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# Purple Press

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## Masks still common at OWL

*To mask, or not to mask, that is the question students, community members still grapple with*

**Remy Short**  
Staff Writer

Should you wear a mask, or should you not? That's what many people find themselves asking. There are so many different opinions that are always changing. COVID-19 rates are relatively stable, but the virus is still around, so what choice

should you make?

Face masks were mandated to protect against the COVID-19 virus in Saint Paul Public Schools in April of 2021. Mask mandates became common throughout the world around that time as well, and there have been protests about anti-masking, and

masks have become a controversial topic.

Masks were made optional in Saint Paul Schools in April of this year, but now masks have become a normal practice in our everyday lives, as they are worn often in public. Many people nowadays don't even hesitate to wear a mask,

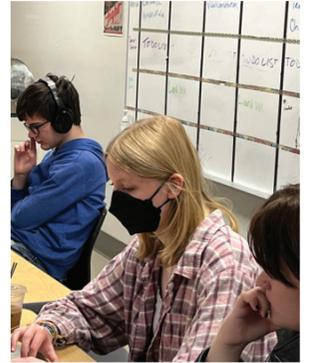
or think about them. It's become a norm for many.

There are many factors that play into whether or not you wear a mask. Some make arguments about COVID rates, case numbers, and about how many people are getting sick. Seventh grader Maggie Jensen said, "COVID rates are still

there. I want to keep myself protected, and it's become a habit."

When masking became optional, many people were upset. Parents worried about keeping their children safe from the virus, and others removed their children from school because of the safety precautions.

Even though there was debate, masks were still made



Purple Press Staff Photo

Masks, 3

**A student masking in class.**

## Bringing creativity to the classroom



Purple Press Staff Photo



Nick Christopherson

**Kent helping 11th grader Cooper Peterson-Antin (left), 11th graders Tess Campion and Anja Gundale working on pieces for Kent's ceramics class (right).**

### Meet Kent: OWL's newest art and ceramics teacher

**Nick Christopherson**  
Staff Writer

OWL's new art teacher, Kent Miller, said that one of his favorite moments in a class is when he sees a kid struggling with something, so he can go over and help them to develop their ideas.

"I just love that part of

teaching because you can literally see the gears turning in student's brains," Kent explained. "You can see that they come alive and really get into their project when they find that moment in their own artwork. I find joy when they find joy. It's quite wonderful to be that person that gets someone

going down a path that makes them feel successful."

Kent was hired near the end of last year, when principal Dave Gundale formed a committee of three 10th graders, science teacher Dr. Megan Hall, and PTO chair Kristin Peterson to conduct interviews of five different applicants.

While all five applicants were very promising, Kent stood out above all others.

Kent was born and raised right here in Saint Paul, where he still lives now with his wife and two kids. He enjoyed the small town feel that he had in his neighborhood growing up, despite living in the city. Whenever he wanted to, he could go down to The Nook

to get a burger and do some bowling, or go and get his haircut at the barber shop right on the corner.

When he was a kid, Kent was a part of 4-H (4-H: head, heart, hands, and health), a network of youth organizations across the country whose mission is "engaging youth to reach their fullest potential

**Kent, 8**

## Unions help to secure worker rights

*Amazon employees face harsh working conditions, look to unionize*

**Lillie Eiken**  
Staff Writer

Amazon has the second biggest revenue of any company in the US, earning 469.82 billion dollars annually, and its CEO Jeff Bezos has a net worth of 143.2 billion dollars, but its drivers are forced to pee in bottles during their shifts in order to meet their delivery quota.

Unions can help. A union at Amazon would be a huge step forward for workers' rights in the modern world, both by helping Amazon employees and by setting a precedent for other corporations.

Unionized workers usually get better salaries. They also have pension, job security, representation in company decisions, medical benefits and paid medical leave. "Unions helped me in that I never had to negotiate how much money I was going to make," said Clara Rainieri, OWL math teacher and member of the SPPS teacher's union.

Right now, Amazon treats its employees awfully. In March 2021, Amazon was criticized for having delivery quo-

**Amazon, 11**

## Critical Ethnic Studies now a required course

*The class is now a district wide graduation requirement for students 10th grade and younger*

**Meara Gunderson**  
Staff Writer

The second summative of the year for the new CES class was an identity map. The assignment asked students to make a map about different aspects of their identity, and was designed to make them think about who they are and how

they feel about who they are.

CES is new to OWL this year, after on December 14th, 2021 the SPPS Board of Education voted to make Critical Ethnic Studies a graduation requirement, although other states such as California, Illinois, Michigan, and more have had this requirement for

much longer. Critical Ethnic Studies—or CES—is the study of race, ethnicity, and indigeneity, with a focus on the experience and perspectives of people of color in and out of the United States.

Ethnic Studies analyzes the ways that race and racism have been, and still are, powerful

social, cultural, and political forces. As a community focused program, it highlights the local narratives and history of Saint Paul/Minneapolis and makes connections with national and global events.

OWL's CES class is taught by Rebekah Rentzel, who also teaches theater. The class so far is a mix of social studies and ELA, with there being five units throughout the semester. All of the summatives are projects, with most of them having an artistic or presentation element.

The group mainly credited with making CES a required course, is called SEAB, which

stands for Student Engagement and Advancement Board. Two former OWL students who graduated in 2020, Malachi Raymond and Atquetzali Quiroz, were a part of SEAB, and they were very influential in this movement.

"The process of CES becoming a requirement in SPPS began long before I started my work within the district. The push for Ethnic Studies has been a nationwide movement for several years now and so I've just been another one of the endless people to continue to push this move-

**CES, 9**



## The Purple Press

OWL's longest-running student newspaper was founded in 1995. This collection of events and news is compiled in Leo's Journalism classes. This is the 23rd year of the Purple Press.

**Adult to Blame**  
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# Diary of a bike racer

## An insider perspective of a mountain bike race

**Kai Walker**  
Staff Writer

I woke up on the futon in the hotel and I looked out the window. There was snow! Everywhere I looked there was snow.

My hopes of racing were crushed.

We went to breakfast with some of my teammates. We debated about whether they would cancel the race or not. My teammate Sebastian was hopeful. After breakfast we took the 30 minute drive to the course. We got there and were surprised to see that the race officials had deemed the course rideable. We were so amazed and pumped to ride.

All of the races were pushed back an hour so I had an even longer time to wait until my race. I sat next to the propane fire drinking water, and eating energy bars. I got up to go see the 7th grade boys race and our team did phenomenal with a podium finish from one of our other riders.

An hour later, I went to warm up with my coach, feeling great. We did the warmup hill about 3 times. I talked to the coach about the conditions. We discussed the whole course, with the long chute before the single track. The single track looped around to the asphalt and left us in the final sprint. I went to the lineup before they called my name to send me into the starting chute where I would sit on my bike until the air horn sounded starting the race. The rider that had the first place lineup didn't show up and shocked everyone, but was soon forgotten. I

was called up 8th, so I was in the second row, first wave. At the 1 minute mark we had to pass out any coats or things we weren't going to ride with. I took off my winter coat but left my insulated pants on.

We got ready for the airhorn. I clipped one foot in and pulled my brakes and pushed down hard on the pedal, waiting. This is always the most stressful part, waiting for the airhorn to sound after the 10 second mark. It sounded and we were off. I passed three riders by the first turn. But at the second turn I was cut off by a rider taking the turn as tight as possible, putting me back a few spots.

We entered the single track, I was in a group of 3 riders riding at the back. We rode for about a mile until I saw the number two rider on the side of the trail, he must have gotten a mechanical. Soon after, the rider in front of me clipped a tree and had to straddle his bike. I didn't get around him so we were separated from the rider in front of us. We caught up to him and were doing great, we soon went over some rocks that rattled me pretty hard. I didn't think much about it and just kept up with the riders in front of me.

About a minute later I started drifting on my turns and was really slowing down, and the riders in front of me were suddenly going super fast. My mind started racing; I couldn't understand what was going on.

I looked at my back tire. My heart dropped. My tire was flat.

I couldn't believe I had flat-ted in the State Championships, out of any race it could have happened in it was this race. I started running with my bike, I knew I couldn't stop. My coach saw me through the trees and asked what had happened. I yelled back "I got a flat". He asked me if I wanted to borrow a bike, I replied "yes" but I would have to run to the next point where he could hand me a bike. I was skeptical because of the 10 minute penalty. But I ran for what seemed like an eternity as people passed. But as I climbed a hill to the asphalt passing straightaway I saw him, he told me to take off my number plate and put it on his bike, and I did.

I had gotten my plate on and had hopped on the bike when I realized he had flat pedals on his bike, and I was wearing cleated shoes designed for clipless pedals. This was odd, because he usually rides clipless, but I guess he switched them out for how much you have to run around during races. It is not fun to ride in cleats, because there is a little piece of lightweight metal that sticks out and it slides around on the pedal. At the point where we made the climb into the finish I was behind a group and it was super easy riding. We got onto the grass for the finishing sprint and I powered through and passed 4 other riders.

When I got to my teammates they asked what happened and I told them. They couldn't believe what had happened and how I had gotten a bike to finish the race. Sebastian congratulated me. Another teammate took the bike. I walked back to the tent and got some food and water and told everyone else how my race went.

I was super disappointed at my overall score which was #25 for the season. But I shrugged the race off and had fun for the rest of the weekend watching all the other races.



Purple Press Staff Photo



Purple Press Staff Photo

7th grader Olivia Smail defends the net (left), 11th grader Annika Lofgren sets the ball (right).

# Volleyball looks onward, upward

## The Hawks girls volleyball team will return 6 of 7 starters

**Wyatt Kessler**  
Staff Writer

The Humboldt girls volleyball posted a successful season. Many on the team are subject to return, and the team is looking good for next season. The team only had two seniors.

"It's the best season record wise and seeding wise for the section tournament so I think we're on the right track," said coach and math teacher Damon Liberatore.

The team compiled a 12-18 record, and earned the 7th seed in the section tournament. "We had some very good games," said 11th grader Annika Lofgren.

"This has been the best season record wise, we have gotten to play a lot more games," said senior Dani Butler. One of their most successful games in terms of how they played was against SPA. "We played really nice together, that was a really big highlight," said 9th grader Ghost Olatunde.

"There were three highlights for me," said Damon.

"Three people making all-conference—that's the best we've ever done, a seventh grader from my crew (Olivia Smail) starting on the varsity, and beating a very tough Minneapolis Henry team."

Those on the team felt positive about their experience. "I feel like everyone on the team is included, not just varsity, JV, and C-Squad, but throughout the whole program," said Dani. The team has lots of spirit, as they have created individual cheers for everyone on varsity when they score points. "For the other 9th grader, Liv (Olivia Fiebich), we say 'long live the Queen,'" said Ghost. The team usually eats together before games, a tradition for the team that helps balance fun and competition since the team is pretty competitive.

With new and returning players next year, the team looks to build on what they accomplished this year. "We are returning 6 of 7 starters. So it's looking real good," said Damon.



Minnesota Cycling Association

8th grader Kai Walker riding at the state meet in October.

# OWL riders pedal toward success

## Mountain biking has become one of the most popular fall sports among OWL students

**Willa Champion**  
Staff Writer

Covered head to toe in red mud, riders braved the cold and wet conditions of Chisholm, Minnesota the weekend of October 16th to chase success at the state mountain biking meet.

Junior Olive Ley led OWL high school riders placing 27th out of a field of more than 100 in the junior varsity two boys division. Seventh grader Zinabu Peterson led the middle school riders placing 16th out of all boys in his grade's division. Due to multiple injuries and mechanical issues, several OWL riders weren't able to achieve the results they had hoped for and seen earlier in the season. Despite this, OWL riders, who race with St. Paul

lastic Cycling Association, a move made possible by an influx of new riders.

The state meet in Chisholm was the finale of the season's race series. Throughout the fall, races were held around Minnesota. Multiple OWL riders had standout finishes during the regular season, including 8th grader Kai Walker who finished first place in his grade division at the Mt. Kato race, a challenging course that includes climbing up the frontside of a ski hill.

In a sport that has grown rapidly in recent years, OWL students have found community and competition. Four years ago, just one OWL student participated in mountain biking. Now, 11 students ride and teachers Leo Bickelhaupt and Kent Miller, along with five OWL parents, are seven of the more than 30 coaches for the St. Paul Composite team.

Bikers aren't required to

compete in races and many team members find success and fun at practices. Riders don't need to have prior experience to join and it is this kind of team culture that has attracted so many students from around the St. Paul metro, especially at the middle school level. "When I first joined the team I was totally inexperienced and really didn't know what I was doing. But I was able to work at my own pace and improved quickly," said 7th grader Charley Cheatham, who has been on the team for two years.

For many, the team offers a space to socialize and push outside of comfort zones. "There was one practice where my group rode up a ton of huge hills and in the moment I hated it because of how physically challenging it was, but when practice was over I felt really, really good and proud of myself. I feel like there are a lot of

moments like this in mountain biking," Charley said. Kai echoed this, "I enjoy meeting new people and seeing them every week. I have met some of my best friends from the team from all over the twin cities."

An important part of being on the team for some includes service work. Throughout the season, team members, made up of a large percentage of OWL students, have been volunteering at Battle

Creek building new mountain bike trails that were recently opened to riders. In addition, multiple riders are MCA Grrls Ambassadors, who work to get more female bikers participating and racing in the league. As a whole, mountain biking is a largely male-dominated sport and has work to do in order to make it more inclusive to all genders. "While I love to mountain bike, it's definitely

Mountain Biking, 5



Minnesota Cycling Association

7th grader Zinabu Peterson races at the state meet.



Tanya Sturm

9th grader Pat Toohey sprints to the finish line at a cross country race for the Humboldt Hawks.

# Cross country balances fun and competition

Wyatt Kessler  
Staff Writer

If you've seen a bunch of middle and high schoolers running around kicking a yoga ball as if it's a soccer ball and yelling "ZIMBABWE"—you aren't dreaming, it is a form of soccer. It's a sport that the OWL-Humboldt cross country team's coach Mario Luna invented named "Zimbabwe". The team plays this on Fridays to end the week in a "chill" manner, and to have fun after hard practices the week before.

The team had a pretty successful season, including lots of personal records and good team performances. Most recently, the boys varsity team finished 10th and the girls team finished 12th at the 5K (5,000 meter) MSHSL Section 3AA Championship. The boys team finished fourth on multiple occasions during the season, such as at the Washington Tech Invitational and the St. Paul City Conference meet. The girls team finished third at the St. Paul City Conference Meet and the Washington Tech Invitational. The boys and girls teams race separately, but train together.

Even though they have their share of fun games (primarily on Fridays), the team knows how to balance fun and competition. 11th grader Willa Champion finished first of twenty-nine at the Washington Tech Invitational 5K for the women's varsity team. Willa says that she enjoys running. "I find it relaxing and it pushes me mentally and physically."

11th grader Elena Davis finished third at the East of Dale

5K. "It's so welcoming and encouraging and I love all my teammates, they're like a second family." Practices are usually very intense, and those on the team show lots of improvement from their hard work. 9th grader Patrick Toohey has consistently finished top 2-3 (on the Humboldt boys varsity team) at meets and invitationals, but claims his most proud moments and achievements are achieving new personal records and seeing improvement when he tries to keep up with senior Anders Mork from Humboldt.

Even though not everyone competes at the top level, everyone seems to be included. 9th grader Teddie Lopez had his first experience on the cross country team this year, and described it as "painful,"

*"I love all my teammates, they're like a second family."*

but on the upside he "got used to it after a few weeks". Most veterans of the team appreciate the spirit of the team and its inclusivity. Willa said she "enjoys the team culture" and that "it's a fun group of people and the coach brings good energy."

Although a large amount of the team consists of seniors, there is still a very hopeful future for the team as some of their best runners aren't close to graduating. With lots of runners returning next year, the team looks to continue their success.

# Soccer team sees big gains

## Humboldt Hawks' girls team has improved since last season

Danny Hobday  
Staff Writer

This season the Humboldt Hawks girls soccer team finished with a record of 5-6-3.

But their record doesn't show the massive improvement and hard work the team put in this season. This year Humboldt had its first JV team in over 10+ years. This was largely due to the fact that they only had 1 senior last year and everyone returned. Humboldt also finished 6th in section 3A this year which is the highest they've been ranked in the last five years.

The Hawks also took down Washington Technology for the second consecutive year in the Community Cup with a score of 1-0. This game took place at Allianz Field, a state of

the art stadium in which the Minnesota United MLS team play in.

Many of the games this year were very close. Three of the losses were within one goal. "I personally feel like our record doesn't [show the team's success], that's because we were on the same level and outplayed a bunch of the teams, but they won by a lucky shot," said 11th grader Anja Gundale. Anja was also a captain this year and a big reason why they improved so much from last year. Another OWL player was Clara Crosby, who made the varsity team year as a freshman.

Another huge part of this Hawks team was the relationship between players and coaches. Being on varsity as a freshman could be pretty scary,

but Clara said, "The whole team was a very supportive group and welcomed me to the team instantly. Coach Jess was also very welcoming from day one and her humor and good connection with all of us makes her such a good coach." She also mentioned that the captains were very helpful in teaching her how the team functioned and meeting her new teammates. Stretching circles after the game, hyping up teammates on the sideline

and many other things kept this team together throughout the year.

They are losing seven seniors this year, so there are some big shoes to fill. However with Anja coming back for another year of captaining and Clara only a freshman, the future looks bright. Coach Jess says, "The girls will need to prepare in the offseason and we hope to keep the momentum from this season going."



Anja Gundale

# HumWOW wraps up the season

## OWL swimmers make up over half the team, find success at sections

Violet Baer-Benson  
Staff Writer

The HumWOW—Humboldt, Washington, and OWL—swim team has success in the pool and out. Success isn't always about winning meets. "Swimming is about making really nice bonds," said 8th grader Ingrid Thune. "I swim not only for the sport but for the people, it's like a family."

Out of 33 students on the

team, 17 of them are OWL students. This year the team went 2-2 for dual meets this year, winning against Harding and their rivals Jomo—Como and Johnson—and losing against Central and the Sparks placing 4th in conference. On November 9th, 10th and 11th the swimmers competed in sections.

Eleventh grader Avery Erb is the team's captain this year. She swims the 50 free, 100 free and the 200 IM (individual

medley). Avery said, "One of my season highlights was after we beat Jomo, we all came together with no hard feelings and sang." This is a tradition for these two schools in which all the swimmers get in a circle and scream-sing "let the bodies hit the floor," then they proceed to push the winners in the pool and celebrate.

Looking forward, the team is feeling optimistic about the future. "We have lots of hard-working young swimmers who

give me hope for the future, especially the 7th grader Amelia Keenan," said Avery.



Purple Press Staff Photo

### Masks, 1

optional. The backlash died down, and masks became less of a focus.

If you choose to wear a mask, when is the right time to? Many Americans say that they wear their masks most in crowded indoor spaces, such as during a concert or in a mall.

Many also do not wear their masks when they are playing a sport that they have to move around a lot in, to prevent their faces from getting too warm. Girls soccer coach and EA Jessica Adame Perez says, "If I feel like wearing a mask, I do, especially when I'm at school. When I'm coaching, I don't wear a mask since I'm moving around." Many also choose not to if they are outside.

In general, many people decide that masks are most important when they are in a crowded area with lots of other people. Masks aren't worn as often when the space is outside and there aren't many people crowded around others.

Some people also do not wear masks because they may have medical problems, like breathing conditions. If so, they are suggested by the CDC to not wear a face mask. Children the age of two years old or younger are also strongly recommended to not wear masks.

Of course some people just simply do not like wearing masks, so if they have the option to not wear them, they won't. "It feels more comfortable when I don't wear a mask, and, COVID not being

as active definitely adds to my reasoning," said eighth grader Liam Nowatzki.

Others can be influenced by the media online, and by the ideas of others. If many people are saying to not wear face masks, some people will then gain that opinion and possibly spread the idea to not wear a mask to other people.

Meanwhile, at OWL, unlike many schools, you will see lots of masks. Masks were first required in OWL in April of 2021. Students had to wear masks for about a year, and it became a daily thing for students attending OWL.

This seems to be a common reason as to why many students and staff continue to wear masks, because it's become a normal practice at our school. Just like out in the

world, because of the pandemic, masks became regular.

Overall, most students continue to wear masks since it's a thing that they had to adapt to and learn. If they were used to it, why not continue. There are also many positives to masking, and they outweigh the negatives.

You most likely won't face any discrimination or strong opinions if you don't wear a mask in OWL. While most students do wear a mask, many choose not to. OWL is overall a pretty accepting school. Same goes for Minnesota, and even the rest of the world.

In conclusion, if you want to add an extra layer of protection to yourself against the COVID virus, masking is the way to go.

# Disc In talks Ultimate Frisbee and much more

## The new podcast was created by OWL frisbee players 11th grader Cooper Peterson-Antin and 10th graders Noah Johnson and Danny Hobday

Marshall Wasmund  
Staff Writer

Disc In, the new ultimate frisbee podcast made by Noah Johnson, Cooper Peterson-Antin, and Danny Hobday, discusses the intricacies and merits of a sport that is not very mainstream.

The podcast is focused on Minnesota Ultimate Frisbee and talks about news and updates about the sport as

well as interviewing people that are passionate about the sport. "We want an entertaining podcast that keeps people informed and teaches them about Ultimate. Our goal is to make our podcast interesting for anyone. It could be a parent with an athlete who wants to learn more about the sport or for newer players and more experienced players," said Noah.

The first episode of the

podcast was mainly about introducing the podcast and Danny's participation in the Youth Club Championships (YCC). There were no special guests in this episode but they are planning on having one in the next episode.

Noah, Danny, and Cooper have a process they use to make an episode of the podcast. They first figure out key ideas they want to talk about

on the podcast, then they do some research about those key ideas. "An example would be YCC or Worlds," said Danny. They then talk about those key ideas and freestyle the rest of the podcast.

Every episode will have a leader. "The leader will be rolling us into the different sections," said Danny and Cooper. Most of the feedback about the first episode was about the content of the episode: "I think the only feedback we got was to focus a bit more on the content and less about explaining how the game works," said Danny. "We hope to get better

and make more enjoyable and fun episodes," added Noah.

Some episodes of the podcast will have guest speakers like people that coach the sport, players that enjoy the sport, and professional players. "We plan to have Drag'n Thrust and Windchill players as guests in upcoming episodes," said Noah.

The podcast is currently available on Spotify and Apple Podcast. "We want to start putting it on YouTube and Amazon soon and upload short clips onto our Instagram," said Noah. The podcast will ideally get new episodes every two to

three weeks with each episode taking 20-40 minutes to make.



Noah Johnson

The first episode of Disc In is now available on Spotify.

# Senior Spotlight

Elizabeth Hallanger



**What pronouns do you use?**  
She/her.

**How long have you been at OWL?**  
Since 6th grade.

**What are your plans for next year?**  
To go to a four year college, and be a baller.

**What's been your favorite class in high school?**  
Ceramics.

**What extracurriculars are you involved in?**  
Robotics, newspaper, community meeting planning.

**Favorite field work experience or school trip and why?**  
Itasca, because 50 plus 8th graders running around in the woods was an interesting experience.

**If you had a walk up song, what would it be?**  
Two Trucks by Lemon Demon.



Purple Press Staff Photo

Student director Elle Galbreath, 11th grade (left), provides feedback during rehearsal to 10th graders Ruby Kate Nolen and Shalimar Watkins (right).

## One-acts are back this fall

Rylan Merwin  
Staff Writer

It's a new school year, and the OWL theater department is starting off kicking with a set of one-acts.

Last May, the OWL Theater Advisory Board (OTAB) read through scripts and discussed ideas, and finally decided on three short plays that excited them and that they thought would be fun for performers.

"Once every few years we do student directed one act plays. They are shorter, and easier for new student directors to start with," said theater teacher Rebekah Rentzel.

The performances are on the 7th, 8th, and 9th of December, and tickets are going on sale a month before then.

"Keep an eye out in the weekly email and for the show posters for the ticket link," Rebekah said.

The first play, Ragnasplosion, is a comedy that will feature middle school actors only.

The play is a comedic retelling of Norse mythology, and the events leading up to Ragnarok.

The second play is The Magic Flute. Originally an opera, this play centers around a man and his quest to save the girl he fell in love with, who has been stolen from her mother by an evil man. The play is a comedic drama, and it will be performed by both middle and high school students.

The high-school only play is The Vampire Cat of Nabeshima. The one-act is a drama that tells the story of a prince who condemns a cat to death, and how that action comes back to haunt him.

Since these plays will be performed indoors, all rehearsals will be performed with masks on, and all actors will mask up when going off-stage.

"We encourage audience members to mask as well, to help keep our performers healthy," said Rebekah.

## That One Little Kid

Matteo Alejandro-Provenzano



**What pronouns do you use?**  
He/him.

**How tall are you?**  
About 4'10"

**What's your favorite book, movie, or TVshow?**  
Book: Percy Jackson and the Last Olympian, movie: Thor Love and Thunder, TVshow: Avatar the Last Airbender.

**Who's your favorite senior?**  
Don't have one.

**What is your favorite video game?**  
Super Smash Bros Ultimate.

**What extracurriculars do you plan on getting involved in at OWL?**  
Lego League, soccer, maybe ultimate.

# New podcast celebrates learning

OWL math teacher Tom Toushek looks to create a platform for students to share their best work

Hiroko Zeleke  
Staff Writer

Have you ever listened to a podcast before? Have you ever put one together? Well, you will want to keep your ears open for a new podcast in our school community hosted by math teacher Tom Totushek called OWL Celebrates Learning.

How did this idea start? "We have a website, OWL Celebrates Learning (owlcelebrateslearning.com), and it sort of hasn't had a hard launch yet, but there's some of the highest work that the

school has produced," said Tom. "What I want it to be is a repository for high quality work across all OWL students. I want it to be the digital presence of the Celebration of Learning that every student has work on." A student could search up their high quality work on the site. In terms of thinking of high quality work, Tom and former OWL English teacher Kevin Hansen thought of three types of high quality work. The first being publications, the second being documentaries.

Podcasts is the third piece of this project. "We were thinking 'how do we get at displaying or housing that sort of product?' And so I said well, we could store podcasts there," Tom said. "I thought, 'it's not really authentic if a student produces a podcast that nobody listens to.' So I said 'what if I create a channel, OWL Celebrates Learning, where the content is student generated podcasts?'"

So what is the format going to look like? "You can think about it as seasons, but I am

not about celebrating me or anything I'm doing. I want to put students front and center," Tom said. An example he gave was, "so I might say, 'in this season, we're going to be listening to survival stories from OWL teacher Leo Bickelhaupt's 11/12 grade classes at Open World Learning Community, so in today's episode we will be hearing the stories of these three people, and this is a five-episode season.' So I'm thinking, I talk 30 seconds, and then it's just student content." He stated it will be a lot more serial compared to other podcasts.

"It will really be driven based on when students are creating content. So I can't

imagine there will be a lot during the summer. But as things come up in the community, I'll just record and put stuff out there."

Now, you may be wondering, why podcasts? Tom said that since students are already creating podcasts at school, he wants to make sure that students actually get their voices pushed out into the world. Tom hopes this idea catches on outside of the OWL community.

"My idea is that high quality OWL podcasts will go out on this channel, but I also want to celebrate learning at other places in St. Paul and greater Minnesota," he said. "Ideally what I want to do is build out

and help other schools build their own podcast channels, so that students have another avenue to get their voices out there and try to change the world." He plans to let people know about the podcast through word of mouth, and will put the podcast on all podcast apps. Even though the podcast isn't out yet, Tom mentioned there is already an existing twitter account for the OWL Celebrates Learning site and once there is enough content, he will create a twitter bot that tweets out everyday about high quality work from the site, which will sometimes include the podcast.

You may be wondering, OWL podcast, 8

# Student Library Advisory Council builds community

SLAC uses student input to develop OWL's library

Constance Van Genderen  
Staff Writer

There sure are a lot of chairs in the library nowadays. It's a good thing too, because the "SLAC-ers" meet there every Wednesday.

SLAC, or the Student Library Advisory Council, is a student group that helps run the library, make the choices on what books are purchased, conserve the library, get people excited about the library, and just overall talk about books. "It is a leadership opportunity to learn how to gather infor-

mation, lots of different things, problem solving, coming together, and collaboration," said OWL librarian Caryl Mousseaux. The group is run by Caryl and science teacher Sorcha Nix, the not-so-secret staff bookworms. SLAC focuses on making the library a place that has input from students and multiple perspectives.

SLAC has grown so much in the last years that it was split into two groups: high school and middle school, both of which have various inside jokes about chicken. "It

makes me kind of sad because it's fun having all of us in one group," said 11th grader Hiroko Zeleke.

When SLAC first started there were five bookshelves. Now the library has over 30 bookshelves and a lot more coming. Before the 2022-23 school year, SLAC had maybe three high school students and around 15 middle school students. Today, SLAC has 15 high school members and over 20 middle schoolers. Just this year SLAC welcomed eight new members for middle

school. "We've gradually become more chaotic and silly each year," said ninth grader, Kate Houle.

The idea of SLAC was created when a librarian at Highland Park Middle School decided to create an EcoLab Grant with other librarians from across the district that would give funding to libraries for student-requested books and would reflect what students want to read. Because it's always hard to get money for anything, Caryl and the librarian at Highland Park Middle proposed the idea of a student library advisory council that

would find what the library needed and incorporate student perspectives into the libraries.

When SLAC first started in 2019 there were only eight

SLAC, 11



Purple Press Staff Photo

SLACers balance books on their heads at a recent meeting.



Purple Press Staff Photo

11th grader Elena Davis links arms with teacher Paying Lor to avoid being tagged in a game of assassin.

## Assassin takes over at OWL

Popular tag game was brought to school halls by 11th graders

Liam Nowatzki  
Staff Writer

Imagine a game where you're given a target. Your only goal is to find and eliminate your target while simultaneously avoiding another player trying to eliminate you.

Well the juniors here at OWL didn't have to imagine. Taking place in early October, Tom Totushek, a math teacher here at OWL scheduled a grade wide game of Assassin. Assassin is a game simulating something you would see in a James Bond movie. Eliminate, Survive, Action, and Excitement. Only without all the guns and spy gadgets.

The game is pretty simple. Every player is assigned a target. Their objective is to eliminate the target while not being eliminated themselves. The goal is to be the last person standing. Trust me, it sounds easier on paper. In reality you have to run around the halls just hoping you don't get tagged. While there are ways to figure out who has you, such as asking your friends, most people have to just hope they won't get tagged without actually knowing if the person is out to get them is right next to them or on the other side of the building. Junior Mya Reynolds said, "Somebody was waiting outside my English class, and tagged me right as class ended, I didn't even have time to get out of the class."

It is not known who invented the game directly, but what we do know is that it's widely known for being played at colleges, many colleges have even created an Assassin's Guild. The game Assassin was even

played at Harvard University, sparking many news stories, which is probably where it got most of its popularity.

Here at OWL the game was organized by math teacher Tom Totushek. The first game was played during fall field work when the Juniors were off on the week long trip at Camp Wapsie. This game didn't have as many rules and certainly wasn't as organized. Tom went off this idea to create a bigger game of Assassin a week later back at the school.

Tom added his own feature to the game, as he describes here. "So normally the way assassin works is it's one big circle, everybody has a target to tag and when you get your target you're assigned their target," Tom said. "This way it was more like a string of pearls, where there were 10 small circles all strung into one circle, so once you killed everyone in your loop, you could go after other loops."

This special adaptation resulted in instances where two people would have the same target. Junior Sora Walker. "My target was Maria and I was her target. When I went to tag Maria, she was trying to tag me, but neither of us knew that Henry Plaman, a player from a different loop, had me too," Sora said. "So he came in and tagged me and Maria." The game was so serious Sora took off his ankle weights.

Almost every Junior I talked to was enthusiastic about the game. When we asked Tom if he would do it in the future he replied, "I'll probably do another game for 11th graders in the third quarter."

# CGI dominates the film industry

The increased use of the visual effect in movies has raised the question—how much is too much?

Kate Houle  
Staff Writer

Avengers: Infinity War is one of the highest grossing movies of all time. The battle packed film is over two hours long and was made of over 2,700 individually filmed shots. Only 80 of them didn't use any visual effects.

Since the first appearance of computer generated imagery in 1973, CGI has become one of the most used tools in the entertainment industry. Visual effects are used to enhance actors and their surroundings, whether by creating entire fantasy worlds through green screen or digitally removing an unruly strand of hair. Using computer software, visual effects (or VFX) artists are able to create three-dimensional characters, special effects, and even full-fledged scenes, spending almost \$400,000 for just five minutes of computer graphics. This process is called CGI animation or 3D rendering and can be found in almost everything you watch.

This technology, though practically unnoticeable when done well, is integral to filmmaking nowadays. Filmmakers are counting on your ability to believe what you see,

even if logically you know there's no way there could be real dinosaurs chasing people in the Jurassic Park movies, or that actual lightning is coming out of Thor's hammer. But this resource can be leaned on too heavily, especially when filmmakers overuse green screen or make fully CGI characters for a fight instead of going to a location or hiring stunt workers.

And this raises the question: how much CGI is too much CGI?

At the forefront of this question is Marvel. Producing eight projects in the past year alone, they rely very heavily on CGI, with almost 90% of their shots being aided by visual effects, according to notable VFX company Industrial Light & Magic (ILM). The Marvel Cinematic Universe is notorious for their use of CGI in their many battle scenes, creating unbelievable superpowers and magical abilities, while also making characters perform impossible stunts.

Their most recent show, She-Hulk: Attorney at Law, sparked massive outrage, when the TV show's titular character's design was released, and the female superhero was al-

most entirely made of CGI. Her pea-soup green skin was practically flawless and her human-forms curly hair was straightened, glossened, and darkened. Fans were understandably very upset with her design, which was modeled off her comics style instead of the actors personal appearance, and there was a lot of criticism for their overuse of visual effects. Marvel has been entering the "uncanny valley" with a lot of their superhuman characters as of late, a phenomenon first identified by Japanese robotics professor Mashiho Mori where you physically can not comprehend the amounts of CGI used. Even though you know what you are supposed

to be seeing, the tools your brain uses to recognize human faces and bodies are overloaded by the fully computer-generated characters, and they look just plain wrong.

But there's a reason for that. Marvel is a firm believer of quantity over quality. They're releasing a new movie or show every other month, with over 20 other projects in the works right now. This rigorously packed schedule is hardest on VFX artists. Responsible for almost every element of computer animation you see on your screen, VFX workers are forced to put in ridiculous hours to meet Marvel's tight deadlines, and rarely ever get acknowledged for their work.

Recently, a "scandal" broke out over how unfairly VFX art-

CGI, 10



Elizabeth Hallanger

## The environmental club is back!

The group hopes to instate compost bins around the school

Nina Laferla  
Staff Writer

"Every new member will get a cookie at our first meeting," said 9th grader Margaret Moe, a co-founder in the Environmental club. The Purple Press could not confirm or deny whether or not new

members of the club have received cookies.

The environmental club was founded in 2019 by former student Kate Moe and her friends. This year her younger sister Margaret decided that it needed to be reinstated and that they should reestablish

some of the values and goals of the club. The club plans on meeting every other Wednesday and is open to new members from all grades.

"I wanted to make an impact at our school," said 9th grade club member Maddie Linstad. "I really like meeting new people and hearing their ideas."

The club says one of their goals is to get a composting bin

on every floor of the school, and at every club meeting they would take it to a local community garden. They would all like to get better agreements with WSCO Community gardens, and other local gardens.

"It's important to have the club to have a place to go for students who are interested in making an impact at our school," said Margaret.

### Mountain Biking, 2

a predominantly male sport which needs to change," said Charley.

At the team's end of the season banquet in late October, multiple OWL riders took home race hardware. 11th grader Tess Champion was recognized as the season high scorer for high school girls, despite missing three races due to a concussion. In addition, Kai and Zinabu received

medals for placing 25th and 13th overall (a weighted total of all races) in their grade level divisions, respectively.

The team is always looking for more riders. "If you are nervous because you aren't great at biking, don't worry! The coaches are super awesome and you will be in a group with people at your level, so you won't be alone," said Charley. Kai agreed, "The overall community of the team is super fun and happy."



Purple Press staff photo

OWL members of the St. Paul Composite team.

# FIFA World Cup will be held over the holidays

The November start date will help alleviate the heat in Qatar

Bennett Vaughan-Fier  
Staff Writer

The World Cup is the most prestigious and famous tournament in the world, it happens every four years, spans over 29 days, and includes 32 teams. This year's Cup is different though, it is in Qatar, and Qatar is so hot in the summer that they had to postpone it to November.

The World Cup is different from most tournaments as

it has a round robin style of games—every team that makes it to the world cup is guaranteed three games, this means that every team will play all the other teams in its group. To move on to the next round a team must be in the top two of their group, the ranking is scored by a point system, 3 for a win, 1 for a draw and 0 for a loss. If two teams are tied in the end they subtract or add points based on red cards, yellow cards, difference in goals

and other things. The next round goes to single elimination, and continues to the finals. To determine who makes it in, they first seed eight teams including the host team, and then determine the rest based on the FIFA world ranking. After that they put them into different pots based on geography, and randomly shuffled into 8 different groups. Next I will be adding up each team's ranking on the official FIFA website.

Group A: Group A has got to go to Netherlands, this is their first cup since their brutal

loss to Brazil in 2014, and they have a pretty easy group with two of the three other teams being in the bottom forty, all they have to do is beat Senegal and the group is theirs. Combined ranking: 111

Group B: Group B has our team USA in it but they are gonna have a bad time. They have England which is ranked currently at number five and Iran and Wales, which are both ranked in the top 20. The USA definitely has to bring their best game, to even make it past the first round. Combined ranking: 60

Group C: Argentina has got this group locked up, they are currently ranked number 3 and all the other teams aren't even in the top 12, and with it being Messi's last year, they want a win. Combined ranking: 96

Group D: for this group it's a bit harder to determine, although France is ranked number 4. They have Denmark which will be a hard opponent to beat to move on. Combined ranking: 82

Group E: Group E is probably the most competitive, it has Germany that is ranked num-

ber 11 and Spain who's ranked number 7, and it has Japan and Costa Rica who are decent teams, this one is the hardest to determine out of all the groups. Combined ranking: 73

Group F: Belgium is currently ranked number 2 and is the favorite for this by far, but they still have to get through Croatia who had a pretty good team and is ranked 12th. This is Canada's first World Cup in 36 years so they will be fighting for a spot. Combined ranking: 77

FIFA, 5



# Reviews 'n' stuff



## Minions: The Rise of Gru is flawless

*...okay, maybe not, but the Minions remain a cultural phenomenon*

**Nick Streng**  
Staff Writer

Minions have been on this planet for over a decade, and have undoubtedly transformed our society into a thriving utopia thanks to their mere existence. From the success of Illumination Entertainment's iconic Despicable Me trilogy spawned the MCU (Minion Cinematic Universe) that we all know and love, and eventually Illumination was inspired to concoct their greatest gift to humanity: Minions (2015), a film beloved by all and definitely not panned by critics. World peace was achieved thanks to the cinematic heroics of Kevin, Stuart, and Bob uniting people from all over the planet and the movie became an instant classic. And

of course, all perfect movies result in a perfect sequel, and now in 2022, we have Minions: The Rise of Gru: an even greater achievement than the first, the most significant history marker of our world—

...Wait, what? You think I'm being sarcastic? Well then dear reader, let me ask you this: if this movie isn't actually good, then why did so many people go see it wearing suits?

That's probably the most amusing—and confusing—aspect of Illumination's most recent animated addition to the Despicable Me franchise, Minions: The Rise of Gru. Released on July 1st, 2022, the film serves as a sequel to the first Minions movie and a prequel to the original Despicable Me. It is directed by Kyle Balda and stars Steve Carell and Pierre Coffin as the lead voice

actors, reprising their roles as Gru and the Minions respectively. And it was...okay.

Illumination's movies can be enjoyable, but it's pretty clear that they're primarily targeted towards entertaining children and are mostly uninterested in telling thematically rich stories, which is a fancy way of saying that they don't really try. Their art style has been nearly the exact same ever since their first movie, making their productions not exactly boundary-pushing in the realm of animation, and as a result I've never seen an Illumination movie that ever reaches the same heights of an animated movie from studios like Pixar, Dreamworks, or Laika.

And the same can mostly be said for Minions: The Rise of Gru. It's essentially 90 min-

utes of Minion shenanigans as they pal around with a young Gru, and whenever it seems like it's trying to send a message in the story or reach any level of depth, it immediately swallows its own words and goes right back to turn-your-brain-off action. The tone is very light-hearted and comedic, with any emotional stakes being nonexistent, and the animation, while admittedly very polished and fluid, does nothing to attempt to change up the studio's art style. It's better than their (previously) most recent movies, but I still have to give it a 5/10. It's a fairly forgettable movie with a few decent highlights.

So with that in mind, as a lifelong devotee of the Minions I went to see this masterpiece the only way it could be seen: in formal attire on opening night with eight of my friends. It was life-changing, unforgettable, and the greatest movie-going experience I've ever had. An easy 10/10, would highly

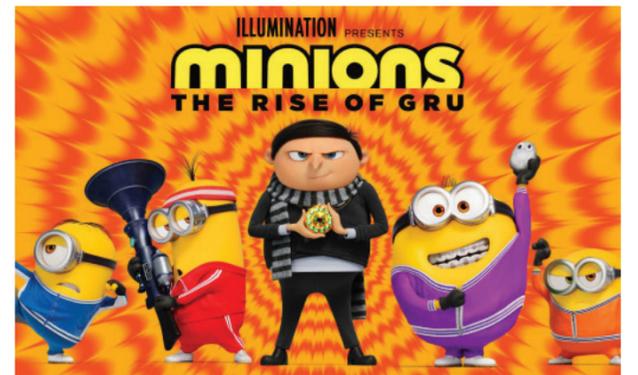
recommend.

And as well, the rest of human civilization made the most reasonable decision to don suits and ties and go out to see it. Around the time of this movie's release, it became a popular meme over the internet to go watch this movie wearing a suit, with those doing so being dubbed "gentleminions." My friends and I had no idea that it was a widespread trend when we did this, and were surprised

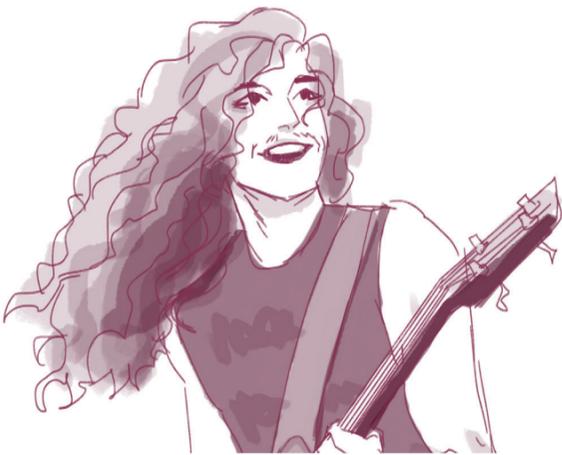
to see multiple other parties of people doing the same thing as us when we went to a theater. Eventually this disbanded due to some theaters banning various groups for being overly disruptive to the staff and other moviegoers, but for a while these gentleminions swept all over the place. The result? \$920.6 million at the box office.

When I learned of this

Minions, 7



Minions: The Rise of Gru was released in theaters July 1st.



Nox GebbenGreen

## The greatest bass player of all time

*Cliff Burton revolutionized how the instrument is played*

**Olivia Bilek**  
Staff Writer

Cliff Burton, who passed away in 1986, was one of the most innovative bass players of all time.

Burton was an American musician best known for playing bass for the heavy metal band Metallica from 1982 until he died at the age of 24. Burton played on the band's first three studio albums, Kill 'Em All (1983), Ride the Lightning (1984), and Master of Puppets (1986).

Burton started playing bass when he was 13 years old after his older brother Scott's death at age 16. Burton was quoted by his mother, Jan Burton, for saying, "I'm going to be the best bassist I can be for my brother." While attending Castro Valley High School in California, Burton formed his first band, EZ-Street. After graduating from Castro, Bur-

ton attended Chabot College in Hayward, CA, where he and former EZ-Street guitarist Jim Martin (and later the guitarist of Faith No More) formed their second band, Agents of Misfortune.

In 1982 Burton joined his first professional band, Trauma. While with Trauma he recorded the track "Such a Shame" which was featured on the 1982 compilation album Metal Massacre II released through Metal Blade Records.

Trauma performed at the Whisky a Go Go on the Sunset Strip in West Hollywood, CA, in November of 1982. In the audience was James Hetfield and Lars Ulrich of Metallica. Hetfield originally thought Burton was a guitarist, but upon learning he played bass he and Ulrich decided they would recruit Burton for Metallica to replace their depart-

Burton, 11

## Nope redefines horror genre

*The new movie is "horrifying, entertaining, impactful"*

**Elizabeth Hallanger**  
Staff Writer

Ah, October, the spookiest time of the year. If you're like me, and are someone who treats fall like the biggest event of the year and loves a good movie, then the Halloween season means binging every spooky film you can find; whether it's a childhood banger like Halloweentown, a gory slasher like Scream, or even something to bring out your inner sigma male, like American Psycho, there's plenty out there to enjoy. However, out of all of the films I've watched this month, Nope was definitely my favorite. Just from watching the trailer alone, I could already tell that it was going to be in my top ten, mostly because I love

good, thought-provoking media, but also because I saw wacky waving inflatable men and allusions to cowboys and subsequently got very excited.

Balancing its horrifying elements, themes, and symbolism surprisingly well, the film promises a spectacle and wholeheartedly delivers. Excuse the blatant slander, but after a whole summer of watching nothing but Marvel movies, finishing a film and walking out of the theater feeling truly impacted was so refreshing.

The film mainly follows OJ and Emerald, two siblings who are running their family's horse ranch following their father's mysterious death. The business isn't doing too well, evident by OJ selling horses

to former child star Ricky and his theme park down the road. However, mysterious things begin happening around the ranch, and when the two catch sight of a UFO, they figure that it could greatly benefit them and along with the help of nearby enthusiast Angel and eventually, Hollywood filmmaker Antlers, they become determined to capture footage of it, no matter the cost.

Much like Jordan Peele's other work, this movie is just as terrifying as any other big horror flick, while also being chock full of poignant themes and symbolism. While Nope's themes are fairly up to interpretation, the main and clearly identifiable ones were those of exploitation and spectacle. The Hayfields remain on the ranch in an attempt to get the perfect shot of the UFO, despite their lives being in danger, Ricky's theme park has an entire show

dedicated to feeding horses to it for the entertainment of an audience, which is what causes all of the problems on the ranch in the first place. There's also plenty of other interesting parts that I could go on for hours about, such as the significance of the horses, the gruesome Gordy's Home incident, and many more.

The movie isn't all heavy themes and horror, however. The characters and art direction are what ultimately make this film so enjoyable. OJ and his sister Emerald's contrasting personalities give them great chemistry, Angel provides some much needed comedy relief amidst all the terrifying events, and Ricky and Antlers are both interesting and mysterious in their own ways. The real show-stopper of Nope, however, was definitely the

Nope, 10

## Reproductive rights in question after the overturn of Roe v. Wade

*The right to an abortion remains legal in Minnesota*

**Alva Healy**  
Staff Writer

On November 8, ballot boxes were overflowing with people voting on candidates for the U.S. Senate, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, U.S. Representative in Congress, State Senator, and many other positions. But, in some states, they also voted on abortion rights.

On June 24 2022, Roe v. Wade was overturned.

Roe v. Wade was a

landmark decision put into action in 1973 when a pregnant woman filed a lawsuit because she was denied the right to have an abortion. During the case, U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Constitution of the United States granted the right to an abortion.

With Roe v. Wade overturned, this year's Governor elections will have big implications for reproductive rights.

13 states have successfully banned abortions, 25 states

still have some form of legal abortions, and 14 states are in the middle ground of gestational limits and temporary ban blocks. Along with other issues, states that don't have a constitutional right for abortion will likely be targeted with abortion propaganda from both sides.

Some states have opted to put abortion on the ballot, like Kansas did this summer. On August 2, Kansas citizens rejected a ballot measure that would have removed protections for abortion rights from the state's constitution. This was a surprise to the rest of

the U.S., because Kansas has been consistently conservative. When an overwhelming majority of citizens voted no on the ballot measure, it gave other states an opportunity to do the same. This election, five other states, California, Michigan, Vermont, Kentucky, and Montana, have put abortion on the ballot.

This cannot be said for all states, though. Most states will still be relying on the governor to decide whether or not abortion will stay legal. This is why, in most states, a battle has been

Abortion, 10

# Grand Theft Auto 6 leaked

90 videos of the latest season of GTA were distributed by a hacker

**Sir Nakhai Guy-Cornelius**  
Staff Writer

Sunday, September 18th  
Rockstar Games got the worst anniversary gift ever after Grand Theft Auto 5's nine year anniversary. There were around 90 leaked clips that were in total around an hour of gameplay of their next GTA title, with some of them having millions of views. The hacker got hold of these clips by hacking a RockStar Games employee slack account and then downloading the clips and posting them on social media.

The hacker attempted to blackmail Rockstar Games to give them \$100,000 or they would leak GTA 5's and GTA's



source codes. It hasn't been proven that they actually have it or not but if they do hackers can easily learn Rockstar Games codes and make more hacks for GTA 5 and day one GTA 6 hacks. Rockstar responded saying that a third party illegally downloaded test videos of the next GTA title and they are disappointed that this is the first time the next GTA was shared with the public but this won't change their plans for the game.

Before this tweet no one knew if the clips were real or not, but in their tweet they never said anything else about the hacker. Which is kind of weird because if they really have the source codes they can cause serious problems. But it hasn't been proven that they actually have it or not but if they do hackers could easily learn Rockstar Games codes and make more hacks for GTA 5 and day one GTA 6 hacks. They can also use the source code to impersonate the company. If this does happen GTA 6 will probably be delayed and also GTA 5 that already has a massive hacking issue will be in an even worse state. And even worse it is rumored that

the hacker already sold the source code for 2.2 bitcoin which is worth a little less than \$20,000 today but it changes. The hacker also has said they will leak the same clips several more times because of how viral they went the first time. At the end of their message they said we will see him again in a year and two months.

The hackers name they're going by is Teapotuberhacker. Teapot-UBER-hacker the Uber in their name is actually important because the hacker also is claiming that they did not only hack Rockstar Games, they also hacked Uber. And Uber thinks that the hacker is part of a group named LAP-SUS\$ that has hacked many other high profile companies this year including Microsoft. And now the FBI is involved and are helping Uber and Rockstar Games find these hackers. One of these hackers might have been arrested so far with one of them being a 17 year old in England. But the UK police won't confirm if it's the hacker from the GTA and Uber hacks. And seven more people have been arrested in the UK for connections with LAP-SUS\$ with ages ranging

from 21 to 16.

The clips of GTA 6 appear to take place in Vice City, which is based on Miami. But the game has gotten lots of criticism about how the game looks. But keep in mind that these clips are stated to be an older build of GTA 6 so most likely GTA 6 is way different now. One of the most viewed clips of GTA 6 was what will be the first female main character in the franchise robbing a store. The store itself looked unpolished and not really up to Rockstar Games standards. And the characters inside didn't look polished, with low detail and some of them didn't even have a complete face. The main character wasn't much better. There was a weird text popping up by the characters and the audio was bad. At the end of the clip the main character stole a police car and drove away, but the driving looked off.

The other game companies saw how the public were talking about how bad it looked and a bunch of Triple A games decided to show some clips of how their game looked



Moss Windingstad

## It's Everyday Bro is a masterpiece

Jake Paul's 2017 song fell flat for critics, but not for Mikko

**Mikko Liimatta**  
Staff Writer

Jake Paul's 2017 song "It's Everyday Bro" has long been considered a disaster in the music world, but it's actually a masterpiece. According to a recent study by the music critic group SpeepeeS, 100% of people actually enjoy "It's Everyday Bro", such as SpeepeeS's leader Arlo Northrop-Kiel. "Jake Paul is the best musician to ever grace the earth with his presence," Arlo said.

One of the most beloved things about "It's Everyday Bro" is the song's lyrics. With iconic lines like "It's everyday bro with that Disney Channel flow," and "got the brand new Rolex and it match the Lambo too," and the ever beloved "I just dropped some new merch and it's selling like a god, church." These epic rhymes really show why experts see this song as a masterpiece. Not only does this Jake Paul song display a stellar use of rhymes, it also incorporates a superb use of imagery such as the line "England is my city." OWL's resident Jake Paul fanatic Mintesinot Sturm said of this line, "It twists the basics of fact and fiction, referring to England as his city, despite the fact that it is not in fact a city."

This song also displays a strong theme of a white male flexing his money. This theme gives this song a lot of character, because who doesn't want to see a white guy flexing his money? "It really adds to the song," said 11th grader Henry Plaman after hearing it for the first time.

The general public was not too keen on the song at first and it only peaked at #91 on the Billboard Top 100 chart. Despite only peaking at #91, it

has amassed almost 300 million views on YouTube and nearly 100 million on Spotify, and has more views than the number 18 song on Billboard Top 100 that week, "Bank Account" by 21 Savage. This shows that despite the insulting rating on the top 100, it is still one of the top songs of 2017.

The best thing about "It's Everyday Bro" is that not only do I have something to listen to while playing Pokemon Go, it has also sparked the rise of Jake Paul's YouTube channel. Jake Paul's channel has shot up in popularity having gained over 15 million subscribers since This song dropped. Since that fateful day, Jake Paul has dropped fire content such as "My New Life As a Pro Boxer" where he routinely flexes his money. This content is always a good watch and ties into the theme of the song of a rich white male flexing his money.

There are very few criticisms of the song, but where there is something good there are always haters trying to cancel people on Twitter. According to a recent survey done by SpeepeeS the most common criticism of the song was that, "The song is a perfect mix of Jake Paul and even more Jake Paul, you can never have too much Jake Paul. No song can be this perfect." Even more surprising is that the second most common criticism was that, "white male flexing money doesn't make a good song." The only logical explanation for this is that these responses are from internet trolls from the internet forum Reddit attempting to get a "ha ha funny" reaction.

**Everyday Bro, 10**

## Is Dave El Macho from the Minions?

**Ian Myott**  
Staff Writer

Have you ever watched the hit 2013 classic, Despicable Me 2, and thought wow, El Macho (the villain of the movie) looks a lot like Principal David Gundale from hit school OWL. If you have you must be mentally capable (like me), but is this really the truth, or is it really the truth? In this hit article from hit newspaper the Purple Press from hit school OWL we will find out.

This came to me while watching Despicable Me 2. I noticed that El Macho seemed to talk like Dave, but I didn't think much of it. Then while looking up the greatness of El Macho I found a very legitimate website dedicated to El Macho's swag energy and it said that DNA that matches El Macho's has been found in St. Paul's West Side. These two facts lead me to believe Dave might be El Macho so I did more research which totally convinced me, so I hope that the research I did convinces you too.

There are many clues that lead us to conclude that El

Macho is actually Dave. You might notice that the movie company behind the hit 2013 classic, Despicable Me 2, Illumination creates very realistic films based on true stories like, Despicable Me 1, Despicable Me 3 and Minions: The Rise of Gru, which were all based on Operation Barbarossa. This tells us the fact that everything in Illumination's movies happened in real life, making the "It's just fiction," argument completely invalid.

I believe that Dave used a High-Tech inator created by Dr. Doofenshmirtz of UCLA. The device is called the Bruhinator 5000 which is located in Los Angeles, California and it is a very powerful healing ray that removes cosmetics and heals all wounds revives the dead, turns body fat into height and makes you 15 years younger but the Bruhinator 5000 has side effects like having a receding hairline, removing most goofiness, and getting a job in the education industry, also none of these effects can be reversed.

Dave also just so happens to have all these side effects.

In an interview he said he was around 5'11", while El Macho is 5'4". If you convert his belly size into height with the Bruhinator 5000, El Macho's height becomes 5'11" just like Dave's, coincidence? I don't think so. Dave also has a receding hairline (not male pattern baldness) and is a principal, one of the most respected careers in education.

At the end of the movie, Despicable Me 2, El Macho injects PX-41 serum into himself and jumps into a volcano in an epic swag gamer fashion. Giving El Macho the feeling of not being alive. Thus Dave must have massive scars and be not alive because of this, but because Dave used the Bruhinator 5000 we know that he doesn't have any of these scars.

That last bit might not convince you as you might think I am leaving out video evidence on purpose, well I am not. I have been using an AI created by Roberto Robert Robertson of MIT that shows people in old videos at their current age. So we used this AI over the epic Gru versus El Macho fight scene and it turns out El Ma-

cho looks almost exactly like Dave. If you don't believe me, watch my video of the program used on the El Macho fight scene.

You may not have believed me before but this evidence will change your views forever. I am of course talking about what happened on October 10th, 2022. Dave started Spirit Week with Minion costumes, which leads us to believe that Dave wants to turn all the students at OWL into Purple Minions with the PX-41 serum. Just like El Macho from the hit movie Despicable Me 2. While you might say these are all coincidences, they're not because I am right and you are wrong (unless you agree with me).

All this completely real evidence proves that our principal David Gundale is El Macho from the hit 2013 movie Despicable Me 2. What should us students do with this information? I recommend calling the FBI to snitch on Dave for being an Indonesian war criminal at 3AM. Like and subscribe to my Facebook page if you agree #DonutEarth.

### Minions, 6

trend, I was very amused, but also perplexed. Why was Minions 2 of all movies getting this kind of attention? In the past I'd heard of many films widely considered to be bad that gathered ironic attention online, but never to this extent. The only movie that came somewhat close was another recent movie from 2022: the infamous Morbius, which generated a hilariously high amount of ironic praise and memes. Most prominent among them was the movie being labeled as the highest-grossing movie of

all time, or for all you moribund heads out there, the first movie to make a morbillion dollars. But here's the key difference: when it came to money, The Rise of Gru flourished and Morbius floundered. When it came to actually bothering to watch the latter, most skipped out, resulting in Morbius having terrible commercial success.

And it left me curious. If both movies were mediocre, why did one of them almost make a billion dollars?

Well, you could say that it was because The Rise of Gru was critically received slight-

ly better and the trend surrounding it actually involved going to see it. However, after seconds of careful analysis, I have a more reasonable explanation:

The Minions.

Minions are, to put it simply, an immortal, unstoppable force of unspeakable power. They're the reason I saw this movie, and the reason so many others did as well. Whether the interest be genuine or ironic, the Minions will be on everyone's mind. Illumination can make the worst film to ever exist, but if they put these tiny adorable yellow marketable

henchmen in it, they'll be led straight to victory. So what have we learned? Simple: Minions dominate all with their choke-hold on the entertainment industry and this year has shown that they're not going anywhere. This is their world, and we're just living in it.



IMDb

### FIFA, 5

Group G: Group G has the current number 1 ranked team, Brazil, so it's definitely going to be a challenge for Serbia and Switzerland to overcome, even though they are both good teams. Cameroon is the underdog in this group, with the lowest ranking, but you never know, anything can happen. Combined ranking: 80

Group H: Group H is also a competitive one, with most of the teams ranking closely together. You've got Portugal at 9 and Uruguay at 14, and Ko-

rea at 28. To match these good teams Ghana is going to have to work hard to earn a spot. Combined ranking: 102

Now let's talk about where it's at. This year's World Cup is in Qatar, which influences this a lot. It's already been delayed because it was too hot in the summer, and this heat is going to change the outcomes, with temperature being higher, and players getting tired more easily, the home team Qatar is going to have a major advantage with this, and the home field advantage, might change how they do, even though they are ranked low.

# Is Wingstop worth the hype?

The fast food chain has received a lot of internet buzz, but Danny doesn't think it's worth the stop

Danny Hobday  
Staff Writer

With Wingstop being one of the most hyped up fast food restaurants on social media right now, I set out to explore. Tik Tok videos saying "best ranch in the world" and Instagram videos raving about the crazy loaded voodoo fries. I tried multiple items, gave them so many chances, even had other people with me to try and change my mind... But it straight up disappointed me.

Wingstop is a chain, chicken wing based restaurant. When we stepped inside the Snelling Avenue location it

was in pretty bad shape. Tables were a bit dirty. They were out of napkins so there was a huge roll of paper towels laying on its side near the cash register. 4/6 of the soda options were out of order on the machine. Not a great first look.

Between my friends and I, we ordered 4 different things. First item up was the regular fries. If I had to sum up these fries into one word, it would be salt. The amount of salt on the fries could've given me a heart attack if I would've eaten them all. The fries were also extremely soggy. If you picked one up it would flop down and sometimes break in half. Not a

great first item.

Next thing I had was the voodoo fries. Voodoo fries are the regular fries but with Cajun seasoning, ranch and cheddar cheese. I'm not going to lie, these were pretty good. They weren't too messy which really surprised me because they had so much on them. I would recommend these if you go (only if you happen to go).

After I got done trying the different types of fries, I got to work trying out the wings. The first wing flavor I tried was lemon pepper. Before going to Wingstop ALL I heard about was the lemon pepper wings. These were supposed to be a game changer. But man oh man I couldn't eat more than two of them. It was as if they fried the wing and then instead of tossing them in sauce they tossed them in a bucket of salt. I guess people must love salt. Definitely think this was the worst item I got and would definitely not recommend... unless you loooove salt.

After I rinsed out my mouth and got my taste back,

I moved on to the barbecue wings. These were again pretty salty but not as bad as lemon pepper. I think most people could probably make better barbecue wings at home but they weren't terrible. There was a ton of sauce on the wing though so I got to give them props for that.

Last thing I had was the ranch. "Best ranch ever," "will change your life." This was the one thing that lived up to at least half of the hype. The ranch was pretty darn good. It was creamy, smooth but not too drippy, and just overall great. To get even half my wings eaten I just drowned them in the ranch and they weren't horrible then. Overall pretty good ranch, but I wouldn't go there just to try the ranch.

Overall, I think Wingstop was a pretty big bust and wouldn't recommend people go there. Fries were soggy and the wings were salty. I also recently went to Buffalo Wild Wings and I can confidently say that every single wing flavor I had there was way better. So if you're ever out and craving wings, please go to Buffalo Wild Wings and not Wingstop.



Yelp

Wingstop is known for its ranch, pictured above.

## Kent, 1

while advancing the field of youth development." He said that being a part of 4-H helped him learn more about leadership and exposed him to experiential learning (learning through doing).

During Kent's time in middle and high school, he started discovering his connection to art. "I think the thing about art for me is it just has the ability to communicate this presence that you have," he said. "I don't want to say 'it has the ability to communicate your ideas' because I think it's more than ideas. I think it's almost like your essence, or who you are. That goes beyond the basic identity stuff. It's your fullness." Kent couldn't really form a connection to writing in school, but he found that visual art was a medium that he really had an attachment to. He discovered his voice through art, and began using it as his way to express himself.

After high school, Kent went to St. Olaf college, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Studio Art and Education. He's a licensed teacher in Visual Art, and he also has a masters in education

from Saint Mary's University, a Montessori teaching certification, and a masters in Montessori Education from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

Kent has been teaching at Saint Paul Public Schools for over 20 years, starting in the Fall of 2001. He's had experience working with both middle and high school students, previously teaching at Battle Creek Middle School, Johnson Senior High School, Parkway Montessori Middle School, and Gordon Parks High School.

One of the things that attracted Kent to OWL, and one of his favorite things about teaching here, is being able to teach 6-12 students all in the same place. "I've taught both [middle and high schoolers] at different parts in my career, and I love both for different reasons," Kent said. "Being able to do all of it at once is great, because with the middle school students you can really help them build those baseline skills, and then with the high school students you can go deeper with concept development. The distance you can go intellectually with the high school students, I absolutely

love that."

Apart from the diverse age pool at OWL, Kent also likes the smaller scale of OWL compared to other schools he's worked for. "Other schools that I've taught at have been larger settings, where it's not so much focused on the individual. It's more focused on the factory aspect of things, like just getting them through and getting them done," Kent said. "I find that kind of 'factory mentality' in education cold and impersonal, and not very enjoyable. But here I don't feel that way, I feel like I'm starting to build solid connections with students."

Outside of school, Kent, unsurprisingly, enjoys making art! He's done painting and photography before, but he says that his absolute favorite medium to work with is clay, so much so that he even has his own pottery studio at his house where he makes practical pieces like mugs that he sometimes puts up for sale. "I really enjoy the process of it," Kent said. "Clay is so liberating because it's this tactile feeling in your hand, and your exact amount of pressure controls the movement of the clay. But then on the other hand, you

have to leave something up to the kiln (furnace that hardens clay). There's a spontaneity that comes back in the kiln that you don't always get to control."

Apart from doing pottery, Kent also has also been one of the coaches on the Saint Paul Youth Mountain Bike Team for two to three years, which he signed up for when the team was looking for a coach and his son urged him to fill the empty slot. He was trained "pretty extensively" and then certified as a coach. "I'm enjoying it," Kent said. "It's really good. It gets me out, gets me moving, you know, gets me doing stuff that I probably wouldn't normally do. I'm always pleasantly surprised at how I'm able to adapt to the courses."

Kent has made a great start this year, building strong connections with students and creating an engaging and creative classroom environment where everyone is encouraged to do their own thing. One of Kent's students especially enjoys his sense of humor. "His humor is really dry, and then he explains it, and somehow it's more funny. I love the dry humor," said 10th grader Owen Belmares.

## GTA, 7

at the beginning stages. And those clips of the games that they made were much better than the leaks and it also has been stated its an older build of GTA 6.

But even more hackers that aren't related to LAPSUS\$ have been reported but this time the hackers are going after the community. In GTA 5 and Red Dead Redemption 2 you can join crews with your friend or different communities. These crews give you exp and money bonuses and even let your crew have your own logo and color on your car. But

to join one you need to make a social club account but these accounts aren't secure from hackers. Because there are currently at least two big groups of hackers hacking the owner of popular crews or crews with rare names accounts and stealing them. One is sealing the crews they took and the others are reported to be doing this to shed light to the problem so it can be fixed.

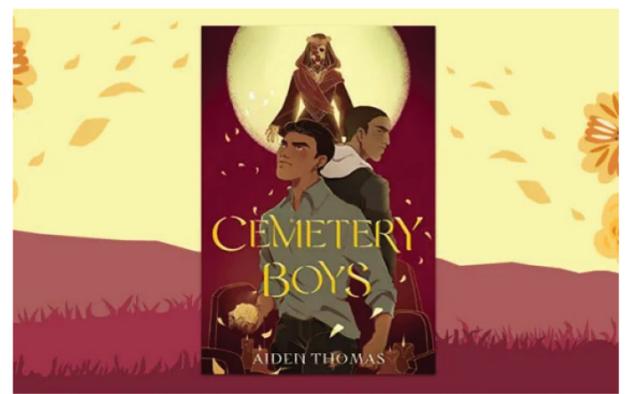
Judging from Rockstar Games tweet it appears that the next GTA title is still at least one or two years away. It has been reported by the same people who have said that the GTA 6 will be in Vice City and have the first female main



The Wall Street Journal

character that it will probably be out in 2024 or 2025. Rockstar Games also just have dropped a new GTA 5 for next Gen consoles and have stated on how they have planned to keep updating the game and

they only update GTA with two things of content three times a year and don't appear to be slowing down. And Rockstar typically shows a trailer with a decent gap before release.



The Cornell Daily Sun

Cemetery Boys was released in September of 2020.

# Cemetery Boys is a must read

Juniper Krings  
Staff Writer

If you're like me, you can't find good books. You see what's getting attention and you try and see what's so good about it and...it's not that good. I've read Twilight (hated it), Hunger Games (love-hate), Divergent (I actually kinda liked this), etc! The last book I read and liked was in the Dorothy Must Die series. And I read that in early 7th grade. Point is, I'm bad at finding good books. But my friend Kaden isn't! He recommended Cemetery Boys to me after I was complaining about Twilight for the 17th time, so I checked it out on Libby.

Cemetery Boys is about a transgender brujo named Yadriel trying to prove he belongs with the other men and not the woman. He and his best friend Maritza try to summon a spirit to prove it and it works! But they can't free the spirit from this world. This spirit in particular is a boy named Jullian the two know from school. Together they explore each other's lives to find out what exactly killed Jullian...and it's Yadriel's cousin.

## OWL podcast, 4

why is having a platform for student produced podcasts important? "Children don't have a voice at the polls," he said, "and so you really need to help adults understand where you're coming from so they can make more informed decisions about what's happening in schools, what's happening in the community for youths. And so right now, all of the media, all of the mainstream media is all adults everywhere, but how can we really give the youth a voice to talk about problems that are important to them, talk about where they come from, their values, how things are changing, so that people can have a broader perspective." Tom throughout the interview stressed the importance of youth having their voices heard.

"You might subscribe and say 'I don't like that episode.' That's fine," Tom said. But sometimes, specific episodes of podcasts will tend to stick with people, and quite possibly change the way they think about something. "And that's what I want to do."

Now, for those of you who are interested in producing music, listen up. "There's gonna be a music competition for an intro and outro, 5-10 seconds of music that's student generated, that I can use on the

Cemetery Boys is 762 pages long, was written by Aiden Thomas, and released on September 1st, 2020. I read it in eight days and I almost didn't want to stop! This book has got to be the best book I've ever read. The character design is familiar and the locations are too. The two's banter was sweet and the care both of them had for their families was something almost anyone can relate to. Both slowly care about each other as they learn about their lives. The diversity and culture was wonderful and every page was living magic to me.

Recently it's been getting a lot of attention and all over the internet there are good reviews. If you check the reviews, it's all 5 stars. I'm being serious, there's nothing but 5 stars. Of course, it's starting to get banned in states that are against LGBTQ+ stories but it's easy to find anywhere online. I 100% recommend this. Almost everyone I know has already read it and I'm just an idiot, but it's still wonderful. You can find Cemetery Boys on Libby and in the school library! Thanks Kaden! You're a lifesaver.

podcast. It'll still be owned by the student. They'll get credits for it on the podcast page."

Tom also acknowledges that the whole idea is very ambitious. "It might fail," he said. "But I'm not afraid of that, because I know if I don't do anything, it isn't gonna happen. If I try, and it doesn't work, at least I can say 'you know what, I tried.' I have a lot of failures, but I learn from them and try to fail forward." Another thing Tom mentioned is that if someone else believes they have a better idea of how to do the podcast, he'd be happy to let them take over. "There's nothing like this in the community right now, and there will be something like this, whether it's from me or from someone else, it doesn't really matter, I just want to try to get it going."

When is it likely we will see a season out by? Tom is hoping that by the end of the semester, he will be able to put one out, and then as the year goes on we will see an uptick in student produced content, with a goal of three seasons by the end of the year.

One last thing Tom wants the community to know is, "If anybody has any ideas to help out, I'm all ears. If they wanna help out with their time, talent, or treasures, I would certainly be willing to accept any help that they have."

# The American Empire examined

## A history of Pax Americana and its beginnings

Wyatt Hanson  
Staff Writer

The Pax Americana is a term used to describe the peace from 1946 to now. The Pax Americana has ended.

The Pax Americana is not just a term for peace, but for global dominance, it is the period of time when the American country was the most powerful nation in the world. The Pax Britannica preceded the Pax Americana, which was the period when Queen Victoria ruled the British empire.

The Pax Britannica was a time not of peace but of hegemony, the English ruled over 25% of the world, the largest empire in history. The British Empire was the deciding force in any conflict until 1914.

The Pax Britannica was broken in 1914 with the outbreak of World War I. The Pax Britannica was not just broken by the war itself but by the risk of

was biased to the Americans.

Now the Pax Americana has been broken with the outbreak of the Russo-Ukraine war. That is not to say that the Pax americana hasn't been teetering for years, The CCP has risen in power, an increasing number of countries are developing nuclear capabilities and victims of American imperialism have begun taking action against the country.

The Arabs have had a grudge against the Americans since WW1. Back in 1915 during WW1, one of the central powers was the declining Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans were in control of swaths of desert filled with black gold but in these swaths of desert lived Arabs, Armenians and Kurds.

The Arabs were abused by the Ottomans and the Kurds were oppressed. The Arabs were forced to work in government oil fields for terrible

at the end of WW1 that their promised kingdom would never be. The Arabs hoped America would help them as Woodrow Wilson was strongly anti-colonial, or so they thought. Woodrow Wilson created mandates which were, for all intents and purposes, colonies made from former central power territory.

The Arabs were betrayed and it was not long before they were back to working for bad wages in the same oil fields. Over 2,000,000 Arabs Died in WW1 just for their lands to be extorted once more.

Many think the attack on the twin towers on September, 11th, 2001, was done because of the constant extortion of the Middle Eastern people. All over the world Americans are seen as evil for the inconsiderate actions our government has committed.

At the beginning of the Pax Americana East Asia was

much from China but in 1937 the Japanese would invade the already broken China. The war in China led to 3,000,000 active combat deaths, 1,000,000+ POW deaths, and 9,000,000+ civilian deaths.

On December, 7th, 1937, the Japanese took the de facto capital and one of the most important cities in China, Nanjing. The following weeks in Nanjing may be considered as one of the most evil singular events in history.

Three hundred thousand people died in Nanjing, the actions taken by the Japanese include, a beheading contest, the murder of babies months old and unspeakable things done to the women of Nanjing. There are famous pictures too gruesome to show in this article but the pictures show some of the most evil things a human can do to a living being.

The massacre was not an event carried out by soldiers acting on their own volition but it was an order given by the Prince of Japan himself. At the war crimes tribunal in East Asia the prince and many others were immune from war crime charges as Japan and the Americans were discussing an alliance.

Prince Yasuhiko Asaka's only punishment was one given to all Japanese soldiers—he couldn't hold public office. Many other soldiers and officers that participated in the Nanjing massacre were let off wartime charges.

To this day, the Chinese have never gotten an apology or compensation for the evils that the Japanese army committed in their country. For this reason, the Chinese would never truly trust the Americans again.

The Pax Romana where we get the name, ended in the crisis of the third century, this event led to the death of 62% of all people in the Roman empire. When The Pax Britannica ended 100,000,000+ died in war. The Pax Americana has ended and the Great American Empire is entering into a period of instability along with the rest of the world.

Rome fell in 475, China fell in 1912, Austria, Prussia, and The Ottomans Fell in 1918, Sweden in 1721, France in 1815, England in 1946, Russia in 1991, the Holy Roman Empire in 1806, the Japanese in 1947, and when will the Great American Empire Fall?



Polygon

Dungeons and Dragons has inspired multiple media.

## D&D expanding its horizons

The game is making forays into shows, movies, and Lego sets

Kaden McNamara  
Staff Writer

Over thirty books, around seven editions, a movie coming out in March, animated shows, and Lego sets. Dungeons and Dragons is truly taking the world by storm.

D&D used to be just this little thing by Wizards of the Coast that was known as "that nerd game," but as time has gone on D&D has become more and more mainstream, and recently it has gotten a movie announced, titled Dungeons and Dragons: Honor Among Thieves. A second season for an animated show on Amazon Prime that was based off of one of the most famous D&D campaigns, The Legend of Vox Machina, has also been announced after fantastic feedback from fans after season one, and Lego has announced a partnership with WOTC so that D&D Lego sets will be released eventually after recommendations as to what to make from fans.

Dungeons and Dragons: Honor Among Thieves has been announced for March 2023 and is about a group of adventurers that are hired to steal something for someone evil, realize their mistake and go to remedy it. Though response to the trailer has been mixed, due to the terrible portrayal of a tiefling character and a Druid having wild-shaped into something they shouldn't have, the movie does seem like it will be a good one and many people, not just the fans, are planning to watch it when it comes out.

The Legend of Vox Machina is an animated show on Amazon Prime based on the first of the three Critical Role campaigns run by Matt Mer-

cer under the same name. Amazon successfully managed to get the voice actors who played the campaign's characters to also voice act for those characters for the show. The show currently only has one season and consists of a small part of the campaign, although a trailer for the second season has been released, so we can probably expect the entire campaign to be animated.

Fans have heavily celebrated the partnership between Lego and WOTC for D&D Lego sets. Although some fans dread the state of their wallets due to the cost of the guidebooks and the Lego sets and fueling their dice addictions, yes that's a thing, it's just buying more dice though, so it's not that bad of an addiction to have. Other fans dread the potential combination of Legos and four-sided dice, the two worst things to step on. But the overall reaction to the announcement has been overwhelmingly positive.

Why has D&D turned from a fringe game for nerds, and according to some people Satan worshippers, to an everyday thing that almost every school has a club for? There isn't an exact answer for it but it can be somewhat pinned down to the three Critical Role campaigns, the kids in Stranger Things having played it several times and JoCat's a Crap Guide to D&D. Gen Z is also wildly different from the previous generations and pretty much the intended audience so that's a major factor for its growth as well.

The future of D&D is something that we can only wonder about. However, we can only expect good things from D&D and all that it has produced.



Nox GebbenGreen

defeat. The Empires of Germany, Russia and America were quickly gaining power and the two world wars would decide the next leader of the world.

At the end of the world wars the Americans were at odds with the Soviets and the British empire was no longer the dominant power. America had risen, the dollar the standard and American style Democracy leading the free world.

The Pax Americana period was a time of peace between the major powers, smaller "developing countries" had wars, civil wars, and coups but the larger world was at peace. This was also in part because of the UN, but realistically the UN

pay. The French and English were at war with the Ottomans and to end the Ottoman threat they made deals with the Arab leaders.

These deals would have given the Arabs their own kingdom, taking up modern day Saudi-Arabia, Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Kuwait, Oman, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Lebanon.

The British and French had no real intentions of giving potential colonies to the Arabs. They had plans to carve up Ottoman territory for themselves within days of making the agreements with the Arabs.

The Arabs were shocked

fractured. The American Philippines were granted independence and America needed an ally in East Asia. The still smoldering empire of Japan was a prime target for an American ally. The Americans held many things over their heads and the Japanese were eager to change to fit with the new world order so they entered into an alliance with America.

The largest state in East Asia, China, was fractured by 1900. After years of opium and colonization the Qing were ready to collapse. The collapse came in 1911 with the outbreak of the Xinhai Revolution.

Japan already had taken

CES, 1

ment. This came up as we were hearing about many different issues across the district and believed Ethnic Studies could simultaneously address several of them through the direct empowerment of students. Through continuous outreach and pressure on the district, we finally received a draft from the Board of Education, stating that they had voted and after piloting the course in the 2021-2022 school year, it would be a graduation requirement for the 2022-2023 school year," said Malachi.

Some people don't think CES should be a requirement, and while OWL has not expe-

rienced any specific pushback, there was some at in public forums that the district held before the class became required. In a documentary CES students watched about a school in Arizona -- where CES had become a requirement -- people voiced concerns and complaints about the course. Some felt that there's no reason to separate students by race, and that talking about these issues will only bring them to the surface again and agitate people. (The course, to be clear, does not physically separate students into racial or ethnic groups). Some even argued that the class is designed to turn students of color against

white students.

"With any policy change you can expect a fair amount of pushback, and this definitely wasn't an exception. We faced much pushback from people through public comment at board meetings as well as many people internally who didn't believe Ethnic Studies was beneficial for SPPS, some even saying it may be harmful," said Malachi about the work being done for CES to become a requirement at state level.

At OWL, the reaction has been mostly positive. "I really like it. It's more interactive than a normal history class," said 9th grader Wyatt Kes-

ler. "I like that there is a class where we deal with real issues and where students intentionally think about their identity," said Rebakah. "I think the most difficult thing is making sure I'm checking my own bias and I'm really carefully thinking about lessons before I teach them."

Rebakah has high hopes for what CES does for students. "I hope that students are able to take more leadership in the class and in the school to make changes that we see as necessary. We know there's a lot that can shift in public education and at OWL to make it more equitable and safe especially for students of color and that



Alliance for Constructive Ethnic Studies

will take all of us to work towards it as part of the required

curriculum," said Rebakah.

# State Fair making a post COVID comeback

*The fair remains a quintessential summer experience*

**August Cheney**  
Staff writer

The Minnesota State Fair is a cherished end-of-summer tradition located in Falcon Heights, Minnesota. It may not be at its pre-COVID-19 visitor numbers, but it's getting there.

The State Fair had just set its record number of visits - about 2.1 million total visitors - in 2019. The fair officials had become excited to attempt to beat that number with a goal of 2.3 million, the goal being created by news charts such as MPR News. These charts that were created had shown success with the fair, with the visitor count growing by 90,000 visitors. Soon, however, growing COVID-19 concerns began to reach the State Fair officials, forcing the fair to shut down in 2020. The decision to cancel the Minnesota State Fair was made via Zoom call with all of the fair's board members.

But soon, an announcement was made following the

prior statement. When all hope had seemed lost to have a fair in 2020, an announcement was made. "Dear Friends, we've been working hard and doing our very best with preparations to make up for the 2020 State Fair," Minnesota State Fair General Manager Jerry Hammer said shortly after announcing the cancellation of the state fair. The State Fair officials had decided to let a limited number of cars each day drive a 1.5-mile route through the fairgrounds, with a variety of different food stands such as Turkey To Go, Tom Thumb Donuts, Mouth Trap Cheese Curds, West Indies Soul Food, and Sweet Martha's Cookie Jar. The route also included in-car bingo and other fair activities. Many of the fairgoers in 2020 weren't as enthusiastic about the experience but the iconic fair food had been worth it.

Over the years the fair has been around, the heat had never come close to how it had been in 2019. The 2019 Min-

nesota State Fair was really, really packed, being the year of its record number of 2.1 million total visitors. Besides that the fairgoers had loved the fair as their Minnesotan tradition.

The heat at the fair is also another aspect to observe. Looking at the heat charts compared to the attendance chart, more people usually show up on the more humid days. Generally, 2014 through 2019 lacked relatively "hot" weather, with no higher than 90-degree temperatures recorded in any of those years, but with the heat slowly rising. The attendance charts through the years 2014-2019 being the most crowded years before COVID hit show us that the hotter it is, the more people visit the fair. "I had gone earlier in the morning so the heat hadn't started, as the day went it had gotten warmer," said OWL teacher Leo Bickelhaupt. This ties to what most state fairgoers do, go in the morning for the lesser lines and avoid the Minnesotan heat.

Going into the 2021 Minnesota State Fair had been very

hyped up over social media, after not having the traditional fair the year prior. If you ended up purchasing a ticket for the canceled 2020 State Fair, it would still be valid for the 2021 fair. The fair ended up having a smaller crowd than many other years before that, with a total attendance of 1.3 million people.

The fair hadn't been any different since the earlier fairs, besides the fact that the fair was urging fairgoers to follow their face mask guidance. The fair did not ask for proof of vaccination though, most likely because it would cut the number of people by a lot. Besides the mask urges, the fair didn't end up too far from being like the prior years, with the famous Sweet Martha's cookies attracting a crowd like no other on the fairground, and the Mighty Midway being packed shoulder to shoulder.

After 2 years of masked fairs, the 2022 State Fair was here and the mask expectations were low to none. Almost none of the crowd had been wearing a mask except for a

few. "A lot of my coworkers who were working in the front of the building were catching COVID, so I decided to wear one to not take the risk," said 9th grader Cam Sisson, an OWL student who worked at the butterfly house in the 2022 State Fair.

Saturday, two days before the end of the fair, had crushed all other days this year with nearly 250,000 visitors, bringing the fair's total attendance

up by 41%. On a worse note, inflation had reached the fair, leading some of the fair sellers to raise prices. The weather had also been quite rainy at some points, and questions about public safety due to two recent shootings, one being near the entrance of the Mighty Midway and the other located in the fairgrounds, caused minor panic. Despite that, the fairgoers definitely had a good time this 2022 Minnesota State Fair.



Purple Press staff Photo

**Eighth grades Dylan Bickelhall and Justin Benner play giant Jenga at the Minnesota State Fair with Dylan's sister Rosealea.**

## CGI, 5

ists were treated while working on Marvel projects. Marvel doesn't actually employ their own artists, but hires workers from various other companies, such as ILM. A user on Reddit brought the issue to attention in a thread titled "I am quite frankly sick and tired of working on Marvel shows," calling them out for the unfair standards VFX artists were held to, and how they wasted their time deciding what the show should look like, not giving CGI workers enough time to work on the final designs, and forcing them to work immense amounts of overtime without getting extra pay. The Redditors post immediately sparked a conversation, with many other VFX workers taking to social media to share stories of their experience with Marvel.

The real chaos broke loose when former VFX artist Dhruv Govil tweeted; "Working on #Marvel shows is what

pushed me to leave the VFX industry. They're a horrible client, and I've seen way too many colleagues break down after being overworked, while Marvel tightens the purse strings." The tweet only fanned the flames, and the issue is still being discussed today, especially after She-Hulk's release and the criticism over her design.

On the opposite end of the spectrum from Marvel's dilemma, lies the newest Star Wars show, Andor. Starting in late September of this year, the sci-fi show is purposely trying to use as little CGI as possible. This idea is certainly not new, as a few of last year's prominent films, such as Belfast and CODA both tried to take more realistic and gritty approaches to filmmaking, but neither quite as spectacularly as Andor.

Star Wars pretty much needs to use CGI, as most of their settings just, well, don't exist in our world. Having a

show that's set in space and on alien planets that uses barely any visual effects? That's practically unheard of in current media. And Andor definitely rose to that challenge. Partially filmed throughout the natural landscapes of Scotland and England, the show tries to rely on computer graphics as little as possible, making the scenes where they do appear even more special. And the shots without any CGI are just as stunning. It's very rare to see smoke from a campfire drifting around the frame or a bit of grime on an actor's face during a serious scene, but these little details can be just as beautiful as a fully computer generated landscape.

Obviously it's practically impossible to make a piece of media without using some kind of visual effects nowadays, especially when filming in darker settings like Star Wars is prone to do. But Andor certainly is trying, and their effort has given them a much

more realistic feeling than fantasy usually produces.

Realism is something filmmakers are constantly chasing, and CGI itself was created to give them a sense of control over unrealistic situations. The technology is constantly changing to fit directors and filmmakers' visions for scenes. The most recent of these groundbreaking developments is called "the Volume".

With two locations in Los Angeles and London, the Volume is a dome made of LED screens. The screens project a setting of a filmmaker's choosing, often a computer generated design of a city, forest, or other location made specifically for the show or movie filming in the dome. It's like a green-screen, but the visual effects are added ahead of time. The LED screens are able to be hooked up to special equipment and when the camera changes angles or moves around the space, the background moves with it, creating

a feeling that the actors are actually in a physical set. Picture a planetarium, but the entire room is covered in displays and when you move your head whatever you're looking at follows where your eyes move. The Volume is still dependent on VFX artists, but it takes out some of the heavy lifting, especially because they don't have to edit a setting around an actor's movements, and instead can just create a location they can interact with. It's also a huge benefit to actors, letting them fully inhabit their character and the setting, because they can actually see the world instead of a blank green screen.

Both Marvel and Star Wars have used the Volume for projects, most notably The Mandalorian, who was the first show to use this new technology. Several other franchises are adopting the dome, with DC and Star Trek both using it for their most recent movies and shows. It truly is the next step

in the evolution of CGI, and might permanently change how filmmakers go about creating their media.

To be clear, none of these shows and movies are necessarily better or worse than others for their use (or non-use) of visual effects, but they prove to be great factors in the big question; how much CGI is too much CGI? Well, in the end it really comes down to personal preference and opinion. Does Marvel have the right idea, packing as many jaw-dropping visual effects in as possible? Does Andor, trying to return to older times where everything was done practically? Or will new technology like the Volume prove that soon even green screen will be a thing of the past? Whatever the future holds, be on the lookout for computer graphics in the next thing you watch. Can you even notice them? Do you think they're needed? Why or why not?

## Abortion, 6

waged using campaign ads.

For this election, most of the Republican campaigns have been focusing on the infrastructure of the country while shying away from the topic of abortion, even though they will most likely try to ban abortion if they are elected into office. Democrats, on the other hand, have used abortions as the base of their campaigns.

Here in Minnesota most people have seen the campaign ads for Scott Jenson and Governor Tim Walz.

Tim Walz has focused most of his ads on how Scott Jenson would ban abortion all together, while Scott Jenson never actually mentions abortion, even though he will most likely ban them if he gets into office.

As for how abortions will affect voting patterns, Katie Craven, a social studies teacher at OWL, has stated reproductive rights will have a large effect on how people are voting this year.

"I think reproductive rights are likely to affect voting patterns," said Katie, "it's an issue that's important to a lot of peo-

ple on different sides of the political spectrum."

Reproductive rights are such a controversial issue, and while conservatives tend to be pro-life, and liberals tend to be more pro-choice, many people can be overall liberal but still have very strong beliefs in pro-life. This is why many Republican campaigns do not dwell on reproductive rights. They know that some of their voters are upset by the overturning of Roe v. Wade, and they are trying to keep as many voters as possible by skipping over disputed issues, like reproductive rights, and focusing on things that everyone can agree on, like lowering crime rates or decreasing inflation.

For this election 14 states are predicted to vote Democrat, 17 states are predicted to vote Republican, and 5 states are toss-ups. Most of the states that are toss-ups have limited protection on abortions, except for Wisconsin, who has

already banned abortion.

Pennsylvania is leaning more liberal than previous years, most likely because it has limited protection on abortions.

Minnesota, on the other hand, is leaning much more conservative than years before. Though Tim Walz is still leading by 8%, it is by much less than a year prior. Most states have close polls right now, and Minnesota is no different, despite our liberal history. It is most likely that states that have not banned abortions will keep reproductive rights, and visa versa for states that have.

Overall, this year, many states have predictable leaned right or left. Most states leaning right already have bans or limits, and most states leaning left have protection for abortion. I would say that here in Minnesota, it is most likely that we will keep our reproductive rights.

## Nope, 6

UFO. Its animalistic behavior, abilities, and appearance, whether that be its hauntingly beautiful true form, or its carnivorous, bouncy castle-adjacent insides provide such a fresh and unique take on a somewhat cliché concept, making it that much more unknowable and terrifying.



TV Insider

## Everyday Bro, 7

What this information reveals is that despite being long considered one of the worst songs ever created, "It's Everyday Bro" should be considered a premiere song of the past decade. It has not only gained a substantial view count, it has

also boosted Jake Paul's YouTube channel into the limelight where he has released banger content ever since. Considering all this song has achieved I'm going to rate it a solid 45/47. As always, remember to keep that Disney channel flow.



Hammer Museum UCLA

## Amazon, 1

tas so harsh some drivers had to pee while driving. Amazon employees work 10-12 hour days, with 30 minute lunch breaks (which isn't enough time to walk across their warehouses). Some workers will have to walk up to 13 miles a day, and others will have to lift a total of 20,000 pounds before the end of their shifts, according to a "wellness" pamphlet once available at a Tulsa warehouse.

The wellness pamphlet also encouraged exercise on days off and a diet good enough to fuel burning 400 calories an hour, and gave advice on buying shoes to fit swollen feet. The pamphlet was available on site for months, said the employee who gave it to Motherboard, a technology news organization. Amazon said the pamphlet had been created in an error and removed.

The holiday season (from Thanksgiving through December) is even worse. Joseph Jones, a part time Amazon employee as of February 2021, said Amazon required staff to extend their shifts, usually with little notice. Once he didn't even know until he arrived at work and the company app said he was an hour late.

However, not all holidays are treated the same. Some workers at a Shakopee, Minnesota location said that Amazon discriminates on the basis of race and religion when deciding who to give time off for holidays. The Shakopee workers were protesting Muslim workers not getting time off for Eid-al-Fitr, which marks the end of the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

Amazon had an injury rate almost 80% higher than the

rest of their industry in June 2022, according to the Strategic Organizing Center, who wrote the study. They blamed Amazon's "obsession with speed" for the high amount of injuries. The study analyzed workplace safety data reported to the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) from 2017-2020. Workers are frequently injured more severely than with competitors like Walmart.

"[Amazon owners are] terrible capitalistic individuals. It's a terrible, terrible capitalistic organization. They only care about profits. They don't have to clean up what's left behind. Whether that's through packaging (i.e. their boxes) or through the healthcare of their employees. Like they can work their employees to the point that they cannot work the job anymore because they're injured," Clara said.

The COVID-19 pandemic hit Amazon workers hard. While the corporation itself succeeded, Amazon workers had 40-60 hour weeks. Amazon failed to provide personal protective equipment (PPE), any safety measures, or social distancing/quarantine guidelines. When former supervisor Chris Smalls met with his bosses, they told him not to tell the employees that he was overseeing someone who tested positive.

On April 30, 2022, Amazon cut paid time off for US warehouse workers and drivers who have COVID-19. Initially, they allowed two weeks of paid time off.

Now, all US Amazon workers who test positive for COVID-19 will get up to five days of excused unpaid leave. If that isn't enough, they'll have to use their sick time.

Joseph Jones, a part time Amazon employee in Alabama said in February of 2021 that "It's [Amazon's attitude towards employees] a very adversarial relationship with the supervisors and the staff. You're a cog in the system... and it's very obvious."

And Amazon doesn't like that system to change, despite its inhumanity. The Amazon Union, which formed in April this year, is the first successful attempt at unionizing at Amazon, a company that has existed since 1994.

Amazon has a set of

union-busting tactics, as described in the New York Times article "How Amazon Crushes Unions". They include threatening union supporters with the loss of their jobs, interrogating workers about unions, engaging in surveillance of union activities, threatening workers with "unspecified reprisals" or threatening to "get" union workers. All of those are either against labor laws, or actions Amazon has said it has sworn off (before it did them again).

Smalls is the leader of Amazon's successful union, which



Nox GebbenGreen

is located in the NYC borough of Staten Island. Smalls was fired because he protested Amazon's COVID policy in March 2021, and the union was formed a year later.

But the week after Smalls got fired, Jeff Bezos, along with Amazon's general counsel, signed off on a defamation campaign that called him not smart or articulate. This defamation made Smalls the face of the unionizing effort against Amazon.

The union used face to face interactions as the main way of recruiting Amazon workers on the ground. They also used social media, barbecues, press conferences, musical guests,

giving free food to workers, and raised money for homeless workers and workers living in shelters.

In response to Smalls and the others organizing at Staten Island, Amazon built a prison-like fence to stop them from talking to the workers. They called the police and fire department on the unionizers. Amazon put signs in the bathrooms, and sent out text messages and emails to turn their workers against the unionizers. They started this effort very quickly, only the first or second week of the unionizing campaign.

But in this case, the union won the battle.

And on April 1, 2022, workers at Amazon's Staten Island warehouse voted to form the first Amazon labor union in the US. Smalls and his colleague Derrick Palmer, organized their fellow workers from the ground up without support from national labor organizations.

However, the union is still small. It's focused in one part of New York City, and while it is filing lawsuits, it doesn't have the power to take on Amazon as a whole.

Widespread unionization at Amazon would be a huge step forward for workers' rights in the modern world, both by helping Amazon employees and by setting a precedent for other corporations.

"A lot of why I can do my job as well as I can is because I have the protection of the union. I don't have to worry about my healthcare. I don't have to worry about my pay. I don't have to worry about any of these things," said Clara.

The main power of unions is in collective bargaining. The more people stand with the union, and join it, the more power it has. Because while one person advocating for equal pay could get replaced or ignored easily, one hundred people advocating for equal pay can't be ignored.

Unions also have special legal protection regarding strikes. If people don't come into work for another reason besides medical ones, that's cause enough for them to get fired. However, if a union declares a strike, workers can not report to work and picket their workplace without getting fired. Ignoring this right is illegal.

Striking hurts an employer because they can't replace their workers, but they lose mon-

ey the more they strike. This means that if the employer wants their workers to return, they have to reach a compromise with the union, which might happen if the workers can't pay living expenses (workers pay their union money so that the union can save up for a strike). About striking, Clara said, "It's not that we (the strikers) don't want our jobs, it's that we can't or we don't agree with the working conditions, so we're not going to work for you."

These actions that a union can take help them advocate for workers rights, including compliance to labor laws, fair pay, good working conditions, and benefits. These are all things that Amazon employees and other workers in the modern world desperately need.

Unions in the 20th century helped get child labor banned, and workplace conditions regulated. Unions in this century can do even more.

Amazon's union in Staten Island isn't enough. Unions have to spread to other Amazon locations for them to truly take on this corporate behemoth. Together, Amazon can be held accountable for the inhumane way it treats its workers.

There are ways you can help advocate for workers' rights. You can donate on the Amazon union website, or join or start a union at your workplace. Look up labor laws so that you can advocate for yourself when you work. Vote for politicians that support expanding and supporting labor protections.

Don't let Amazon and other employers like them win.

## Burton, 6

ing bassist Ron McGovney. Burton declined the offer.

Hetfield and Ulrich got a hold of Burton and asked him to come to a show they were playing in San Francisco. "Eventually Trauma started to... annoy me... a couple of different ways, so I said "later."" Burton said in an interview with Thrash Metal Magazine in 1986. Burton's older sister, Connie Burton, has said while Burton was in Trauma the guitarist would always get mad at him for playing too much.

He eventually agreed to join Metallica if they would relocate from Los Angeles to the San Francisco Bay Area. Burton did not like the idea of moving to Los Angeles. so the band relocated.

After Burton joined Metallica the band learned about Burton's vast music taste. He was known to be a big fan of Thin Lizzy, Samhain, the Misfits, Aerosmith, etc. He also loved classical music along with southern rock. "He studied classical music and he could sit down and talk with you about Bach and Beethoven and Tchaikovsky. In 1981, James Hetfield and I didn't sit there and talk about a lot of classical endeavors, you know? We had a little more narrow-minded outlook. So Cliff - he loved the energy, he loved the aggression, but I

don't think he was a big fan of like, Iron Maiden," said Lars Ulrich in an interview with Guitar World.

Burton's musical influences ranged from rock to jazz musicians. Some of his main influences included "everything Glenn Danzig", Thin Lizzy, Rush, ZZ Top, Aerosmith, and Black Sabbath. In an interview with Thrash Metal Magazine Burton was asked about his influences, and he responded, "My influences would be... well, first off, with bass playing it would be Geddy Lee, Geezer Butler, Stanley Clarke... Lemmy also had an influence in the way he uses distortion. That was different, new, and exciting. Also, certain guitar players had an influence. People like... well, everything Thin Lizzy did has had an influence. Jimi Hendrix, Ulrich Roth, Schenker to a degree, Tony Lommi—they also had an influence."

Metallica released their first studio album Kill 'Em All on July 25, 1983 through Megaforce Records, the album features the song "Anesthesia (Pulling Teeth)" in which Burton displays his use of effects, which included a wah pedal, which aren't commonly used by bassists. On the band's second album Ride the Lightning released on July 27, 1984, Burton received writing credit on six out of the eight songs on the album.

Metallica was signed to Elektra Records in 1984 after leaving Megaforce and began working on their third album Master of Puppets, the bands commercial breakthrough album, and Burton's last album with Metallica.

Metallica began the Damage, Inc. Tour in March of 1986, opening for Ozzy Osborne from March to August, headlined with Armored Saint from May 23 to June 7, and were the main act through the fall and winter with support from Anthrax and Metal Church.

While on the Damage, Inc. Tour Metallica performed in Stockholm, Sweden, on September 26, 1986. Later the band complained about the bunks on their tour bus, saying they were uncomfortable. To decide who got the bunk with the window Kirk Hammett and Burton drew cards; "The first card Cliff picked was the ace of spades, and he looked at me and said, 'I want your bunk,'" said Hammett. "And I said, 'Fine, take my bunk, I'll sleep up front, that's probably better anyway.'"

In the early hours of September 27, according to the driver, the bus hit black ice (even though police saw no sign of black ice anywhere near the scene) and skidded off a road north of Ljungby and rolled into the grass. Burton was thrown through the

window of the bus, being that there were no safety restraints on the bunks, which then fell on top of him, killing him instantly. He was 24. The day of his funeral there was a two page spread in Kerrang! Magazine from Jonny and Marsha Zazula, the band's former managers, which read "The Ultimate Musician, The Ultimate Headbanger, The Ultimate Loss, A Friend Forever."

Following his death Burton received posthumous writing credit on Metallica's fourth studio album ...And Justice for All on the song "To Live Is to Die." (Ironic isn't it?)

I decided to write about Cliff Burton because his music has had a huge impact on my life and he is the reason why I started playing bass guitar. The first time I heard "Anesthesia (Pulling Teeth)" it was totally life changing. He was just so different from metal bassists at that time and that's what made him special. I've been a fan of Metallica since I was around 5-6 years old. Me and my dad used to blast ...And Justice For All and Metallica (The Black Album) in the car and headbang, but the first time I heard Kill 'Em All I knew I wanted to play music. I think Cliff made a big impact on metal and music in general. His bass playing was really unique. There will never be another bassist like Cliff Burton.

## SLAC, 4

people, with only Caryl leading the group. At first Slac was just sort of figuring itself out, giving book recommendations, making activities, and talking about and sharing their love of books.

"And then the pandemic hit," said Caryl.

"We started meeting over google meet," said Hiroko. The pandemic made SLAC more flexible. "This was more of a gathering," said Caryl. The pandemic was definitely a big change and affected SLAC by encouraging the students to be more creative in coming up with ways to get people involved in the library. "I think we all just wanted to be together," said Caryl. During the pandemic and distance learning, the library's collection of ebooks grew an amazing amount, which now lets people check out books from wherever they are. "When we moved to distance learning, it became much more community focused," said Kate.

Today SLAC is a version of its old self that reflects the fun and friendly side of SLAC but has a deeper underlying tone of understanding and family. Now that it has more people, it just keeps growing. The more the merrier after all. "We're just a bigger group of chaotic, book loving, library nerds, and I can't imagine anything

else," said Kate. SLAC works very hard trying to get people involved in the library to start reading books through gentle persuasion and different creative opportunities. There is a lot of connection to the community now because of the popularity and the widespread grades there are in SLAC. "It's the highlight of my week!" said Kate. The library still rewrites the EcoLab grant every year and has so far received the grant every time.

Caryl waits for the return of soft seating. "I hope people still carry on the fun light-heartedness of it and continue to help the library improve," said Hiroko. The library has been talking about adding more shelves and getting more input from students about what the library should be. Whether or not that means there's more SLAC members on the horizon, we'll just have to wait and see.

# Scary story of the month: Forget-Me-Not

*The first in a series, this month's edition is a tale of paranoid betrayal, inspired by Edgar Allen Poe*

"Come down, love!" my wife called from the kitchen, "I've finished with the roast, come help set the table!" God, who does that woman think she is, bossing me around?

Now, now, I know what you must be thinking. You think I'm terrible, a man who would think of his wife in such a manner must be the worst. But you aren't me, so don't be too quick to judge.

I still got up from my desk, and trudged down to the kitchen.

"Don't you worry, dear, I'll set the table and you can worry about the food," I said, pleasant as could be. I didn't let my anger show, no, only a fool would do that. She mustn't know a thing until it's far too late. Because I know what she's going to do.

She was a fool, the only true thing about her, yes. Because, only a fool would have left those travel magazines out on the coffee table. Only a fool would leave rat poison in clear sight. She thought she was so clever, buying rat traps along with them, but I'm not stupid. She thought herself smarter than me? Bah!

I never inquired about it. I knew it would only spur her into action. See? She must've been planning to kill me. It explains everything, how she'd been acting.

I've been called mad so, so, many times. They always say it when they think I'm not listening. They think they're so clever, sitting just outside my door after I tell them my story.

But you don't think I'm mad—do you? Surely, you'll understand?

I placed the plates and silverware out and put a mat in the exact middle of the table. Nothing could be out of place. If something was wrong, someone, anyone, would notice, they would know the moment they crossed the threshold.

I had been meticulous in cleaning the house. She had complimented me on it, said it was good I was cleaning up. Of course she would, she only saw a husband cleaning.

She walked out from the kitchen, holding the steaming roast out in front of her with plaid oven mitts. It smelled delicious. I loved that about her, she could out-cook anyone I knew. A shame she turned out so rotten.

She set the roast down, directly in the center of the mat. Perfect, nothing out of place. She went back and grabbed the potatoes, green beans, and carrots. She went all out for our anniversary.

You may say I was cruel to do it on our anniversary, that surely this proves I must be mad! No, you mustn't judge 'til all is said and done, then you'll understand. You will.

Obviously she deserved it. Every little thing she did she designed to enrage me. She could have only done so in order to make my life hell. She wished for me to struggle getting out of bed and suffer

going home, to find nothing left in life. That was her joy. Not in knowing she would end me, but in knowing that she made every second agony while I stood beside her.

She would tell me to massage her feet for they "ached from walking around the house all day." As if her work could compare to how I slaved at my office. She would make menial tasks sound like a mountain, saying that all day she was going washer to clothes line, clothes line to washer.

I saw that little light behind her eyes as she said it, she knew how it infuriated me how she bemoaned her comfortable house life as I sat behind a typewriter all day, tearing out a part of my soul when I ripped a sheet of paper from those mindless machines.

She's always reaching places she doesn't belong, picking up my keys from the counter, bringing my coat to the hooks at the front of the house.

Even though she whines constantly, she's always so proud to tell other people she's a stay at home wife, calling herself the backbone of the house. As if I'm not the one who's providing this godforsaken house with running water and electricity! She finds such sick pleasure in pretending to be a good little wife even though I know everything.

Once she sets the carrots down we're both seated and ready to dish up our plates. We both take heavy helpings, making sure we definitely won't have room for dessert. We never do. I always want some kind of dessert, but she always eats too much for her own good and never has room for anything else. Says she "doesn't want to waste the food," when she knows that I'll eat it for dinner tomorrow. Another one of her little ways to spite me.

I wait until she's eaten the food before I do. Couldn't have been too careful, especially on a night like that. Once she's eaten enough I speak up, it's time for the set up, "You wouldn't mind helping with the back garden for next year, would you? I'd rather have it done sooner than later."

"Must I?" she asked, "It's quite cold out and I'd rather not do yard work on our anniversary."

I expected that, of course. Don't you see? A mad man would blow his top, burst from his chair and drag out his wife to work, but not me. You see, I'm clever, I'm patient.

"Oh, please, won't you? I've been putting this off for far too long and today may be the last day to do it, and I need your help on this, it's definitely a two person job," I tell her, not a hint of the intense nervousness in my voice that I truly felt.

"Fine. If you really need my help with this," she says to me, "I was excited to show you something, too, I think you'll really like it. But if it's what you

really want." She was clearly unhappy. Good.

So we kept on with dinner, talking of menial things, and professing our love to each other. I would have rather said nothing at all, just enjoyed her food, but I knew I had to keep up the charade. But the most important thing was making sure she drank her fair share of wine. She may have been a fool, but she sure wasn't a complete moron. She needed to be off-set.

And drink her fair share she did. By the end of our meal she was struggling to not slur her words..

After dinner we cleaned up the table and set out for the back garden. The back door opened with a squeak and the fresh November air hit my face. The grass was dead and the trees were barren. The leaves had fallen from their branches, leaving dry husks strewn about the ground, devoid of the color they held not a month earlier.



Nox GebbenGreen

I find it funny how the seasons mirrored our relationship. Bright and warm when we got married, the beautiful colors of our love as we mellowed out, then the slow decay, the warmth being replaced by the cold indifference shown by the winds of today.

I walked over our lawn, dead leaves crunching beneath the outside boots I had donned. Didn't want to dirty my work shoes. Everything had to be perfectly normal, or they would know.

I opened the door to our shed full of tools, resulting in a loud creak from the hinges. I flinched. I really needed to oil that door. Everything needed to be perfect.

But I moved on, I thought it would be fine. I grabbed the shovels, and we got to digging. I said the hole needed to be big, because we were going to be planting something special along the garage.

"What will we be planting?" she asked me, her words

slightly breathy from the alcohol.

"Oh," I sighed, "don't worry, you'll love it." I never did get her thoughts on what I did, but I would guess that she didn't like it. Not one bit.

We shoveled away, the orange glow of the sunset fading to a dull, purple gray color, diffused even more by the abundance of clouds.

Once we were done the sun had fully set, the sky black, save for the gray clouds. I positioned her at the end of the hole so we were looking down it the long way, she didn't notice in her drunken stupor.

Then I pushed her in. She fell limply, not understanding her sudden predicament. She hit the bottom with a crack, for I had positioned her so precisely, so perfectly, her head had hit a stone sticking from the dirt. Pure coincidence it was there, the stone. I am smart, but not that smart. Even the earth is on my side— don't you see? I must be right, for why would the earth side with a mad man?

You think I'd just start

though that would be taken care of. Then I went to the garage and pulled out a large pallet of bricks and began to build. Nothing extravagant, but eventually I made a red brick planter. Directly over what was the hole. Every brick placed perfectly, corners sharp, top level, nothing strange.

With my wife gone, I had no more worries. No more nervousness to vent, no more anger, only peace in knowing I wouldn't die by her hand.

When I get here in the story they say I must be mad— that only a truly deranged man would do what I had done that day. I urge you to think better. Understand what I did had to be done. It was her or me, and I chose me.

It was only a matter of survival.

Isn't that what life is about? Living to the next day, waking up to eat another meal. Wouldn't you do the same?

I returned the tools to their places and I went inside to sleep, but while I was walking by the counter something caught my attention. On the counter sat a brochure that showed a rock beach in Iceland.

I walked over and picked up the brochure, and two tickets fell out from the pages. The date was the next week, the 16th of November, round trip.

So she had planned to do it soon! I had finally figured out when she planned to kill me. Funny, I figured it out after I'd buried her. But I still found myself infuriated that she'd have had the gall to take someone else on a trip with her. Extremely irritating in death as in life.

I dropped the tickets and the brochure in the garbage. My wife had no need for them anymore. She had planned on killing me that night. That had been what she had wanted to show me. Luck blessed me to just choose to do it so soon before she was going to.

But I quickly brushed off my anger, why should I feel anything for something gone? It's buried in the past.

The stairs creaked under my feet as I prepared for bed, when my doorbell rang. I remember panicking for a brief second, but I reassured myself. No one knew a thing. I know I did it all right— for I am not mad.

So I descended to the door. I opened it a crack, then opened it wide once I saw who was there.

"Good evening, sir. I'm Officer Miller and this is Officer Johnson, we're from the county police station and we were called here about suspicious conduct in your backyard. Do you know anything about this?" Miller said. He was a lanky figure, half a head taller than I and probably twenty pounds lighter.

He was skinny compared to his partner, a balding man with left in his gut who could look me in the eye.

"No, sirs, I haven't heard anything, but you can look, if you'd like," I said to them. My

voice was perfect, not wavering a bit. Exactly as it should be.

I walked them through my house, through the entry hall, kitchen, dining room, and out the back door.

The wind had stilled, leaving our, no— my, backyard motionless. Officer Johnson took out a flashlight and swept it across the yard. He paused on the planter and questioned me about it.

"When did you make that planter? The mortar looks wet."

"I made it today, officer," I told him, "thought it would be a nice gift for when my wife returns from her vacation."

"Well that sounds nice," he replied. He then chatted on of this and that. He asked what I was going to put in the planter. That made me think, but maybe I'd have put in some flowers my wife liked. That would've been ironic. She always loved Forget-me-nots.

Then something caught my attention, a noise like a scuttling rat. I tried to ignore it, but it just kept getting louder. It got so loud I started thinking that something was in my ear trying to deafen me.

I shook my head back and forth, nothing changed. I figured it was coming from outside my head. At this point I was looking around wildly, trying to find the source of that wretched noise. But even at my apparent distress, the policemen looked completely fine, prattling on about some random anecdote they remember from work.

Don't they hear it? I thought, Can't they hear that awful noise? Of course they do, they must know.

Who were they, really? Were they in league with my wife? That must've been it. They were pretending. They were making fun of me. They found such pleasure in my distress, like my wife.

They must've thought me mad! They thought I was some quack. But you don't think me a mad man— right?

"I'm not mad!" I screamed at them, my patience worn thin with their mockery, "Is this what you want? Fine, dig under the planter! That is where my wife is, scraping away at the board!"

She wasn't. I should have held my tongue, they never would have found her if I had only ignored that horrid scratching. That damned woman, making things hard for me even after she's gone belly up.

Oh, they're coming now, in their godforsaken white coats, holding their clipboards filled with "reports."

They even have the nerve to stand behind glass when they talk with me, who do they think they are? Do they think themselves better than me? Or, maybe, they think I'm going to hurt them?

Idiots. All of them. I explained that I won't hurt them, that I only did what I needed to. They still think I'm mad.

But you understand, don't you?

You know I'm not mad.