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Grant moving on after 7 years

Spanish teacher is transitioning to new role licensing language educators

Kate Houle
Staff Writer

After 7 years at OWL, and 24 years of teaching, Spanish teacher Grant Boulanger is moving on.

Grant has been working at OWL since 2017, after previously working at Skyview Middle School. He heard about OWL's community based culture from his oldest

daughter, who was a student here at the time, and was instantly drawn to it. "When [my daughter] told me that there aren't "cool kids" in the cafeteria, that people just sit with different grade levels and with different kids, it really piqued my curiosity. And I thought, what is going on that's different at OWL?" he commented. "When Tim

contacted me and said that Fiona (the previous Spanish teacher) was leaving, it was a good time for me to make a change. And so, I came to OWL."

Now he's moving to work for the state of Minnesota, to help other language teachers get licensed. "The state legislature approved a new kind of teacher licensure for

heritage language speakers. So that's for speakers of languages like Hmong, or Somali or Karen or Oromo... my job will be working to articulate what needs to happen for that license, and help people who are interested in getting that license go through that process," Grant explained. Students were surprised to get the news of his departure,

but overall understand the unexpected change.

Grant's Spanish classes are often unexpected. He exemplifies the project-based learning aspect of OWL, as most of his classes don't do regular school work. Usually they don't even have tables in the room, sitting in clusters that make it easier to move around, though some

desks have been added after news of Grant's departure. Students focus on speaking and learning with each other, not on writing worksheets or memorizing vocabulary. "He really understands everyone and has a good perspective.. how he can teach and interact with these students in a way

Grant, 10

Crisis in Israel cuts program short



Adam Griffith



Adam Griffith

Adam poses for a selfie at Masada, a mountain fortress in the Israeli desert (left), a view of the old city of Jerusalem (right).

OWL student faces sudden change of plans after war breaks out in Middle East

Adam Griffith
Staff Writer

I woke up in a third-floor hotel room on October 7 to a blaring siren. It was a sound unlike anything I'd heard before. I asked my friend next to me what was happening and he said "Oh no, there's a bomb." I thought he was joking until I heard staff banging on

our doors, screaming for us to wake up, and they told us to run to the bomb shelter on floor -5.

I entered the stairwell, filled with more than 70 high schoolers and staff members running to the bomb shelter. Once we got down there, we learned what happened. Unbeknownst to me, my

entire semester had been turned upside down in a single morning.

You see, I was studying abroad in Israel this semester, and I was supposed to be there from late August to late December. For the first month and a half, I was having the time of my life studying with other Jewish teenagers and

learning about Israeli culture and Jewish history. We lived in dorms on a campus in Hod HaSharon, a small city just north of Tel Aviv, and went on weekly field trips to different sites in Israel. There were 29 of us in the program I was in, and about 40 more students in another program housed in our dorm building.

For the weekend of October 6-7, our group went on an overnight trip to Jerusalem for the Jewish holiday of Simkhat Torah, a holiday of joy, happiness and celebration, or at least that's what it's supposed to be. Instead it became about fear, sadness, hate and tragedy.

Israel, 10

Elle, Eli found

BSU

Black Student Union fosters a space for Black voices

Hiroko Zeleke
Staff Writer

Every year at OWL there's always new clubs to join. The Black Student Union is one that will be starting up this year. Started by seniors Elle Galbreath and Eli Stende, the BSU meets every Wednesday during crew in Mr. Williams room.

Now you may be wondering what exactly is the Black Student Union? "It's a space for Black students to come together and express issues at our school, how we can address them. It's kind of like a safe space in a way," said Eli. Eli spoke about how transitioning to OWL, a predominantly white school, can be isolating as a Black student.

OWL is not at all unique when it comes to having a Black Student Union. One could say OWL is late to the game. The history of BSUs date back to the 1960s on college campuses where Black students sought to protest and address issues of race happening both on and off campus as well as seeking increased Black representation at schools. "I have a contact for somebody at Highland and we're working on communicating with the group at Humboldt," said Elle.

Elle and Eli began working on getting this club started at the beginning of summer break. "We talked about it at

BSU, 10

OWL students make cash at the fair

High schoolers share their experiences working at The Great MN Get-Together

Nora Crosby
Staff Writer

One of the most anticipated events of the summer is the Minnesota State Fair, an event where people from all over the state come together to celebrate with food, games, and rides.

But with over 1 million attendees each year, many workers are required to keep the fair functioning. This year over 2,000 people were hired

to work at the fair, many of which are people who go to this school.

In order to fully understand the ins and outs of the fair, I talked to some of the people who actually worked at the stands, in hopes of getting a glimpse behind the scenes of the Minnesota State Fair.

This year there were almost 1,000 booths at the fair with almost 300 of those stands serving food. Some of the most popular booths include Sweet

Marthas, French Fries, and Corn Roast.

Depending on the booth, a worker could be making, serving, or ordering the food. Both 12th grader Maria Imolhte and 9th grader Luke Hobday had roles such as "general staff" or "team member" at their respective workplaces of Sweet Marthas and Nordic Waffles. But 10th grader Maddie Linstad had a



Elena Davis

Seniors Nora Crosby and Elena Davis at Italian Junction.

State fair, 2



The Purple Press

OWL's longest-running student newspaper was founded in 1995. This is the 25th year of the Purple Press.

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First winning season in program history

With a record of 8-5-3, Humboldt girls soccer team finishes record breaking fall season

Mya Chandler
Staff Writer

The Humboldt girls soccer team has made history by taking more wins than losses for the first time in program history.

With a total of 16 games played this season, they took eight wins home, finishing the season with an 8-5-3 record. One of the season highlights was a pair of ties against Como this season, their first match was 0-0 on Como turf and their second game for Mayor's Cup 1-1. Although the Mayor's Cup was officially a tie, the girls lost the cup 3-4 in penalty kicks. Humboldt has never managed a tie against Como, according to senior captain Anja Gundale, who has played for Humboldt since her freshman year.

Anja was awarded All-State second team this year and is one of the major reasons why the team has improved so much since last year. She is known for her positive outlook both at games and at practice, whether that was at 7:00 AM practices or during the cold days of late fall. "I think we were a strong team, maybe a little tired at points and tired

at the very end of games, but we persevered and I'm proud of each and everyone of my teammates," said Anja. Anja tallied three total hat tricks for



Purple Press Staff Photo

Senior Anja Gundale (left) and 10th grader Clara Crosby (right) celebrate a goal.

The team welcomed three new coaches: head coach Kyle Johnson, assistant coach Htee Moo Chaw, and JV coach Jeff Steiner. Kyle, who previously

coached at Como Park, has introduced new team traditions that both Anja and 10th grader Cam Sisson, who plays striker and left wing, have said helped create a bond between each player and a stronger connection on the field. These traditions included team dinners, scavenger hunts at The Mall Of America, and early morning hiking.

With the end of the 2023 - 2024 season, the Hawks are losing four seniors: Anja, Mue Lee Htoo, Tha Lay Paw and Pruk' Paw. "This was a very fun season. It's my first time playing soccer for an actual team and it was fun to be on varsity. I feel like we did really well, especially making it past our first section game, which has never happened before," said Cam. The other OWL student who earned varsity minutes this year was 10th grader Clara Crosby, who plays winger.

The Hawks defeated Washington 6-0 in the first section playoff game at Humboldt, and their season ended with a 3-0 loss to Concordia Academy in the section semi-finals.

State fair, 1

more specific role as cashier at Juanita's Fajitas.

Maria discussed having a variety of tasks such as, "dolloping dough, serving cookies, and ringing up customers," which is similar to Maddie who stated she, "rang up customers and handed them their food."

Two of the biggest aspects to working at the fair include the

hours a staff member works/how many shifts they have as well as their wage. All three students worked between 55-90 hours, quite a range. Both Maria and Luke stated their wage was "around 15 dollars an hour," which is a little over Minnesota's minimum wage.

Upon being questioned about their favorite parts of the job, the students had similar answers. Maria stated one of

her favorite aspects of the job was, surprisingly, "being super busy." Both Maddie and Luke talked about enjoying the free food that came with the job as well as trading food with other booths. Luke said, "We had really chill managers that would let us go out and trade for chicken from Lulus and cookies from Sweet Marthas."

All three students discussed

State fair, 10



Photo courtesy of Humboldt Athletics

The Humboldt boys soccer team celebrates their victory at the Mayor's Cup.

Boys soccer finish 7-2-3, win Mayors' Cup

Four OWL athletes contributed on the varsity squad in 2023

Wyatt Kessler
Staff Writer

The Hawks boys varsity soccer team have wrapped their season up with a record of 7-2-3. "I'm happy with it, some games I felt like we could've won, but we sadly didn't," said 10th grader Xavier Harris.

Xavier, who earned an All-Conference honorable mention, tallied three goals and six assists this year. Senior Endale Witt, 11th grader Charlie Acosta, and 10th grader Alex Perez are all the other OWL students who played varsity soccer this year.

One of the highlights of this season was a 2-0 win in the Mayor's Cup. The Mayor's Cup is an annual game between Como Park varsity and the Hawks varsity team. The Hawks did well this season, despite this season being more of a transition season after losing important players from last year. They stayed pretty

competitive in the conference, playing Central and Highland, the top two teams in the conference, pretty close—1-0 loss to Central and 2-1 loss to Highland. Humboldt's Than Soe, the team's captain, earned All-State honors.

Xavier describes the team as a diverse group who gets along well. "It's a bunch of kids from the city representing different ethnic groups," said Xavier. Tony Wani, a Humboldt junior from South Africa, leads the team in prayer before each game.

The Hawks have had a pretty successful year for what they were planning to achieve, with a player in All-State and a player with an honorable mention for All-Conference. They hope to continue and expand their success next year by another year of rebuilding. A lot of important players will be lost, but the future still looks promising.

Cross country sprints across the finish line

The team wrapped up their season strong at sections

Oscar Mons
Staff Writer

It's a little after 3:00 pm. If you're just leaving school you might see three or four OWL students running by gasping for air. You might be wondering, "What kind of maniacs run themselves to exhaustion for fun, and why?" The OWL/Humboldt cross country team, that's who!

As for why, well, everyone has different reasons for joining the team: friends, love of running, learning a new skill, or the inclusiveness of the sport. But all team members come to practice for the same thing: to have fun. Whether it's Fun Friday playing Zimbabwe (a game like soccer but played with a giant yoga ball), traveling to the meets, or running the routes with your buddy, cross country at Humboldt isn't only about your mile time.

Cross country at Humboldt isn't a new sport; it has been

around for many years. However, this season, the team lost many seniors from the previous year. Despite this, the team still strives to improve and shows up to races with confidence. "Even though we lost I think 13 seniors last year, we were able to only lose just one runner. We had 23 last year and 22 this year," said Coach Mario Luna. "[The energy on the team] started out a lot calmer than it has been in the past. But with the addition of new people, it's a different vibe and a different energy and I think it's a more focused energy. I would say that runners want to be better as opposed to 'I want to come here to have a fun time.'"

Many seniors that left have been replaced with new first-year runners, including middle and high schoolers. Cross country is available to all grade levels, with a wide variety of people ranging from 7th and 8th graders to seniors.

The team also offers a JV and varsity team for both boys and girls, but those categories only apply at meets.

Practice is for everyone, and everyone runs together. Cross country is also an extremely supportive sport. When you finish at a meet—no matter how exhausted you are—there is always enough energy to go back and cheer

on your teammates as they finish. "My favorite part about the team is probably how supportive everybody is—it's very grounding in a sense. It definitely makes you see a lot of different scenery and different places you haven't gone before," said OWL 9th grader Annabelle Wilson. At practice, teammates will sometimes partner up and run

a route together to help each other finish.

This season, the team competed in eight 5K (3.1 mile) meets and one two mile meet. In most meets, first place is usually earned by bigger schools and private schools who have a greater number of experienced runners, like Central, Como, SPA, and Highland Park. Still, Humboldt is usually able to secure a top 10 finish.

One highlight of the season was the Battle Creek 5K meet. Humboldt succeeded in securing first place, after competing against other smaller teams like Johnson and Washington. Some of the best times for the team at the meet included Humboldt 12th grader Tamirat Windabu—finishing first with a time of 19:27—and 11th grader Bennett Vaughn-Fier with a time of 19:30. For the girls 9th grader Aria Kulseth finished first with a time of 25:35.

In cross country your best run at a meet or certain distance (1 mile, 2 mile, and 5K) is called a PR, or personal

record. Most 5K times are anywhere from 21 to 30 minutes but some runners manage to get under 20 and even down to 17 minutes which generally wins meets. A PR is important in running because it shows off your best effort and result. A PR is important to runners because it is a symbol of how far you have come in the season or throughout running cross country. Senior captain Willa Champion managed a PR in the final meet of her high school career, with a time of 21:27 in the section meet at Apple Valley. Up and coming runner Aria Kulseth also managed a PR at the section meet with a time of 21:37.

With the season of cross country ending, most runners are looking forward to next year's season or training this summer. A goal for the end of the season is to finish off strong with PRs. "It would be a big thing if someone made it to state, but I think PRs [in sections] would also be sweet," said Mario.



Julie Christenson

From left to right, 11th grader Gwen Stender, 9th grader Aria Kulseth, and 11th grader Lucy Keenan finished 2nd, 1st, and 3rd respectively at the East of Dale Invitational.



Purple Press Staff Photo

Ronin pushes the pace near the finish of the Duluth Race.

Diary of a mountain bike racer

Rainy conditions and a giant hill make this race memorable

Ronin Eckfeldt
Staff Writer

I woke up in a Duluth hotel at seven in the morning. I knew it was race day but I thought maybe the race would be canceled because of rain. When I went outside, I realized how much it had rained. There were puddles everywhere and it was still raining.

We left the room at 7:30 and I had some breakfast—a granola bar. After that we went outside and walked around. We were on the shore of Lake Superior. We walked on a wooden walkway right next to the lake.

At 8:30 or so we left to go to the race course. We got there and helped set up the tent. The tent is where people on the team gather to stay warm and hide from bad weather. There are also chairs and food for before and after races. From the tent, it was impossible to see more than 100 feet because of the fog. It was also windy, muddy and wet.

They canceled the pre-ride because it was too wet and they wanted to make sure the course would be good to race on. A pre-ride is when you ride the course before the race to know what it's like so you know what's coming. This meant I would be racing without knowing what the course is like and would have to take some of it carefully.

We were all sitting in the tent bored, so we went and walked around. It was cold even though it was only in the 60s. It was so wet and cloudy. At noon the races started with 6th grade division. I didn't race until 3:30 and I had time to kill, so I went and watched a lot of races and hung out with my friends on the team. Then at 3:00 we went to warm up, where you go out with the people on the team who you race with and some coaches and ride around and get your legs warmed up for the race. By the time I was done with the warm up I realized how muddy and wet the race was going to be as we were already caked in mud.

After that we went into the start gate. You are there for about five minutes and once

the first wave starts you have one minute to race start. My heart was racing. I put one of my feet on the pedal and got ready to start. I heard ten seconds to race start and then the horn blew. I took off but I missed my pedal and took too long to clip in. I knew I had a bad start but I knew I had time to make it up.

The start of the race was downhill. The long downhill had flat corners and berms; it was so muddy and slick you had to take it slow. The course was super torn up as we were the second to last race. I was not in a great spot but I had a lot of time to make it up. At the bottom of the hill there was a flat section.

At this point I started to think about the big hill at the end of the race. I knew it was not going to be easy. The name was very daunting—"the puker." I had heard a lot of stories about how the puker is never-ending and painful. I couldn't see anything because my glasses were muddy and dark. For the climb I took them off and put them between the zipper of my jersey. On the hill there was a rider ahead of me who had a good pace so I stuck on his tail as we approached the hill.

The hill was two bike widths wide and looked like a dirt road. There were puddles everywhere and grass in the middle of it. It was so wet and some parts were super slow rolling because of the mud that you sink in. I was super tired by the middle and to make it even worse the mud was the worst in the middle. There were some sections where it was super steep and I was exhausted. My legs hurt but not nearly as much as they could have. The problem was I was winded and I was trying to get more air. My cardiovascular system was tired and struggling. I was slow.

The hill had a variety of different grades, some of the hill was steep and hard to climb and some was not that steep and was easier. The start was pretty easy but it started to get steeper in the middle. Then I got to the first bridge

Bike diary, 6

Volleyball looks to next year

The team is becoming more competitive with each season

Nora Crosby
Staff Writer

The Humboldt girls volleyball team ended their season with a loss to St. Agnes on October 26th, but they can look back on their season with pride.

The team finished with 19 wins and 11 losses; a definite improvement from last year's record of 12 wins and 18 losses. Senior setter and captain Annika Lofgren said that this season was, "better than we've done in many many years...it's been really good and successful."

This season the team experimented with some new offensive plays. Annika said that one of them consists of, "the middle hitter being in the air when I set the ball." She went on to say, "if I set that then it goes straight down and it's a big kill...this is the first year we've actually run it."

This year's team is on the younger side, Annika

claims, saying that it's a very "sophomore team". She explains how they are "locked in for the next two years", allowing them to help develop and grow the team even more. One of the most essential players is 10th grader Olivia Fiebich, who won All Conference this year.

When asked about how her role on the team has developed, Annika says that freshman and sophomore year she didn't contribute as much to the team but now

she "runs both right sides and middles." She also says that she has made it her job to keep the team focused and positive throughout every game, saying that sometimes she just has to yell. But really, Annika says, it's all about setting a good example like, "being the first person to be loud on the court when it's silent."

One of the most well known aspects of the team is the huddles they have after every point. Annika says they usually talk about, "who's got the ball next time, what needs to be adjusted, and congratulations." She says the vibe of the team is very humorous and there

are always a lot of jokes going around.

Another tradition the team has is the intros they do before every game. Annika says they have personalized intros for each player where Damon Liberatore, the coach, will get on the mic and announce the players. She says, "Last year they called me Stormy because I walk fast...they try to mimic a storm."

When asked about the future, Annika expressed a positive outlook for the team in the upcoming years. She says that they have evolved into being, "more competitive and tight knit," qualities she hopes will help support the future team.

As a closing sentiment Annika discussed some of her favorite parts of this team. She stated that being on the volleyball team allows her to "be my own person in a way." She says, "I don't have to bring school stuff with me there, I can kind of just relieve stress and be a part of this exciting environment."



Photo Courtesy of Damon Liberatore

The varsity volleyball team posed for a team photo.

Humwow swimmers push each other to be better

Encouraging environment makes the effort worthwhile

Bea Lloyd
Staff Writer

"I've committed to this team because I really like the environment and I really like all the girls. We really push each other to be better and I really love to swim." Said Anna Nowatzki, a senior on the HUMWOW Girls Swim team. The HUMWOW Girls Swim team has made a splash this season, and they are just getting started. The team is made up of girls from Humboldt, OWL and Washington, with a continuously growing number of OWL students joining the

team each year. The season started mid-august and this year the girl's team has 3 OWL seniors, Avery Erb, Anna Nowatzki and Jaielle Galbreath. The team took home a win against Harding in their meet on September 26th. HUMWOW won 80-40 against Harding while taking some close losses to Highland/SPA, Central and Jomo. The team is 1-3, and HUMWOW ranks 6th in the Saint Paul City conference.

The 2023 St. Paul Public Schools Girls Conference took place

October 28th, at St. Catherine University. There were a total of 24 events, and HUMWOW participated in 16 of those. HUMWOW had some stand out performances from OWL students such as Anna Nowatzki in her 500 Freestyle, Ingrid Thune in the 100 Yard Breaststroke and Avery Erb in Girls 100 Yard Freestyle.

The team is made up of a large percent of OWL students, many who have been on the team for years. Senior Anna Nowatzki has been swimming on the team for 4 years, "I usually swim freestyle but our coach is really good about putting us into new events so I've swam everything." The girls are

continuing to push themselves each year, "I swam the 500 Freestyle (the longest event) for the first time this year! It's been something I've been wanting to do for a while and I'm proud of myself for not just doing it once, but three times" says Anna when asked about one of her biggest accomplishments this season.

Jaielle Galbreath is a newer member of the team, "I joined last year, and everyday I regret not joining earlier." Jaielle typically swims breaststroke and freestyle. "I've been sick a lot and had a lot of personal health issues that have kept me from swimming in the

Swimming, 6

Mountain bike team wraps season up at the state race

OWL riders warm to challenge of hilly Mount Kato course

Roman Rufi
Staff Writer

At the state mountain biking race held at Mount Kato in Mankato in October, 9th grader Kai Walker and senior Tess Champion had very different experiences. Tess said she felt like she was passing people on the uphill only to lose time on the descents. Kai said that for him it was the opposite.

"You have to have the endurance to be in shape and train for the climb but also have the technical skills for the descent," said Tess, in a statement that captures the essence of mountain biking as

a sport. Tess, one of the team's captains, is the only girl on the Saint Paul Youth Mountain Bike team who raced at the varsity level this season. Conquering the Mount Kato course was particularly important to Tess, because last year she fell and suffered a concussion on that same course. It was "mentally hard" to go down some hills, said Tess.

Kai placed tenth among 9th grade boys at the meet. He almost got eighth but got passed two times in the final stretch. He was also battling personal demons, having suffered a flat tire at last year's

state meet, finishing near the back of the pack. "The season went pretty good. I didn't have any major crashes during any race," said Kai. 8th grader Zinabu Peterson placed 14th at state.

There are 50 riders on the Saint Paul South team and ten OWL riders, including senior captains Oliver Ley and Tess. Everyone practices Tuesday and Thursday on many different aspects of mountain biking. For practice on Tuesday they go to Hidden Falls to work on endurance and power. On Thursday they go to a trail around St. Paul and work on more technical skills. Even though the team has students from 6th to 12th grade, they all practice

together. They split everyone up during practice based on speed and ability level. "I made a lot of friends and learned a lot from more experienced

Bike recap,



Purple Press staff photo

Zinabu Peterson nears the end of "puker hill" in Duluth.

Senior Spotlight

Elena Davis



What pronouns do you use?
She/her.

How long have you been at OWL?
Seven years.

What are your plans for next year?
Four year college to study elementary education—I love working with kids.

What's been your favorite class in high school?
AP Lit because I've always loved English classes plus any of Luke's classes especially World History.

What extracurriculars are you involved in?
Cross country, frisbee, theater, choir, yearbook, Outward Bound, and lots of babysitting.

Favorite field work experience or school trip and why?
California Outward Bound trip junior year. Exploring Yosemite was amazing.

If you had a walk up song, what would it be?
Self Care by Mac Miller.

That One Little Kid Dhoua Vue

What pronouns do you use?
She/her.

How tall are you?
Don't know.

What's your favorite book, movie, or TV show?
I like playing Roblox, reading the babysitters club and my favorite movie is Coraline.

Who's your favorite senior?
My brother, Ty.

What is your favorite thing about OWL so far?
The teachers.

What extracurriculars do you plan on getting involved in at OWL?
Math in Preston's room.



Kent fashion bonus content Kent's fashion sense is no joking matter

Raina Rossell and Kiara Stiener
Staff Writers

Me and Kiara went to Kent's room with one thing in mind: a simple fashion interview.

We wanted to continue the "Fashion Spotlight" section, started by previous Purple Press writers Gwen and Violet. Fashion Spotlight is an interview with teachers about their outfits. All we had to do was ask simple questions that we thought would have simple answers. Halfway into our convo, as soon as Kent began to expound about his "shirt buying philosophy," we knew this was more than just a quick interview.

When explaining his philosophy Kent said, "But the shirt that I want is the 'ugliest shirt'—but it's not ugly to me, society has deemed it ugly by leaving it leftover on the rack"

When entering a store, Kent goes straight to the discount rack, a section containing clothes that have been picked over, and discarded by popular society. In a way he embodies the saying "one man's trash is another man's treasure." Of course these clothes are not trash per se, but Kent sees value, where others have found none. He says that he champions for the underdogs of the world.

As for Kent's other clothes,

he sticks to Carhartt pants, specifically double paneled pants, and Dansko clogs. These clothing brands create clothing that lasts a long time. His decision making focuses more on the experience of wearing and quality of product, than the appearance and cutting costs. These clothes have a purpose beyond aesthetic. In Kent's own words, his clothes-buying system is "no joke."

Most people choose their clothes the day of, either throwing on whatever they see first or digging through the clean laundry. Kent however, treats his shirts more like collectibles, with detailed schedules and ranking systems. He even has his "top 10 shirts." Each of his top 10 shirts has a story behind it. His number one shirt was found within an open air clothing market, in Tokyo Japan. The sight of this "wonderful shirt" stopped him in his tracks and immediately drew him in.

Kent says "My top 10 shirts I only wear once a year."

"I want them to last as long as I can." Kent takes protective measures to make sure his shirts are long lasting, and one way he does this is by only wearing his Top Ten shirts once a year. This might present a challenge for any other, as one might run out of clothes to wear, but not for OWL's

favorite art teacher. "I have enough shirts to get through, first, second and third quarter without repeating any shirt." This is especially meaningful for Kent as this aids in the longevity of each shirt.

There is intention through each outfit, and Kent announces to his classes when a Top Ten appearance is coming up. Why would he do that you must be thinking?

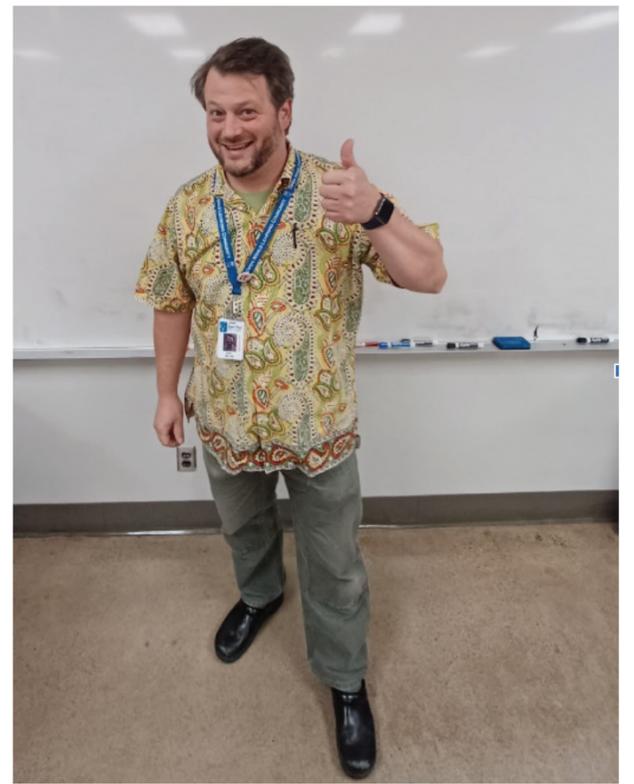
It is not for people to simply marvel at his collection, but to have the camaraderie that comes from shared expression. He urges other students to wear one of their own "Top Tens," and celebrate. For other students, this proud example

of self expression is impactful. When Duncan Smith, a OWL 11th Grader was asked to comment on how he feels about Kent's style choices, he uttered the simple phrase "I don't think you can improve perfection."

This is about more than just shirts or clothes, this is about values and personal meaning. For Kent, his fashion represents those who have been neglected by society, through his shirt selection, and represents the common man, as his style emulates his style icon Bob Newhart.



Kent's closet includes a plethora of Hawaiian shirts.



Purple Press Staff Photo

Fashion Spotlight: Kent

OWL teachers are known for their style, Kent is no exception

Raina Rossell and Kiara Stiener
Staff Writers

What is your go-to fit?
My go to fit is smart wool socks, Dansko clogs, Carhartt's double paneled pants, and then some kind of fun button up short sleeve shirt.

What is your skincare routine?

Wash with soap and water.
What is your hair routine?
Shampoo every other day because if you do it every day, then you're depleting your oils right? You don't want to deplete your oil so every other day, wash my hair and then just comb it.

How early do you wake up to get ready?
Five o'clock and I'm here at school by six every day.

Where do you shop?
Well, my socks I get from REI, my Danskos I get from the walking store at the Mall of America, and my Carhartts I get from the Carhartts store in Mall of America. My shirts I just get wherever I see a short sleeve shirt that I like.

What's the number one store you shop at?

The number one store I shop at for clothes? Well, I don't know, I guess Columbia or REI or something like that? I guess.

Who is your fashion icon?
Bob Stewart. No, no, no. Bob Newhart.

Why?
He just wears simple clothes like back on the Newhart

Show. He was just kind of like the common everyday man.

What teacher at school has the best fashion?

Well, I'd say the staff member is probably Ms. Ma'lene but if you're gonna go teacher. . . well then I got to think about it more. . . Probably Preston.

What do you have to say about the current style trends of OWL?

It seems like everyone is enjoying expressing themselves.

What fashion trend do you think should come back?
Bell bottoms.

What fashion trend do you think should never come back?

Oh, there's a couple, but skinny jeans.

And I know in me saying that, I've now just offended half of the boys at the school but that's okay.

Glasses or contacts?
Glasses.

Describe your wardrobe in one word.

It's tough—that's hard. . . I'm gonna go with two because I can't do one. "Functionally Fun."

At Kent's recommendation, our next staff member to interview is Ms. Ma'lene. Stay tuned for the next issue, where we will explore Kent's inspiration, his favorite fits, and the meaning behind it all.

Upcoming Events

November 21st: Asian Culture Night

November 23rd - 27th: Thanksgiving break

November 29th & 30th: Student led conferences

December 8th: College March

December 13th - 15th: Performances of the fall play

December 25th - January 5th: Winter break

Alysha has her own horse?

Meet the new face you've seen around the halls

Claire Ales
Staff Writer

Just like many OWL teachers, Alysha Lundquist enjoys spending time outdoors. She enjoys anything from snowshoeing to camping. She even has her own horse named Ace!

Alysha has been Ace's only owner and had her since birth. She did all of Ace's training and has even taken her to the State Fair, where they won first in training and third in showmanship. Alysha currently goes and visits Ace almost every weekend in Carleton, Minnesota where Ace lives on a 40-acre farm. "It's really nice having a partner that I've had for a very long time and I know really well," said Alysha.

Alysha graduated from the University of Minnesota Duluth with two bachelor's degrees. Her first one was in teaching communication arts and literature, and her

second in literature language and culture. But this isn't what she was originally going to college for. She originally went to college for chemical engineering but didn't like how large the classes were.

Alysha found herself liking her English and philosophy classes because they had smaller class sizes (around 40-50) and students' voices mattered more. She really wanted to bring the importance of student voices into the classroom. Alysha also had the opportunity to co-teach a geometry class when she was in 11th and 12th grade and she really enjoyed it. These are a few of the reasons Alysha wanted to become a teacher.

When she was younger, Alysha was part of 4-H which is a youth development organization that focuses on empowering youth, and creating safe, diverse, and inclusive environments. They also really focus on hands-on learning, being involved in

the community and having a positive impact.

Alysha has been teaching in the Saint Paul Public Schools district for three years and previously taught in Inver Grove Heights for three years. Throughout her six years of teaching, Alysha has taught at E-STEM middle school, Northfield middle school, and helped start the St. Paul Online high school. At OWL, Alysha currently teaches 9/10 English and seventh grade English.

One of Alysha's favorite things about OWL so far is the students. "I really like the students. Everybody is happy to be here and very kind to one another. Students were going out of their way to help me find the rooms I needed to go to and figure out how to run crew," said Alysha.

Since Alysha is an English teacher, she likes to read books. Her favorite book is *River Runs Through It* by Norman Maclean. "I think the language is very beautiful, it is

focused on the outdoors and it tells a very simple story about how hard it is to know the people that are closest to us," said Alysha. A fun fact about Alysha is that she eats the same thing for lunch everyday. An apple and a granola bar.

Alysha is very excited to be teaching at OWL and can't wait to get to know the community better. "OWL is a lot different than any of the other schools I have taught at and I'm really excited to continue the year here," said Alysha.



Purple Press Staff Photo
Alysha teaches her 9th grade ELA class.



Purple Press Staff Photo

Laura checks out a book to a student at the library.

Familiar face in the library

Laura takes on new role as librarian and media specialist

Kate Houle
Staff Writer

OWL's new librarian is a swing dancer, has taught in the Netherlands and Japan, and has actually been at OWL for the past two years.

Laura Orris is a familiar face to many OWL students, after working as a substitute teacher here, both short and long term, for the last couple years. Outside of school she likes "swing dancing, hiking, biking, reading (of course), trying different restaurants..I'm always really busy." She enjoys traveling abroad and the opportunities that come with that. She also has two cats she loves dearly, and just bought a house over the summer.

At OWL, she's now our Library and Media specialist, and is in charge of all the books, computers, and other various things in the OWL library. Only 37% of SPPS schools have a licensed librarian working in the building, and though Laura is not yet licensed, it's a great advantage to have a dedicated person in charge of these resources.

"So it's also managing the online collections and helping with History Day, like online research, or the website building." Laura commented. "It's more inclusive, what all the roles that a librarian needs to do."

The retirement of OWL's old librarian Caryl Mousseaux came as a shock to many after seven years of seeing her in the library. But Laura was more than ready to step in. "She was training a lot with Caryl last year, and would come to SLAC meetings, and be in the library consistently, so that she knew all the things she needed to know already," said senior Hiroko Zeleke, a longtime member of the Student Library Advisory Council. Laura has continued her relationship with her predecessor, and both have reassured it won't be the

last we'll see of Caryl. "It's definitely bittersweet, because I love Caryl just as much as the students. But I'm happy she's enjoying her retirement a lot... and I'm happy that [she's] still coming in and being involved," remarked Laura.

Laura grew up in a small, predominantly white town in Wisconsin, and got her English degree from the University of Wisconsin River Falls. The diversity and lively culture of the Twin Cities drew her west, and she started looking around at different types of schools to see what she'd be interested in. "In my student teaching, I was at a school that didn't have a library. And I was like, I'm absolutely not going to work at a school that does not have a library. So I wanted to get a feel for different schools. And that's how I kind of found Open World Learning," she said. Laura's now working towards getting her masters degree in Library and Information Science. "I always had my eye on the library position, but you need a master's. And, like, that's a lot. So actually being hired in the position, and knowing that you have a job was the push that I needed to get the masters."

Laura was hired at the end of last year, with help from a couple students. "OWL tends to have students help with the hiring process of teachers.. and Laura was our sole applicant, but that didn't mean we had to hire her," said Hiroko, who was a part of the hiring committee. But everyone there agreed that her passion for books and the library made her an ideal candidate.

She wasn't just an ideal candidate for a librarian. Laura's also taken over Caryl's crew, which has been going well. "Having a crew is interesting, because I've had experience with crews before, but now it's like, oh, this is my crew...I really like that.

Laura, 6

Murder is announced at OWL

Fall play is adaption of Agatha Christie novel

Charley Cheatham
Staff Writer

An old house, an imminent murder, and an estate full of people who may not be exactly who they say they are. This sets the scene for a thrilling mystery. The fall play has been announced and this riveting classic murder-mystery is sure to be one to remember.

A Murder is Announced is an adaptation of Agatha Christie's 1950 novel redesigned for the stage by Leslie Darbon in 1977. The play follows the events after an announcement in the local newspaper states the time and place of an imminent murder and an unexpected

visitor shows up dead at mysterious Miss Blacklock's estate. Filled with thrilling twists and turns and a cast of uncanny characters, A Murder is Announced is sure to be one of OWL's most gripping shows yet.

The process of putting together this show started back in April, the OWL Theater Advisory Board got together to decide on the play. They started by bringing together a list of plays that they were interested in putting on and then argued over which one should be chosen. They narrowed down the list to three and over the summer, then OWL theater director Rebekah Rentzel chose this

play. "A Murder is Announced has a really great group of different female leads, and it's a really cool Murder mystery with a lot of good plot twists," said Rebekah.

Auditions were held on September eighteenth and nineteenth and over the course of those two days, students read monologues in front of Rebekah, and assistant director senior Mira Iwaszek. "The audition and casting process is one of my favorite parts of starting work on a new show. It is so special getting to watch people explore their interest in theater," said Mira. After that, the list of auditionees was narrowed down to a list of around 20 students to

do callbacks. Much like in auditions, these students read parts of the play for Rebekah and Mira but this time they focused on working with other actors to act out a scene. Then, on Friday, September 22nd, the cast list of eleven was announced along with the list of designers for the fall play.

Because the cast is so small, competitiveness and hurt feelings were bound to be in the air. "Sometimes it is [competitive]. Like it's true that there's only so many spots for each show or so many spots for each design crew. And so there are times where there's competition around

Fall play, 6

Akira takes on teaching role

OWL's favorite student teacher is back on staff

Beatrice Cosgrove
Staff Writer

"The word moist and raisins. I feel like there's a lot of group hate [towards them] and it's because people want to fit in and not because people actually hate it, because raisins are good, they're nature's candy," Akira Mally, science teacher at OWL, said when asked about a controversial opinion. I had sat down with him for an interview regarding the article you are currently reading and found myself thinking: wow, you can learn so much about a person in a five-minute interview. This is so cool.

I first met Akira way back in 7th grade (wink, wink). He was a student teacher from the University of Minnesota, helping out our class and cracking jokes with the students. On his last day he brought candy -which was

accepted graciously- and said his goodbyes. I was sad to see him go back to the U, but much to my surprise, he returned this year teaching 9th grade Integrated Science, 7th grade Life Science (both in Megan's room), and Anatomy (in Rebecca Palmer's room).

Akira got a degree in Bio-Chem from the University

of Minnesota, hoping to go to pharmacy school, "...but then after doing some soul searching at the end of my journey I realized that that wasn't going to make me happy and that it wasn't going to be very fulfilling," he said. Afterward, he began exploring other career options, including teaching. He had never worked

with kids before, but decided to go forward with it. "I did my student teaching here, had... an absolute blast and I fell in love with teaching...that's why I'm here today," Akira told me.

There are so many types of science. Oh, so many. Attempting to think of the ologists alone kills about a few bajillion brain cells. So I decided to ask Akira why he pursued science. I went on to learn that ever since he was a kid, he liked the research aspect of science. The fact that not everything has been discovered has also been a magnetic force associated with Akira's choice. "...the exploration of the unknown is what drew me to science," he said. It is also a career of trial and error, "There was one time at the U, where I was in...O Chem lab and someone mixed the wrong two chemicals and



Purple Press Staff Photo

Akira poses for a photo while teaching 7th grade science.

Akira, 6

Ultimate team builds bonds

Fall season is about building chemistry and working together

Luis Hernandez
Staff Writer

This fall the Manatee have had a strong season, the bond and chemistry between the team has only got stronger. Working together, and making concise plays, is only benefiting the team and helping lead them to the top.

Currently, the Manatee fall league has two teams. They have a boys team and a mixed team. Both teams have had a very successful season as of press time, the boys team currently undefeated 5-0 and the mixed team 4-1 only having lost to St. Louis Park Crush. "The season has been going pretty well, everyone is having fun and we are growing as a team. It is so great to see the progression," said junior captain Noah Johnson. The season will continue until November 4th where both teams will have their final game. Each team has their

own set of coaches. "I'm am hopeful for spring, people are looking really good, putting in the work, practicing. There's nothing I love more than seeing the players come together and fall in love with the sport," said senior captain Cooper Peterson-Antin. The boys coach is Joe Ling, he is also the boys varsity coach during the spring season. The mixed teams coaches are Maddie Scott, Donald Post, and Athena Bolton-Steiner who are all OWL graduates.

As of press time, the season has one season game left on November 4th.

Although the fall season is far less important than the



Photo courtesy of Elena Davis

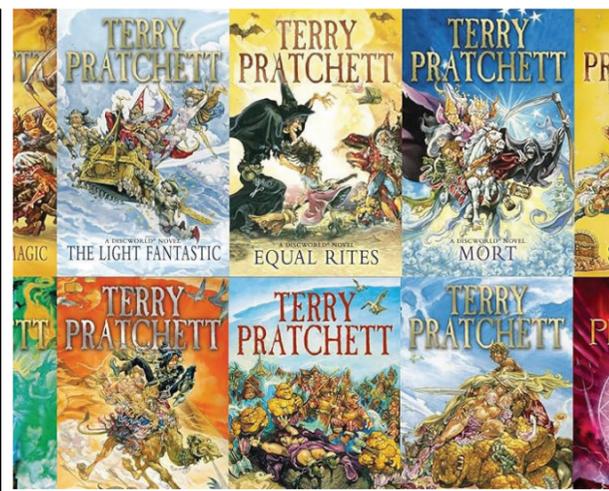
The manatee finished 2nd at the Manatee Mow Down.

spring season, it's still very vital and is necessary for the team. During the fall season, the team gets introduced to the incoming freshmen and that creates a space where the team can connect with the new players and makes them feel more comfortable and welcomed. It's also a preparation for the spring season where the stakes are higher and the games matter way more.

In the last couple weeks of the season, they had two tournaments that they will be participating in. The first of the tournaments is Crushtober which is an annual tournament hosted by St.

Louis Park Crush. This was a one day tournament that was held on Sunday October 15th at the Oak hill park in St. Louis park. The Manatee ended up placing 3rd in the tournament, behind SLP and Edina. The second tournament was the Manatee Mow Down, which was also a one day tournament that was held on Sunday October 29th at the Humboldt Fields hosted by the Manatee. This tournament has been hosted by the Manatee and will hopefully not be the last. The homecoming game is going to be played at the Humboldt fields on Saturday October 28th against Great River High School.

The Manatees were supposed to have a homecoming game against Great River on Saturday October 28th but unfortunately due to weather issues, the game was canceled.



Amazon.com

Terry Pratchett is a highly acclaimed British author.

Better than Harry Potter 40+ books in 44 years

Kaden McNamara
Staff Writer

Move over J.K. Rowling, a better British author is continuing to be a higher quality writer and person, from beyond the grave.

With 40 plus books in a single series, 44 years as an author, and two separate knightships, the late British author Terry Pratchett has received very high praise from those that have read his books, and here's why you should read some of his works instead of continuing to support Rowling by reading Harry Potter.

Sir Pratchett's fame mostly comes from his extremely lengthy book series, Discworld, and his co-written book, Good Omens, with fellow British author Neil Gaiman.

His Discworld series consists of 41 books, written over a total of 32 years, and takes place upon a disc shaped world that is carried upon the backs of four giant elephants that all stand on the back of a giant turtle that floats through space. As can be surmised from that description, it is generally a parody of fantasy and fantasy tropes, but also has extremely grounded conversations and life lessons that hit like a truck.

The series generally can be read in any order without major consequences, although fans of the series do often recommend books to start with or advisable reading orders, such as by publish date or by sub series. His

co-authored book, Good Omens, is about an angel and a demon that messed up at the birth of the Antichrist and accidentally sent him to a family in Oxfordshire. The pair of long standing friends have to work together and prevent the Apocalypse from happening, contrary to the orders of both heaven and hell. The book recently got a season two of its popular Amazon Prime TV series, and will likely end up getting renewed for a third season after WGA and SAG-AFTRA manage to get a fair deal with the CEOs and shareholders.

The Discworld series is, to put it bluntly, very ridiculous. The books range from wild concepts from, "Death becomes Santa Claus for a night," to "Mulan but everyone in the group did the same thing," to "Macbeth but the protagonists are the witches." And yet despite concepts so ludicrous you'd think it was made up, it's also one of the most grounded and hard hitting book series I've ever read.

"Death becomes Santa Claus for a night," also has the deepest analysis of the human relationship with fantasy ever, containing the quote "The place where the falling angel meets the rising ape." "Mulan but everyone in the group did the same thing," has some fantastically portrayed themes of gender, war, feminism and

Terry Pratchett, 10

Laura, 5

It's kind of like another sort of family," said Laura. "She's very, very nice and she controls the 9th graders," commented 8th grader Leo Scoggins, one of her crew kids, "we are currently trying to make curtains for the library and so her helping with that has been pretty nice."

Laura has been dedicating a lot of her time and help right now to the library and books. "I think books are really powerful and can change people's lives, because that's what they did for me," she commented. "She likes books, which is an important part. I don't want to have a librarian who doesn't like books," said Hiroko. "I recommended maybe my favorite series ever to her while she was still a substitute and I got her to read it.. I'm really excited to talk about that with her and just share that with someone else," said 10th grader Lillie Eiken. That's a common story for students, and Laura is

all for it. "I'm really excited to choose books and hear student recommendations, what they're reading and what kids are interested in," she commented.

Both students and Laura herself are getting acclimated to the library again. "It's definitely overwhelming, like little technical details that you wouldn't think that you have to sort through." Laura remarked, "there's been a lot of anxiety about [students] not having their old books being able to be turned in... but even if they're returned after I mark them lost the system still remembers them so it's really no problem...I really don't want students to be scared to come to the library." Hiroko thinks she's handling it well, "She wants the feedback, she wants to know what she can do," she commented, "I'm excited to see what Laura's library is going to be like.

Mountain bike team, 3

riders," said Zinabu.

The team had a total of five races this season. The team has done well with some people placing in the top ten. Kai got fourth at Lake Rebecca in the boys freshmen D2 category and Tess placed seventh among varsity girls. In most races that they participate in they have a rider place in the top ten in their division. "My highlight of the season was Lake Rebecca because it was hard and down to the wire," said Kai.

A mountain biking race begins with everyone in one group, which is called a mass start. Riders are placed in the start area based on their previous results. They go around a certain course, usually around three to four miles long. Middle school does one lap, freshmen do two laps, JV does three laps, and varsity does four. The riders may encounter steep downhills and uphill, as well as sharp corners and rock obstacles.

You can join the mountain

biking team no matter what skill level you are at. "I have been biking since I was three and mountain biking since I was five," said Zinabu, but you don't have to be as experienced as him to be on the team. Many of the riders on the team didn't have experience before and still joined because they thought it would be fun. "The team caters to a wide range of riders. Some ride on weeknights just for fun, and others are really competitive and love to race. But everyone becomes a stronger and more skilled bike rider," said English teacher Leo Bickelhaupt, who is one of the coaches for the team.

The team culture of mountain biking is really positive. Tess puts on glitter with other riders before races, riders cheer each other on, and race day atmosphere is lively. There's a lot of reasons why people like the sport, but 9th grader Kai Walker said "I like it because it's a very diverse and big group of people and I have made a lot of friends."

Akira, 5

they gassed out the entire room...we had to evacuate the building and let it sit for a couple of days, so that was pretty crazy," explained Akira about an experiment gone wrong.

In addition to facts regarding his academics and career, I was able to obtain some other interesting information. Akira has lived in Germany for two years and

Bike diary, 6

and realized that there were four of them. I thought that I was only one, a fourth of the way through. With no pre-ride I didn't know how far apart the bridges were, luckily they were close together so the end was closer than I thought. The last couple hundred feet are single track so you can't pass there. I was at the very end and I sprinted past the kid I had been behind the entire hill. Then I was done.

Even though I didn't have the best race, I felt good after finishing. I congratulated my teammates who were done before me and talked to my parents. Then we went to the tent and all of the high school people were there to pre-ride

Fall play, 5

parts and that can be tough," said Rebekah. On the other hand, it seems that a small-cast play opens up doors for actors, giving them a bigger opportunity to shine. Beatrice Cosgrove, who will be playing Miss Marple in the play, said, "I think that plays with a small cast really give actors the opportunity to play bigger roles and really get into and get involved in a play. But I think that if we did a small play every single year year after year, it wouldn't give as many people the opportunity to really get into acting."

The play is set to be performed on December 13th, 14th, and 15th in the OWL auditorium at 7pm. "I think this one is going to be one of

Japan for eight, speaking fluent Japanese. He also has a beloved corgi named Maddie. Akira has other interests and hobbies including, but not limited to, rock climbing, attending concerts, hanging out with friends, eating and making food.

I'm really excited to have Akira back and ultimately, I have decided that he is very akin to protons. They both like to stay positive (please don't fire me).

because they were going to race the next day on Sunday. But the pre-ride was again canceled.

We stayed and I hung out with some of my friends and had some hot cocoa. Then I went home and got cleaned up. We had to put a towel down in the car to not get it muddy. My legs were pure mud, my bike was covered with mud, along with my face, my jersey, and my shorts. That night we had a team dinner and I hung out with my friends and had some food. The next day I woke up at 7 am and got ready to go to the high school races. As we were getting ready to go, the high school races were canceled. The course could not take any more rain.

our strongest acting pieces in a long time because it's such a small cast. And it is a bit more of a drama than most plays we do," said Rebekah, "I'd say, come for the surprises. Come for the murder, it's fun in this particular circumstance."



Agatha Christie

Swimming, 6

meets, which is a little sad. But practice has been going really well," Jaielle has been able to make the most of the season regardless. "I have learned to be more gracious and understanding with myself with all my health issues, my performance has dropped a bit, but I've learned that that is okay. It's been a learning experience for sure."

The team has an environment that allows people to branch out and connect with people they wouldn't normally meet, "I've made friends with a lot of people in different grade levels." Says Jaielle.

As it comes to a close, the girl's reflect about

their senior season. "The team environment is very supportive. Everyone is so nice and welcoming. The coaches are so amazing and understanding. It's so nice having a community where you can connect and feel like family with people from OWL, but also Humboldt and Washington. This, along with my love for the water and the amazing exercise I get is why I've stayed," says Anna. Every year the team continues to grow and thrive, and with the addition of many younger OWL students a part of the team now, it will continue to grow and push the team to success in the coming years.

Quest for a perfect sandwich

Seniors Eli, Oliver, Henry, Aidan, and Brenin took a road trip to Deadwood, South Dakota in search of the restaurant chain Earl of Sandwich

Nick Christopherson
Staff Writer

When you think of an epic quest, several things might come to mind. Frodo and Sam's harrowing trek to Mordor in *The Lord of the Rings*, Odysseus' journey back home after the Trojan War in the *Odyssey*, or countless other stories. But the most epic of all the epic quests happened only a few months ago, and you probably don't even know about it. It was when six OWL students went on a road trip to find the Earl of Sandwich.

The Earl of Sandwich is a chain of sandwich shops with 53 locations across five different countries around the world. Their name, and by extension their whole brand, came from the story of John Montagu, the fourth Earl of Sandwich (Sandwich is a town in southeast England). As the tale goes, in 1762, John Montagu was sitting at his gaming table playing cards when he got hungry. He did not want to leave his game to go and eat, so he asked for a serving of roast beef to be placed between two slices of bread so that he could eat it with his hands. Supposedly, other people soon began to order "the same as Sandwich," which was then eventually shortened to "sandwich."

This legendary origin story for the sandwich was discovered one day by current seniors Oliver and Henry Plaman, Aidan Jewell, and Eli Berg in their 10th grade chemistry class. After they found out there was a sandwich chain named after the Earl, they were determined to rye it (heh).

While Henry wanted to visit the Earl of Sandwich for the novelty of it, his brother Oliver saw something special. "For me, it had an air of almost, like, whimsy," he said. "[The fact that] such an old institution operates a restaurant chain, where they make sandwiches? I just thought that was ridiculous, and I had to try it."

After a little research, they discovered that the nearest location to Saint Paul was in Winnipeg, Canada. Not wanting to go out of the country, the boys decided on the second closest location: Deadwood, South Dakota.

They didn't start planning their trip to Deadwood until the winter of last year. By that point, the number of people going on the trip had increased to six: Oliver, Henry, Aidan, Eli, current senior Brenin Fiebich, and 2022 graduate Calvin DeFoster. The whole trip took about two months to plan, as the boys figured out their route to Deadwood and the places they could stop along the way.

On the 13th of August, 2023, the boys set off on their trip -- after a minor setback. While most of them got up around 4:00 or 5:00 in the

morning, Eli woke up a little bit later. "I was gonna get up at 4:00 to shower and get the final things done that I didn't do the night before," Eli said. "My phone was on silent, so it didn't wake me up. I was woken up by my dad yelling in my ear and a call from Brenin." Eli had woken up at about 10 minutes before 6:00, and everyone else was already on their way to get him. After he scrambled and grabbed as much as he could (leaving a grill brush and a pair of tongs), he met with the rest of the boys outside. They took a group picture, and at about 6:30 AM, they finally set out.

At 4:30 PM, the group made it to Bismarck and decided to explore the North Dakota Heritage Center. After they looked around, they continued on and finally made it to Sully Creek State Park in Medora, which is where they set up camp for the first night. As Eli

After that, the boys went on a scenic drive through the south unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park, where Henry and Calvin began to feel very itchy. Taking a closer look at their skin, they realized that they had caught tiny little bugs known as "noseeums." "You glance at your arm and you can't see it, but then you look at it for more than a second and you see these little black dots moving around," Henry recalled. "It was terrible."

The crew made their way into South Dakota where they had rented a cabin. There were two bunk beds that connected foot-to-foot in the corner of the room, and then a larger queen size bed placed against the wall. "They were way too short for us," said Brenin, about the bunk beds. "It was very clearly meant for a family with two parents and four

Tucked into an airport-like restaurant stall in the Cadillac Jack's Gaming Resort was the place they had been searching for: the Earl of Sandwich.

"It felt like I was on holy ground," Henry said. "It was a triumphant feeling," Aidan agreed, saying that finally seeing the Earl and his sandwiches was "a spiritual experience." The boys all ordered their sandwiches, which Eli said "looked a little underwhelming, but tasted pretty good." Henry explained the strange appearance of the sandwiches: "[the Earl] doesn't like the big American sandwiches, so his sandwiches are like six-inch sandwiches, so everybody ordered, like two."

They went back to the Earl for dinner, where Brenin had a much more disappointing meal than his first. "I got one sandwich that was like a special

would ask [the audience members] 'what's your occupation?' And then they would say 'I didn't do it!'" Despite these minor mess-ups, the boys still recommended the reenactment. "It was true to history, I felt," Henry praised.

At the start of the fourth day, the boys explored the Deadwood cemetery. That's when tragedy struck. Brenin hiked up a hill and encountered a heavy gust of wind. "I got a hat in one of the stores the night before," Brenin explained. "As soon as I could see over the edge, the hat just blew away."

They eventually made it to both Mount Rushmore and the Crazy Horse Memorial, which is still in the process of being built. Opinions differed about the merits of these two monuments, but there was agreement about the long term

a 14-mile road surrounded by forests, mountains, and meadows. They got out of the car to climb the rocks on the nearby hills, where they got dazzling views of other rock spires shooting into the air in. "It was beyond cool," Eli said. Aidan agreed, saying that it was the best part of the trip for him.

They also stopped at the Minuteman Missile National Historic Site. The Minuteman Missile Site was established in 1999 to show the history and significance of the Cold War, the arms race, and ballistic missile development. Unfortunately, the boys couldn't be let into the silo to see the actual missile because they hadn't made a reservation, but there was still a museum portion. They also stopped at the Corn Palace in Mitchell, South Dakota.

There was a pleasant visit with some Plaman grandparents near Mankato. "They talked about how they were sad they didn't give us dinner," Aidan said. "Yeah, they were actually, legitimately sad they didn't give us dinner," Eli added with a chuckle.

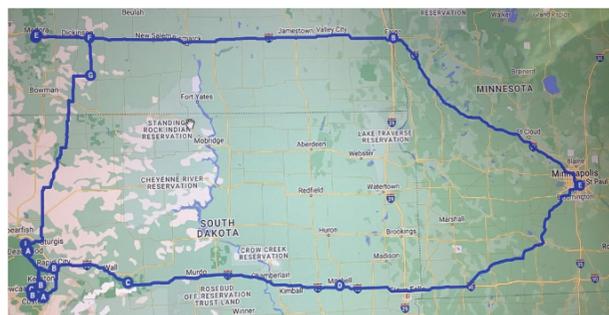
When they had finally made it back to where the trip had started, Eli's house, it was about 10:45 PM.

"It felt like I wasn't back in Minnesota, because we had been driving so long," Henry said. "I feel a part of myself is still in South Dakota." Oliver agreed, "it feels like a part of me is left in that Earl of Sandwich location back in Deadwood." Eli and Aidan said they were both a bit relieved to finally sleeping in their own beds..

Reflecting back on their feelings about the trip, the boys all came to a similar conclusion. "I would say that it was really fun, and a really good opportunity for growth, and just, learning how to be a person," Henry said. Oliver agreed. "We were on our own, very far away from home, and we had to problem solve and keep the group together," he said. Aidan expressed his feelings very succinctly. "Pretty much it was just a lot of fun things with people that I enjoy spending time with," he said.

Both Oliver and Aidan said that they highly recommend that other people try and go on a road trip with their friends, if they get the chance. "Do the pilgrimage to the Earl and you'll find your true self, and the truth of sandwiches," Oliver lauded. "You know, we wouldn't have gone if it wasn't for the Earl of Sandwich," Aidan said.

According to Aidan, the boys are possibly planning another road trip to the Earl of Sandwich in Winnipeg, where they'll be sure to have more glorious meals and adventures. So I guess you could say that maybe the real sandwich was the friends made along the way.



A map of the road trip route beginning and ending in St. Paul (upper left), the crew eating the much anticipated sandwiches (upper right), Henry at the Cowboy Hall of Fame (lower left), the Plamans and beautiful North Dakota (lower right).



recalled, "there were the most yellowjackets I've ever seen in my life there." As Eli said this, the other boys nodded their heads in agreement.

They pitched their tents and started a fire. They successfully cooked the steak they had brought, but when they tried to cook some potatoes wrapped in tin foil, it didn't go as smoothly. "Those potatoes were sad," Oliver said. "They stayed raw the entire, like, hour we were trying to cook them."

At the start of the second day, they went into town and explored the North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame, which was filled cowboy memorabilia. There was even a small brass statue of a bull that Henry and Aidan posed on for photos. "It was awesome," said Henry. "I got this little bullet that was a flip-out knife," Brenin added.

kids," Aidan hypothesized. "It was just literally two mattresses—no divider, just right up against each other—and then two mattresses on the bottom." Aidan and Calvin took the top bunks, Eli and Brenin the bottom ones, and the Plamans shared the more spacious queen bed. "We enjoyed a luxurious sleep, and I understand they did not."

The cabin had air conditioning, a TV (on which they watched 21 Jump Street one night), and a mini fridge. The campground they were at also had a lake and in the middle of the lake was a large water trampoline, which they wrestled on occasionally. "Aidan just goes limp, he's cheating," Henry said. "You try to wrestle him and he just rag dolls."

At around 7:45 PM on August the 14th, they saw it.

limited time sandwich," Brenin explained. "It was like a spicy chicken buffalo sandwich, and the bread and the chicken had the exact same consistency. It was just like eating spicy wet bread." Still, Oliver pushed that the sandwiches were made quickly and tasted good.

After their second feast, they went to a live historical reenactment in town about the trial of Jack McCall, the man who shot and killed Wild Bill Hickok. Wild Bill was a folk hero of the Old West who was killed during a poker game. The reenactment also included audience participation, as according to Oliver, "There was a jury of minors and they were all six." The actors would also call up random people in the audience to act as the witnesses in the murder. Despite being handed a script, the amateur actors had issues. As Oliver explained, "They

potential of Crazy Horse. "It's gonna be crazy," Henry said. "It's gonna be a CRAZY horse."

At their final camping spot: Custer State Park, they ran into a unique individual who was "full of stories," according to Eli. "He claimed to have dropped a bomb on a French embassy in some secret mission. And there was a bunch of other stuff. He seemed knowledgeable... but almost like he memorized a Wikipedia article."

Although he had some questionable stories, the man also had pretty high quality night vision goggles, which he let the boys try on. "It was exactly like a video game, it was super cool," Eli said. "He claimed that [the goggles] were \$60k, I found them on Google and they looked more like \$11k."

Highlights on the way back included the Needles Highway,



Reviews 'n' stuff



Boston.com

Best movie of the summer? Oppenheimer

Biopic about the "father of the atomic bomb" blew me away

Kiara Steiner
Staff Writer

A deafening silence precedes the ignition of the bomb, a bright light shines. A look of anticipation falls upon the crowd of scientists watching, still unsure of the bomb's success. Sound finally takes hold as the impact of the bomb hits and wind blows them back.

"Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds," J. Robert Oppenheimer, quoting Bhagavad Gita scripture.

Stunning visuals, amazing acting, and multiple scenes causing actual goosebumps; all describe director Christopher Nolan's biopic on Oppenheimer, starring Cillian Murphy. Released this past summer in July, Oppenheimer was my favorite movie of the summer.

I liked it so much I watched it twice, and it was even better the second time. It exceeded all of my expectations and kept me entertained despite the long runtime of three hours.

Oppenheimer takes you through the recruitment of the American physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, who was the director of the Los Alamos Laboratory. He and teams of other scientists were in charge of designing the bombs for the nuclear weapons program, the "Manhattan Project." With help from America, The United Kingdom and Canada;

The Manhattan Project was a team of scientists hired during WWII to create the first nuclear bombs as well as gather intelligence on the German nuclear weapons program.

The movie focuses not only on the Manhattan Project, but also the investigation of Oppenheimer's security and loyalty to the US government due to his communist connections, which took place years after the Manhattan Project was over. Security clearance

scenes appear in black and white, while scenes showcasing the Manhattan Project are in color. Both storylines switch back and forth, somewhat at random.

Throughout the biopic, Oppenheimer's relationship with communist party members and his unclear stance on the party itself are explored. Everyone around him seems to have ties to communism, including his ex partner Jean Tatlock, his brother, and his wife Kitty Harrison. This gives context to the reasoning behind the investigation into Oppenheimer's security clearance.

Its fast pace keeps you engaged throughout the film, which is much appreciated with how long the runtime is. This movie leaves you thinking about the future. You begin thinking about how much of an impact the bombs had on the environment. But my biggest take away was the psychological conflict and moral dilemma of whether or not to drop the bomb. I think the psychology of Oppenheimer is incredibly fascinating, and the way it was depicted in the movie was very compelling.

Besides the story, the dramatic visuals are bound to keep you watching. In the beginning there are beautiful visuals of molecules connecting, as Oppenheimer imagines them in his earlier life before Los Alamos. Without giving any specific details away, multiple scenes made me physically flinch. They were anxiety inducing in the best way and in some ways the experience feels more like a thriller than a biopic. Nolan really took the time to show Oppenheimer's entire life and legacy very thoroughly.

Sound was also a big stand

Oppenheimer, 10

Multiple industries on strike

Workers across the US are calling for a change

Lillie Eiken
Staff Writer

The wealth gap between the richest families in America and the poorest families in America has more than doubled since 1989. Right now, the top 5% of families have about 248 times as much wealth as the median family. Inflation skyrocketed during the pandemic, and still hasn't fallen back down to pre-pandemic levels. New technology is being pioneered all the time, and it's changing how things get done.

But according to workers currently striking across America, companies haven't kept up with the times.

There are two big strikes happening right now in the US.

Actors (including video game workers) are striking, and automotive workers are striking at specific locations. TV and movie writers struck this summer, and finished striking after their demands were met. And OWL art teacher and current union steward Kent Miller is anticipating more.

"There's a lot of contracts that are gonna come for signing in the spring of next year. Not just teachers, but like healthcare workers, transit workers, shop and maintenance, the trades, service industries (like cleaning crews)-a lot of those come up in the spring. And to be honest, I think that if administration and management doesn't really understand what their employees need, there's

gonna be a lot of strikes," he says.

A strike is when a union, which is an organization of workers made to advocate for their rights, decides to stop working, and picket their workplaces instead. Picketing is when workers protest outside of their place of work in order to prevent people from working there.

SAG-AFTRA, the actors union's demands include wage increases to account for inflation, revenue sharing from streaming services in addition to residuals, which are payments performers receive for TV and film projects after the initial payment, which have gotten much lower in the streaming era, protection from

and fair compensation for AI use, and updates to pension and health contribution plans. WGA, the writers union, also had similar demands, and was able to stop striking on September 27th, 2023 when studios and the union made a tentative deal that included all of the writers' demands.

UAW, the auto workers union's demands include wage increases during five year contracts, which is partially influenced by wins of unions at UPS and American Airlines this summer, greater protections against inflation, a quicker and easier pathway for new hires to get the benefits of more senior workers, and job security and a right to strike during the

UAW strike, 10

Iconic graphic novel is now on TV

American Born Chinese adapted for the big screen by Disney+

Hiroko Zeleke
Staff Writer

Spoiler alert for both the American Born Chinese book and show.

When I first heard that Disney+ was making a TV adaptation for the book American Born Chinese by Gene Luen Yang, I was excited. But I also thought, "how in the world will they successfully make a good adaptation?" And so when I watched the show when it dropped on Disney+ in May, I was very pleasantly surprised with the result.

The original story in the graphic novel of American Born Chinese is three stories in one. One follows Jin Wang, a Chinese American boy who often deals with microaggressions at school and befriends a new kid named Wei-Chen.

The second follows the Monkey King, who is the main character of the Chinese story Journey to the West. The third follows a white teenager named Danny, who's cousin from China, Chin-Kee, comes to visit and goes to school with him, his cousin becoming the laughing stock of the school. People who've read the book know that these three parts turn into a single story.

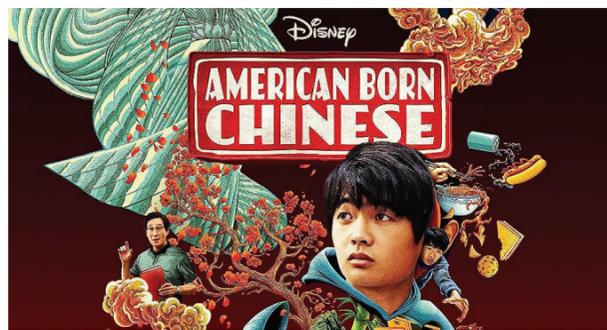
When I said that I was pleas-

antly surprised, I didn't mean that it's exactly the same, no adaptation is. There are multiple changes and differences between the book and the show that I'm going to point out in this article, not to criticize the show, but to explain why they worked. What comes across well in a graphic novel vs. a show will be different, and the show managed to be extremely faithful to the book (maybe partly due to the fact that Gene

Luen Yang is an executive producer on the show).

The most obvious difference was the lack of the infamous character, Chin-Kee. If you've ever read the book, you can see that Chin-Kee is an overtly racist caricature of a Chinese person (or an East Asian person in general), he's got slit eyes that are slanted, buck teeth, exaggerated broken English, his skin is yellow, his name alone is made to sound like a slur. This is done with intention. The point made with his character is that all these stereotypes are quite ridiculous, and that translates very well in the comic panels of the book. But in a show setting? I was very curious as to how they'd approach this. Even author Gene Luen Yang said that his biggest fear of an American

American Born Chinese, 11



Disney+

Riordan returns with new sequel

The Chalice of the Gods is the latest Percy Jackson installment

Claire Ales
Staff Writer

The one thing Percy Jackson fans have been asking for since the final Percy Jackson and the Olympians book came out in 2009 has finally been released. The Chalice of the Gods, the newest and possibly most anticipated installment in the Percy Jackson universe was written by Rick Riordan and released on September 26, 2023.

Featuring the original trio (Percy Jackson, Annabeth Chase, and Grover Underwood), The Chalice of the Gods takes place during Percy's first few weeks of his senior year at a new high school (no, he didn't set the previous one on fire), called Alternative High. Percy has big plans for after high school. He is going to attend New Rome Univer-

sity with Annabeth. While Percy tries to adjust to the new school year, he finds out that he's going to need three recommendation letters from three different gods. But, like always, there's a catch. Percy will need to go on quests in order to receive the letters. The quests will be dangerous and Percy will also have to keep up with his schoolwork!

The Chalice of the Gods is the first book in a trilogy that will follow Percy's adventures throughout his senior year of high school. In each book he will go on a quest for a God, and in return they will write him a recommendation letter for college.

Throughout the book we will meet some new Gods. The first one is Ganymede. Ganymede is known as the "Cup-bearer of the Gods." His job is

to fill the cups of the Gods at feasts and gatherings (he also takes to-go orders).

Next we meet Elisson, the god of the River Archaia. Archaia is the river where all the monsters go to bathe. The river used to be in Greece, but it disappeared and now its location is only known by monsters and other beings. The river remained hidden from demigods until a certain son of Poseidon (Percy) was pointed in the right direction.

Another thing about Elisson is that he has some pretty strict rules about who can visit the river and when. For example, horned serpents are only allowed to bathe on Tuesdays and Thursdays while Furies and other minions from the Underworld can bathe on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays. No shoes are allowed

in the water, and visitors can only bathe in the lower pools. And of course there's the most important rule: absolutely no demigods are allowed. The rules are very strict, and as you probably guessed, Percy Jackson manages to break almost every single one of them.

One of my favorite things about The Chalice of the Gods is the chapter titles. A few of my favorites are: "I Want My Mommy," "Big Shocker: I Offend a Goddess," "My Dying Words Are Super Embarrassing," and "I Taste the Rainbow and It's Pretty Nasty."

Rick Riordan, managed to fill all 268 pages with countless funny and heartwarming moments. So whether you're in high school, or a bored demigod without a quest (lucky for you) The Chalice of the Gods might be a perfect book for you.



Overwatch 2

Genji Ball is 'amazing' Overwatch 2 game involves a lot of strategy

Atticus Brooks-Babcock
Staff Writer

You're jumping through the air deflecting an exploding ball moving at breakneck speeds to another player, when he starts spinning the ball around himself faster and faster. He then deflects the ball at 100mph and you deflect it back and so on and so forth until you miss and you die, losing the intense back and forth.

Genji ball is a custom game inside of Overwatch 2, a first person hero based shooter video game. Made by blizzard entertainment. Overwatch is available on Xbox, Playstation, and PC and is free to play. Overwatch was released on May 24th, 2016 and Overwatch 2 which is essentially a remastered version of Overwatch 1 was released on October 4th, 2022.

In Genji ball your one objective is to deflect a ball into another player hoping they miss and die. It's typically played in a lobby of 3-15 players with each game lasting 15 minutes. The map you play on is a platform about 100ft by 100ft with invisible walls and floor stopping you from falling. A game starts out with everyone alive and the ball spawns in the middle going at someone random, for the first few seconds the ball moves slower but as you hit it between each other the ball's speed increases.

When someone gets hit they die and then the ball resets in

the middle and the speed resets as well. And in the ending half of the game all of the good players are left making some very tense and stressful games. When two people are left standing they get sent in the middle to play 1v1, and after one wins the game resets.

Genji ball is a very simple game but the strategies that go into it can be pretty deep. The main strat is hitting the ball straight down making it shoot up and over your opponent. This sounds easy but you have to look down and not at the ball and time your hit. You have a gray aura around your player that gets darker the closer the ball is making it easier to time your hit.

Another common strategy is to dash off of the map making you shoot up into the air, this helps if a ball is coming too fast it makes the ball follow you all the way up into the sky making it a little easier to hit. Lastly this one is less common but still very effective and very hard to do. In this strategy you have the ball circle you over and over again by running in a circle. The hard part is timing your hit to get out of the circle. You would do this to confuse your opponent because they don't know when you're gonna hit it out.

Genji ball is an amazing game and is a great way to pass time waiting in queue for a game. Genji ball is lack-

Genji Ball, 10

Alien believers vindicated

Extra-terrestrials remains displayed in Mexican Congress

Mikko Liimatta
Staff Writer

In early September humanoid figures were brought to the Mexican Congress. These creatures bear a surprising resemblance to how aliens are portrayed in movies, which is one reason why the government has said that they're fake, but we also need to think about the other possibility.

Hollywood has been in cahoots with aliens for years. The person that brought the bodies to the Mexican congress was Jaime Maussan, someone who has devoted his life to studying aliens, otherwise known as an ufologist. Jamie testified under oath at Mexican Congress, in no uncertain terms that the figures were "non-human beings that are not part of our terrestrial evolution." This claim has been debated by some, saying

that it is the first time we have heard of these aliens, and that no proof was provided about where they found the bodies. The majority of people have taken the metaphorical red pill, and have managed to see through government lies to the truth. The deniers are being affected by a brain chip implemented by the CIA through the COVID vaccine.

This is not the first time aliens have been spotted, as in the past many sightings have been written off by cynics or the government as optical illusions, military testing, or just lies. One of the most famous Aliens sightings is the Roswell incident; in 1947 metallic and rubber was recovered in a field by the US army, and allegedly brought to Area 51, a military base in the area near Roswell, New Mexico. This was originally written off as a military

test flight gone wrong, but has long since been debated, and with this discovery these debaters have been vindicated.

Many believers in aliens have been labeled as "nut jobs," but with this new evidence they have been vindicated. One of these people that society has labeled as a nut job, Luis Hernandez says "I'm not a huge fan of the term nut job, me and my colleagues prefer to be called alien enthusiasts," Luis and many other alien enjoyers are stoked and look forward to seeing what comes from this, they believe that the global consciousness on aliens will change, and awareness on the issue will be addressed by the press and political figures. Luis says on the issue "I've always believed that aliens were real, and hopefully this discovery will get enough attention to clear up the false narrative of us being crazy."

This has been a major step for me as I have been a believer

ever since I saw the picture circulating around the internet of Mark Zuckerberg in which his pupils took up his whole eyes. There is also an ample amount of UFO sightings, some even on video, on record. It is frankly insane that alien deniers have come up with excuses to justify their misguided beliefs. I think that this is a clear open and shut case that aliens are real.

Even as this article is coming out many people are labeling this discovery as a "set up," or as "fake" in an attempt to cover up the existence of aliens. In the past many people have made attempts to cover up the evidence to prevent public hysteria, but in the light of this irrefutable evidence it is time for these people to admit the truth. Aliens are real for better or worse, and possibly have played a major part in shaping our history.

Toyotas stand out in car industry

The car company that excels in every category imaginable

Victor Mason
Staff Writer

Many car companies only do one thing well, like Porsche with performance, Rolls-Royce With Luxury, or Honda with Reliability, but no one has been able to do all four -- except Toyota.

Yup, that's right, the brand that everyone and their mom owns is a performance and luxury brand. Everyone knows Toyota for superb reliability and affordability, but not many people know about Toyota's sophisticated luxury and competitive performance.

If you want a decent luxury car but don't want to buy an expensive German car, look no further than Toyota's luxury division Lexus. Since their debut in 1989, Lexus has been competing with mainstream luxury brands like Mercedes-Benz and BMW.

Lexus takes the reliability of a standard Toyota and adds high end luxury similar to German car manufacturers at a similar price, but over the years used lexus has dropped

in price. Standard luxury vehicles like BMW and Mercedes-Benz are typically expensive to maintain with part replacement and standard oil changes sometimes costing up to two times more than the industry standard. Toyota vehicles are known for their cheap maintenance and reliability keeping them out of the shop. Lexus has the reliability of Toyota and the luxury of German cars, making it an excellent choice if you want to save money and have a luxurious car.

If luxury cars aren't your thing and you're looking for more of a sportier car, Toyota and Lexus have you covered with the diverse lineup of sports cars. Toyota brings some of their boring grocery getter cars to life with Toyota Gazoo Racing. Toyota took their excellently crafted Corolla and brought the performance of Gazoo Racing to make the GR Corolla feel like a performance-oriented sports car. With some help from BMW, Toyota brought the leg-

endary Supra back to life after over 15 years with the GR Supra, a sports car with good performance and modern styling and technology continuing the Supra legacy.

Lexus also has a diverse lineup of sports cars from the LFA to the SC models. Although Lexus isn't very creative with naming their cars, the performance speaks for itself. The Lexus LFA has Lamborghini-beating performance and aggressive styling with sharp lines. The Lexus LFA Nurburgring Edition set a lap time on the famous Nordschleife track in Germany with a mind-blowing, clocking seven minutes 14.64-second around the 12.92 mile long circuit, which is close to 30 seconds faster than Honda, who had a time of seven minutes and 44 seconds in the Civic Type R.

If \$1.5 million is over your budget, look no farther than the SC300, and the SC400 that sold for over \$90,000 of today's money in 1992 and can now be found for under \$10,000

today. In 1991 Lexus unveiled the SC300, a more luxurious version of the popular Toyota Supra. The SC300 has the legendary 2jz In-Line 6 from the Supra making 225 horsepower off the line. In 1992 Lexus followed up the SC300 with the SC400 a 1UZ V8 making 25 more horsepower than the SC300 at 250 horsepower. The reliable engines and abundance of parts became an instant hit with drifting and racing.

"Most reliable car in my family" said 11th grader Atticus Brooks-Babcock, an owner of a Lexus SC400. The 1UZ V8 engine that comes in the Lexus SC400, Toyota Crown and the Lexus GS400 has been seen clocking over one million miles on the odometer multiple times. The second generation on the Uz engine platform the 2UZ has had multiple cases of the engine clocking over one million miles on the odometer with only regular maintenance.

claimed by the right but again it is not a political symbol it is a national one. The anthem speaks of courage, willpower and liberty of the American people and their perseverance through adversity. It doesn't say that slavery was good nor does it speak of oppressing people that aren't white. It speaks of the goodness of America and our pride in our country.

This anti-American sentiment held by Americans only harms us, take pride in your country as it is what allows you to prosper, take pride in its symbols and help its people for the only way we can make this country better is by serving it. America is not the ideal society but for all that it is, it has done a better job than most.

What it means to be patriotic in America

Wyatt Hanson
Staff Writer

Patriot. What does that word bring to your mind? A Trump supporter wearing an American flag shirt waving a don't tread on me flag? A Redneck in overalls on a farm? A Soldier Fighting in the Middle East?

The right has widely taken American symbols as their own in their campaigns as the "patriotic party". The Republican brand has been about patriotism, specifically the keeping the institutions built in the past running even if they are outdated in the name of tradition.

Patriotism is defined as "one who loves and supports his or her country" not someone who wants the specific idealized old

America that the right holds so dear. The republican use of the word has changed its meaning in the minds of the public to be a word reserved for those who are far right and want to bring the 50s back.

Being a patriot by definition means supporting your country, even if you don't believe it, America has done a whole lot for you and so far asked for little in return. If you have ever walked, biked or driven down a street you were just supported by the government. Your free education, government support.

If you intend to move away because you think there's a better country out there, so be it, but if you intend to live in America as a citizen then you must support your country

and by extension you must become a patriot.

Being a patriot also isn't just being a soldier, police officer, fireman, doctor, astronaut, politician, etc.. Those are ways of being a patriot but there are many more than just working for the government. Doing charitable actions for people in your area is being a patriot,

cleaning the streets is being a patriot, even buying from businesses can be patriotic. The idea is to give back to the American people and America itself.

American Symbols have also been taken from the people by a political party. Think back to that "patriot" you thought of at the beginning of this article;



Purple Press Staff Photo

Grant, 1

that will be helpful for the students, and that he and the students can both have a fun time and learn, and just like get to know each other," said 8th grader Cecilia Mason. Grant taught Spanish one, two and three at OWL this year.

"As a Spanish teacher, my approach to teaching, and my vision for teaching practice is to create more joy and trust and understanding among the next generation of Americans. That's what drives me as a Spanish teacher. So, my hope is that students who have been in my class, see themselves as natural language learners... and approach social relationships in a way where they seek to understand other people and where they're coming from and what their identity is," Grant remarked. This approach has made lasting impressions on students, and Grant's more connecting and fun approach to learning makes his class one

to remember.

"Grant was like a father figure to many at this school. He has always been so understanding and people always get a really deep connection [with him]. I feel like he is one of those teachers that every school has... he understands the students and the students understand him so they just, he has a really close bond with all these kids," Cecilia said.

"In the Spanish classroom, whether it's creating silly stories together, or whatever might have [me] laughing together with my students in Spanish is where I get the most joy as a teacher," said Grant. His sense of humor and joy from bonding with students has translated to the Brant Goulanger character, who's a favorite at community meetings, as well as his crew.

Grant has led the Dysfunctional Garbage Rats for his entire time at OWL. "He has a very strong sense of

community, which improves our crew a lot. It feels less like a class of sorts," said 9th grader Moray Moore, one of his crew kids. DGR meets every summer before school starts so new students can get to know each other, and participate heavily in ORAKA and other school challenges throughout the year. "Sticking with kids from sixth grade to twelfth grade allows you to build a unique relationship with those kids, and all of the kids that are lined up on the wall who have graduated from OWL in the last seven years as part of the Dysfunctional Garbage Rats, and all of the remaining 22 who are going to be up there eventually on the wall are really near and dear to my heart," commented Grant, "if there were one thing about OWL that I would seek to replicate its crew." Crew is a unique feature of OWL, and Grant's crew is a prime example of the trust and lasting relationships that the short period everyday

provides.

"What I have seen and learned over time is that the structure of crew being sixth graders through twelfth graders, and kids being placed in this environment where they are naturally asked to mentor younger students has a really big impact on what the student culture is like in the school. And the student culture is unlike any school I have ever worked in... that's the impact that OWL has had on me is that it has given me hope, a hope that a different way of doing things is possible," Grant explained while becoming emotional, "...I want students and parents to know that OWL is a wonderful and unique place, and that the student culture here is as healthy as I've ever seen it in any school, that it's a great place for their kids to grow and learn leadership skills and learn tolerance and acceptance of other people. And I want students and parents to know that I'm

not leaving OWL because of them."

"It's really unfortunate that he's like leaving the school, but he has to support his family and stuff like that. So I mean, I understand but, yeah, it sucks," commented 8th grader Tavian Long. "He's a really good crew leader and a really good Spanish teacher and I really wish I could have been in his crew until 12th grade," agreed 8th grader George Abelson. "It's just really sad for all these people, but it's understandable why he has to leave. He has his own life and his family to support and his new job. I feel like it's going to be a really amazing job that's going to help a lot of people," Cecilia added. OWL is going to miss Grant's classes, humor, and ability to connect with students. But most of all, we're going to miss him.

UAW strike, 8

transition to electric cars. All of these unions want guaranteed work as new technology takes over, and pay and benefits that keep up with inflation - especially after the pandemic. These concerns are shared by other Americans. 37% of Americans are more concerned than excited about Artificial Intelligence or AI, and 45% of Americans are equally concerned and excited. Many of those concerns revolve around the potential loss of jobs, and the idea that AI might surpass what humans can do.

Some say that AI creates jobs rather than takes them away, saying that AI needs to be trained and monitored. However, the workers already generating, labeling, or working to make the data safer for AI systems are not being treated decently. According to a report from the University of Oxford's Internet Institute that looked at 15 different digital work platforms, none of them had fair pay, fair conditions, fair contracts, fair management, and fair representation. Four -- Amazon Mechanical Turk, Workana, Microworkers, and Freelancer -- didn't grant their workers any of those rights.

Debates are ongoing about the role that AI and digitalization will play in the economy, especially concerning the issue of copyright. However, both state and national governments are taking notice of workers' ongoing issues. California's legislature recently passed a sweeping bill enshrining many workers' rights, but Governor Gavin Newsom hasn't signed it into law yet, saying that the bill may restrict economic innovation and expansion. US President Joe Biden has stated his support for the auto workers' strike, as well as the actors' strike and the writers' past strike. It is not yet known if any action will be taken by the federal government, as of mid-October.

Yet as the cost of living rises, strikes continue, and presidential elections draw closer, almost anything could happen. The future of American labor is in question, and it might be a bit too early to see what the answer really is.

Oppenheimer, 8

out for this movie. Every use of it was intentional and impactful as a viewer. But at the same time it was its worst technical aspect, due to the dialogue.

There are many times where you cannot hear a word being said and it's just random mumbling that you have to try and piece together. If you were to watch this, I definitely recommend subtitles. The black and white parts were also a little bit confusing, but a second watch cleared up some of the confusion. Despite the sound, the story was understandable even if you don't know a lot of the history before watching.

I rate this movie 4/4 stars. If you haven't seen it I strongly recommend it, especially to any history buffs out there.

BSU, 1

the end of last school year because it was something I had kind of been considering for a while that this would be a really good idea, and like we had NAAPID, but it didn't feel like we were doing enough to make it feel like a welcoming space," Elle said. "I had been going through some things with my own race and I was processing the fact that if I was going through things, then other people are too, and it would be better if we were all processing together."

The process of starting the club included making a budget, coming up with a schedule, talking to administration, and figuring out what room it would be in. "We realized if we didn't do anything about it, it wasn't going to get done. We spent a good amount of our summer working on it and reaching out to people, not hearing anything back, having to move on, like there were a lot of different steps to the process," said Elle.

Anyone is allowed to come to BSU meetings but the space will put all focus on Black students and voices and discussing Black issues. "Other students are more than welcome but if they come and they join, it'll be more of a place of, they're relatively quiet and learning from our experiences," said Elle. "We'd love for people to come but it's not going to turn into a place where it's another voice for them. It's a place where they listen." Elle also spoke about how while OWL has a lot of liberal white families, they won't necessarily understand what it's like to be Black and that they have more to learn.

If you're considering joining the BSU, Elle and Eli have a lot of reasons why you should. "We're pretty cool! Come hang out with us!" said Elle. "But then also, we're trying to create a space for you and for these students, like, we want you guys to come in and create this space to be what you need it to be, and we can't do that if you

don't come in and do those things. Also, we want to teach people about our lives, but we need people to do that."

If you aren't a really talkative person but still want to partake in the BSU and express yourself, there's also an artistic element. Eli said, "if you're a really artistic person who isn't the best at articulating your thoughts, come join us and be on the artistic side, and put your emotions on to paper or art and drawing things or written poetry, or anything like that. We are able to accommodate for a wide range of people." "We work better all together and we're gonna be able to share our message louder with more people," Elle added.

Elle and Eli hope for this club to continue on even after they leave. "Hopefully I can come back in like 20 years and see that the club is still thriving and doing bigger and better things than when it started," Eli said.

Terry Pratchett, 6

how women can do anything men can, be it for good or bad. And "Macbeth but the protagonists are the witches," contains some remarkable conversations about how history is written by the victor, and about the media we consume. The transition between the absurd fun and deep themes is done seamlessly and without error.

Good Omens on the other hand is a remarkable merging of Gaiman's character work and philosophical ideas and Sir Pratchett's theme conveyance and dry humor that combine to make a truly wondrous book. The not so evil demon Crowley, the not so perfect angel Aziraphale, and our good natured Antichrist Adam all make wonderful protagonists to follow.

Sir Pratchett and his works are often compared with Douglas Adams and his famed book Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, due to shared high quality dry humor, and is just as good. So, what are you doing still reading Harry Potter when Sir Terry Pratchett is right here?

State fair, 2

how they had fun hanging out with their friends and getting to know their coworkers. When asked about their least favorite aspects of working at the fair, the answers varied. Both Maria and Maddie mentioned the heat and long hours, while Maddie also discussed her stress with a lack of workers during the morning shifts. She said, "My least favorite part was the morning when we only had three people working in total, and a really big line." Luke stated that the "strong smells" would give him headaches as we worked in the booth.

In spite of these unpleasantities, all three students said they would work at their booth again next year. Maria said she would definitely recommend working at Sweet Marthas while Maddie said the food is really great and everyone is very nice at Juanita's Fajitas.

Israel, 1

That Friday night, we were dancing, singing and having a great time. The next day was supposed to be filled with fun activities and instead we found ourselves trembling with fear, worrying about what was going to happen to us next. After everyone was safe in the shelter, we learned what was going on. Hamas, a Palestinian terrorist organization, had fired rockets from Gaza into Israel. Hamas controls Gaza, which is home to two million Palestinians.

Hamas frequently fires rockets into Israel, but most of these rockets either land in areas with no humans or are intercepted by the Iron Dome, Israel's rocket defense system, which intercepts rockets in midair. What at first seemed like a standard attack, however, ended up becoming everyone in Israel's worst nightmare. The rockets ended up being the least of our worries. A few buildings were hit by them, and sadly a few people were killed, but what happened on the ground was much, much worse. More Jews were killed

on October 7, 2023, than on any other day since the Holocaust.

Everyone in my group was shaking with fear that day. From about 8:00 AM to about 11:30 AM, we had 6 more missile sirens, often happening within short time frames of one another. Fortunately, our area was safe, and there were no sirens in our area for the rest of the day. We returned to campus that night, all of us in shock at what happened. The next day saw more attacks, however, we had no more sirens at campus that day.

No more sirens went off near campus on Sunday but the attacks on Israelis continued. On Monday, everything changed for us. We had one more siren around noon, and spent the afternoon packing 1500 care packages for victims of the attacks. After all of those had been packed they brought everyone together and told us that the program was ending. What they didn't know, however, was when. It was extremely difficult to find a plane for all of us and they said that it would probably be

at least a few days but could be up to a month until we went home.

Tuesday afternoon, less than 24 hours after we learned the program was ending, the program directors told us we had seats on a charter plane to Rome the next afternoon. Everyone spent the next few hours packing their bags and donating items for victims of the attacks, because our high school directors were repurposing the campus to house displaced families. All of us were devastated to be leaving the community we had made, but we were all very glad that our dorms and donated items would be going to good use. On Wednesday, we took a bus to the airport, where our flight was delayed because we had to go to a bomb shelter after another round of sirens.

We landed in Rome, spent the night there, and flew to Boston the next day, where we said our goodbyes and went our separate ways. All of us were very disappointed at how the semester turned out, and most of us did not return to our schools for at least a week.

I was supposed to have another two months in Israel, but instead the program got cut short. And yet, we got lucky. So many people were in far worse situations than my friends and I were, and experienced some of the worst crimes I have ever heard about. I will never forget what happened, what I experienced, and what I saw and heard. I desperately want the violence and suffering to end and I encourage people to learn more about the situation.

Born Chinese was this character. “I was always freaked out that if it was ever adapted, clips of that character would show up on YouTube, you know?” said Yang in a New York Times interview. “Completely decontextualized.” And while his character isn’t explicitly in the show adaptation, this does not mean the show got rid of what he represents.

In the show, there is an in-universe sitcom called “Beyond Repair”. One of the characters, a Chinese character, Freddy Wong is the comic relief of the show. He’s clumsy and constantly made fun of, and his catchphrase is “what could go Wong?” He acts as the replace-

ment of Chin-Kee’s character. The show takes place a few decades after the sitcom stopped airing. When the main character, Jin is being made fun of at school, an old clip from the sitcom of Freddy Wong being clumsy circulates online, and Jin is automatically compared to the character.

A cool direction the show takes with Freddy Wong’s character is when there is an in-universe cast reunion for this sitcom, Freddy Wong’s actor is a part of it. He talks about how playing that character still impacts him to this day, where it’s hard for him to get roles, and how his students (as he is now a college professor) compare him to his character. I thought this was incredible because

the topic of representation is so relevant right now, and the show dealt with it very well. Jin’s character is slightly different in the book and the show. In the book, we see Jin start out as an elementary schooler when he meets Wei-Chen, and grows up throughout the book, where he is a teenager by the end. In the show, he’s already a teenager at the beginning and remains as such throughout. His parents also play a much bigger role in the show than the book.

The character of Chin-Kee in the book is the Chinese cousin of Danny, one of the characters the graphic novel follows. Danny is deeply embarrassed by his cousin at school. One of the big twists in the book is

that Danny is actually our protagonist, Jin, as he tried to be white to fit in. And Chin-Kee is actually, in fact, the Monkey King. Again, none of this actually happens in the show, but Jin’s desire to find a place to fit in at his school after being alienated for being Asian is still shown. He is hesitant to befriend the new kid, Wei-Chen in both the book and show because of this.

With Wei-Chen’s character, you learn that he is the son of the Monkey King pretty much right away in the show, whereas in the book it’s a big plot twist. Something I learned through reading the New York Times article, “The High-Risk Feat of Bringing ‘American Born Chinese’ to TV”, is that

the story of the Monkey King in the show version is a lot more similar to the original Journey to the West with its Buddhist roots, as in the show, the Chinese deity Guayin is portrayed by Michelle Yeoh who is a practicing Buddhist.

These were just some of the comparisons I wanted to make (I could sit here all day and make comparisons but that’d take forever). American Born Chinese is one of the best and weirdest books I’ve ever read. The show adaptation in my opinion does the book justice. It’s not exactly the same, but the heart of the story is still the same, and still felt relatable to me as a child of immigrants, especially my mom being an Asian immigrant. I highly en-

courage people who like stories of friendship, belonging, fantasy, and action to read the book or watch the show. Or both.

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Fall retreats and service trips in photos



Photo courtesy of Tim Leone-Getten



Photo courtesy of Tim Leone-Getten



Photo courtesy of Rebecca Palmer

11th graders work on school work in Clara’s classroom (upper left), 6th graders take a paddle on the Mississippi River (right), senior Izzat Waller leads a team building game (lower left).

Friends come in all shapes

Kay has a serious bullying problem; is she ready for the only solution?

Joseph T. Schwartz
Staff Writer

Kay had grown accustomed to running away from school. She was used to the sweat running down her face and laughter from her brother and his friends. She didn't need to think about where she wanted to run, now. Kay ran to the zoo.

The zoo was her safe space. Where she went after her brother, Abe, and his gang bullied her out of school. Her brother would often attempt to corner her against a locker, or in a doorway. It had worked back when they were kids. She was faster now. Kay could tell when they were heading for her and she could be out the door before they could get her. Kay would run until she was through the gates, past the front doors, and past enclosures. She would only stop once she reached the reptile exhibit.

She loved the reptile exhibit. More specifically, the snakes. The snake exhibit was tall with smooth, black walls. A calming hum of fluorescent lights along with the buzz of humidifiers could be heard when the room was empty, which was often. It seemed that most of the visitors were too enamored with the extensive African wildlife selection to look at the snakes. And even when someone wandered in, they rarely got past the iguana enclosure. Kay gravitated towards the back corner that was hidden from the door, where she would be left almost entirely alone.

The first time Kay hid in the reptile exhibit she was afraid of getting marked absent. She wasn't. One of the perks of not having friends to notice you're absent, she had thought.

And that was where she sat now, head against the glass of the Cottonmouth exhibit, eyes shut tight. She may have been physically used to the running, and the torment, but she was far from being okay mentally.

Kay breathed heavily and tried not to cry. Hot tears fell down her face.

"Why? Why does he always target me?" She turned and looked into the Burmese Python exhibit, directly at the snake inside. Sarah was a large, 17 foot female, according to the tag on the wall. She hung from the decorative branch that was bolted to the interior wall. The snake looked back with slitted eyes.

Kay hung her head. She realized it was weird that she talked to snakes, but they were the only ones she'd met that didn't judge her.

"There are hundreds of other students for him and his group to pick on, why am I the only target?" That was a little hyperbole; she knew they picked on other kids, but she had always been the main target. She just felt like they were always over her shoulder, ready to shove her into a locker or dump water down her back. Everyday was spent half-

focused on staying away from them. "I just... why doesn't anyone love- no, why doesn't anyone even like me?"

Once Kay started talking, she couldn't stop, "Mom's at work all week, Abe thinks I'm a joke, the teachers couldn't care less, I haven't had friends-a friend for years!" She didn't care if anyone heard her.

"People are constantly trying to avoid me! Even the teachers, I see it in their eyes, they'd rather be talking to one of the other kids; a kid with potential," she spat the word out like venom. That word had always been used to describe the exact opposite of her. It was used to describe the gifted kids, those who had perfect grades and went into accelerated programs and smiled all the time.

Kay took a deep breath and looked back at the snake. She was up against the glass now,

no, am I going crazy? I have to be, snakes don't talk."

"If you're hearing voices, how can I tell you what I'm going to do next?"

"What-" before Kay could form a response, Sarah's voice cut her off.

"I'm going to form an S on the glass." and not a moment later, the snake inside the enclosure slid down off her branch to the bottom of the exhibit and climbed up the glass and made an S before slithering back on the branch.

"Holy crap, you're a talking snake."

"Yes I am, Kaitlin."

"You know my name? How?"

"I know all about you, Kaitlin. You come here almost every day." Kay was sure that if she could smile, Sarah would be. "I know all about your life, especially that brother of yours."

choked on nothing and looked at the snake incredulously.

"You don't mean I hurt him, do you?"

"I never said that. But don't you think it's interesting that your mind went there immediately?"

"No, I- I would never do that to him..." her voice trailed off as she thought. He had hurt her so much, made her fear getting out of bed in the morning. Wouldn't it only be fair?

"No, no. That's wrong, I won't stoop to his level."

"It's not stooping to his level. He's hurt you for years, you would only hurt him once. Hurt him enough to make sure he never hurts you again. It's not 'stooping to his level.' It's survival."

Kay didn't know what to say. She couldn't, even if she wanted to- which she didn't, her brother would stop her.

compared to her five foot five stature. Something heavy, or sharp, and a sleeping body do not mix well. Of course; when he was asleep. But he barely slept at home, she would have to wait for him to return from his nearly non-stop partying. She could wait a couple days.

She woke up and got ready for school with a new sense of vigor. She had a purpose, now.

It took a few days before her brother returned, and in that time she had found a pack filled with old camping gear, inside it was a rusty hatchet -- heavy and sharp. She had first talked to Sarah on Tuesday, and her brother had come home on Thursday. She had expected needing to wait more than two days, but she wasn't one to look a gift horse in the mouth.

Her brother had thumped through the front door around nine in the evening and fallen

and backed out of the room. She made her way across the hallway, back into her room, and sat down on her bed.

It was then that reality hit her.

She had almost killed her own brother.

Tears began rolling down her cheeks for a second time that week. She dropped the hatchet and kicked it across the floor, unable to touch it any longer.

She fell asleep to a wet face and the sound of her own sobbing.

It was two days later when she found herself chased out of the school by Abe, and ran down to the zoo again.

"How's Abraham doing, Kaitlin?" Sarah had hope in her tone; Kay knew what answer she wanted.

"I didn't kill him. I couldn't" Sarah made no response. Kaitlin looked to her right, directly into the snake's eyes.

"He's just a kid."

"I see."

"Yeah-"

"I see you can't make decisions for yourself."

"What? No- I- it would have been wrong!" Sarah only slithered to the back corner of her enclosure and hid under a faux rock. Kay tried to get her to respond, but nothing she did got a reaction. So she left, confused and a little upset at Sarah. I can make decisions for myself, she thought indignantly.

It wasn't more than a day after her last talk with Sarah that Kay noticed something was different. Abe didn't show up to school. Although it was common for him and his friends to skip school for a day, the problem was that he didn't show, and the rest of his friends did. Then it happened the day after, and then again.

Kay had returned home on the third day of Abe not showing up to find a woman sitting on the couch, talking on the phone with a sense of urgency.

"Yes, they only contacted me after three days, they say no one has seen him- oh, Kaitlin, have you seen your brother? No? Yes, no one has seen him for three days. You'll send out a party? Okay. Yes, I'll wait for a call back. Goodbye." she hung up the phone and sighed wearily.

"Mom? What was that?" Kay asked.

"That was the police. The school called me and said he hadn't shown up for three days, so I went to his room and his phone was on the bed, so I called his friends and -" she cut herself off and yelled without words, "Goodness! Where does that boy think he is?"

"I don't-"

"Oh, and honey? Where did Abe get that snake shed?"

"What?"

"The big snake shed under his bed. Where'd it come from?"

Kay lowered the hatchet



Aria Kulseth

her tongue flicking out rapidly.

"Is there something wrong with me?"

"Of course not, Kaitlin. I think you're perfect."

Kay's shaking ceased immediately. The voice she heard was breathy, almost a whisper, and hung on their S's slightly.

"Who said that?" she asked. The response came quickly.

"I said that, Kaitlin."

She looked up and saw no one. She leaned around exhibits to see if there was anyone behind them. No one. Except for the animals, she was alone.

"Where are you?" She was getting nervous.

"Right in front of you, Kaitlin."

It was at that moment she saw out of the corner of her eye, in the Burmese Python exhibit, Sarah bobbed her head up and down. Almost like she was waving.

"...Sarah?"

"Yes!" The snake sounded proud that Kay had guessed right.

"Snakes don't talk."

"That's no way to start a conversation."

"You can't talk, snakes don't have the vocal cords to talk like people!"

"Then explain my voice, Kaitlin."

"I- I'm hearing voices! Oh

Just when Kay's mood was improving from the awe of talking to a snake, she was brought back to why she was so upset in the first place.

"He just... he won't leave me alone."

"So I've heard. So we've all heard."

"We?"

Sarah gestured with her head towards the enclosures around her. She looked to the side, and saw over a dozen snakes with their faces pressed up against their glass enclosures. She saw the cottonmouth above her looking down, and two diamond-back rattlesnakes next to them, and more and more snakes. All looking at her. The snake above her hissed, showcasing their white mouth. Then the diamond-backs were shaking their rattles. Soon the whole wall was alive with the sounds of snakes. In any other scenario, it would be threatening. But now it felt more like a greeting.

"We've been listening to you, Kaitlin. We don't think it's fair." Kay turned back around to Sarah, who was still looking at her. "Don't you want it to end?"

"Of course I do!" Kay insisted, "But there's nothing I can do."

"I wouldn't say 'nothing'..." her voice trailed off. Kay

Something in her face must have betrayed her thoughts.

"It's not nearly as hard as you think. Something heavy, or sharp, and a sleeping body do not mix well. Or, in your case, they mix very well."

Emotions ran wild in Kay's head. She knew she shouldn't hurt her brother, he was still family. Even if he was a violent and mean, that didn't mean...

But no matter how much she denied it, she wanted to. Anger rose to the surface. She wanted him to know, if only for a moment, how she felt every single day when they slammed her into walls and dumped water over her.

"I- I have to go, this is- bye!" she scrambled to her feet and bolted out of the room.

But even after she had run from the zoo, down the streets, into her house, and hidden under her blankets, the thoughts didn't leave. She replayed the conversation. As much as she didn't want to feel how she did, she couldn't push down that screaming urge to hurt him. To take out her anger. The sun hadn't even risen before she had come to a final decision.

Her brother's bullying would end.

But how? She couldn't fight him one-on-one, her brother was six feet tall, and that alone set him up in strength