Chat GPT became a popular and jarring sensation
- King Charles was crowned King of England with his second wife Camila, the new queen.
- “Here comes the Sun” by the Beatles hit 1B streams.
- *The Barbie Movie* premiered on July 9th.
- Diana Taurasi became the first WNBA player to reach 10,000 professional points.
- Simone Biles won her 8th US Championship.

We asked some students what their
New Year's resolutions were!

Here's what we heard back:

- Avery Schapira:** Doing my history notes every night
Peter Mascilli: Take less for granted
Michael Didomenico: Be kinder to people
Margaret Rusche: To be to be more positive
Ava Persichetti: Journal more
Owen Howell: Be on my phone less
Simren Sahni: Try to prioritize mental health and study harder for school
Ben Hallman: To maintain my second semester grades
Matthew Begg: Try to learn to cook
Franco Pistella: Start doing yoga
Alex Jones: Go to WPIALS with my team
Henry Stallings: Get into a good college
Travis Malone: Hydrate my body better
Evan Skvarla: Independently choose to work on chores
Maria Marasco: Be consistent with my fitness
Gianna Patterson: Be more positive
Melisa Pietz: Decrease screen time
Sophia Gass: Practice better sleep habits
Josie Giguere: Procrastinate less
Ben Myers: Be able to bench 300 pounds
Ian Wellman: Make it to Nationals for crew
Katie Haas: Be more weird
Shriya Krishnamurthy: Read more books
Laila Golla: Use my phone less
Annalese Bartolacci: Journal more
Safiya Stewart: Read 10 fiction books this year
Mia Costello: Learn to speak Korean
Alex Navas: Drink more water
Abe White: More Phoebe Bridgers
Karsten Buchert: Finish Mandarin on Duolingo



Strong Start for Fox Chapel Wrestling

By Eli Olifson & Joe Yoshikawa

The winter sports season for the Foxes has been off to a steady start. But one sport stands out in the midst of lots of success for the Foxes; the wrestling team. This season marks many accomplishments for the program, from plenty of trophies to the first ever girls team in the district's history. Overall, the powerful leadership of the team combined with the must-win spirit allows for this team to go on and have one of their best seasons yet.

For the boys team, the season got off to a great start, as they boasted a 9-1 record, beating some tough opponents, such as Altoona and Kiski. While many matches were close, the team also strung together their fair share of blowout victories, such as their 50-15 victory over Mount Lebanon on senior night. The upperclassmen made sure to put on a show for the supporters and alumni in attendance. But for NYU commit Alex Kaufmann, the night meant so much more. He told us, "I was really happy with getting a win in front of a great crowd, especially my parents. This was my first week getting back from an injury so it was really special to get a win for them on senior night." Alex has been a leading presence and a motivator for his teammates to push themselves on the mats and in the weight room. Outside of the physicality of the sport, there is also a heavy impact on the mentality needed to succeed. With wrestling being one of the few one-on-one sports at the varsity level, proving that you can win using different skills and styles all while making split second decisions is a challenge to take in while under the spotlight. Still, wrestling can also teach lessons that extend to many aspects of one's life. Kaufmann said, "I have learned the importance of keeping composure in all situations and staying consistent in my work. Not to mention the discipline and delayed gratification that the sport also teaches you." These tests of strength and wit prove necessary on the mats, and eventually the discipline in a future job setting will keep your life thriving. Through and through, the boys wrestling team this year has seen their fair share of victories, and at



the pace they are moving, they look to capture a section title and possibly a state championship as well.

As for the newly introduced girls team, the season did not start off on quite the right foot. Although their early season record is not what they had hoped for, there is still so much promise in this team. Two of their losses were in undoubtedly close matches, suggesting that this team, when working to their full potential, will begin to win games frequently. Also, it could be expected that in the first year with a girls team, much of the season will focus on team bonding, as many players have never wrestled before. When considering all of this, the start of the girls season is not as unfortunate as one may think. The team is focusing on the basics so that in the coming years they can be a powerhouse. One thing that needs to be appreciated when looking



Photo: @FCAHSWrestling/x

at this team is that it is a very important moment for Fox Chapel wrestling to have this team, and the girls on it certainly feel lucky to be a part of it. Sophomore Emma

Srodes says, "I think it's an amazing opportunity to be on the first girls team. I hope to see it grow into a bigger program". Also, the spirit on the team is in a good place, as "most of the girls are new, but the returning wrestlers make a great environment for all of us to learn". The team is definitely showing a fair amount of potential for what is to come in the future years. Strong upperclassmen encouraging the newer wrestlers make the team come together. Srodes also believes that this team has the qualities of a winning team. "All of the girls are very hard working and willing to try everything. I think that will help us throughout the season," said the sophomore.

In a very different type of year for the wrestling program at FC, from newfound attention to the very first girls team, one thing has not changed. The team chemistry and will to win is something that has been seen year in and year out, and has only grown during this season.

Telethon Efforts Raise \$66,775 for Backpack for Hunger



By Madeleine Stone

December was all about Telethon! Referred to by most of the student body as just “Telethon,” this fundraising initiative lasts the whole month of December, with all profits given to a preselected charity to improve the lives of those in the district. Every school in the FCA district works hard to find creative ways to raise money for the charity. At the high school, all clubs are required to hold some type of fundraiser. Events range from bake sales to full-blown concerts. Occurring during QRTs, lunches, and even complete class periods, these efforts have been a long-standing tradition in the district.

For the past few years, the donations went to Fox Families Care, a non-profit that helps children and families in the Fox Chapel Area School District. This year, the fundraiser was dedicated to Backpack for Hunger, a nonprofit that provides food for children in need in the Fox Chapel Area School District. In the past years, FCA has raised over \$1.1 million for the area. For the thirty-fourth Telethon, the district raised \$66,775. The high school made over \$14,000 of that total due to the 78 different fundraisers!

Almost daily, some sort of bake sales took place during lunches. Some ranged from decorating sugar cookies to spinning cotton candy. Other exciting and popular food sale events included boba tea by the Asian Cultural Club and spaghetti eis by the German Club.

Competitions were also a common occurrence around the school. The Robotics club brought out an air hockey table for students to challenge each other. Larger competitions included the QRT spirit competition in which QRTs attempted to have the highest percentage of

their students participate in different dress code themes for each day of the week. Some of the days included flannel shirt day, black and gold day, and ugly sweater day. Pajama day was by far the most popular choice. Another QRT competition was the door decorating contest, organized by the Psych club, in which QRTs created a holiday-themed decoration on their doors. Each competition was well enjoyed, but one of the most anticipated events was the dodgeball tournament. Teams of students and teachers competed and spectators attended for a \$1 fee. In the end, the students were victorious over the teachers, but not without a strong battle!

All the fundraising efforts culminated on telethon day, December 22nd, when the entire school day was dedicated to fundraising activities. Students could buy tickets to watch a movie, see the final rounds of the dodgeball tournament, and pack the auditorium full to watch the grand finale, Fox Fest. Fox Fest is one of the most anticipated events of the day, when teacher and student musicians show off their amazing skills in a concert. The crowd seemed

to be especially blown away by the rapping skills of Mr. Aries and by the vocal and guitar performance given by one of our favorite substitute teachers, Mrs. Occhipinti.

All the fundraisers allowed for engaging student support and a way for clubs to participate within the school. Students with interests in a variety of subjects helped by volunteering to run a booth or interacting with one of the many fundraisers. With each dollar donated, the school district was able to raise \$66,775.04 to keep Backpack for Hunger well-supplied so they could keep giving back to the people in the community.



The FC Backpack for Hunger program provides about 180 free bags of food to families in need. They also support approximately 150 families by providing weekly food bags throughout the summer months.



Technology Student Association's cotton candy was very popular.



Members of the Black Student Union served up tasty soul food -- always a crowd pleaser.



Photography club created a winter wonderland backdrop for photoshoots.



Junior wrestler Youssef Abdelsalem showed off his pie tossing skills on Coach Frank and freshman Victoria Macklin clearly enjoyed making a mess of her Biology teacher, Mrs. Sperdute.



Above: Santa and some of his favorite elves were available for photos as part of the telethon festivities.

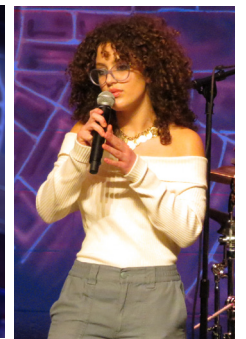


Right: The egg race competition that was organized by Best Buddies was a ton of messy fun for all who participated.





FoxFest



DODGEBALL





Jingle Bell BASH



By Elena Curran

This year, a new holiday tradition was initiated by the junior class. The “Jingle Bell Bash” built up the holiday spirit through the help of our school clubs, student government, and faculty. This idea came from the already established “Boo Bash,” the annual Halloween-themed event that is sponsored by the National Honor Society. What is special about events like these are that they are able to bring the community together. It is a chance for high school students to interact with elementary school students to make this a positive experience for them and act as a role model.

The Jingle Bell Bash welcomed more than 100 kids and family members with tons of festive events. Activities included a hot chocolate stand, pictures with Santa, holiday read-alongs, drawing/craft stations, and different games like bingo! Additionally, student volunteers decorated the school with candy canes, red ribbon, colorful tablecloths, and made a cozy “fireplace” using

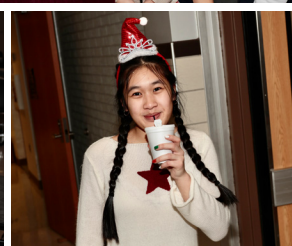


boxes with a red-brick print. They also supplied the craft materials and helped organize each aspect of the event so that everyone knew where they needed to be to make the night flow smoothly. We even had our class president and vice president dress up like Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus to take pictures with the kids. Furthermore, each club and individual who volunteered that night played a huge role through arriving early, doing their job enthusiastically, and being friendly and patient to the kids and families.



The most important involvement of this event to note was the hard work and planning by Mrs. Matonak. Her engagement, patience, and commitment to this night and our community made it not only possible, but special for the families and elementary school kids who came. School functions like these are a

lot of work and monumental to plan, but end up being so worth it to spend time with the FC community during the holidays.





Holiday Traditions

By Safiya Stewart

Every family enjoys celebrating the holidays in different ways. For this edition of the Fox Tales Quarterly I thought it would be interesting to hear from fellow classmates about their favorite holiday traditions. I asked a variety of students from different grades to share what they most enjoyed during the holiday break. Here's what they had to say:

- "Staying up until midnight to open my presents, and secret Santa." - Alex Navas
- "Watching Elf and Home Alone on Christmas." - Mia Costello
- "I like making Christmas cookies." - Becca Lokshanov
- "I like Elf on the Shelf." - Katie Haas
- "Making Christmas cookies." - Sienna Siegel
- "Christmas caroling." - Henry Koloc
- "Opening presents." - Abe White
- "Cookie exchanges." - Laila Golla
- "Going to dinner on New Years for my brother's birthday." - Mira Busch
- "Looking for the piece of matzah on passover." - Caroline Burger
- "Visiting family." - Sage Good
- "I like to travel." - Vanessa Perez Milano
- "Going to my grandma's on Christmas Eve." - Anonymous
- "Going skiing with my family." - Edie Tuthill
- "Spending time with family." - Hannah Smith
- "Making cookies." - Henry Stallings
- "Secret Santa." - Meg Delaney
- "Going to Seven Springs on Christmas day" - Jillian Pelcher
- "Going to my family's house on Christmas eve." - Chloe Coulter
- "Ice skating." - Ross Calig
- "Going to my family's house for Christmas." - Mikhail DeMarco
- "Decorating the tree." - Michael Costello
- "Making gingerbread houses." - Joey DeMartino
- "Hanging out with my family, like everyone coming home." - Blake Kuhn

Taking a Break to Focus on Wellness

By Josie Giguere

The FCAHS Wellness Council hosted their annual Wellness Day on January 5th. The timing couldn't have been better, with the pressures of Keystone exams and finals upon us. The day was full of activities for everyone in hopes to provide some fun ways to release stress and take some time for fun with friends.

The day began with an extended QRT that offered a range of activities for students, including pickleball, yoga, roller blading, and working out in the fitness center. Not only did these activities count as a make-up gym class for participants, but they provided an enjoyable distraction from the end-of-semester pressures. Peter Mascilli, the president of the pickleball club said, "it was a great event that helped everyone de-stress after the return from break." The pickleball courts were crowded with students who were trying it out for the first time and others who had fun showing off their skills. Regardless of skill level, the smiles and laughter were plentiful.

Countless activities were also held during the lunch periods. Student leaders of the Wellness Council passed out hot cocoa with oversized marshmallows. Each cup had a special sleeve with a positive message hand written on it from members of the Light Club. The Psychology Club provided peppermints and taught students about its

benefits. Various support service providers were also on hand, giving students free fidget toys, lip balm, stress balls, candy and other swag and informing them about the types of support services that are available to them through our school and community. Next to the stress relief coloring station, students made bead bracelets to raise awareness of



Wellness Day, continued...

mental health issues – each bead color was associated with a different type of mental health condition. The library contributed by providing a variety of games and puzzles and the Yoga club challenged students to try different yoga poses to win stickers. All of these activities were enhanced by live music provided by the Busking Club.



Not only did these activities provide an outlet to relieve stress and take a break from school, but they also helped to educate students about positive coping mechanisms to get them through challenging times. In addition, Wellness Council also arranged for therapists to visit the high school

during finals & Keystones weeks for an extra bonus. The overall outcome of this year's Wellness Day affected many people in a positive way and the students were very grateful for all the clubs that contributed to this resourceful event.



Tips To Stay Zen During Stressful Times

By Alex Navas



Navigating through stressful times, especially during finals and sports, can be challenging. The Zen Club recognizes the importance of maintaining a sense of calm during these moments and encourages students to prioritize their well-being. To help you start your morning on a calmer note, here are five helpful tips:

Mindful Meditation:

Begin your day by engaging in mindful meditation. Take a few moments to breathe deeply and incorporate positive affirmations, allowing your mind to center itself and alleviate stress.

Nourish Your Body:

Opt for a nutritious breakfast that includes whole grains and proteins. Fueling your body with the right nutrients sets the foundation for a day filled with sustained energy and mental focus.

Connect with Nature:

Amid the hustle, take a short break to connect with nature. Whether it's a refreshing walk in the park or a moment of quiet reflection outdoors, embracing the natural environment can provide a much-needed sense of calm.

Digital Detox:

Unplug from screens each morning to create mental clarity. A short digital detox allows you to step away from constant notifications, promoting a more focused mindset as you begin your day.

Express Gratitude:

Cultivate positivity by reflecting on things you're grateful for. Taking a moment each morning to express gratitude fosters an optimistic outlook, setting the tone for a more positive day.

Embrace these simple morning rituals, and remember: you've got the power to create a calm and focused mindset. Start each day with intention, nourish your well-being, and face challenges with a Zen mindset. You can do it! As we near the finish line, let's look forward to the new semester with a smile.

TICKETS GO ON SALE JANUARY 31

Disney THE LITTLE MERMAID

**February 29
March 1 & 2, 2024
7:00 p.m.**

**March 3, 2024
2:00 p.m.**

**Fox Chapel Area
High School
Auditorium**

Lyrics by Howard Ashman & Glenn Slater
Music by Alan Menken, Book by Doug Wright

Based on the Hans Christian Anderson story and the
Disney film produced by Howard Ashman &
John Musker and written & directed by
John Musker & Ron Clements

Originally Produced by
Disney Theatrical Productions



Tickets \$13

www.showtix4u.com/events/fcahsmusicals

**Reserved Seating.
Tickets non-refundable.**



DISNEY'S LITTLE MERMAID is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com

Band Accomplishments



Seven Fox Chapel Area High School students were selected by audition to perform with the 2023 Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 1 Honors Band.

The students are seniors Elijah Herzer (bass clarinet) and Chloe Kim (clarinet), juniors Marina Dunham (bassoon) and Patton Johnson (percussion), sophomores Elliott Broyles (trombone) and Joshua Shah (flute), and freshman Rachel Kim (clarinet). The band was comprised of 120 of the best student-musicians from Allegheny, Fayette, Greene, Washington, and Westmoreland counties.

The PMEA District 1 Honors Band concert was held November 19 at North Hills Middle School and was

conducted by Dr. Jack Stamp, a composer and the retired director of bands at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

Fox Chapel Area High School juniors Lindsay Gould (baritone saxophone) and Patton Johnson (drum set) were selected by audition to perform with the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 1 Honors Jazz Band. District 1 encompasses school districts from Allegheny, Fayette, Greene, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties.



The FCAHS marching band had some wonderful adventures in Florida during the winter break. They toured Kennedy Space Center, spent a few days in the Universal parks and marched on New Years Eve in Universal Studios!



The PMEA District 1 Honors Jazz Band performed at Moon Area High School December 9, 2023, under the direction of Dr. David Glover, associate professor of percussion, and Dr. Jason Kush, assistant professor of Music. Both directors are from Slippery Rock University.



Vexillology: What Does a Good Flag Look Like?

By Karsten Buchert

Flags serve as the main internationally recognized symbol for a geopolitical region, whether that be a country, state, territory or city. While at first glance they may just seem like rectangles, or in some cases, other shapes, with cool designs, the meaning goes much deeper. The study of flags is called vexillology. A basic

example of symbolism on a flag can be exemplified with the United States flag. Obviously, the 50 stars represent each state. However, you may not know that the colors and alternating stripes have meaning as well. Red symbolizes hardiness and victory, white represents purity and innocence, and blue shows vigilance, perseverance and justice. The US states have their own representative flags as well. State flags are often criticized for being “bad” in either meaning or design. In fact, some state flags are so disliked that state governments have actively tried to change them.

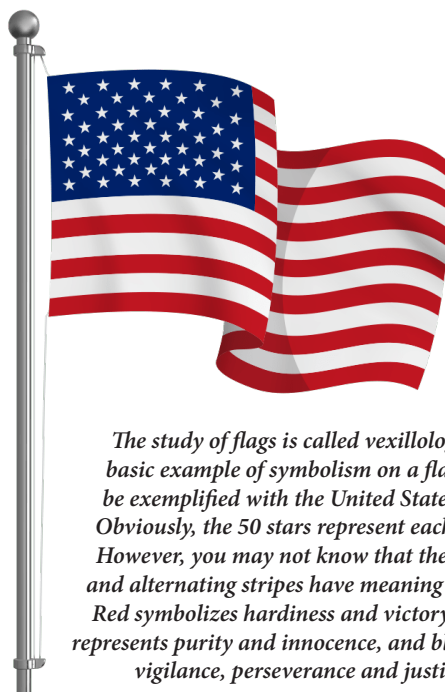
Perhaps the most notable example is Mississippi, who prior to 2021, had a confederate battle flag as a prominent part of its design, a leftover of Mississippi’s rather unfortunate civil rights history. The updated flag now has the magnolia, Mississippi’s state flower, front and center. The new design may be one of the most tasteful state flags, in my opinion. There are a couple other states that maintain what could be considered racist symbols on their flags, these primarily being Alabama and Florida. Both of these flags feature a

red and white St. Andrew’s cross. It is often argued that this is intended to evoke the essence of the Confederate flag, however, others say that it is meant to be a call back to Spanish colonial times since the Spanish used a very similar design for their colony in Florida. There is a current debate

over state flags in Minnesota with six contenders at the time of writing this that are a certain improvement over the state’s previous design which followed the cliché “seal on a blue blanket” style. With the bad reputation that these state flags have earned, it is worthy to ask what makes a flag bad, or, on the contrary, good?

The North American Vexillological Association (NAVA), which defines itself as “the world’s largest association of flag enthusiasts and scholars,” has outlined five basic principles that flags should adhere to in order to be seen as “good.” These are that the flag should be: simple enough to be drawn from memory, have meaningful symbolism, only have two to three colors, no lettering or seals, and be distinctive from

other flags unless it is connected to another entity, then it may have similarities to signify connections. The “seal on a blue blanket” state flags receive dislike as theoretically they violate all those principles. Thus for examples of well-designed flags and sticking within the theme of US states, some of the best would be New Mexico, Texas, or despite not being a state, the District of Columbia.



The study of flags is called vexillology. A basic example of symbolism on a flag can be exemplified with the United States flag. Obviously, the 50 stars represent each state. However, you may not know that the colors and alternating stripes have meaning as well. Red symbolizes hardiness and victory, white represents purity and innocence, and blue shows vigilance, perseverance and justice.



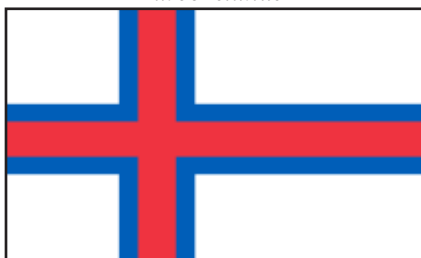


Vexillology, continued...

Texas is a great example of the last principle as it has the same colors as the US flag. The colors also have relatively similar meanings.

Let us move out of our US geographic bubble and look at international flags, specifically those of countries. First, when judged with both an objective lens (that being NAVA's principles) and a subjective lens (otherwise known as my opinion), country flags are without a doubt better than

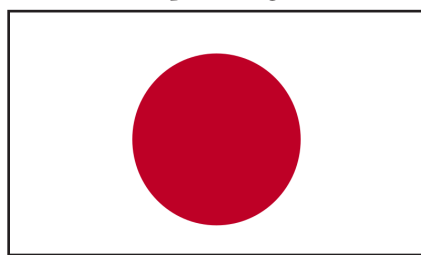
*Flag of Denmark's
Faroe Islands*



*Flag of Finland's
Åland Archipelago*



Japan's Flag



even the self-governing territories of these nations like Denmark's Faroe Islands or Finland's Åland Archipelago have it for their flags. Åland arguably has the most unique color scheme variation. Another pleasant example of a flag

is Japan. It's extremely easy to replicate and understand. The red sphere shows that Japan is "the land of the rising sun." That's it.

To round off this brief exploration of vexillology, a couple not-so-great country flags must be mentioned. Turkmenistan, which is definitely a "quirky" country (but that's a whole other rabbit hole) is an instance where the design is too complex. While the carpet gul medallions

Turkmenistan's Flag



running down the left side have cultural significance, they truly damage the simplicity that the flag could have achieved. Perhaps they need to stop spending funds on new marble

buildings and hire a better flag designer. Finally, there is the disaster that is the flags of Indonesia, Monaco, and Poland. While following the first four NAVA principles exactly, they are awfully similar and easily confusable for countries that have no connection to each other. Indonesia and Monaco's flags are virtually identical and Poland's flag is just the previous two's design but with the colors flipped. As said above, there are always more good flags and bad flags to check out, too much to cover in this one article. Hopefully you've gained some newfound knowledge on the subject!

Sources:

<https://www.pbs.org/a-capitol-fourth/history/old-glory/>
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<https://yellowhammernews.com/alabama-flag-removed-us-capitol-confederate-imagery/>
<https://nava.org/good-flag-bad-flag#:~:text=Limit%20the%20number%20of%20colors,Be%20Distinctive%20or%20Be%20Related.>
<https://www.scandinaviastandard.com/a-brief-history-of-the-scandinavian-and-nordic-flags/>



Mark Your Calendar!



Noteworthy Second Semester Dates

January:

- 15: No school - MLK, Jr.'s birthday
- 18: Last day of first semester
- 19: No school - Clerical day for teachers
- 22: First day of spring semester
- 25: Senior class meeting during QRT
- 26: Freshman class meeting during QRT
- 29: Junior class meeting during QRT
- 30: Sophomore class meeting during QRT

February:

- 8: High school open house
- 9: Early dismissal for high school (1pm)
- 19: No school - Presidents' Day
- 29: Spring Musical performances begin!

March:

- 4: Spring sports practices begin
- 22: Early dismissal (11am) - end of grading period
- 25 - 29: Spring Break

April:

- 11-13: Spring choir trip
- 16: Multicultural Night
- 18: Opportunities Fair

May:

- 1: Class of 2024 breakfast
- 3: Tapestry publication party
- 4: Prom
- 6: AP exams begin
- 13: Spring Keystone testing begins
- 27: No school - Memorial Day
- 28: Senior awards assembly
- 29: Early dismissal - Kennywood day

June:

- 4: Senior class picnic
- 5: Graduation practice
- 6: Early dismissal - last day of school for students



Representatives from the University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy visited Fox Chapel Area High School with SimMan, an interactive manikin used as a teaching tool for those training for medical careers. By evaluating SimMan's realistic vital signs and articulation of symptoms, students received hands-on experience in how medical professionals evaluate patients in emergency care settings. Fox Chapel Area students were joined by Fox Chapel Area alumnae Alayne Gaghan (Class of 2020) and Jessica Michel (Class of 2019), who are pursuing doctor of pharmacy degrees at Pitt.

Global Outreach Update

By Vesta Homayoun

Global Outreach's purpose is to raise awareness around our community as well as take action on global issues. Our goals extend beyond the walls of our high school, as we aim to engage our members in meaningful discussions, and take tangible actions. This includes the African Library Project. We will help collect books for this non-profit organization, focusing on improving literacy and education in Africa. We intend to coordinate a book drive to collect gently used books throughout our community for this project. We chose the African Library Project for our club because it aligns with our values of education and making a positive impact on a broader scale. Books serve as a powerful tool, and by contributing to libraries in Africa, we have a chance to directly improve literacy and provide resources to communities in need. Additionally, it enables us to participate in a worldwide effort, creating a feeling of comprehension that extends beyond our local communities. Overall, this project encapsulates the spirit of our club's mission and is a great way to provide positive change. The book drive is currently in the planning stages, but keep a lookout for posters around the school with more information! All are welcome to join this cause, make sure you contact the club email (globaloutreach.fc@gmail.com) to get involved!

Lean on Green

Knowledge You Need to Make the Earth Clean

JANUARY 2024

Where to Get Involved

The Fruit Tree Planting Foundation is a Pittsburgh-based nonprofit that is dedicated to planting fruit trees worldwide for healthy communities and a healthy planet. This organization is looking for donations, tree-planting volunteers, and new locations to plant. Their programs strategically donate orchards, training, and aftercare where their fruit tree harvest will best service communities for generations—including public schools, city parks, low-income neighborhoods, Native American Reservations, hunger relief sites, and animal sanctuaries. For more information, visit ftpf.org.



Why Action is Necessary

The World Health Organization reports that global heating will soon reach an all time high of 1.5°C due to greenhouse gas emissions from human activity. If humans do not make an effort increase sustainable practices, every additional tenth of a degree of warming will have a serious impact on people's lives and health. Climate change will affect clean air, drinking water, availability of food, spread of disease, and many more aspects of life. The rapid growth and high stakes of global warming makes saving Earth an issue of utmost importance.

Written and Designed By:
Henry Koloc

Latest News in Green Technology



Vertical Gardens have become very popular in recent times. They not only create the atmosphere of having a garden, but they also have economic, physiological, and environmental benefits. Vertical gardens are often used in urban settings to utilize limited spaces. Research has proven that vertical plants improve urban air quality significantly, acting as natural air filters. Vertical gardens also reduce the cost of energy by regulating temperature, using a process known as evapotranspiration. Both interior and exterior vertical gardens help cool the air during summer months through this process. Another benefit of these gardens is that they help reduce noise levels. Vertical gardens act as sound barriers in buildings. For more information on vertical gardens, visit conserve-energy-future.com.

Easy Ways to be Green

Being involved in an important environmental project is not the only way to help Earth. You can also make a difference through these changes to your daily routine.

- Recycle paper, metal, cardboard, plastic, and glass
- Eat with reusable utensils and plates
- Shut off lights in empty rooms
- Avoid bottled water
- Thrift clothes
- Buy local and organic foods
- Donate used goods





Looking Back and Looking Forward: Space Exploration in 2023 and 2024

By Ian Wellman

The year 2023 saw tremendous progress in mankind's missions to the moon and beyond. Missions ranging from small to large, some widely covered and others obscure, made 2023 a year to remember for space enthusiasts. The following is a highlight reel of some of the most memorable accomplishments. 2024 promises to be even more exciting!

In April, the European Space Agency launched JUICE, a probe that will explore Jupiter and the three ice-covered Galilean moons (Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto) after its eight-year journey. It will look for signs of life in Europa's subsurface ocean, study the structure of Ganymede's and Callisto's ice-based crust during flybys, and study Ganymede's atmosphere and magnetic field (Ganymede is the only moon to have a magnetic field), as well as further explore its structure once it enters its final orbit around Ganymede.

In August, both India and Russia had attempted a moon landing. India's Chandrayaan-3 lander/rover mission successfully landed near the moon's south pole, where they continued to function and succeeded in performing their mission before the two-week-long lunar night. However, Russia's Luna 25 lander crashed into the moon after a failed orbital change.

In September, Osiris Rex's samples from Bennu arrived

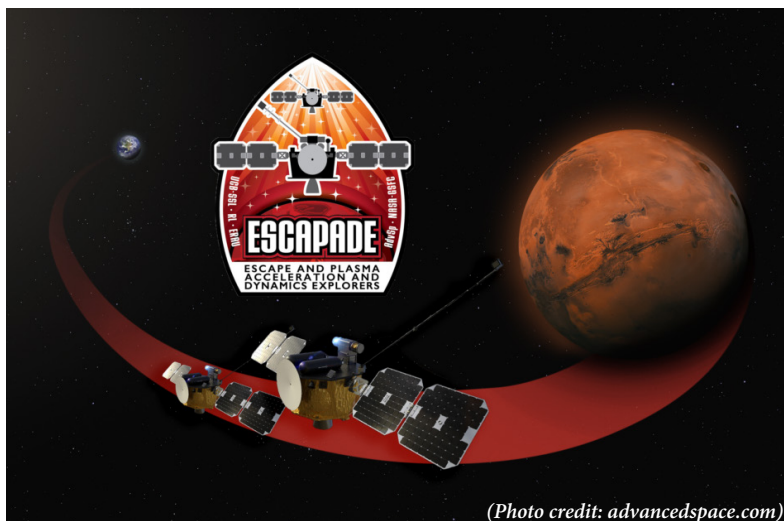
at Earth. While rock from outside the main container was successfully recovered, the majority of the sample is still locked inside the container until new tools can be used to open the container early this year.

In October, NASA launched the Psyche spacecraft to study the metallic asteroid 16 Psyche. 16 Psyche is theorized to be the remains of a planetary core from the early

solar system. Studying the asteroid will give more information on planetary formation, as well as a better idea of the structure and composition of planetary cores.

In December, Japan's SLIM lander and rover entered orbit around the moon and are scheduled to land on January 19th. The mission will attempt to land within a circle with a diameter of 330 ft; the landing zone for Apollo was an ellipse that was roughly 12 miles by 3 miles.

In January, the Peregrine lander will be launched to the moon as part of NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) program. It will carry 14 scientific instruments and two rovers, all of which are NASA sponsored, as well as 14 commercial payloads from various organizations. In February, the NOVA-C lander, another CLPS mission, will be launched to the moon. It will carry more scientific



(Photo credit: advancedspace.com)

In December, during the 2024-2025 Earth-Mars transfer window, NASA will launch EscapADE. EscapADE consists of two spacecraft and is part of NASA's SIMPLEX program, which uses low-cost spacecraft for planetary exploration. The spacecraft will study Mars's atmosphere for a primary mission length of two and a half years.

instruments, as well as commercial payloads.

Blue Ghost is a third CLPS mission scheduled to launch this year. It is carrying additional scientific instruments to study the moon. It is being built by Firefly Aerospace, which also develops orbital rockets and will launch future missions on its own rockets. NASA created the CLPS program to support the Artemis program.

In May, China's Chang'e 6 mission is scheduled to launch to the moon as a sample return mission. Unlike other sample return missions to the moon, Chang'e 6 will land on the lunar dark side. The lander will collect samples from two meters below the surface and send them back to earth in a return vehicle.

In October, NASA will launch the Europa Clipper to Jupiter to study Europa and will arrive in 2030. The probe will be in an elliptical orbit around Jupiter to minimize radiation exposure during flybys of Europa. High levels of radiation can damage electronics, and probes can collect data faster than they can transmit it. The Europa Clipper will study Europa's subsurface ocean and the ocean's potential habitability. In addition, the Hera Space Mission will be launched by the European Space Agency to study the effects that NASA's DART mission had on Didymos and Dimorphos, a binary asteroid system. The mission consists of the Hera spacecraft and two cubesats—small spacecraft that range from 6 to 72 cubic inches. The three spacecraft will study the system, then land on the asteroids. The cubesats will land on the smaller Dimorphos, and Hera will land on Didymos.

In November, NASA's VIPER mission will launch to the moon on Astrobotic's Griffin lander, where it will explore the viability of mining lunar resources, such as water at the Moon's South Pole. The presence of extractable resources, such as water, removes the need to send resources from the Earth to a future lunar base, like the one in the Artemis Program. Artemis II is also scheduled to launch to the moon in 2024, and it will be the first time since Apollo 17, in 1972, that humans will orbit the moon. In addition, it will be the first time a woman, a person of color, and non-American astronaut will go to the moon. The crew consists of Reid Weisman, Victor Glover, and Christina Koch from NASA and Jeremy Hansen from the Canadian Space Agency. Artemis II will be used to test numerous procedures needed for a lunar landing in Artemis III.

In December, during the 2024-2025 Earth-Mars transfer window, NASA will launch EscaPADE. EscaPADE consists of two spacecraft and is part of NASA's SIMPLEX program, which uses low-cost spacecraft for planetary exploration. The spacecraft will study Mars's atmosphere for a primary mission length of two and a half years.

Accomplishments and plans like these from 2023 and 2024 paint a bright future for space exploration.

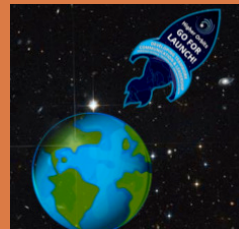
Interested in Space Exploration?

These upcoming programs taking place in
Mars, PA might be perfect for you!

Mars New Year presents
Countown Breakfast
Thursday, February 8, 2024
8:30 - 11 am

Speakers:

- Dr. Jim Green, Former NASA Chief Scientist, now Chief Scientist for the Metavisionaries
- Dr. Michelle Lucas, Former ISS Flight Controller and Astronaut Instructor, now Founder and CEO of Higher Orbits



Go For Launch! Summer
Program
June 24 - 26, 2024
Mars, PA

Go For Launch is a 3-day immersion program focused on the wonder of human spaceflight research. Students will work with an in-person team of experienced astronauts, aerospace scientists and engineers. There will be a competition to have their science experiment flown to the International Space Station!

Students who register for Go For Launch will also have the opportunity to participate in four virtual learning events:

In-flight Learning – virtual learning events

- Mar '24 - What is the future, Metavisionaries with Dr. Jim Green
- This will be a virtual reality experience; can be viewed without VR goggles

• Apr '24 – What science can be done on the ISS, Dr. Tara Ruttley, Chief Scientist, Orbital Reef, BOEING – Blue Origin

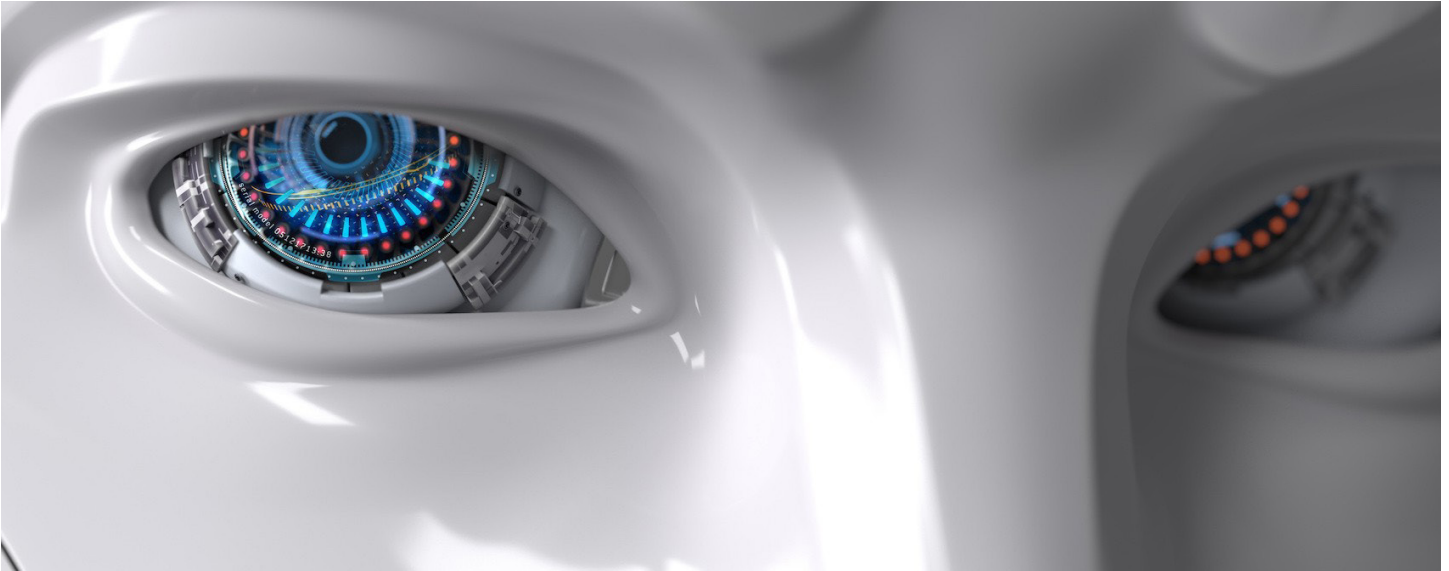
• May '24 – What it is like to design and fly an experiment on the ISS,

Previous Go For Launch! student winners

- May '24 – How do we do experiments on the ISS, potential astronaut

See Mrs. Gibson in the QUEST office
(room 168) for more information!

Why AI is Devious and Super Duper Evil



By Katie Haas

Everyone remembers the weeks leading up to the pandemic. You heard about this mysterious virus – teachers were subtly moving all their files online, and students were kicking their feet and giggling at the prospect of time away from school. COVID was a joke, until suddenly, it wasn't. This is how I feel about the rise of artificial intelligence (but on a much smaller, less life-or-death scale). This past year, AI has blown up over the internet. I've seen more ChatGPT, MyAI, and Dall-E screenshots floating across the interwebs these past few months than I have in my entire life. To put it plainly, it scares the crap out of me.

You may be asking, "Katie, if AI scares you so much, why haven't you spoken up about it before?" That's a totally valid question. AI has been in all our lives much longer than I care to admit (hey, Siri). Google is probably adding me to its kill-list as we speak. But up until recently, AI has just been a tool we use to find previously existing information. We ask Alexa about the weather, tell her to put on music, and scream at her to answer basic math problems that we don't have the mental energy to puzzle out.

But the AI we see now isn't just spitting out pre-programmed knowledge. It's creating.* A few months ago, I saw that someone had gotten AI to write and illustrate an entire children's book. AI is making paintings, music, and stories. Until now, human beings have been the only ones capable of doing these things. We have been creating for tens of thousands of years. And if we're not careful, AI is going to replace this innovative and inventive part of our society.

I would rather admire art and read books that were made by actual people. I'm sure that most other people

feel that way, too. Unfortunately for us, people in charge of overseeing creation probably aren't going to agree with this sentiment. Why pay people to make something when you can ask a computer to do it for free?

We can see these fears reflected in the recent Writers' Guild of America (WGA) strike. Part of the reason writers were protesting was because of the usage of AI (Thankfully, at the time of the writing of this article, the strike had ended and the writers got a pretty good deal.). One of the clauses detailed in the WGA agreement states that AI cannot replace material written by people, nor can it be used as a reason to dock a writer's pay – and that's great! For now. This clause leaves room open for AI creation. People can still train it by having it learn from already existing material. Unfortunately, corporations aren't the best at keeping their promises. It's only a matter of time before the higher-ups weigh the pros and cons and decide to cut unnecessary expenses (the writers).

AI is dangerous. It may not seem super powerful now, but at the rate it's growing, it sure as heck will be. We are going to lose so many brilliant creations if we allow it to prosper. So, next time you ask ChatGPT to write you a piece of crappy *The Summer I Turned Pretty* fanfiction, consider the sources it's using and pulling from. Human imagination is something that a machine can never replace, as much as some may want it to happen.

*AI isn't actually creating. Phrasing it that way makes it more dramatic. What it's actually doing is stealing the work of thousands of talented artists and storytellers, and meshing everything it finds into a dumpster fire that's capable of passing as "art".

A Little Literature:

A quarterly blurb about books you might not have heard of...YET!

By Shriya Krishnamurthy

TODAY'S TOPIC: The Heart of Rebellion

I can't say much - the header speaks for itself. These books are overflowing with incredible adventures, betrayals, close calls, schemes, and a dash of magic here and there. If you want to spice up your winter reading with some exhilarating escapades to unknown realms (even if just for a while) - these are the books for you!

Cast in Firelight

by Dana Swift (*Wickery Duology*)



Photo: penguinrandomhouse.com

Princess Adraa of Belwar can't stand Prince Jatin of Naupure, the man she's supposed to marry. The two royals have had a long-standing competition of trying to best each other by helping more people with their magical power. But Adraa has a secret: she is also Jaya Smoke, a cage-caster who fights in illegal duels and makes firelight - glass orbs that contain fire that burns for two months. She has been working with Jatin's father, the Raja of Naupure, to give firelight to the poor of Belwar. In an unplanned run-in between the two royals, identities get mixed up, and soon Jatin, undercover as his guard Kalyan, is working with Adraa, undercover as Jaya. As the stakes rise, Adraa and Jatin find themselves facing a major conspiracy involving the Vencrin, a black-market gang that seems to be stealing firelight and selling it at exorbitant prices. Along the way, they discover a deeper plot that threatens both their kingdoms. When secret identities are revealed and the true enemy is realized, Adraa and Jatin may have to sacrifice everything to save their kingdoms. Will they be able to overcome their differences and save their people? Or will they lose each other in the process?

The Prison Healer

by Lynnette Noni (*Prison Healer Trilogy*)



Photo: amazon.com

Kiva Meridan has been a prisoner in Zalindov for ten years, barely surviving as the prison's main healer. She has survived only by staying under the radar and on the good side of Zalindov's warden. When along with one of the new prisoners turns out to be Tilda Corentine, the famed leader of the rebellion, Kiva receives a message from her family, she is thrown into a terrible situation. Her family promises to get her out if she manages to keep Tilda alive. The only issue? Tilda has been sentenced to the Trial by Ordeal, designed to kill just about anyone. Desperate, Kiva does the only thing she can think of and volunteers for Tilda. As she prepares for the Trial, Kiva is also juggling the emergence of a new illness (with a dark history) throughout Zalindov, attention from a new prisoner, and the care of a younger inmate, Tipp. When the prince and princess enter Zalindov to preside over the Trial, Kiva finds herself with a mysterious benefactor, saving her from a sure death by Trial. As the trials progress, Kiva discovers that Zalindov is not what it seems, and that her fate is tied to a dark prophecy. As conspiracies unravel and identities are revealed, Kiva needs to choose between family and a future.

Warming Winter Treats



By Mia Costello

Even after the holiday season has ended, there is joy to be found in baking!

Keep the cookie season in full swing by spicing any of these desserts up with some fun decorating items.

My favorite ways to decorate usually involve some type of colorful sprinkle or design, but you have complete creative control over presentation. Making treats for your families and friends is a great way to spread cheer, no matter what you might be celebrating. It's been a long year, so take the time to enjoy a little sweetness with the treats below. I placed an asterisk next to any ingredients that you might need to buy from the store, but most are common. The sites I pulled these recipes from are Sally's Baking Addiction and Broma Bakery — make sure to check them out if you're looking for more desserts to try. Enjoy!

Red Velvet Crinkle Cookies:

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cook time: 10 minutes

Yield: 24 cookies

Ingredients:

- ½ cup softened butter
- ¾ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 2 room temperature eggs
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- *½ teaspoon red food coloring
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- ⅓ cup cocoa powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup powdered sugar

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit, and line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
2. Cream the butter, brown sugar, & granulated sugar

together in a large bowl until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating between each addition. Add vanilla & red

food coloring. Scrape down sides of the bowl as needed.

3. In a separate bowl, sift flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, & salt. Add dry ingredients to wet until just combined.

4. Fill one bowl with granulated sugar and the other with powdered sugar. Use a tablespoon to scoop cookies. Roll balls in granulated sugar, then powdered sugar to completely coat them. Place on cookie sheet. Bake for 10 minutes, or until cookies have puffed and cracked, but are still a little gooey inside.



5. Allow to cool, and enjoy!

Chewy Gingerbread Cookies:

Prep time: 10 minutes

Cookie time: 12 minutes

Yield: 20 minutes

Ingredients:

¾ cup room temperature unsalted butter

¾ cup light brown sugar

*⅓ cup molasses

2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

1 large room temperature egg

2 ⅓ cups all purpose flour

½ teaspoon baking soda

¼ teaspoon baking powder

2 teaspoons ground cinnamon

2 teaspoons ground ginger

½ teaspoon ground cloves

¼ teaspoon ground
nutmeg

½ teaspoon salt

Instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 250 degrees Fahrenheit. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper.

2. Beat butter and sugar together until light and fluffy (around 2 minutes). Mix in molasses & vanilla extract. Combined. Add egg, and beat well.

3. In a separate bowl, stir together flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, nutmeg, and salt. 4. Add dry ingredients to wet and beat until no streaks of flour remain.

5. Use about two tablespoons of dough to make cookie balls. 6. Roll in additional sugar if desired. Place cookies 2 inches apart.

7. Bake for 12 minutes, or until cookies have puffed up and crinkled but are still gooey in the middle.

8. Allow to cool, and enjoy!



¼ teaspoon salt

2 large room temperature eggs

½ cup granulated sugar

¼ cup packed light brown sugar

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

*½ teaspoon peppermint extract

½ cup buttermilk (can substitute other milks if necessary)

Peppermint Vanilla Frosting:

1 cup unsalted butter softened to room temperature

3-4 cups confectioners' sugar

¼ cup heavy cream

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

*¼ teaspoon peppermint extract

Pinch of salt

Optional: crushed candy cane bits & chocolate

Instructions:

Cupcakes:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees

Fahrenheit. Line cupcake pans with liners.

2. Melt butter & chocolate in the microwave with 30 second increments, stirring between each time (you can also do this on the stove). Stir until combined, then mix in instant coffee.

3. In a medium bowl, toss cocoa powder, flour, baking soda, baking powder, & salt together. In a large bowl, whisk eggs, sugar, brown sugar, vanilla extract, & peppermint extract together until smooth. Add chocolate mix from the previous step and whisk until smooth. Add half of the flour mixture, then half of the buttermilk until everything is combined (batter will be thick).



4. Divide batter between 12 liners. Bake for 18 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted comes out clean. Cool completely before frosting.

Frosting:

1. Beat softened butter for about 3 minutes, or until smooth and creamy. Add in confectioners' sugar, heavy cream, vanilla extract, & peppermint extract while continuing to beat the butter. Increase to high speed and beat for another 3 full minutes.

2. Add more sugar if the frosting is too thin. Add more cream if the frosting is too thick. If the frosting is too sweet, add a pinch of salt.

Peppermint Mocha Cupcakes:

Prep time: 30 minutes

Cook time: 18 minutes

Yield: 12 cupcakes

Ingredients:

Cupcakes:

½ cup unsalted butter

2 ounces chocolate

1 heaping tablespoon instant coffee

½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder

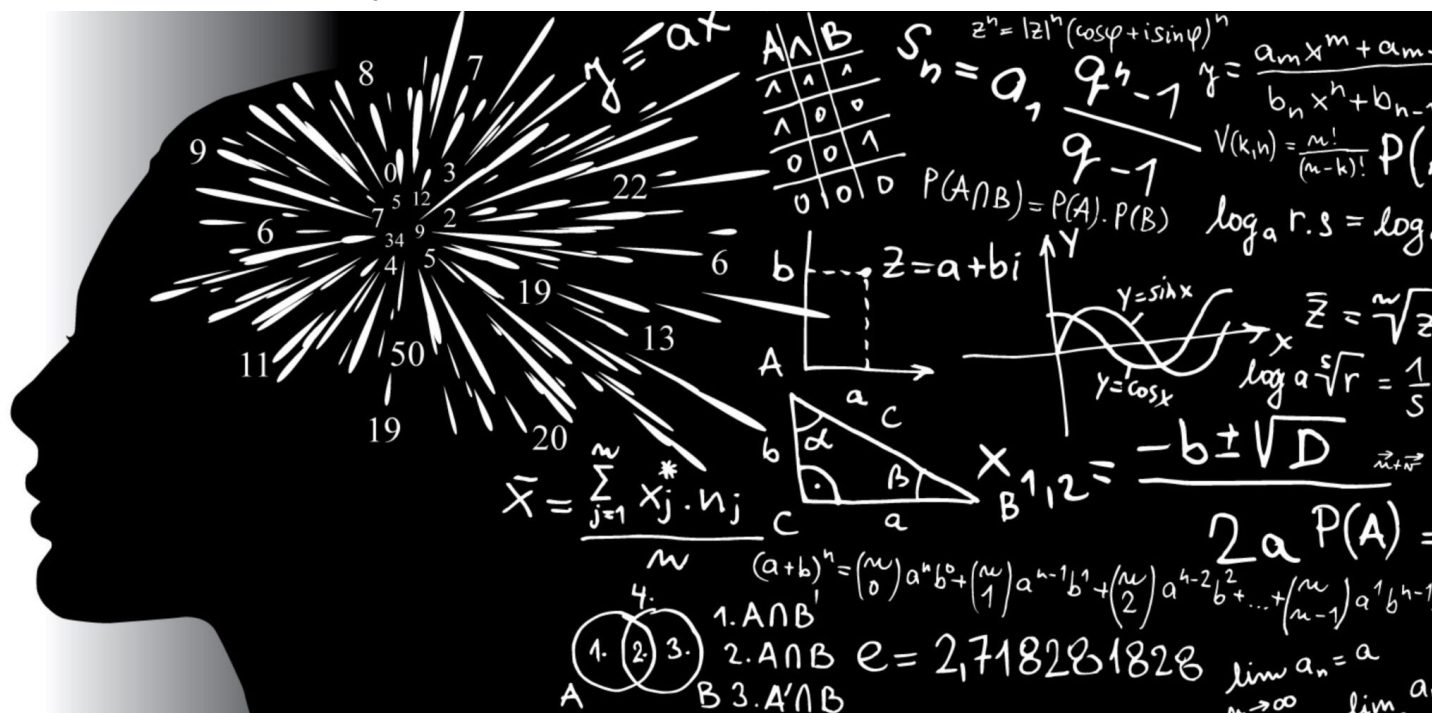
¾ cup all purpose flour

½ teaspoon baking soda

¾ teaspoon baking powder

A Math Minute:

A quarterly report about numbers and mathematics.



By Rishi Krishnamurthy

TODAY'S TOPIC: How Numbers and Mathematics Affect People

Imagine yourself walking into a clothing store at a mall and picking out a pair of pants. First, you have to check what size the pants are. Then, you review its price, maybe the discount, and at the cashier you pay tax. When you leave the mall, you have to figure out what row number you parked your car in. All of these have something in common: numbers or mathematics. My name is Rishi Krishnamurthy, and I am a seventh grader at Dorseyville Middle School. Every quarter, I am going to write a piece about numbers and mathematics. My plan is to continue this until I am a senior, so make sure to check out *A Math Minute* every issue!

Though one may think that math is boring, we live in a society where math is an integral (no pun intended) part of everyday life – pricing clothes in the mall, measuring items for cooking, sizing eyeglass prescriptions, evaluating the Steelers's chances of winning, or checking speed while driving. Even our grades in school are numbered! It is important for us to learn to live with mathematics.

This quarter, I am focusing on how mathematics and numbers affect us. By incorporating mathematics and numbers into our lives, we have made them very powerful. They can help us in many ways; they can also cost us money; they can save us time or make us sick. It is important for us to get control over the math in our life and apply it so that it can help us. I suggest the book *Making Numbers Count*, by Chip Heath and Karla Star. This interesting book is about communicating numbers to us humans. The book describes how humans are not necessarily built to understand numbers and uses relatable comparisons to help us understand numbers to our benefit rather than letting them confuse us.

Over the last year, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become much more prevalent in our lives. AI is advanced mathematics – it uses numbers and creates models to classify things and predict what may happen. However, it has a problem – it consumes a lot of electricity. According to a Wall Street Journal article by Christopher Mims titled, "AI Is Ravenous for Energy. Can It Be Satisfied?," the amount of electricity required to power the world's data centers could jump by 50% by 2027. To reiterate, AI is nothing but mathematics. We input a set of numbers to the computer, and the computer outputs another set of numbers. AI is special because of how the numbers are changed – but that is a topic for another day. The fact is that this use of mathematics is costing us millions of dollars in energy and may impact global climate.

However, we can also use mathematics to help us – to save us money, to save us time, and to get us a better understanding of the world. We have to use numbers and math in the right way, though. Part of my next article will be about logic, and this is one way we can train our brain to better understand this world of mathematics.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA
LEARNING ACADEMY
presents

PRACTICE
MATERIALS
PROVIDED!

SAT[®]

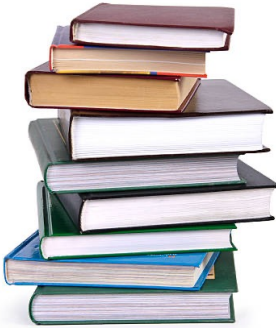
**BOOT
CAMP**

\$100

Sunday, February 25, 2024

Noon – 5 p.m.

Fox Chapel Area High School LGI



- Test taking and time management tips
- Intensive grammar & usage skills review
- Intensive math skills review
- Critical reading skills and strategies
- Practice drills with actual test questions
- Experienced and highly-trained instructors

Student Name: _____ Grade: _____

Student Email: _____ School District: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Email: _____

Please make checks payable to Fox Chapel Area School District (FCASD).

*Submit check and completed registration form (front and back)
either in person (Fox Chapel Area High School room 168) or via mail to:*

Lisa Gibson, Director
Western PA Learning Academy
Fox Chapel Area School District
611 Field Club Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15238

The well-being of any child is a parental responsibility. In an emergency, every effort will be made to contact a parent/guardian. Please list two persons who can arrange transportation and care for your child when you are not available.

Relative or Friend: _____ Phone: _____

Relative or Friend: _____ Phone: _____

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA LEARNING ACADEMY

SAT Boot Camp Program Permission Form

Student Name: _____

I, _____ give permission for my child to attend the assigned date of the Western Pennsylvania Learning Academy's SAT Boot Camp. In the event of an emergency, if treatment is required and parents/guardians cannot be notified immediately, I give consent for emergency treatment and transport to the nearest emergency room.

Does your child have any health concerns that would hinder participation in the field experience? _____ No _____ Yes. If yes, please complete the following:

Please indicate if your child has any of the following health concerns:

_____ Asthma	_____ Inhaler needed
_____ Life-threatening allergy to bee sting	_____ EpiPen
_____ Life-threatening allergy to food	_____ Benadryl needed
_____ Seizure disorder	_____ Diabetes
_____ Allergy to _____	Other _____

Emergency Treatment (if needed): _____

Health Insurance: _____

Family Physician: _____ Phone: _____

My signature confirms that my child has permission to participate in all activities on the specified dates. Permission is also granted to share this information with appropriate academy personnel.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Cell Phone #: _____ Work Phone #: _____

MEET THE STAFF



Annalese
Bartolacci



Karsten
Buchert



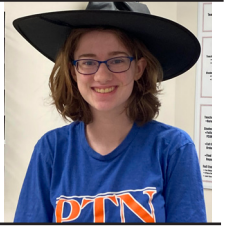
Mia
Costello



Josie
Giguere



Laila
Golla



Katie
Haas



Vesta
Homayoun



Henry
Koloc



Shriya
Krishnamurthy



Alex
Navas



Eli
Olifson



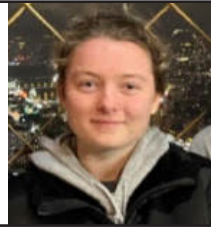
Sienna
Siegel



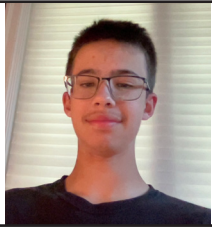
Safiya
Stewart



Maria
Stiger



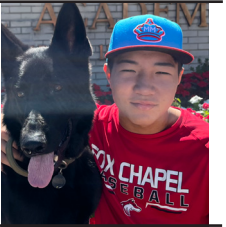
Madeleine
Stone



Ian
Wellman



Abraham
White



Joe
Yoshikawa

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Fox Tales

Volume 9, Issue 2

Fox Chapel Area High School

Second Quarter, 2023/2024 School Year

Fox Tales is a quarterly news publication created by the students of Fox Chapel Area High School. The mission of this publication is to showcase the many positive happenings in the Fox Chapel Area School District and surrounding community. Fox Chapel Area School District is comprised of six municipalities: Aspinwall, Blawnox, Fox Chapel and Sharpsburg boroughs, and Indiana and O'Hara townships. To contribute articles, photographs, or letters, please contact the Fox Tales faculty sponsor, Lisa Gibson, at Lisa_Gibson@fcasd.edu or 412-967-2479. Letters should not exceed 350 words.



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Dr. Michelle Young, Program Principal (A-L)

Dr. John McGee, Program Principal (M-Z)

Second Quarter Fun

