



Owl senior makes it to state!
- Page 2



Banned books
- Page 2



Why are Subarus so popular?
- Page 4

Purple Owl Press

Volume #22, Issue #5 March 3rd, 2022

Possibility of SPPS teachers strike looms

Just two years after the last strike, SPFE union members have voted to return to the picket line

Paloma Leone-Getten
Staff Writer

As of press time, Saint Paul Public Schools teachers, educational assistants, and school and community service professionals are set to begin striking on Tuesday, March 8th.

About 3/4 of the 3,680 members of the Saint Paul Federation of Educators voted on

February 17th, authorizing a strike in a 78% decision. Each SPPS building with union members will have a picket line. "The truth is, I am optimistic and remain committed to reaching an agreement before a strike happens. I am confident that progress can

be made during mediation to avoid disrupting all the great things happening in our schools," said Saint Paul Public Schools superintendent Joe Gothard via a letter to families prior to the strike vote.

The Saint Paul Federation of Educators' demands include class-size limits, mental health

support, more educators to assist students with disabilities, and a living wage for educational assistants. A statement by SPFE stated that "after two years of teaching and supporting students and families during a pandemic, we did not make this decision lightly. Our



The teachers at a rally during the strike in 2020.

Purple Press Staff Photo

Strike, 6

Students walk out for Amir Locke



Students leaving Central High School, beginning the march to the Governor's Residence on February 8th (left), hundreds of students from across the Twin Cities marching at the walkout (right).



Sahan Journal

Paloma Leone-Getten
Staff Writer

On Tuesday, February 8th, students across the Twin Cities walked out of class. Meeting at Central High School for a brief rally, they walked down Lexington Avenue until reaching the Governor's Residence on Summit.

The walkout was planned after the murder of Amir Locke by Minneapolis Police officer Mark Hanneman on Wednesday, February 2nd. The officers rushed into the apartment shouting "search warrant," and shot Locke within 9 seconds of entering. He had been asleep on a couch, but reached for a gun as soon

as he awoke. Locke was not the subject of the warrant.

Around 20 OWL students joined hundreds more from other Twin Cities schools. Senior Maggie Morris and 11th grader Maleah Young facilitated the planning of OWL's part of the walkout. "Most of the planning was done by MN Teen Activists beforehand.

As for the OWL part, Maleah reached out to me. She had talked to Dave already and she just wanted me to help get the word out," said Maggie.

Since Locke's murder, the issue of no-knock warrants has been at the forefront of the news. Though Frey's campaign claimed that he had banned no-knock warrants, the current

policy in Minneapolis is that officers must identify themselves as "police" and that they must state that they have a search warrant periodically in case not all occupants heard it initially. It states that no-knock warrants can only be used in high-risk situations, and some say that in this case,

Walkout, 5

Alice in Wonderland to be OWL's spring 2022 play

The play is an adaptation of the Lewis Carroll books, will feature actors in grades 6-12

Willa Campion
Staff Writer

OWL's theater department is back this spring with an adapted version of Alice in Wonderland.

After a fall production of The Play that Goes Wrong that, despite having to be re-

scheduled due to COVID-19 complications, went quite right, the theater department is looking forward to adventures in Wonderland.

"I have been wanting to do Alice in Wonderland for like five years," said co-director

and theater teacher Rebekah Rentzel. Many of the plays Rebekah chooses for the theater department to perform tend to be lesser known and so she said she is looking forward to putting on a production many students have heard of. Additionally, now feels like an especially pertinent time to produce Alice in Wonderland. "It's a play about a kid who is going through all sorts of changes all of the time and nobody really

gives them any clear rules, the rules change constantly, and I feel like growing up through COVID the rules have changed constantly. So, hopefully it's something we can all connect to," Rebekah said.

The play will be an adaptation of the books Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Alice Through the Looking Glass by Lewis Carroll. "A lot of adaptations of Alice in Wonderland take elements from both the original novel and Through the Looking Glass. Tweedledum and Tweedledee, the White Knight, all those are from Through the Looking Glass, but then stuff from the

original novel is usually cut," said 11th grader Hazel Carroll, who plays the role of Cheshire Cat. Rebekah elaborated, "The version we are doing right now actually follows the books really closely, so you might see more of the characters you have seen in the books. It is very different than the Disney movie though, so that is something to kinda look out for."

Hazel, who has been in theater productions at OWL since sixth grade, is excited to get back on the stage. "I am really excited to just work with these people that I haven't been able

Alice, 6

Mock trial team finds success

Meara Gunderson
Staff Writer

Hazel Carroll prepares to take a stand in court; she was a victim in a swindling case and is a witness in the trial. Of course, this isn't a real trial, but a part of OWL's mock trial competition.

Mock trial is where a group of students meet to act out a trial. At OWL there were around 17 students this year. The students can choose their role from witnesses, lawyers, a bailiff, and a timekeeper.

If you are a witness, you will receive information before the trial, so you have time to read it over, find out who you are, and prepare to answer questions from your fellow students. If you are a lawyer, you will work with your witnesses to create questions, and a timeline for the trial. If you are a bailiff you will maintain order, and swear in witnesses (although over virtual learning there was no need for bailiffs). If you are the timekeeper, your job is to keep track of the time, as all segments are timed.

"I've never seen a real trial, but I assume that mock trial is set up similarly," says 11th grader Hazel Carroll. "There's opening statements by the prosecution side, then they call up their witness and cross examine them, then it's the defense's turn and they do the same thing as prosecution with their three witnesses,"

Mock trial, 6



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 22nd year of the Purple Press.

Adult to Blame
Leo Bickelhaupt

Editor-in-Chief
Paloma Leone-Getten

Writers
Olivia Bilek
Atticus Brooks-Babcock
Willia Campion
August Cheney
Nora Crosby
Meara Gunderson
Claire Hulson
Henry Karre
Paloma Leone-Getten
Mintiesnot Sisay
Lana Stevens
Nick Streng
Hiroko Zeleke

Linux: a fast, uncommon operating system

What and where Linux is used

Henry Karre
Staff Writer

It runs the world from the shadows, almost every server which you connect to runs it - even Microsoft, the makers of the Windows operating system, uses it to run their servers. It's the Linux operating system.

Unless you're like me and run desktop Linux, you (probably) will never interact with it. Most devices that run Linux are servers, with some major exceptions, such as Android phones which run a version of Linux.

What even is an operating system, or OS, and why does it matter which one you use? Ever wondered what displays your desktop, manages your windows and runs your apps? That's the job of the OS. Why does what OS you use even matter? Two major reasons: one is efficient usage of resources, meaning that it doesn't waste processing power doing unnecessary tasks. The other reason is customizability, being able to mix and match software components of an operating system is an important factor for enthusiasts. For both of these, Linux is the best choice.

The Linux kernel (the kernel is the interface between the

software and hardware) was created in 1991 by Linus Torvalds. Linux remained closed source (which means that limited people have access to the source code) until it was picked up by the GNU Project, a project to make a completely open source operating system, based on AT&T's Unix operating system. GNU/Linux was originally released as 2 floppy disks, one titled "root" which was where the file system was stored, and the other titled "boot," where the disk image was stored.

The first well known Linux "distro" was Softlanding Linux System, or SLS for short. This inspired a trend of "forking" the GNU/Linux source code to make custom distributions. Linux was still majorly a desktop operating system, and wasn't thought of as a serverware. One of the first and most popular "backend" Linux distros was the Red Hat Linux Advanced Server (now known as Red Hat Enterprise Linux or RHEL), one of the first Linux distributions where you had to pay for the license, while still being open source. Today the Linux kernel is used in many things, including Android, almost all servers, and even software for the Mars rovers.

Why is Linux used every-

where? One of the major reasons is its modifiability. Linux can be packaged, compressed, and compiled into tiny file sizes, and can literally run on almost any computer. Another reason is its security and stability, due to its open source nature, bugs and security vulnerabilities that can be patched quickly by the millions of people maintaining the kernel. Another reason people use Linux is due to its customizability, because GNU/Linux itself is just a kernel and various GNU tools. So many minimalist distributions are easy to customize, you don't even have to use the Linux kernel!

Although Linux is objectively one of the fastest operating systems, it is still not widely used by desktop computers. Because Linux is not that user friendly and has a somewhat steep learning curve compared to Windows and MacOS, many people see it as too much of a hassle to switch. Although Linux's desktop market share is slowly increasing as some more beginner friendly distributions such as Pop!_OS and Linux Mint are being further developed. Linux is the platform of choice for many projects, such as Valve's Steam Deck and even the Mars rovers.



Stian getting tagged by his partner in the relay at the state meet.

Stian earns spot at state

OWL's senior nordic skier qualified in a partner relay

Paloma Leone-Getten
Staff Writer

On February 17th, senior Stian Asper raced at the Minnesota Nordic Ski Meet, placing 18th in a 17:01 relay with his partner Henry Huron, a student at Central High School.

Stian qualified on February 8th at the section meet, skiing a 12:22 minute relay and placing 3rd. This race involves alternating between two skiers twice, each skiing two 1.5 kilometer loops. This year, the race was done in the skate skiing technique, where skiers move side-to-side, similar to ice skating. The relay will alternate between skate and classic, another technique, similar to

running, each year. This was a new event added to Minnesota high school skiing. "It made things a lot more complicated so (qualifying) was a lot more of a guessing game. I was surprised to qualify but really ecstatic. It was a really fun experience," said Stian.

This wasn't Stian's first experience at the state cross country ski meet. Last year, Central won the section, qualifying as a team. This year, however, they placed third, so only 7 individuals and Stian and his partner were sent up to the meet. "We just missed the team qualification by only 5 points out of almost 400... The 3 pursuit skiers—not on the relay teams—did well. Charlie got 12th, Elijah got 71st, and Micah got 85th," said Stian.

Stian began skiing as a child, and has raced for Central for the past five years. "My favorite part is that I get to be a part of a really cool communi-

Stian, 3

Safety vs. tradition

How OWL is balancing COVID-19 safety and fun traditions

Nora Crosby
Staff Writer

About a month ago, my friend and I were searching for new spots in the cafeteria. Our eyes landed on several of our other friends but there weren't enough COVID-19 safe spots. She pointed to two empty chairs, isolated in their own row, and looked at me with a question mark. I smiled and shrugged my shoulders, did we really have a choice?

Every day, whether it's conscious or subconscious, many ask ourselves the question, "How do I find a balance between what we want to do and what is considered safe?"

The past two years have held a lot of changes, conflicting emotions, and difficult decisions due to restrictions related to the global pandemic. The way we structure a typical school day has changed in numerous ways and many of our special school traditions and

activities have been altered. When met with the challenge of making difficult decisions regarding our education, it is normal to feel ambivalence in our responsibilities and personal beliefs.

At the beginning of online school, teachers and students alike were told to follow directions and "finish up" the school year. But now, almost two years later, we have a greater understanding of the impact of COVID and the decisions we make. According to the Saint Paul Public Schools Safe Learning Plan, some of the best and most efficient ways to prevent the spread of COVID are, "consistent and correct mask use, physical distancing and cohorts, and staying home when sick."

Talking with principal Dave Gundale as well as some teachers and students, I have received further insight into some specific changes and

beliefs surrounding our past, current, and future situation. The central topic is how challenging it is to find a middle ground between safe, normal, and happy. According to Dave, "From the very beginning, that, at the core, has been the hardest thing to navigate. How do you keep doing the special things, the very important things this school values while responding to CDC recommendations."

While most can agree that these are easy and effective ways to help keep us all safe, they also hold undeniable social and emotional implications. Some of the biggest challenges and changes range from mask wearing and required seating, to the cancellation of field trips and a virtual graduation ceremony.

Throughout the past two years, some of the biggest changes to our school's traditions include fall retreats, prom, and graduation. While many of those activities had to be eliminated from the schedule entirely, some were altered to fit a more COVID-friendly environment. When asked about his thoughts on all the changes, Spanish teacher Tim Leone-Getten stated, "The overall culture of the school community is pretty similar. The way students feel about the school and each other has stayed remarkably the same. The biggest differences are the

lack of fieldwork and trips, experiences that are very important to our school models, and the social events that are not happening: dances, cultural nights, etc." Tenth grader Tess Campion said she misses some of those events, "Hopefully we'll be able to have an interim or field trip soon, because that is something that has definitely been hard."

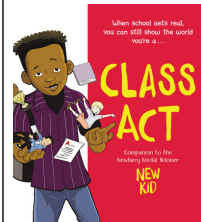
The implementation of precautions may not have ruined our ability to maintain important aspects of our school, but it has undoubtedly made it more difficult. "I feel like it's hard to interact between classes, because there's definitely a larger barrier there than there was before," said Tess. Many of the safety measures have also gone through multiple stages, such as a fourteen to five day required quarantine when sick. With these changes, new, and old, experiences have come into play. "I have never been at odds with decisions made, they have hurt me because they took something meaningful away from us. But I also have to understand that we've had new experiences that shape our perspectives," said Dave in response to a question about the decisions made about safety precautions.

With all these changes come a lot of conflicting and intense emotions, and the decision making involves a

COVID-19, 6

Banned books

Censorship wave targets books with POC, LGBTQ+ characters



Hiroko Zeleke
Staff Writer

Texas Republican State Representative Matt Krause sent a letter on October 25, 2021 to the Texas Education Agency to investigate if any schools in the state have any of the books on a 16 page spreadsheet, containing 850 books and wanted to know how much schools were spending on them. This is just one of the many attempts to ban books throughout the country in recent months.

As I looked through the list, I found many books that I have read before and loved on this list, such as New Kid and Class Act by Jerry Craft, and I was horrified and disgusted. Book bannings are nothing new, as people will try to challenge books for a variety of reasons, but there is a new wave of book banning around the country.

The number of books being banned isn't the only thing that scares me, it is the types of books being banned that is particularly concerning -- as this pattern targets mainly diverse books, especially those that discuss race, gender, and sexuality.

Many of the Read Brave books in the last few years are targets of these book bannings, including this year's Read Brave, The Magic Fish by Trung Le Nguyen (which if you haven't already read, I highly recommend!), which features a gay Vietnamese American main character. So many of these books have LGBTQ+ characters and many are POC, especially targeting Black books and authors.

New Kid, a middle grade graphic novel about a Black kid going to a mostly white school that tackles racism and microaggressions in a humorous way, is being banned in many places due to claims of "teaching critical race theory" and "making white children feel uncomfortable." Everyone I interviewed said it is okay to feel uncomfortable when reading a book. "That just seems really selfish to me," said En-

Banned books, 3



6th graders wore masks to stay safe during Fall Retreats.

Luke Turvold

Senior Spotlight

Skylar Bandelin



What pronouns do you use?
He/him.

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

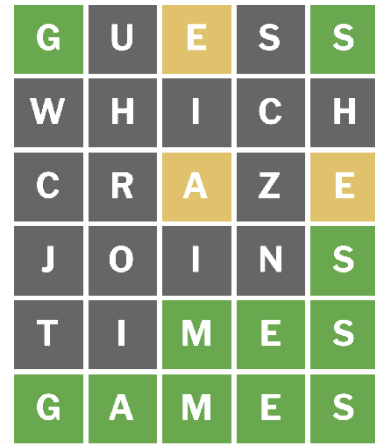
What are your plans for next year?
Going to college in Ontario.

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

What extracurriculars are you involved in?
Archery.

Favorite field work experience or school trip and why?
2019 choir tour.

If you had a walk up song, what would it be?
I don't know.



The New York Times Company

What pronouns do you use?
She/her

How tall are you?
I think I'm like 5'3"

What's your favorite class so far and why?
Probably English because Preston is really fun.

Who's your favorite senior?
Auria.

Where do you think you're going to go for college?
Maybe some sort of like, writing school.

What extracurriculars do you plan on getting involved in at OWL?
Theater and D&D.

That One Little Kid

Beatrice Cosgrove



Wordle finds fans at OWL

The word game has several niche offshoots in the Harry Potter and Star Wars worlds

August Cheney
Staff Writer

What is made up of yellow, green, and gray boxes, and, according to the New York Times, worth about a million dollars?

Wordle, a new hit game where the key is to find the five-letter word by using up to six words; the different colors that will show up correspond with the five letter word of choice; those colors are red, yellow, and green. Wordle was created by Josh Wardle and is currently housed at the New York Times website. Every 24 hours there's a new word of the day.

To play, Wordle gives players six chances to guess a randomly selected five letter word. A correct letter in the correct spot will show up green. A correct letter in the wrong spot shows up yellow. A letter that isn't in the word

in any spot shows up gray. You can enter a total of six words, meaning you can enter five burner words from which you can learn hints about the letters and their placements across the board.

Why do people like Wordle? They are aware of concepts like letter frequency and letter position that allow them to strategize about the best opening words and faster solutions. It gives a sense of accomplishment getting the daily Wordle, especially with the use of streaks (getting the wordle correct day by day). Eighth grader Arlo Northrop-Kiel, for example, currently has a twelve day streak going. English teacher Leo Bickelhaupt said, "I think it's the right level of challenge. I can usually get it with a bit of effort." Wordle can be frustrating, which is why

Wordle, 6

Banned books, 2



glish teacher Kevin Hansen. "And I get that you don't want your child to feel uncomfortable, but I personally believe that, in my life at least, some of my best learning ever has come out of situations that I've been uncomfortable with and forced to learn from." Librarian Caryl Mousseaux agreed, "it's okay to feel uncomfortable" and that books can also help one realize that maybe they did something to make someone feel hurt and learn from that. "Ignorance feels safe," English teacher Preston West said. "When you don't know something, you can't worry about it, but you also then don't want to make things better for other people."

One book every teacher I interviewed brought up was Maus by Art Spiegelman, a graphic novel about the author's father's experience in the Holocaust. Maus was banned in a unanimous vote by a school board in Tennessee. "I know that Maus is like a 40 year old book and it was on the bestseller list last week," said Kevin. "You know, when these

things happen it creates sort of a whiplash effect where more people want to read something that's banned," noting that books being banned often get a lot of attention.

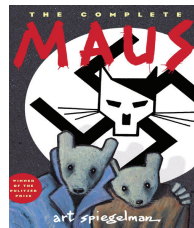
Like most districts, SPSS has protocols and procedures in place for if someone wants to challenge a book/material. There is one form for instructional material reconsideration, so things like books a teacher may use as a lesson in class that the parent may either not want their child to read or may want to withdraw it from a whole class, and another one for an alternative instructional material. This isn't a huge problem in our school district though, as a majority of book challenges happen in more conservative areas. English teacher Leo Bickelhaupt mentioned that out of all his years of teaching at OWL, book challenges and bannings have never been an issue.

All the teachers I have interviewed had reservations about book censorship, and they all agreed that it is a problem that books being targeted are diverse. One of things

brought up multiple times is a metaphor called "Mirrors and Windows," having mirrors for a person to see themselves reflected or feel seen by a book, and windows so that someone can read about someone who may be different from them. "When we limit the authors that people can read and the stories that they're being told, that really limits their ability to walk around as a citizen of the world," English teacher Nora Krings said. "So books are the best way we can experience other people's perspectives and to me that's kind of the point, not just of education, but of life."

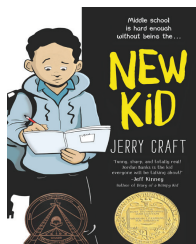
I also looked into what some authors whose books are often banned had to say. Both Jason Reynolds (All American Boys and Stamped were in the top ten most challenged books of 2020) and Alex Gino (Melissa has been #1 on the most challenged book list for the last three years) said that having their books banned is "not a badge of honor" because it cuts access to kids who may really need them. This is especially true since school may be the only place a student may be able to get access to books as they may not have a library nearby or be able to afford to purchase books.

Like the 850 books in Texas, many of the book bans are political. "I think there are some people who are using book bans against LGBTQ people and against people of color as sort of a political move, as a way to sort of get people elect-



ed," Preston said. One example Preston provided of this was Matt Krause. "Right now, what we see is that there is greater power going to diverse authors and diverse writers and diverse stories, and when people see some people getting power that makes them uncomfortable because that means they're having less power," said Nora. "I view it as this wonderful opportunity that we're getting to get diverse voices."

During this wave of book bans, what can we do about book censorship and how can we fight it? All the staff I interviewed agreed that we should support these books/authors. Some other recommendations included writing letters to representatives, voting (if you're 18+), attending school board meetings and making your voices heard, and making sure that people are aware of the wave in book banning. "We talked about it in library school and graduate school," said Caryl when discussing learning about book challenges, "and our role as a librarian is to provide access to materials. We are not about censorship."



Stian, 2

ty of people that I live close to and have the same interests as, but I don't go to school with. It's cool to get to know all those people and make connections," said Stian. Aside from the community he's found, Stian has also made huge progress as an athlete. "I've loved growing as a skier and putting in the work to see the results after five years of being on the team. It's been great to learn so much from the amazing coaches we

have."

While Stian's high school ski career is over, he plans on continuing the sport for years to come. "I don't know if I'll be able to ski competitively in college since I don't know where I'm going, but my goal is to eventually do the Birkie." The Birkebeiner—or Birkie—is a 50 kilometer race in Hayward, Wisconsin, held each year. It's the largest cross country ski marathon in North America, a must-do for many skiers.



Skinny Ski

Stian skiing at the state meet on February 17th.



Reviews 'n' stuff



The Mandalorian, but even better Star Wars knocks it out of the park with new Boba Fett mini series

Nick Streng
Staff Writer

If there's one Star Wars character that was so unbelievably overrated to the point where it is not an exaggeration to say that the sole reason for their fame was their cool-looking costume, it's without a doubt Boba Fett.

For over forty years, this iconic bounty hunter has been immensely popular with the Star Wars fanbase even though he did nothing but walk around menacingly in the background, say four lines throughout the entire original



imdb.com

trilogy, then fall to his comical demise in the Sarlacc pit. But since his green armor just looked soooooo cool, everyone wanted him to come back and do more—and eventually, that's just what he did when The Mandalorian resurrected him in its second season and gave him a spin-off show.

The Book of Boba Fett is a seven-episode miniseries that began streaming on Disney+ on December 29th, 2021, with one episode being released every Wednesday until February 9th, 2022. Boba himself is played by Temuera Morrison, who has previously played him in The Mandalorian and various other pieces of Star Wars media. Written by Jon Favreau and taking place after The Mandalorian, this show tells the story of Boba Fett and his struggle to rule as the daimyo of the planet Tatooine, while also exploring what happened to him after he fell into the Sarlacc pit through a series of flashbacks.

As someone who loved watching The Mandalorian, I

was pretty excited to see this, but also cautiously optimistic. Because while a Boba Fett show sounded like it could be fun, I had no idea what to expect from it, since it had a completely blank slate for a main character.

The reason Boba Fett is regarded as cold and mysterious by everyone is because nobody knows anything about who he is as an actual person, aside from the fact that he's supposedly a legendary hunter who worked for the bad guys. And when Mandalorian Season 2 brought him back, he got to blow stuff up to make the fans happy, but still remained a static character. So I was hoping this show would change that. Its premise seemed to have...some storytelling potential, but I was pretty sure it wouldn't be anywhere near as good as The Mandalorian. If anything, it seemed like it would be The Mandalorian but worse. Why do we need another Star Wars story about a guy with cool armor?

But as you can probably tell

from the title of this article, I was dead wrong and am here to say that The Book of Boba Fett is an amazing show that not only turned an overrated icon into one of the most compelling Star Wars characters I've seen in a long time, but also surpassed The Mandalorian in the process by doing everything that The Mandalorian wouldn't.

First I'd like to elaborate upon that last statement, because it's probably what surprised me the most about this show. The main appeal behind The Mandalorian was the premise of a show set after Return of the Jedi - a galaxy without law, without the Galactic Empire that we're so used to in nearly every other Star Wars story. But despite that show telling us again and again that the Empire is gone, we see the Empire a lot. Sure, it's technically just the remnants of the Empire, but there was never enough emphasis on that fact. Stormtroopers constantly showed up in spades to create conflict for Din Djarin and Grogu, and it didn't feel like the Empire was any weaker.

This still made the show

Boba Fett, 5



Car and Driver

Why Subaru? The reason for the popularity of Subaru cars in Minnesota

Atticus Brooks-Babcock
Staff Writer

If you go to any skiing hill, any snowshoeing area, or any other winter activity you will notice an overwhelming amount of Subarus in the parking lot. Why is that?

The short answer is because they have a reputation for being reliable and good in the snow. The reason most people think Subarus are so good in snow is because of their all-wheel drive, but just having AWD doesn't make it magically good in the snow, it really just lets people get away with having bad tires. That's not to say that Subaru's AWD isn't good, because it is. It's set up to be a constant 50/50 split, meaning that 50% of the power goes to the front and 50% goes to the back. On nicer models you get X-drive, which is Subaru's advanced traction control, which means it sends power to the wheels that need it and cuts power to the wheels

that don't.

Onto reliability: out of all of the major Japanese brands like Honda and Toyota, Subarus come in last for reliability. If you ever talk about Subarus to a car guy they will always make a joke about Subarus blowing head gaskets. That's because the EJ25 and other engines of that era would blow head gaskets at 60,000-100,000 miles, which is pretty bad. Most car guys would try to mod their EJ25 and end up blowing a head gasket and needing to pull the engine. Speaking of needing to pull the engine, changing the spark plug on any car is a very simple job that takes 30 minutes max, but because Subarus are boxsters the engine is flat, making it hard to reach the spark plugs which you are supposed to change every 60,000 miles. However, other than those issues they are pretty reliable cars. But out of Honda and Toyota, Subaru

Subaru, 5

2022 Read Brave book is highly rated for good reason

The Magic Fish graphic novel is a story of acceptance

Lana Stevens
Staff Writer

The 2022 Read Brave book is a tale of mermaids, evil stepmothers, magic gowns, handsome princes, and the coming out story of Tién Phong, a second generation American Vietnamese teenager, who has a crush on a boy at school.

Read Brave is Saint Paul Public Library's citywide, intergenerational reading program set around a theme relevant to the city. It's goal is "to ignite empathy and help us think of big ideas to build a better Saint Paul." (According to the Saint Paul Public Library (SPPL) website). 2022's theme is community care.

This year's book — which happens to be the first ever Read Brave nominated graphic novel — is called The Magic Fish, by Trung Le Nguyen. It follows the main character, Tién, through his struggles with coming out to his parents. Since his parents are still learning English from immigrat-

ing from Vietnam, he doesn't know the Vietnamese words to tell them. His best friend, Claire, has known about Tién's crush on their third friend, Julian, and tries to help him through his feelings by asking both of them to an upcoming school dance.

Meanwhile, when Tién comes home from school, after homework and dinner, he and his parents read fairy tales from library books. It helps them learn English so he and his parents can speak the same language. I personally think this is a very sweet tradition for them, and it becomes a very important feature in the book later on. The first tale we see them read is a tale a bit along the lines of Cinderella, where we follow a girl named Alera, who is the daughter of a princess from the sea, and the daughter of a merchant. But one day, "his wife looked out to the sea... stepped into the water... and never returned."

Her aunt Velvet takes care of her after her mother leaves. But one evening, the Old Man

of the Sea comes to either take her father's soul, or take Alera as a bride. But Alera makes a deal with the Old Man of the Sea to make her "three magnificent dresses," one made from the dawn, one made from moonlight, and one from starlight. Will he agree to her terms? What will happen to Alera? Well, you'll have to read the book to find out.

Back in reality, long story short, one of the teachers at Tién's school finds out about Tién's homosexuality when they see him dancing with Julian at the dance. They want to help him. He tells them he can't tell his parents because he doesn't know the right words. So they talk to his mother, Hiên, and find a way to inform her. Tién feels uncomfortable, and doesn't believe his parents will accept him. Now, the rest you should read by yourself, because not only have I said too much, but this is, in my opinion, the best part of the book, and you all should read it for yourself.

This book is beautifully written and illustrated, and I love the way Tién and his family use fairy tales to bond and learn about each other. I also am a big fan of the way Trung Le Nguyen uses colors



Amazon.com

to decipher the story's many perspectives. He uses red colors when we are reading about their reality, such as Tién at school with his friends, and Hiên's perspective on Tién's life. He uses blue colors while we are reading about the fairy tales that they are reading, like Alera and her story. And finally, he uses yellow to tell us about Hiên's past, about her travels to America from Vietnam. Another thing I thought was very interesting about this book was that it is semi-autobiographical from Trung Le Nguyen's experience growing up American-Vietnamese. Not only did I like the colors, but I like his art style in general. Especially the hair on the characters. It's the perfect amount of

Read Brave, 4

T-wolves find a new groove

Mintesinot Sisay
Staff Writer

Last year, in my final article for the Purple Press about the Minnesota Timberwolves, I stated that Jarred Vanderbilt would turn out to be a "defensive stopper", and ended it with "see you next year when we're good (I hope)". I was not even aware how right I would be, or how good we would be. Watching the Timberwolves this season has been full of exciting highs, often due to Vanderbilt's unrelenting energy.

Point guard D'Angelo Russell has spearheaded our actually good defense (DLo being a good defender is insane) to a point where we have been within the top 10 defensive teams for much of this season, a meteoric improvement from years before, when we were close to last. Our new defensive identity can also probably be attributed to veteran Patrick Beverly, who was traded to Minnesota at the beginning

of the season. OWL teacher Thomas Totushak described him as "a solid player with a mean streak", saying "we needed that", which I wholeheartedly agree with. Beverly has been involved in on court altercations before, but that energy and passion has been instilled in a positive way for our Timberwolves.

Unfortunately, as Tom said, "our defense is getting weaker as our offense has improved", saying it's worrying if we just try to out-score better teams. If Minnesota learns how to balance their lights out shooting with lockdown defense, we could make some noise this playoffs.

Sophomore Anthony Edwards has continued to evolve as an all-around player. He does have a shot selection issue, as his extreme self-confidence - in a post-game interview after scoring 40 points,

T-wolves, 6



What's happening with Ukraine and Russia?

Russia launches attack on its neighboring country

Claire Hulson
Staff Writer

It has started.

Russia has gone to war with Ukraine, and United States President Joe Biden has decided against sending U.S. troops in an attempt to avoid World War Three: "That's a world war when Americans and Russia start shooting at one another."

And if you are still in the dark about why all of this is happening, it condenses to one small point: Russia's president Vladimir Putin is angry, scared and has way too much power. He stated it's because he wants to "denazify" and demilitarize Ukraine, but it's mainly because of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization). NATO is an intergovernmental military alliance between 27 European countries, two North American countries, and one Eurasian country, created to protect each other and keep freedom and peace after Russia gained power after WW2.

Sounds nice right? Well, Ukraine is trying to join NATO, but that's Russia's idea of a nightmare because NATO would be setting up in Russia's backyard. Russia's reaction to Ukraine trying to join NATO is invading and bombing eleven highly populated Ukrainian cities, killing roughly 100 civilians in the first 24 hours.

Here in America we don't

have to worry about physical fighting or attacks, because the U.S. will not send troops, opting to instead wage political and financial war against Russia. The U.S. and their allies are attempting to cut off all ties with Russia, hoping to put them into a downward economic spiral because they will only have world trade with smaller authoritarian countries plus China and North Korea.

Ukraine won't be totally alone though, because other than the political support they also have Germany, the U.S. and multiple countries in the U.N., U.K. and E.U. sending weapons and money.

Unfortunately enough for Russia, there are consequences for your actions. Just days after the attacks, the U.N. as well as Germany and the U.S. are putting sanctions on Russia through many things, but the main sanction is the SWIFT banning of Russia. SWIFT is an International banking system that is the backbone of Russia and will dig them deep into an economic hole. Other small repercussions have been happening like boycotting Russian events, for instance Poland refusing to play the upcoming World Cup qualifier against Russia, but the main takeaway is that Russia is not coming back from this unharm.

English, so that she and Tién can be closer and speak the same language, instead of the kind of mixed Vietnamese/English they speak in the book. Through all of this, she still takes time to patch her son's jacket and make Claire a dress for the school dance. We don't see Tién's father too much in the book, most likely because he's always working, but when we do he seems very caring of Hiên, and really nice and sweet to Tién.

Overall, I'd say this is one of the best graphic novels I've read in a while. It definitely deserves all the awards it got. If you like fairy tales, cultural references, gay characters, and beautiful art, then this is the book for you.

Read Brave, 4
graphic and realistic.

I think it's really sweet how caring and kind Claire, Tién's friend, is about Tién's struggles. She even asked Julian to the dance for him, and feels terrible, thinking she made a mistake. She also just doesn't care who Tién loves, and she is always there if he needs her. Now more about Hiên, Tién's mother. I also really like her as a character, and how she struggles with her past and present. Throughout the book, you can often tell she works hard to help Tién have a good life, and is often stressed. She also feels disconnected from Tién, and feels he doesn't want to tell her things.

This is part of why she works so hard on learning

The story of "the next James Dean"

The life, career of TV and movie actor River Phoenix

Olivia Bilek
Staff Writer

One of my favorite River Phoenix movie quotes is "There's no reason to tell the time. We are timeless." from *My Own Private Idaho*.

River Phoenix was an American actor, musician and activist. He is best known for his roles as Mike Waters in *My Own Private Idaho* (1991), Chris Chambers in *Stand By Me* (1986), and as young Indiana Jones in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989) as well as many others.

Phoenix was born River Jude Bottom, August 23, 1970, in Madras, OR, to parents Arlyn 'Heart' Phoenix and John Lee Bottom. He is the older brother to actors Rain Phoenix, Joaquin Phoenix, Liberty Phoenix, and Summer Phoenix.

In 1973 Phoenix and his family joined the religious organization *The Children of God*, now known as *The Family International*. The family left the faith in 1977 and boarded a freighter to Florida. While on their trip to Florida, Phoenix and his siblings saw fish-

men catching fish and killing them in a violent way. Before they saw this they didn't know where fish came from or how they were captured, which led the whole family to go vegan. Shortly after the Bottom family left *The Children of God* they changed their last name to Phoenix to symbolize their new beginning.

Phoenix began acting at the age of 10 in television commercials. His first film role was in *Explorers* (1985). In 1986 he got the role of Charlie Fox in *The Mosquito Coast* in which he played Harrison Ford's son. In 1984 Phoenix got his first major role of Chris Chambers in the coming of age film *Stand By Me* (1986) adapted from Stephen King's novella *The Body*. In 1988 Phoenix got the role of young Indiana Jones in *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989). Harrison Ford is the one who suggested Phoenix for the role to the director Steven Spielberg.

Spielberg said, "[Ford] said to me 'The guy who looks most like me when I was that age is this actor named River Phoenix.' It was Harrison Ford's idea, because [Phoenix] played his son in *The Mosquito Coast*.

So I met River and I thought he was great, and I cast him". In 1991 Phoenix got the role of Mike Waters in *My Own Private Idaho* (1991) starring alongside his friend Keanu Reeves as Scott Favors.

His best roles in my opinion are Mike Waters in *My Own Private Idaho* and Chris Chambers in *Stand By Me* because I think his acting and his portrayal of the characters were great and I can relate to the characters. His acting method was interesting because it reminded me of James Dean's, who used a lot of method acting and elements from his own life and experiences which made the roles more personal, and River Phoenix playing a lot of emotional roles and method acting or at least emotional vulnerability seemed to come naturally to him.

For example in *Stand By Me* when his character Chris Chambers was crying to his friend Gordie because he got suspended from school, the director, Rob Reiner, told Phoenix to think of a time when an adult disappointed him so the crying would be real, and in *My Own Private Idaho* his

character Mike Waters and his friend Scott visit Mike's older brother, Richard, to see if he knows where Mike's mother is. Richard later tells Mike about his father and that he was killed when he was very young but Mike tells Richard that he knows Richard is his real father.

On October 30th, 1993 Phoenix and his girlfriend Samantha Mathis went to the Viper Room to drop off his siblings Joaquin and Rain but Phoenix wanted to stay. Sometime after that, Samantha Mathis came out of the restroom and saw Phoenix in a fight with another man. The fight moved outside after they were pushed out of the club by a bouncer and Phoenix collapsed on the sidewalk and began convulsing. Mathis tried to get back into the club to get help, but the side door was locked so she had to go around to the front. She ran around to the front and ran through the club trying to find Phoenix's siblings.

Once Mathis found them, they ran out to Phoenix. Joaquin called 911 on a pay phone saying, "He's having seizures! Get over here please, please, cause he's dying, please." The

River Phoenix, 6

Boba Fett, 4

fun, but I couldn't help but think that it would have been more interesting to explore other aspects of the galaxy. What's it like to be a bounty hunter? What goes on in the underworld? Mandalorian seemed like it would focus on that at first, until it retracted into the rebels-versus-empire storyline that we're all familiar with. But in *The Book of Boba Fett*, the Empire is completely absent from the story. We only get a few brief reminders that it existed, and this allows for a much deeper exploration of the criminal underworld on Tatooine, as a variety of crime lords challenge Boba and his allies for control of the planet.

And exploring this storyline was only made more entertaining with an excellent protagonist at the helm. Boba himself finally feels like an actual person in *Star Wars* as he undergoes a really interesting and compelling character transformation, growing be-

yond his legacy as a murderous bounty hunter to become an honorable leader. Through his traumatic experience of escaping the Sarlacc pit and time spent living with a tribe of Tusken raiders, he learns the importance of looking out for others and vows to protect the people of Tatooine from harm. Temuera Morrison's performance is outstanding; he brings a great amount of depth to the character yet still manages to maintain the cool and menacing presence Boba is known for having.

While the rest of the ensemble cast wasn't quite as good due to not getting a whole lot of focus, they still were fun characters and helped make the story fun. The show sometimes stumbles a bit with slow pacing, frequent alternations between Boba's flashbacks and the present day plot, and a few action sequences that were rather badly directed, but these problems didn't bring it down that much in my eyes.

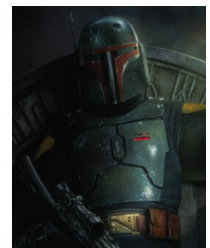
If anything, I found this

show to be at its worst when it suddenly decided to be *The Mandalorian* season two point five for a couple of episodes. For some baffling reason, episodes five and six abandoned the original storyline in favor of catching up with Din, and Boba doesn't even show up until the seventh and final episode, which then proceeded to resolve the storyline built up in the first four episodes. While Din's story eventually does intersect with Boba's in a coherent way, since Boba hired him to help out on Tatooine, everything Din related in episodes five and six really should have been saved for the actual third season of *The Mandalorian*. Everyone I know said that those episodes were the best of the season, but they really only reminded me that I was far more interested in Boba as a character now. On top of that, I didn't think the episodes were even that good on their own. There is a truckload of fan service in both of them, and it was extremely ir-

ritating. And it was especially disappointing to see a new and original *Star Wars* story briefly sidelined by one that loves to yell, "Do you remember THAT?"

Despite that major flaw, I still loved watching *The Book of Boba Fett* as a diehard *Star Wars* fan, and I'm gonna give it an overall score of 9/10. If you enjoyed *The Mandalorian*, this is definitely worth a watch.

Oh, and whatever you do, don't skip listening to the theme music at the end credits. I've heard it over fifty times now, and STILL can't get



Den of Geek

Subaru, 4

is the least reliable, but that is like getting a bronze in the Olympics.

The second reason that Subaru is so popular among outdoor enthusiasts is just how they advertise the cars. If you ever see a Subaru ad you'll notice people hiking, skiing, kayaking, and doing all those types of things.

Overall I have grown up with both my parents driving Subaru and I think that Subaru are the best brand no matter what, and many of the OWL staff agree.

Walkout, 1

a no-knock warrant was not justified.

Hundreds of students from schools across the Twin Cities area attended the walkout, flooding the entire block of the Governor's Residence. "It was awesome to see the power that young people have, people like us that are still in high school," said Maggie. "Just seeing how many people showed up and are fighting for change was refreshing to see how the youth are turning the tables. We're not gonna let this happen again. It inspired me and made

me want to continue what I've been doing and fight for this," said Maleah.

Maggie and Maleah stressed the importance of staying involved in the Black Lives Matter movement. "I would follow @mnteactivists to get information about more walkouts. I would visit George Floyd Square if you haven't yet—keep following them and supporting them," said Maggie. Maleah agreed. "I would definitely say that it's very helpful to check social media and see what petitions you can sign, what walkouts

are happening, what protests you can attend. Just talking to your peers [is also helpful]."

As for what's next, Maleah sees the walkout as part of an ongoing struggle. "Our voices are not going to be silenced. We're going to continue to speak out about this until change happens and until there's an end to police brutality. Amir Locke was not the first and we need change. I'm really glad that students are taking that lead," said Maleah.

T-wolves, 4

Edwards said "I feel like Black Jesus" - can influence him to take shots he shouldn't. Being smarter with the ball is the next step for Ant.

As always, Karl-Anthony Towns has been steady as a rock. I would argue he is the third best center in the league, behind MVP candidates Nikola Jokić, and Joel Embiid. KAT's improved defense is due to coach Chris Finch's changes in schemes, removing Towns from the drop-coverage where he was often eaten alive by quicker players, and having him more involved ahead



CBS Sports

The Timberwolves' Karl-Anthony Towns has been consistent this season, as predicted by Mintesinot.

of screens. In the past, Towns would sit down close to the basket and swipe at the ball instead of performing a solid contest. Again, I was right to praise Finch. We would be bottom-feeders if Ryan Saunders was still here.

Aside from our consistent great stars, Minnesota has a bounty of supporting characters who seem to be figuring it out. Forward Taurean Prince has been heating up as of late, with 23 points on 8/12 shooting against the Denver Nuggets, on the first of February. Guard Jaylen Nowell, a regular off the bench, has been incredible. In 2020, I would be

actively frustrated whenever he was on the court. Now, I trust him to score at all times. His improvement has been amazing.

The man, the myth, the legend: Jarred Vanderbilt. Vando has been incredible for us. The ridiculous ardor with which he attacks every loose ball, and every defensive assignment is reminiscent of NBA legend Dennis Rodman. Vanderbilt has recognized that for a player with his limitations offensively, the way he can earn minutes is to hustle like his life depends on it. Minnesota has long been without someone who does the dirty work, which we finally have in the "Vandolorian", as he has been dubbed.

Jaden McDaniels has proven to be our most switchable player, habitually assigned to the opponent's most dangerous scorer. A very good defender, J-Mac still fouls too much, at seventh in the NBA in fouls, while Towns is second. Anyhow, he still is trusted to match up against star players like James Harden, Kyrie Irving, and Paul George. While Jaden's shooting hasn't been as good as many hoped, I'm confident that he will figure it out.

While writing this article, I had some criticisms for some

players, like backup point guard Jordan McLaughlin, and most notably, Malik Beasley. Surprise, surprise, they have both stepped up big time since then. The other J-Mac has been a solid player coming off the bench, while Beasley has connected on a high percentage of his threes as of late. Malik's shot has been bad this season, so this is hopefully a sign that he's returning to form.

The NBA playoffs are looming, and the Timberwolves are poised to take the seventh spot, but could even move to sixth. While Minnesota is in no way going to make a deep run, the Wolves are a capable enough squad to give any of the top teams a run for their money. I could see a series against the Suns or Warriors going to six games. Hopefully MN doesn't find itself battling a healthy Lakers in the Play-in tournament, because we know LeBron James is not going to allow LA to be a Playoff no-show. While in his last years, he's shown he has enough in the tank for a run.

See you this May, when we're in the Playoffs and have upset the Phoenix Suns (I hope),

Mintesinot

River Phoenix, 5

phone call was later leaked to news stations. While Joaquin called 911, Rain proceeded to give Phoenix mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

When the ambulance arrived Phoenix was still breathing and Flea, the bassist of the Red Hot Chili Peppers and a friend of Phoenix, accompanied him to the hospital. Attempts to resuscitate Phoenix were unsuccessful. Phoenix died from a drug overdose caused by a combination of heroin and cocaine. Phoenix was commonly called the James Dean of his generation. He was pronounced dead at 1:51 am PST in the early morning of October 31, 1993, at the age of 23.

I think River Phoenix was a great actor and definitely one of the best of his generation. River Phoenix is one of my favorite actors because his acting seemed so natural and he seemed to put a lot of emotion into the roles he played as if they were real people. I think it's pretty ironic that people called River Phoenix the James Dean of his generation before he even died because they were both amazing actors and they both died young and



The Guardian

tragically.

I think he will continue to inspire people for years and years because he was such a great person. He was an animal rights and environmental activist, was vegan from the age of seven, and he was nominated for an Oscar in 1989 for his role in Running On Empty (1988) and when he lost to Kevin Kline he wasn't even upset, he went to congratulate Kline. Hollywood didn't seem to get to him like it has with other people in Hollywood. That's why I think he will live on forever. Not just because of his movies but because of who he was as a person. He really seemed to put his heart into everything he did and I think that's great.

Alice, 1

to work with in a bit, and be in a show again," she said. Eleventh grader Nick Streng, who will play Humpty Dumpty (he described his character as a "pretty dramatic guy"), shared this excitement, "[I] am looking forward to" just getting back into theater again because the audition alone reminded me

just how much I loved to do it in middle school. Just getting to act alongside people on stage, it's fun."

This production will include OWL theater veterans like Hazel as well as newcomers like Nick. "I used to be in a lot of plays and musicals in middle school before I came to OWL, and I always had a lot of fun doing that. After ninth

grade when I was in the Addams Family, I didn't do theater at all for a long time till now when I was put in an advanced theater class, so I thought I would try and audition," he said. With actors in grades 6 through 12, the spring production will show the versatility of the theater department.

Many students showed up to the play's auditions, which

were held in February, or applied to be a part of the design crew. Rebekah hopes to continue to see this enthusiasm for the theater department. When asked why she would recommend students to join she said, "It's the best. I would recommend it because being involved in a play is a way to get to know other people really, really well and closely,

while also exploring a role that you step into or as a designer taking on responsibilities that you'd have in real life; you get to do real things. Plus it's a great community, once you've been in a play, you've always been in a play." Hazel echoed this. "Everyone [in the theater department] works together really well, it's stressful but it's a really great way to form rela-

tionships," she said.

As for what the play will look like, students will have to come see for themselves. Performances will be held after school on the 27th, 28th, 29th of April. "Everybody come see the show! It's going to be at the end of April, and honestly the most fun thing is sharing it with the whole community," Rebekah said.

Mock trial, 1

said Hazel.

OWL has competed in mock trial for three years; two years ago they were 0-4, last year they were 1-3, but this year they were 3-1 and almost made it to regionals. "Winning our two defense cases was our goal. Winning a third

was huge," says math teacher and mock trial coach Tom Tushesk.

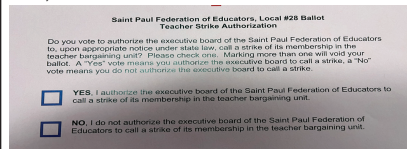
Most people enjoy almost every part of mock trial, and for some people, their favorite part is the bonds they get with their classmates. "There are a lot of inside jokes that help us make conversation

and the coach tells us stories from previous mock trials too," says eighth grader Maren Sletten. While there's plenty of things people like there are some things that are a bit harder. "Despite the conversation; being a 6-8th grader it is hard to communicate with the high schoolers because they

are kind of intimidating," says Maren.

When Tom was asked how he felt the season went overall, he said "Huge success." Congratulations to the OWL mock trial team, and good luck next year.

Strike, 1



Purple Press Staff Photo

Teachers voted using this ballot to strike on February 17th.

goal is to protect the future of public education in St. Paul for our students, families, and community."

While striking, teachers will not receive their wages, be able to do any work, check their district emails, or enter into any district buildings. If the strike continues into April, they will not receive insurance. School activities will be halted, aside from some varsity sports, decided on a case by case basis. Transportation to childcare, as well as free breakfasts and lunches will be offered at

various locations. If the strike lasts long enough, the district has reserved the right to extend the school year, possibly affecting graduation dates.

The last strike in Saint Paul occurred just two years ago, wrapping up after 3 days with teachers on the picket line—notably, just before the COVID-19 pandemic began to hit the United States.

It's possible that Saint Paul and Minneapolis Public Schools' teachers could be on strike at the same time. Both unions share similar demands.

Wordle, 3

science teacher Megan Hall says, "I really feel like doing Wordle alone is frightening so doing Wordle in crew can make you feel better."

Have you already done your Wordle for the day? Don't worry, there are many other versions of Wordle to try out, including but not limited to: Wordle unlimited, which is basically Wordle, but it provides endless word puzzles, swardle, where you try and guess a 4 letter swear word in a 4x4 box, SWordle, which is

Star Wars Wordle, and Wizarding Wordle, which is Harry Potter themed.

There are many tips to "beat" Wordle, or at least get the word of the day; this article will go over some of them. One is to start out with 3-4 anchor words that can help narrow down the word you are looking for, such as audio, crane, adieu or ouija. Another strategy is to use words with lots of vowels, such as crane, audio, adieu and ourie.



Purple Press Staff Photo

A student playing Wordle in class.

COVID-19, 2



Students held a masked, outdoor Homecoming this fall.

delicate balance: "One of the biggest things I wanted to do [while online] was maintain a connection with the kids, because part of school is about math, science, social studies but another part is about connecting and finding what has meaning to us. Eliminating or drawing back on those are the hardest things." Tim also gave an opinion, "I think my feelings about the measures being taken and how they lined up with my personal values have shifted greatly during the various phases of the pandemic."

The unpredictability of

COVID and school can also create a lot of stress and anxiety, and has implications for mental health. "With COVID cases happening like that [insert snap of a finger here], we could be staying home for a week out of nowhere. That uncertainty can be overwhelming, but I try to focus on the other things that are going well. For example, theater!" said 10th grader Mintesinot Sturm. Dave, meanwhile, gave a more private approach, "I have no personal feelings within this situation, I live a life where I have to give up

personal rights for the benefit of all others. And this [pointing to his mask] is just a symbol of that."

Reflecting on all we have worked through, it remains difficult to answer the best way to balance safety with tradition. One of the most important skills we've learned, intentionally or not, is how to adapt. "In essence," Dave concludes, "it's the process of doing things a little differently to meet the needs, but when we're allowed to; doing those special things again."

Upcoming Events*

*subject to change due to COVID-19

March 4: No School (Staff PD Day)

March 15: PTO Community Meeting

March 24: African American Family Culture Night

April 1: Last Day of Quarter 3

April 4-8: Spring Break

April 11: First Day of Quarter 4

April 13: Latinx Family Culture Night

April 19: PTO Community Meeting