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Purple Press

Volume #22, Issue #4 February 11th, 2022

OWL team is well balanced

Robotics team gaining popularity at OWL due to creativity, community

Willa Champion
Staff Writer

Students in grades 6 through 12 sit in a circle eating pop tarts and quickly the chocolate fudge flavor is completely gone. A younger student teaches the group to say hello in Hmong. “Nyob zoo,” stu-

dents turn to greet each other. It’s 3:15 on a Monday and a regular meeting for the Open Circuits has begun.

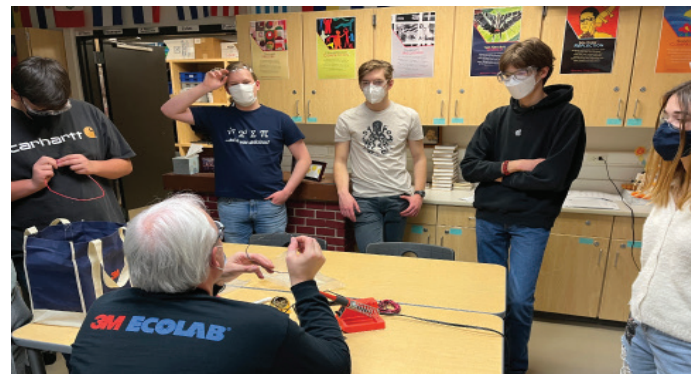
Coached by science teacher Megan Hall, the Open Circuits, OWL’s high school robotics team, is back this year despite the fact that the com-

petition season looks slightly different due to COVID-19, again. Unlike last year however, the team can look forward to competing at the North Star Regional tournament in Minneapolis in April.

“Combining the excitement of sport with the rigors of science and technology,” the FIRST robotics competition website about page reads. In

2012, Minnesota became the first state in the nation to host a state tournament for robotics teams. Since then, the sport’s popularity has grown significantly. An official activity a part of the Minnesota State High School League (MSHSL), robotics has 267 participating teams across the state. The premise of the sport is simple:

Robotics, 6



Leo Bickelhaupt

The robotics team learning how to solder, the process of melting two pieces of wire together.

Students walk out of class



Students watching the walkout organizers speaking (left), seniors Jackson Sheire, Mae Wrigley, and Maggie Morris showing their walkout signs (right).

Paloma Leone-Getten
Staff Writer

On January 18 at 1:00 PM, students at several SPPS schools walked out of class in support of better COVID-19 protocols being implemented district-wide, OWL included.

After returning to school in January with cases surging, many students expressed dis-

satisfaction about handling COVID from the district, and took matters into their own hands. “According to the CDC, the Omicron virus is more likely to spread than our previous strains. However, the Omicron virus is projected to pass in the next few weeks. This is why multiple school districts have gone remote for the next

two weeks or so. It seems to be that SPPS district is attempting to risk students’ lives for the sake of remaining open as the Omicron strand passes,” said 10th grader Avery Erb, one of the organizers of the walkout.

The students’ demands include shifting to distance learning temporarily — with support for students includ-

ing meals, IEP support, and keeping buildings open for those who need it — providing KN95 masks for staff and students, weekly testing for students, and biweekly testing for staff regardless of vaccination status, continuing contact tracing, and maintaining the 10-day isolation period for people who test positive for

COVID.

11th grader Maleah Young, and seniors Nora Verner and Sophia Govrik also helped organize the walkout. “I had been feeling frustrated with the situation since I thought that the district was endangering myself, other students, and our families. It felt like there

Walkout, 2



Nora Verner

Staffing shortages causing problems for all involved

Teachers out of class is yet another ‘new normal’

Meara Gunderson
Staff Writer

If your teacher was gone for multiple days at a time, you would be concerned, right? Well right now, it’s normal.

The main cause of all these staff shortages is the Omicron variant, which is spreading much faster than any other variant of COVID-19. Since so many teachers are getting infected, the teachers who are still here have to be substitutes during their prep hour, as well as other times.

Before Omicron, few teachers were missing, especially at the same time, but now over time a lot of teachers are gone, leaving students with substitutes and assignments on Schoology. Some classes take place in the cafeteria or theater when there aren’t enough subs or when there are too many students. “We were in the auditorium for three days in crew, and they told us we could do work or read,” said 9th grader Nick Christopherson from Caryl’s crew.

Many students feel as if the district is ignoring how bad Omicron is and that we should

Staffing, 4



Tom Totushek

11th graders Joe Gorton and Daniel Meekin, and 8th graders Pat Toohey and Henry Karre found the medallion on January 19th.

School-wide medallion hunt takes OWL by storm

Inspired by Winter Carnival, Tom invented his own version

Nick Christopherson
Staff Writer

All of a sudden, taped on the walls throughout the school, there was a strange piece of paper. It had a QR code at the bottom of the page and a cryptic message written in haiku that said, “A medallion hunt, within the walls of

our school? Scan code to get clues.” And the hunt was on.

The idea for this medallion hunt came from math teacher Tom Totushek, who was himself inspired by the annual medallion hunt that takes place during the Winter Carnival. During the Winter Carnival hunt, the Pioneer Press puts

out 12 clues over 12 days, which all point to the location of a medallion hidden somewhere in a Saint Paul public park. Whoever finds the medallion can be awarded up to \$10,000.

Obviously, \$10,000 is a pretty steep price, and instead of taking the money out of the school’s budget, Tom decided the prize for the winner of the

Medallion, 7



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.

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iPad distractions

How much should we worry about students who game during class, and what are the root causes?

Aanen Kulseth
Staff Writer

How many times have you been sitting in class as the teacher explains something, to see the kid next to you playing games on their iPad, not paying attention, and missing information. Personally, I see this a fair amount, and those same kids are often ones that have trouble in class. So the question is, why are students gaming on their iPads?

But first, here's some background on the situation. In an attempt to combat iPad misuse, some Teachers utilize Apple Classroom, an app that allows teachers to view student's screens to make sure that they are on task. Some students have found a way around this, by looking for the blue icon that shows if you're being monitored, and then switching their app to appear as if they were working the whole time. One key characteristic of Apple Classroom is that it's only on the teacher's iPads, not computers. This means that if teachers don't use their iPads then they can't make sure everyone is on task. Many teachers use computers because it is much faster and smoother to navigate, and allows them to use a projector, so they aren't able to utilize Apple Classroom.

In my mind, the main issue with iPad distraction is how it affects students' grades and learning. If a student is distracted on their iPad, it

is very likely that they aren't paying attention, and missing important information. "The solution involves the students understanding the benefits of their education versus the time wasted playing games. Education is a gift and until realized I'm not sure that there is a solution," said math teacher Damon Liberatore.

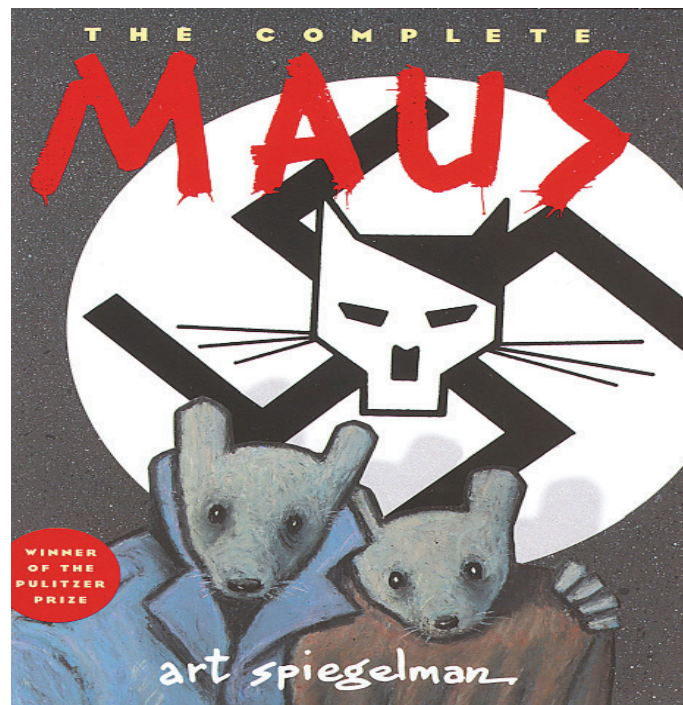
The other question is, why are students spending their class time this way? It seems non-beneficial to spend class missing information and worktime. "Behavior happens for a reason. We need to understand why students choose to do this before coming up with a solution. I suspect that students who misuse their iPads during class may not feel connected. They may not feel connected to what is being taught or to the people around them. I believe connection drives interest and interest drives engagement," said Spanish teacher Grant Boulanger.

I decided to talk to some other students to see their takes on the situation, and why they think students game during class. "My guess is because of boredom and apathy. Kids who play on their iPads probably have a hard time paying attention to classes just because they're not interested in what they're learning, so they turn to games, which they know will keep them interested," said 9th grader Nick Christopherson. This essentially means that students who are already having trouble pay-

ing attention in class and are bored, most likely will continue to not absorb information, and fall farther behind in class. However, not all students believe that iPad gaming is a bad thing. "I think students gaming during class is a good thing as long as it isn't disruptive, it can help relieve some stress from school," said 9th grader Theo Kimball.

In talking with students and teachers, I found myself thinking that students who are misusing their time and gaming are not connected with their work, and therefore have no interest in learning the subject. But, I also think that iPad gaming isn't always bad. If it's done in downtime it can help students relieve stress from school. Of course, most of the time it is disruptive to a student's learning, but in an ideal world it could work out for everyone.

I don't think the solution to iPad gaming misuse is just blocking the games. All this would do is make those students move on to something else. This has been happening for decades, with students doodling and being off task. Of course teachers are already working on this, but I think that putting effort into making lessons more interactive and interesting to everyone would curb students from gaming during class, and instead make them feel more connected, thus increasing their desire to learn.



Amazon

Maus by Art Spiegelman is a groundbreaking graphic novel, telling the story of a Holocaust survivor.

History of the graphic novel

The genre has come a long way since the 80's

Lana Stevens
Staff Writer

Graphic novels are a good way of getting pictures into a novel without turning it into a picture book. They can be sophisticated, or just lighthearted comedy. But what is the history behind these wonderful books, you ask? Well, you're in luck my friend, because I am about to tell you.

The early version of American graphic novels started in newspapers. Comic strips, sometimes called the "funnies" or the "funny pages", were (and still are today) a source of entertainment for the young and the old. They appeared in the late 19th century, creating weekly as well as daily short stories. They started making the stories into book form, starting with The Yellow Kid in 1895. Comics kept evolving, until novelists (probably) decided, "Hey, if they can make pictures with their funny stories, we can make our books graphic, too." (This quote is in no way historically accurate to what actually happened, although it conveys what I mean (hopefully)).

The very first book with the term 'graphic novel' was Eisner's A Contract with God, and Other Tenement Stories, published in 1978. Books like this encouraged more authors to make more "sophisticated comics", and the result was many so-called adult comics in the mid to late 1980's, with three major works: Frank Miller's The Dark Knight Returns (1986), Alan Moore's

Watchmen (1986-87), and the Pulitzer Prize-winning Maus (1980-86) by Art Spiegelman. Although these were a bit more mature, you couldn't really say they were much different from the newspaper comics. Yes, they were considered graphic novels, but really, they hadn't evolved too much from the original yet.

But when the 21st century came around, the age of graphic novels started booming. Kids began liking graphic novels, and they started putting them in schools. They could be easier, and more fun for children to read independently, and got some kids to learn to love reading, when before, they were reluctant. Some parents and teachers initially thought they weren't good, or very insightful books for their children and students to read. They wanted their children to read 'real books' instead of the graphic novels. But eventually, they got over it, and over the past decade, they have evolved. It's been a sort of golden period for graphic novels.

In OWL's library, the graphic novels section is the most popular. "I think they appeal to students because of the interplay between the words and the art," said OWL librarian Caryl Mousseaux. "Graphic novels expand our thinking about stories and how they are told. We learn how text/words work together with pictures/images to tell a story. Reading them can be challenging,

Graphic Novel, 3

LEGO League makes state



Sorcha Nix



Clara Raineri



Megan Hall



Megan Hall

Sorcha and Clara's team at the LEGO League tournament on Saturday, January 29th (above, left), Clara's team after the regional tournament (above, right), and Megan's team (below, left and below, right). Clara and Sorcha's team is advancing to state, and both of the other two teams won programming awards.

Walkout, 1

wasn't clear communication or direction from the district despite an obvious issue. I have been trying to find a way to voice my concern, and I was lucky enough that other SPPS students have been feeling the same way," said Nora. For Sophia, the cause had even more significance, as it was held on her first day back after testing positive. "After I got COVID, it

put things into perspective for me. I didn't have any resources to work from home, all I could do was check Schoology and my email. I just don't feel safe in school right now and I didn't like getting sick. My mom has an autoimmune disease and my dad got treated for cancer, so the last thing I wanted was to bring COVID home," said Sophia.

Nora estimated that about 70 students walked out of class

at OWL, with hundreds more doing so at schools including Highland Park and Harding. "I think it went pretty well. It felt good to see so many other students who share the same beliefs with me, Avery, Nora, and Sophia," said Maleah.

That evening, the school board's 5-4 vote kept schools in-person, with a 25% threshold of teachers — not including other staff members — to be out in order to go virtual.

"The current situation that we are in is unsustainable. To do nothing is abdicating the school district's responsibility to our community," said Avery. Maleah agreed. "It feels very overwhelming right now...I know that we didn't get what we wanted out of the protest, but I want to acknowledge that everyone feels this way right now and say that it will get better. Just stay safe right now."



Nora Verner

Students at the walkout on January 18th.

Senior Spotlight

Mae Wrigley



What are your pronouns?
She/her.

How many years have you been at OWL?
7 I think? Math in my head is hard.

What are your plans for next year?
I'm going to Wesleyan University in Connecticut.

What's been your favorite class in high school?
Human Geography with Luke because I felt like I was able to debate real world problems in a way that's comprehensive.

What extracurriculars are you involved in?
Swimming, theater, and History Day.

Favorite field work experience or school trip and why?
The 9th grade Camp St. Croix trip because I feel like our grade really bonded.

If you had a walk up song, what would it be?
Here Comes the Sun by The Beatles.

What are your pronouns?
He/him.

How tall are you?
5'2-3' ish.

What's your favorite class so far and why?
Math because my friends are in it.

Who's your favorite senior?
Josie.

Where do you think you're going to go for college?
Some art school in Minnesota.

What extracurriculars do you plan on getting involved in at OWL?
I'm already in archery and I might join ultimate.

That One Little Kid

Benjamin Diaz



An insider's view of a gymnastics meet

The logistics of the four events and how they are scored

Rayne Van Guilder
Staff Writer

Competing in gymnastics is a big commitment. I have three, three-hour practices a week and we train year round. We have six competitions a year, and also a state meet. This is my insider perspective on what a competition is like.

A competition starts with stretching and doing skills on the floor. Everybody competing warms up with easier skills on the floor before going into smaller teams to warm up the events. After stretching and floor warm up is done, teams go to events and warm up for 10 minutes, rotating until everyone has warmed up everything. Then, the teams get in lines to march in.

The announcer calls the teams names and we salute. Then the national anthem is played. Then teams go in groups on the floor to do our cheers, then we compete. Sometimes the meets are capital cup style, which means teams warm up and compete the events right after. If it is capital cup style we stretch,

do our skills on floor, march in, do cheers then go warm up and compete.

Here is a break down of the four disciplines:

Balance beams are 4 inches wide and 16.4 feet long. They are set at between 120 cm and 125 cm tall. If you fall off the beam during the routine, you have 30 seconds to re-mount. You have to use the whole beam and go up and down the beam 3 times. A beam routine has to have a mount, jumps, a flight skill, a tumble series, a down to beam, a full turn and a dismount.

Beam is scored based on the difficulty of skills, if you fall or wobble, if your legs are straight and your toes are pointed, and the landing on the dismount. Each fall off the beam is a point deduction. Beam is my least favorite because I get the most nervous, then I wobble and get deductions.

For the uneven bars you can do a low bar routine or a high bar routine. Bars are scored based on difficulty of skills, your form—like pointed toes and straight legs—and also whether you fall or not. A low

bar routine has less skills. A high bar routine needs a skill to get from the low bar to the high bar. The most common way for my level is a squat on.

A bar routine also has to have a dismount, my team does flyaways. The bars change settings so they can be higher or lower and closer or farther apart. The lower bar is usually set at around 5.5 feet, the high bar set at 8 feet, and the distance between the two bars set at 6 feet. Bars are scored by form and connection of skills. Bars are my second favorite for competing, because I know that even if I do badly during warm up, I'll still do fine during competition.

A floor routine can be up to 90 seconds. My routine is a minute and 17 seconds. Floor routines have three tumbling passes. Most commonly the first pass is a back pass, the second one is a front pass, and the third one is another back pass. Floor routines have jumps and dancing. They also have other skills that can help get you a better score. A lot of routines have aerials or standing back tucks in them.

Floor allows gymnasts to express their personality

through their music choice and dance. Gymnasts can also show their other talents in it, like flexibility or other skills. Floor is judged on the difficulty and form of the tumbling, jumps and other skills, and how the rest of the routine looks, like the dance. I rank floor third, because it normally goes pretty well for me. It just takes a lot more energy and there's a lot of time to be nervous while watching your teammates perform.

Vault can be set at whatever height works best for the gymnast. I normally put it at four or five feet. When competing, each gymnast gets two vaults, and they keep the highest score. Vault is judged by the difficulty of the skill, the form, and the landing. Taking a step on your landing is a deduction. Every gymnast has a preference on where they start on the runway. People on my team normally start between 45-60. I personally like to start at 50 because I think it gives me enough room to get up to speed before I hit the vault.

I think vault is my favorite to compete in, because it's done so fast and I know that even if I completely mess up the first one, I still have another chance.



Car and Driver

2016 Forester is a practical, good first car

An affordable and reliable family car with decent acceleration

Atticus Brooks-Babcock
Staff Writer

Have you ever seen someone play with a racing simulation steering wheel and wonder, is that really realistic? Me too. I have been playing racing games my whole life and last year I got a steering wheel controller. Recently I turned 15 which means I have my permit, so how does the game compare to real life?

The short answer is it's basically the same, but you can feel the G-force of moving. I think from all my time playing these games they really did transfer into real life or at least made me comfortable with the idea of driving.

Because I just got my permit, I can start writing and giving you real car reviews, the first one being my mom's 2016 Subaru Forester. Back in 2016, the Forester was around \$26,000 but now you could find one for around \$16,000. The Forester comes with a turbocharged 2.5 liter flat 4, which sounds fast but it only makes 170 horsepower. That engine is connected to a CVT

and that is connected to a symmetrical all wheel drive system that is split 50/50 front and back. For what the Forester is, it feels surprisingly quick and that's mostly due to Subaru's throttle mapping, it's a non-linear map which means if you press down on the pedal 40% it will give you 70% of the throttle and the rest kinda dies out.

As a first car it is good because it's easy to drive, fuel efficient (27 miles per gallon) and boring, however it does 0-60 in a better than expected but still slow 8 seconds. It is powerful enough for everyday driving and will never make you feel slower than most traffic, but as soon as you ask it to do anything sporty the CVT just lets the revs climb but not the speed, but due to it being winter and there being a decent amount of snow in parking lots, you can do some AWD donuts.

Overall the Forester is a great car and has some sort of soul that others don't, if you are looking for a used SUV this is a great choice for you I give it a 7/10.

Graphic Novel, 2

which is part of why we enjoy them.” Now that the books have become more popular, there are many new genres authors and illustrators are trying. “It's exciting to see this format expand; we're now seeing lots of genres published in this format, including memoirs, history, biography, and other informational texts,” said Caryl.

The Newbery Medal, in Caryl's words, “is awarded annually by the Association for Library Service to Children, a division of the American Library Association, to

the author of the most distinguished contribution to American literature for children.” Two years ago, in 2020, Jerry Craft's New Kid won the Newbery Medal making it the first graphic novel to receive that award. This year, St. Paul nominated the 2022 Read Brave book Trung Le Nguyen's The Magic Fish, which is the first ever Read Brave that is a graphic novel. In conclusion, I'd say graphic novels sure have come a long way from the little strips of pictures in the newspaper, and I'm sure they'll keep evolving and gaining popularity. Happy reading!

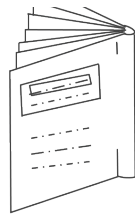


Artist's Edition Inbox

Will Eisner's book is the first recognized graphic novel.



Reviews ‘n’ stuff



Ted Lasso is top notch, feel-good TV series

“A worthy, funny, comfort show that I recommend to everyone”

Alexander Cowles
Staff Writer

Perhaps due to recent worldwide struggles, I’ve noticed an increase in television of nice characters and comforting vibes along with a decline of cynicism and rudeness especially in comedy. No show exemplifies that better than Ted Lasso.

Ted Lasso debuted in 2020 and is now on its second season. It can be watched on Apple TV. It was created by Bill Lawrence, Jason Sudekis, Brendan Hunt, and Joe Kelly. Ted Lasso features music by Marcus Mumford of Mumford and Sons. It is based on a commercial for NBS sports, which



IMDB

also stars Jason Sudekis.

Ted Lasso (Jason Sudekis) is hired as a coach by the owner of a Premier League football team, Rebecca Welton (Hannah Waddingham), in an attempt to make the team fail. After a messy divorce Rebecca believes this is the only way to get back at her ex-husband.

With Ted Lasso’s goofy mannerisms and extreme optimism, in addition to the fact he has only ever coached American football, it is assumed that he will unintentionally sabotage the team. However, Ted turns out to be wise and kind despite his dorkiness. He helps the team through their issues and conflict by focusing on the humans instead of winning. As Ted and Rebecca become friends she begins to feel guilt over her actions.

Other characters include Jamie Tartt (Phil Dunster), the arrogant young star, and Roy Kent (Brett Goldstein), an older soccer player with anger issues and a big heart. Jamie’s girlfriend, Keely Jones (Juno Temple) becomes a friend to Rebecca and the team. Leslie

Higgins, Rebecca’s right-hand man in her attempted sabotage, Nathan Shelly, the bullied kit manager, and Coach Beard, Ted Lasso’s deadpan sidekick and best friend round out the cast.

The show is always more interested in these characters than soccer. It’s not a sports show, it’s a comedy-drama that happens to take place on a soccer field. The show is reliant on the characters being interesting. The good news is that they are. Every single character in the ensemble becomes much more interesting than they appeared at the beginning. It’s difficult to pick a favorite character. I guarantee it won’t be someone you expected when you started watching.

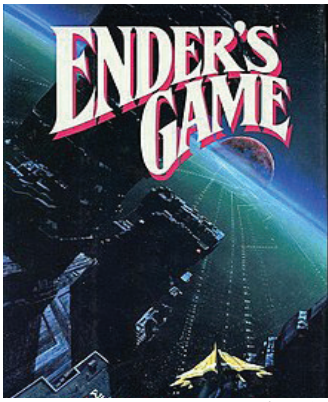
What makes Ted Lasso work is the genuine warmth and kindness reminiscent of another fantastic comedy: The Good Place. Both shows make a convincing argument for being a better person. The titular character’s compassion spreads to the other characters in a heartwarming way. It’s refreshing to see characters in a

comedy actually care for one another.

Often feel-good media goes too far and becomes corny. The kindness feels hollow and unrealistic when characters are just cartoonishly good. In my opinion, most successful heartwarming stories are not about being perfect and nice all the time, but instead just trying to be a better person than you were before and accepting you are human and will make mistakes. Ted Lasso does just that, allowing its characters to screw up and hurt people, then making them figure out how to deal with it.

However, some elements don’t completely work for me. I thought the first season took some time to find its footing, but it caught its stride after a few episodes. There are certainly funnier comedies out there, but I think that’s alright, as the show relies more on its drama with the humor adding to it. The only issue with the characterization is how fast the characters change. The 180-degree turns sometimes make character development feel unearned.

Minor issues aside, Ted Lasso is a worthy, funny, comfort show that I recommend to everyone.



Wikipedia

Ender’s Game is a classic sci-fi novel

A six-year old nerd becomes our best hope to save the world

Joseph Lodahl
Staff Writer

Ender Wiggin is a small, nerdy, bullied young kid who is asked to do the impossible: save the world.

Ender’s Game is a book written by Orson Scott Card, who is known for his science fiction works and also for being the only person to win both a Hugo Award and a Nebula Award in consecutive years.

The book takes place in 2118 AD (the future), with an ongoing war with an Alien race that the humans call “Buggers.” Earth itself is war torn as well, with the Bugger war being the only thing keeping an all out massacre to emerge. The government has turned to pretty much breeding people like animals to make the strongest/smarter people they can to fight the buggers. They use special monitors on the back of the children’s heads so the government can watch their every move, similar to government birds in today’s day and age.

Ender Wiggins is a genius, and he accelerated through classes, becoming the smallest and youngest kid in class consistently. He also has to wear his monitor for longer than the other kids. This leads to intense bullying at home from his brother, and at school. One day, three kids gang up on Ender, but he snaps and beats up the 3 kids. The government then decides to take Ender into a space training session

where he learns that schools in space are just like schools on earth: cliques and conflict. Since Ender is still one of the smallest kids, he’s forced to the outcast group on his team. The teams in battle school all participate in weekly fights to test their skills and rankings. As Ender rises through the ranks, the target on his back grows with no help from the adults, but the more he learns about the war, he realizes things on earth and in space are not exactly what they seem...

One of the strengths of this book is the great character development, as I felt like I was really watching someone grow up and start to think more about life and not just eradicating the buggers, along with the other characters who were affected by Ender leaving or being a mentor of some kind. Ender goes from a bullied, helpless, nerdy 6 year old, even being bullied by his own brother, forced to play games where he is beat up, to a strong, independent leader, as well as one of humanity’s last hopes to save the world, all at a young age.

Although, sometimes the plot seemed a bit slow for me, it was sometimes confusing with how earth was portrayed, and I didn’t always get the full picture of what was happening on it with the war that was being waged on earth. Even so, it was a very enjoyable read for me, and I recommend this book to sci-fi lovers and maybe people who like playing with the idea of morals in dire situations.

Ranking 2021 MCU additions

Nine different MCU shows and movies were released in 2021

Nick Streng
Staff Writer

For years on end, the Marvel Cinematic Universe has constantly continued its never-ending story - until the pause button was briefly pushed in 2020 due to COVID-19, and its streak of releasing two or three movies every single year was finally broken. So in 2021, Marvel went completely nuts and released movies and television shows one after another for the entire year. And being the geek I am, I watched, uh... all of them. So if you’re a fan of anything Marvel-related and wondering if there’s anything good that came out, here’s a



Disney+

worst-to-best ranking with what I’d recommend is worth a watch and what isn’t.

#9: What If...?

The MCU’s first animated miniseries, called What If, explored what would happen if significant events in previous MCU movies went differently, hence the “What If” title. Examples include Peggy Carter receiving the super-soldier serum instead of Steve Rogers in the first Captain America movie, or the Avengers never becoming a team. With all the creative ideas it had, this show could have led to some really interesting stories- but unfortunately nearly every episode’s storytelling potential was dragged down by a short runtime. Many of the alternate-timeline stories were far too ambitious to be told in 30 minutes, so each episode essentially speedruns its plot leaving no time for anything to be explored thoroughly, and that resulted in this show being a bit of a letdown in my opinion. Given that it requires prior knowledge of many other MCU movies but doesn’t manage to create anything better than them, I’d say you can skip

this one. Fortunately though, it was the only bad MCU entry of 2021, so the rest of this ranking is a lot more positive.

#8: Eternals

...well, maybe not quite yet.

Eternals wasn’t a bad movie, but had the same pacing problem as What If to a lesser extent. This movie introduced a new group of superpowered people called - can you guess? - the Eternals, who fought a group of CGI monsters called the Deviants. While that doesn’t sound very interesting, it actually ended up being a lot better than I expected. I’d



Art Station

recommend it if you’re looking for a Marvel movie on the more serious side. Its biggest problem, though, was that due to the fact that there are ten Eternals in total, the movie has



Blu-Ray.com

a lot of trouble balancing them all, despite being 2 hours and 30 minutes long. I kind of wish it had been a miniseries in order for the extra long runtime to allow all the characters to get plenty of focus. Just like....

#7: WandaVision

This show was the first MCU entry of the year, as well as the first miniseries, and it started the trend of taking underdeveloped characters from previous Marvel movies and spending an entire television series to make you care about them. Both Wanda Maximoff and Vision were restricted to side character roles in all their previous appearances, so this show puts them front and center in an engaging mystery story that kept me riveted through all nine episodes. Unfortunately

Staffing, 1_

already be in distance learning for everyone’s safety. “I think it would be possible for teachers to find a way to teach from home; having google meets with the class and posting helpful updates on Schoology,” said eighth grader Ellie Patton. While many students learn better in-person, they still recognize that the district’s current plan is unsafe and should be updated, even if they know that it could be hard for some people.

With so many teachers testing positive, many remaining teachers have had to step up and cover for their colleagues, even though it means missing their prep hour. “It has been very challenging to have so many teachers out over the last few weeks,” said school secretary Tammy Plaman.

MCU, 8



Lifestyle Asia Hong Kong

Shang-Chi film worth the hype

Elizabeth Hallanger
Staff Writer

After a lack of new Marvel content during 2020 and the beginning of the pandemic, the 4th phase came back stronger than ever with some of my favorite shows and movies Marvel has made so far. WandaVision, Falcon and the Winter Soldier, Loki, Black Widow, are all amazing pieces of Marvel media in their own right, however, they're all based mainly on a returning cast. The Marvel film I looked forward to the most when it was announced, and was arguably snubbed for promotion considering its quality, was Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings, the introduction of the titular Shang-Chi into the MCU. With the movie bringing a brand new storyline into the universe, it could either go very well, or I would be falling asleep in the theater. However, luckily, this movie definitely kept me awake this time.

The plot mainly follows Shang-Chi, now going by Shaun, who escaped his father, Xu Wenwu, and his Ten Rings organization at a young age, and now tries to live a mundane, regular life with his best friend, Katy. One day, Shang's father reappears, wanting both Shang and his long-lost sister, Xialing, to participate in his plan to open the door to an evil realm and free its dark creatures, which is being guarded by Shang's mothers' magical village. He believes that Shang's deceased mother is trapped behind the door, however, it's merely a trick by the realm, who know that with the powerful weapon he possesses, the Ten Rings, can free them. Now Shang, along with Katy and his sister, has to find the village and stop Wenwu before it's too late.

Overall, I really enjoyed the plot of this movie, but I did have a few issues. I loved the magical realism in the story. The mother and her realm and village, Shang's whole backstory, his relationship with his father, the action and adventure, the epic end battle was really good. However, the movie seems to suffer from too much of everything at once. There's so much good material, but many times it either doesn't seem to mesh together, or doesn't have enough time to really settle in. Despite this, however, I thought Shang's story was solid.

Speaking of our protagonist, Shang-Chi, I really enjoyed his character in this film. His arc about learning to let go of his father's influence and embrace both sides of his fam-

ily was really interesting, and pretty unique compared to the other previous Marvel heroes. I also liked how the movie began with Shang already knowing how to fight, there's a plethora of movies where the character has to train and learn how to fight throughout the story, so this movie's ability to get right into the action was sort of refreshing, and gave more time to focus on character development. I thought his sister, Xialing, was such a cool and strong character, and I loved watching her and Shang reconnect and grow from being fairly distant, to close once more. I also absolutely loved Katy. Watching her grow from a comedic best friend to a warrior and an archer was so fun, and she and Shang had some amazing chemistry.

I also thought the movie had some really good comedy. The timing was always on-point, and some jokes had me genuinely stifling laughter in the movie theater. The only part that I wasn't so fond of was the actor in Iron Man 3-turned-comic-relief sidekick and his weird bird-nugget creature. I felt like he sort of came out of nowhere and I think the movie would have probably been just fine without his inclusion.

Marvel's visuals in this film are absolutely on point, and I thought they were really solid. The movie's Chinese cultural influences shine through, whether it was in the costumes, sets, or mythology, and add so much extra depth to the movie. I also absolutely loved the different sets that the fights took place on. Whether it was the inside of a moving city bus, the scaffolding on the outside of a neon skyscraper, or a magical lake, they were all unique, which made each of the fights highly memorable. In fact, the fight at the end was one of the most exciting, unique and visually interesting fights I think I've seen in a Marvel film. The introduction of the majestic guardian dragon, the way the blue and orange ten rings clashed with one another, and the amazing martial arts choreography made for not only a comprehensible fight, but a visually interesting one too.

Overall, I loved Shang-Chi. While it may have had a few bumps along the road, it was still really a solid Marvel film with a compelling plot, fun characters, great comedy, and epic fights. I'd give the film an overall 8.5/10, and would highly recommend this one if you're a big superhero fan, or are just looking for a generally good movie to watch.

How can the Minnesota Vikings bounce back next year?

A new coaching staff is probably a good start

Danny Hobday
Staff Writer

On January 2nd, the Vikings lost to the Green Bay Packers 37-10 and were officially eliminated from the playoffs. This game marked the end of the Mike Zimmer era. But what went into that end and what can they do to move forward and push for the playoffs next year? Contracts, coaching, free agency, and the draft. We need to nail it all for a great next year. Here's my opinion on what we should do for all.

Let's start off by looking at the coaching staff, who needs to leave, and who we need to keep. It comes down to 2 main coaches: Mike Zimmer (head coach who's now been fired) and Klint Kubiak (offensive coordinator). Zimmer was hired for the 2014 season and started off alright. He helped build the team up from missing the playoffs of the past years. The Vikings were trending in a positive direction and even got to the NFC championship. But then suddenly they went from the NFC championship to missing the playoffs the following year. Then they lost in the first round the year after and this year will be the second consecutive year we miss it. That's why the Vikings just had to kick him to the curb.

We couldn't just keep waiting and waiting until he got us back in the playoffs because it probably just wouldn't have happened. We now should interview and hopefully hire

Eric Bieniemy, the offensive coordinator for the Chiefs. He's been great with Tyreek Hill (wide receiver), Travis Kelce (tight end), and Patrick Mahomes (quarterback) and would work great with Justin Jefferson.

Now Klint Kubiak is currently calling plays for the Vikings, but I'd say if he wants to stay he would have to take a break from play calling and let Bieniemy try it out for a bit. If he refuses then I'd fire him. If Bieniemy does well then we keep him for calling plays, but if it doesn't work out we go back to Kubiak. Kubiak has just made too many questionable calls in crucial moments.

Onto free agency, we really can't do much because we are currently -11 million dollars in cap space. I think we need to resign Patrick Peterson for another 1 year deal. Currently we are paying him \$8 million but if we can keep him at that for next year that would be great for the salary cap. That puts us at -19 million so we need to restructure or cut some players. We NEED to get rid of Kirk Cousins. He's currently on a contract that says we would have to pay him 35 million next year minimum and could get up to 45. That's an outrageous amount of money for someone who's not doing much for us. We need to get rid of his contract ASAP.

I'd say we look to trade him first. If Russell Wilson is out of Seattle next year we could offer cousins, a couple of firsts and a third round pick. If that

doesn't work out, target Derrick Carr from the Raiders. If we can offer around the same package, or maybe a little less, and get Carr that would be massive for us. Carr brings a great deep ball like Wilson and great decision making. Carr is doing great things in Oakland where he has almost no help at wide receiver. And finally, if that doesn't work either and our only option was moving forward with Kirk then we would need to restructure his contract. In no way can we go into next year paying Kirk 35 million dollars.

Then comes the NFL draft, taking place on April 28th this year, and we have the 12th overall pick. We need lots of help on our offensive line and at defensive back. In the first round we should aim to draft a cornerback. Andrew Booth Jr. from Clemson and Ahmad "Sauce" Gardner from Cincinnati are both projected to go around then. Gardner is one of my favorite prospects for this year. He's played 3 years at Cincinnati and never given up a touchdown. That's over 1,100 snaps he's played and NEVER allowed a single touchdown.

A lot of doubters said he's never played actual competi-

tion, but he squared up against one of the top receivers in the nation and only allowed 60 yards. This is the guy killing other corners for hundreds of yards and multiple touchdowns a game. If we can get Gardner that would be the best scenario. If he's somehow overlooked by the Vikings, then go pick Booth.

The second round in my opinion is when we start taking offensive linemen. If we can get Trevor Penning from the University of Northern Iowa, or Darian Kinnard from Kentucky in the second, and Jaxon Kirkland from Washington in the third, then we'd have better depth at both guard and tackle. After that we could go receiver but I wouldn't be surprised if the Vikings drafted a receiver earlier.

Overall we just need to utilize our star players. Dalvin Cook, Justin Jefferson and Adam Thielen will certainly light it up on offense with the right coach/play caller. The future is very bright for the Vikings on defense with Anthony Barr and Erick Kendrick leading the way at linebacker, and with Sauce, our secondary would certainly take a leap next season.



Bleeding Green Nation

According to Danny, the big step in contending next year is getting rid of Vikings quarterback Kirk Cousins.

The effects of travel bans

South Africa lost millions per day due to COVID restrictions

Claire Hulson
Staff Writer

If you had vital information about a worldwide pandemic that has cost over 5 million lives, wouldn't you share it?

Well, that's just what South Africa did with the new Omicron variant. When Omicron was first detected in Botswana, SA, their government alerted the rest of the world and as a result, the EU, UK and US issued travel bans without warning that shut down South Afri-

ca from the rest of the world, putting them on the bridge of an economic breakdown.

These travel bans are simply unnecessary and an over-reaction to a problem that had very simple solutions. If this happens in the future do you really think that other countries' governments that need tourism to stay afloat are going to go straight to inform people about a new deadly virus?

Now even though I am against these bans, I can see



Elizabeth Hallanger

The pandemic has led to travel restrictions across the world, especially recently, with the emergence of the Omicron variant.

why they had to do something, but these do more harm than good in the long run because of how many other options they had, like just increasing testing or mandatory vaccination to enter or leave the US, which instead of people not knowing if they have COVID, would inform them and let people leave their own country and in the end, help SA track more cases and be safer in general.

Many European countries and the US have made bans against South Africa and neighboring countries, but for the US this ban only applies to people from South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, Mozambique, and Malawi (some of which had 0 cases of Omicron.) If you are an American citizen you can come right back from South Africa with only a negative COVID test. Now why people from South Africa that aren't US citizens can't also take a COVID test and go to the US is still a mystery that by the looks of it will simply go unanswered. "I've decided that we're going to be cautious," Biden said, as if in-

creased screening at points of entry, or longer quarantine periods, weren't cautious enough options.

On December 31 Biden lifted these bans but the impact that was left was undeniable. One industry estimated that South Africa lost 26 million rand (\$1.6m USD) for every day it was on the UK's ban list, and after a month they lost roughly 49.6 million which doesn't begin to compare to the billions lost in the local economy like coffee shops, bars, restaurants and especially tourism sites. For instance, the Mziki Safari Lodge is in South Africa who get almost all of their income from tourists. It is undoubtedly going to affect the way countries react to new variants.

When South Africa informed the world that they found a new mutated and dangerous variant the reaction should have been to get all the world's top scientists to start working on a booster vaccine, like South Africa, instead of cutting them off from people that could have helped move the Omicron vaccine forward.



Pokemon Go Live

Tips for playing Pokemon Go

The game that took the US by storm in 2016 is still going strong in 2022

Nina LaFerla
Staff Writer

Pokémon Go was released on July 6, 2016, and gained popularity fast. The object of the game is to walk around and catch as many different kinds of Pokémon as you can. After a while, the media stopped paying attention to it, but there are still reportedly over 800,000 daily active players in the U.S.

It doesn't take much to be good at Pokémon Go, all you have to do is get good at battling and get strong Pokémon. Luckily, this article is all about learning the basics.

There are three teams to choose from; Valor (red), Instinct (yellow), or Mystic (blue). After choosing your team, you can battle other team gyms and claim them as your own. If you see a gym with your team already, you can place your Pokémon in the gym (if it isn't already full). You can change teams with a medallion, but it does cost 1,000 pokecoins.

"If possible, be online and active for at least five minutes a day and collect 'stardust' so you can do larger trades with friends," said 8th grader August Cheney. "Remember to send gifts to friends every-

day, it can boost your friendship level to give you perks in game."

One of the best places to hunt for Pokémon in the Twin Cities area is the Mall Of America, where there are lots of gyms where you can battle in. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts is also a great place to catch Pokémon. Other popular spots in Minneapolis-St. Paul includes Rice Park, in downtown St. Paul, and the Minnesota Zoo, where rare Pokémon have been known to spawn.

Each Pokémon type has strengths and weaknesses, for example water type Pokémon are strong against ground, rock, and fire types. The key is to use Pokémon that are strong against your opponent.

Low on pokeballs? Buy some with coins! Although earning coins isn't easy, there are other ways than just buying them from the shop. Putting Pokémon in gyms can earn you coins, once the Pokémon is knocked out of the gym if it has been in the gym longer than a day you will earn 50 coins. For every five minutes the Pokémon is in the gym you will earn two coins. Unfortunately you can only get 50 coins a day, you can also only put one of your own Pokémon in each gym at a time. Coins can get you accessories for your avatar, and items you can use in game, such as pokeballs, remote raid passes, incense, and much more.

The Sun and Her Flowers is ‘humbling and comforting’

Rupi Kaur’s second book centers around a women’s life experiences

Nora Crosby
Staff Writer

Healing and self discovery are not one-dimensional. We all make and have our own decisions, reactions, and emotions within the journey to peace; not perfection. Growth, as well as defeat, are necessary to finding yourself within the experiences of you and your world. The Sun and Her Flowers, through it's simplistic honesty, allowed me to not only question but answer and accept how I fit into the pages of my own. "This is the recipe of life, said my mother; as she held me in her arms as I wept. Think of those flowers you plant in the garden each year. They will teach you that people too must wilt, fall, root,



Wikipedia

rise, in order to bloom."

The Sun and Her Flowers was written and illustrated by Ruphi Kaur and published in 2017. Kaur was born in India yet moved to Canada at a young age due to safety precautions. She began creating poetry, art, and photography at a young age. Her first book, Milk and Honey, was released in 2014. The Sun and Her Flowers is her second, a poten-

tial sequel to her first.

The themes and events within this story are loosely connected to the circumstances and feelings of Kaur herself. The story of her own experience with immigration, trauma, and healing are faintly reflected back through the phrases and sketches included. The Sun and her Flowers, a book of poetry, is broken up into five sections; wilt, fall, root, rise, and bloom. The book also includes sketches that illustrate the feelings and actions tied to each poem.

The Sun and Her Flowers is the story of a woman, potentially Kaur herself, who is learning to love herself and heal despite the negative aspects, events, and emotions within her life. The book's five sections; Wilt, Fall, Root, Rise, and Bloom, reflect not only the cycle of a flower but the cycle of the woman's growth process. As she develops an understanding and acceptance towards her worth, the woman also contemplates the role she holds in her own story.

The first section, Wilt, discusses the toxic relationship the woman just escaped from and the taboo subject of still "feeling" for your abuser. She struggles to come to terms with the freedom and individuality she now possesses. In the second section, Fall, the woman reflects upon the trauma she experiences from childhood assault and how those attacks still affect her thoughts, actions, and words as an adult. She contemplates how the negative people throughout her life have impacted the person she is today.

In the third section, Root, the woman writes about her connection to immigration and the culture she feels has

been lost through hate. She discusses the impact violence had on her parents and how their emotional response has affected her.

In the fourth section, Rise, the woman finds love and safety with a new partner by developing a healthy relationship with her own mind, body, and soul. She learns how to express her personal femininity despite societal and internal pressures. In the fifth section, Bloom, the woman reaches the highest point in her journey of self discovery and love, through which she is able to fully embrace the uniqueness of herself.

One aspect of this book that really projected itself to me was the writing style; the simplistic phrases, capitalization and punctuation techniques, and sketches. The majority of the poems were simple but provided great meaning. Short phrases dominated long sentences, allowing for a more universal and heartfelt understating. Additionally, little to no words were capitalized within each poem and the only punctuation included were periods. Having a more blunt and clear format helped me find a connection with each piece.

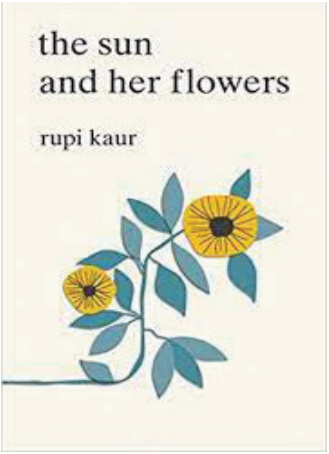
There were also many sketches illustrating the topics of each poem. Having a visual of the author's thoughts provided a stronger understating of her feelings and intense emotion to each piece. Personally, I found that reading this book was similar to having a conversation. Kaur's writing style prompts the reader to engage in the poetry and both internally and externally answer the questions that arise.

Another feature of this story that had an impact on my point of view was how the plot

progression and character development intertwined. As the story moves forward, through the exposition up to the climax and down to the resolution, the woman goes through her own experiences and emotions similar to a plot diagram. Seeing how the character impacted the plot instead of the plot impacting the character allowed for a more sincere story.

Each section; Wilt, Fall, Root, Rise, and Bloom, also has a unique way of portraying the woman's feelings based on the plot development. The woman's journey within the story isn't straightforward; she didn't automatically go from sad to happy. Yet seeing how the character's emotional fluctuation wasn't portrayed as a negative thing made me appreciate the plot.

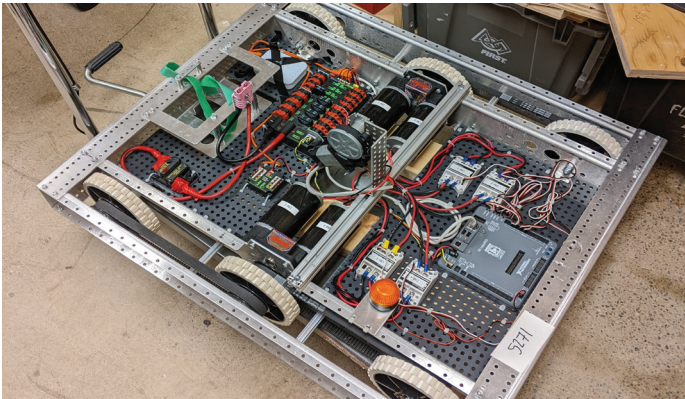
Reading this story was not only an activity, but an experience that I found slightly intimidating. My own feelings were reflected back through the pages, which was both humbling and comforting. The most important lesson I've learned, or more deeply understand, from this book is that all creatures revolve around a cycle. A rotation of joy and sorrow and growth and defeat. That eventually, or at least hopefully, leads to love and healing; for both yourself, others, and the world. "There is nothing left to worry about sun and her flowers are here."



Goodreads

Robotics, 1

teams build robots with batteries, wheels, and soldered wires. They then program them to complete a series of challenges, on their own or when driven with a pre-coded joystick, in a head-to-head setting with another team. Every year in January, FIRST, the international parent organization of robotics that organizes other STEM based competitions for youth including LEGO League, releases a new challenge, including the layout of the playing



Nick Streng

The team is taking apart this robot to build a new one to use for their upcoming game.

field (typically 26' by 52') and a rule manual.

This year's challenge, which focuses on transportation, involves collecting dodgeballs that have been scattered across the playing field and dispensing them in a center bin. For additional points, teams can also use an arm attachment to lift their robot onto and remain suspended from a series of monkey bars that vary in height.

The Open Circuits was previously headed by science

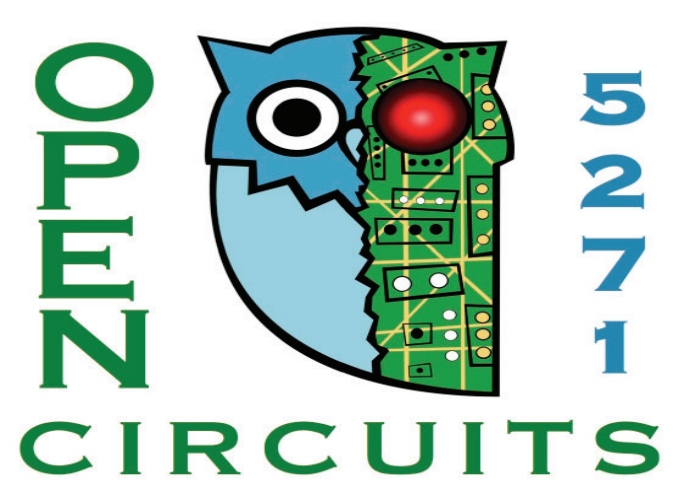
teacher Rebecca Palmer. Prior to coaching, Megan didn't have any experience with robotics but began because of her son's interest in LEGO League, a competition for middle schoolers that involves programming small robots to complete challenges on a game board. "My son really enjoyed LEGO League and was planning on coming to OWL. I knew that OWL's LEGO League and FIRST Robotics Competition program would be important to him. Rebecca had decided to retire from coaching the Open Circuits, so OWL needed a coach. No one else was up for it, so I stepped up," she said.

Robotics offers an opportunity for students to learn multiple skills including coding in java, engineering, team building, and mentoring younger students. Megan is looking forward to seeing these skills on display this season. "I'm excited to see students discover and develop whatever talents they enjoy. There's really no

bad area for skill developing in Robotics. What really blows my mind is when students get confident in a skill area and start leading younger students to get stuff done, like getting the chassis built, coding programs, soldering electrical components."

For many teams across the state, robotics is mainly male dominated. However this isn't the case at OWL. "I really love that our team is super gender-inclusive. Lots of FRC (FIRST Robotics Competition) teams are majority male or all male. The Open Circuits has equitable gender representation, with female, male, and non-binary team members. When we walk into an event, it's like an automatic mic drop - look at us, we've got gender diversity. I love it," Megan said.

Eleventh grader Nick Streng has been on the Open Circuits since 9th grade. Originally he joined to spend more time with his friends but has found he enjoys a lot of the things he has learned with the



team. "This season specifically I am hoping we can go to a competition since that has sort of been on hold since I was in 9th grade," Nick said. Luckily, it looks like the team will be able to showcase their work this year at a tournament over spring break in Minneapolis. Originally the team hoped to compete at a regional tournament in Duluth, however due to COVID concerns this wasn't able to happen.

The Open Circuits practice after school on Mondays and

Wednesdays in conjunction with the middle school LEGO league team. "We always have interesting projects to work on, but it's a much more relaxed environment than the classroom, so we have time to get to know each other and have fun," Megan said of the team. The Open Circuits is excited to continue to grow in the coming years as the sport becomes more popular in Minnesota—the state that now has more robotics teams than hockey teams.



Tom Totushek

The medallion was found after over a week of clues.

OWL medallion hunt would be given a much more reasonable \$10 Target gift card.

Over winter break, he and his daughter Kathryn came into school for about an hour to find a good hiding place. After a little bit of searching, they found it. On top of a door closer in a second floor stairway, right next to the giant posters of Barack Obama and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Even though they had found a good place to hide the medallion, they needed to clean the spot thoroughly because it was very dirty. Once they had cleaned off the spot, they taped the medallion up, and then it was time to start writing the clues.

The hints released by the Pioneer Press for the Winter Carnival hunt are written in rhyming couplets, and Tom wanted to do a similar fun style by writing all the clues for this medallion hunt in haiku.

Technically, the first clue was on the sheet of paper that I mentioned earlier, but that was more of an introductory one. The real first clue was revealed when you scanned the QR code. It said, “Not in our classrooms, nor is a key needed, come find the plastic OWL.” This code revealed that the medallion was not in

“Not in our classrooms Nor is a key needed, come Find the plastic OWL” - Day 1 clue

a class or another room that might be locked during the school day, but instead in the halls. The second part of the clue was telling the students exactly what to look for, as the medallion was a piece of plastic cut out to look like an owl. But some students, including myself, thought that it was a hint to the medallion’s location, and not to what it actually physically was. One of my friends came to the conclusion that it was talking about the LEGO owl in a display case on the second floor, which was actually pretty close to where the medallion was.

The second clue revealed that the medallion was either on the first or second floor, but not on the third, as it was “too close to Tom.” This clue eliminated an entire floor of the school, but there were still a lot of places that the medallion could have been, so it wasn’t giving too much away.

The third clue said, “Eat a good breakfast? Never Eat Soggy Waffles! But I like them soggy.” Many people immediately recognized the “Never

Eat Soggy Waffles” as the directions on the compass, and the comment about liking them soggy meant that the medallion was in the southern part of the school, but the first part referred to breakfast, which personally made me think about the cafeteria. This still didn’t narrow the search area that much.

The fourth clue was definitely the one that stumped a lot of people. It said, “I like clean places, but Kathryn did me dirty. Can you not see me?” This clue was written because of how dirty the hiding place was when Tom and Kathryn had first found it. At this point in the search, it was the most vague hint that we had gotten so far. It pointed to the medallion being somewhere dirty, but that wasn’t enough to pinpoint a location.

The fifth clue gave us the most information about the location of the medallion. It said, “Salvation will come, that is my hope anyway. I’ll dream all weekend.” Many people correctly guessed that the words “salvation” and “dream” were references to Martin Luther King, and that the word “hope” was a reference to Obama, as that was his campaign slogan. With this clue, the hunters had narrowed the location down to the stairway on the second floor.

The sixth clue said, “The tape suffocates, but keeps me suspended high. At least I’m still clean.” This clue pointed out that the medallion was covered in tape and up someplace high. The third part of the clue calls back to clue four. “After listening to people talk about the clues,” Tom said, “it became clear that the ‘Kathryn did me dirty’ portion of that clue was not clear, so we wanted to reference again the clean/dirty difference that was

important to finding the medallion.”

The seventh clue said, “Reach for me, reach high. I am easier to find, once the door is closed.” This clue was the most direct out of any of them. It told people that they needed to reach up high, and that it had something to do with the door, but it still took the hunters a while to find it. Tom was surprised about this. “After the first five clues we figured people would find it. Writing the final two clues was easy because we basically thought we were saying ‘go here and do this’ and even then I guess it wasn’t clear. We didn’t know what the eighth clue would be because we wanted to avoid a race where the first person to see the clue would find the medallion.”

This seventh clue ended up being the final one before the medallion was found very suddenly.

For my third period class on January 19th, I had, coincidentally, Newspaper. I walked into the class and realized that I had no idea what I was going

to do my next story on, when I heard some people talking behind me. I looked over my shoulder and saw eighth graders Henry Karre and Pat Toohey talking to Leo, who is the man responsible for this mess of a newspaper. The two students were proposing an idea for a story if they could find the medallion. All of a sudden, I had the idea for this story. I walked over to them and told them that if they found it, I would interview them for my story. Leo gave them permission to go and search for it, and they were off. A surprisingly short time later, they came running back into the class claiming that it had been found. I ran after them and it was indeed true.

11th grader Joe Gorton had found the medallion and pulled it down from its hiding place, but not without some

“Salvation will come That is my hope anyway I’ll dream all weekend” - Day 5 clue

help. “Since I happened to be present when the group that found it was in the space, I told them to close the door and reach,” Tom recalled. “Joe reached and touched it but didn’t realize it. I told him to reach out again and he realized what he felt.” Joe himself was excited but modest about the find. “Even though I technically found it, a lot of people helped with looking and understanding clues so I can’t take the majority of the credit,” He said. “I was just pretty excited to have finally figured out where it was, although it was a little disappointing that our whole group wasn’t there.” Joe wasn’t the only one feeling excited. “Honestly, like, I can’t believe that I actually was here [when it was found],” said Henry. “There were a lot of people around so everybody was looking, and it was like ‘woah,’” Pat remembered.

The main four who were a part of the winning search party consisted of Henry, Pat, Joe, and another 11th grader, Daniel Meekin. When asked about which clues helped the most, Joe said the MLK one definitely narrowed the search area a ton, and both he and Henry agreed that the seventh clue, about the door, ultimately led them to where it was.

Now that it had finally been found, the reward was in or-

“Reach for me, reach high I am easier to find Once the door is closed” - Day 7 clue

der, right? Well, actually, Joe had a different plan in mind. “I wasn’t actually looking for the reward, I intended to find the medallion and then just put it back,” he said. “So when a bunch of people saw me find it and I couldn’t put it back, I just told Tom to keep it.” He and Tom agreed that the money would be spent on snacks for the Mock Trial. “That dude can

eat,” Tom said.

When asked if they think they deserved bragging rights, Henry and Pat were quick to answer. “Yes,” Henry said, without hesitation. “As long as everybody else brags, yes,” said Pat.

Although Joe and the others actually found the medallion, other people were certainly trying very hard. Two of those people were science teacher Sorchia Nix and senior Josie Gibson. Sorchia was very excited to take on the competition and find the medallion. “I looked a lot,” she said. “My crew and I looked together and Rebecca and I spent some of our prep time (okay, a lot of it) looking too.” One day while I was in her Biology class, Sorchia made sure we finished up our work and then let the whole class go and search for it for the rest of the period. She

even did a whole crew “project” that Tom found hilarious. “My crew thought the solution might have something to do with Kathryn, so we started writing down what we knew about her,” Sorchia said. “It was intended to look like a concept map... but it may have looked more like a murder suspect board from a tv show.”

Sorchia enlisted the help of Josie, who also ended up getting really invested in the hunt. “It was Sorchia. It all goes back to Sorchia,” Josie said. “She pulled me out of class to go look for the medallion.” Josie spent literally an entire day just searching around the school for it. “I dug through the lost and found. I looked like a scavenger.” Her and Sorchia even checked in some overhead lights, because they thought they saw something, but it turned out to just be a piece of cardboard. On the day that the medallion was found, Josie wasn’t at school, so she felt a little cheated by it. “I thought it was a little unfair,” she said.

Overall, it seems that OWL’s first ever medallion hunt was a success. It gave teachers and students a fun thing to do at school, and a lot of people worked together to find it. “It was great to do something light-hearted during such a tough year,” Sorchia said. Tom

has also confirmed that there will be more fun events coming up in the future. “We are thinking about how we can do an Amazing Race style game later in the school year, but it isn’t clear how we could get that to work,” he said. “We are cogitating on it. We will do the Medallion Hunt again next year for sure.” Well I am certainly looking forward to it.



Elizabeth Hallanger

The impact of toxic gamers

Sir Nakhai Guy-Cornelius
Staff Writer

Have you ever wanted to play an online game solo or with friends and get a match with a toxic player that ruins the game? By trash talking, being sexist, being inappropriate, abusing something in the game, or even tracking IPs. It can ruin the experience. Sometimes the best option is just to leave the game or play a different one or just stop playing games for that day.

I have played lots of GTA 5 and I notice in the time I have played it appeared that people had something wrong with them. In GTA 5 online, there are a bunch of people who will destroy stuff they spent a bunch of in-game money on and a bunch of their time on for no reason. Also there are people that will abuse stuff in the game to ruin it for everyone and they will also send toxic messages. It’s called Sadism, that is the tendency to derive pleasure, especially sexual gratification, from inflicting pain, suffering, or humiliation on others. I’m not really sure how they get this way or if they are sadist in real life too, but so far it’s one of the best ways to explain why most toxic people do what they do.

Not every community or gamer is toxic, but I have noticed that depending on what

the game is like it can attract different people. Also I think people have different mindsets when it comes to what game they’re playing. Let’s say you play a car game and lose a race, there’s less chances of a person being mean to you if you lose in a shooter or sports game. And I think this is like that because overall most gamers take shooter and sports more seriously than they do a car game.

One factor behind what makes gamers more toxic than a person you would meet in real life is that you are invisible and they are also invisible. When they are being toxic to people they won’t see a full human reaction to their actions that they would see in real life. They just see an avatar and it’s kinda hard to be empathetic to an avatar. Their anonymity means not much will be done either and they can cyberbully all they want without hurting their real life reputation.

People when playing a video game think less about what they are doing than they would in real life, so there seems to be a higher chance they will step out of line and yell at someone. Also, while not thinking, they tend to a lot just say it’s just :a game” to get away with cyberbullying without feeling bad, and try to convince the other person they’re taking it too seriously.

The 5 worst TikTok trends of 2021

The reels-style app features trends regularly, some of which are unsafe for users

August Cheney
Staff Writer

Returning back to school in September you might have noticed that some of the soap dispensers in the bathrooms had been stolen within the first couple of weeks of returning to school. This is one of the many bad TikTok trends that has been going on around the nation.

This article will feature the top five worst TikTok trends, and an introduction to what you need to know about TikTok and its issues with the cur-

rent trends users have made.

1. With TikTok overtaking Google as the most popular site in 2021, the Chinese video-sharing platform community unsurprisingly made some ridiculous trends go ‘viral’. Now, nearly every app is attempting to transition into TikTok’s idea of ‘reels’ but, why wouldn’t they? In September, the social media app claimed that a whopping one billion users turn to TikTok each month, creating all these trends. Any TikTok viewer, or creator, would be able to recognize these 2021 TikTok trends right off the bat, from good to bad.

2. The “shoot your school” trend, it’s pretty clear why this one is in the number one spot. The TikTok trend had supposedly encouraged students to commit violence to their schools on December 17.



ly though, the ending leaves a lot to be desired, even without the ridiculous expectations set by the plethora of fan theories surrounding this show. So if you decide to watch this, don't get your expectations too high for the finale, but the ride there is extremely enjoyable.

#6: Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings

Shang-Chi was perhaps the most important Marvel movie this year, being the first one to have an Asian lead. Simu Liu gives an excellent performance as the titular Shang-

Chi, who faces off against his father Wenwu's criminal organization, the Ten Rings, as well as his father's literal ten rings, otherwise known as magic bracelets that give the user immortality and power and blah blah blah. While this movie was dragged down a fair amount by the generic CGI action MCU movies are known for having, it was also filled with incredibly-well choreographed fights that made 90 percent of the action in all the other MCU movies look like a joke, and was definitely at its best focusing on the main conflict between Shang-Chi and Wenwu. It was far from the best MCU movie this year, but still a really fun time.

#5: Hawkeye

Clint Barton was probably the Avenger that needed a spin-off show the most, considering that he's easily the least popular of the group. And Hawkeye gave him a great amount of focus as he teamed up with fellow archer Kate Bishop, and this show was essentially six hours of the two of

them fighting against a group of bad guys in jumpsuits who said "bro" all the time. Fun!

#4: Black Widow

For some reason, this movie came out four years later than it should have. Black Widow, despite being released after Avengers: Endgame, takes place before that movie, in which we all know Natasha Romanoff dies. Despite being long overdue though, it still managed to be a really good solo movie for her. Natasha was unfortunately a bit overshadowed by her sister Yelena, who was hilarious, but the movie still did well at finally exploring her backstory



Concert Addicts

in-depth and was a nice final send-off for her.

#3: Spider-Man: No Way Home

This one needs no introduction. Concluding the MCU's Spider-Man trilogy, No Way Home was easily the most popular movie on this list; I guess that's what happens when you take an already iconic superhero and pit him against half a dozen villains from five other Spider-Man movies - oops, I mean other universes. This movie was a giant pile of fan service to Spider-Man fans, yet still managed to be a mostly coherent and satisfying story. If you've seen it, I don't need to tell you why it's so good, and if you haven't...I still won't tell you why it's so good, because I strongly recommend you see it for yourself if you're a Spider-Man fan.

#2: The Falcon and the Winter Soldier

Out of all the MCU shows that gave an underdeveloped character the spotlight they deserved, the one that did

it best was The Falcon and the Winter Soldier. Sam Wilson and Bucky Barnes are both transformed from one-dimensional action figures that used to do nothing but run around and blow things up to actual characters who, despite being regarded as superheroes, feel like normal people. Along with compelling storylines for both of them, a lot of the show is just the two of them going through their normal lives. Nearly all of the MCU entries this year took the franchise in new directions, but The Falcon and the Winter Soldier took it in perhaps the most remarkable one - making a superhero story that's at its weakest during the action, and at its best when two or three people are just sitting around talking.

#1: Loki

Honestly, I don't even know where I should begin here. It's Loki! What else can I say? If you haven't seen this show yet, you should go watch it right after you're done reading this article, because it's easily the best MCU entry of the



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year, and one of the best MCU entries, period. I could drone on and on about how great the characters are, how creative the setting is, and how fantastic the musical score is. Much like The Falcon and the Winter Soldier, this show is also at its best whenever we see the characters interacting like normal people. But what ultimately puts Loki at the #1 spot on this list is that it took an already great Marvel villain and somehow made him even better in one of the most engaging, chaotic, and unpredictable stories to come out of the MCU in a long time.

Archery competing in person again in '22

9th grader Duncan Smith placed 2nd overall, and the high school team placed 2nd



Leo Bickelhaupt

11th grader Guadalupe Dimayuga shooting at the archery tournament on Saturday, February 5th (left), members of the archery team collecting their arrows in between flights during the tournament (middle, above), coach and OWL Archery alumni Donald Post talking to members of the team (middle, below), and archers shooting side-by-side at the tournament (right).

TikTok said it could not find any evidence of such a trend, although the videos had been popping up a lot of users 'for you pages.' Although school districts had been heightening their security measures and increasing police presence on school grounds on December 17th, the threat is always a thing to keep in mind.

The "blackout" challenge was another deadly TikTok trend where you hold your breath until you pass out, sometimes to the point of brain damage or even death. Authorities have warned people to not attempt the Blackout Challenge, which, like the Pass Out Challenge of 2020, can lead to asphyxiation (the state or process of being deprived

of oxygen). There have been many serious injuries, usually in younger children. A little girl in Palerm, Italy was declared brain dead after going into cardiac arrest attempting to participate in the Blackout Challenge. On March 22, a 12-year-old boy Joshua Hail-eyesus was found breathless on the bathroom floor by his twin brother who had been accompanying him after he participated in the Blackout Challenge.

The "slap a teacher" TikTok trend, one of the latest trends on social media, encourages students to physically attack teachers and record it to post on TikTok. Some students have even been facing charges. An 18-year-old student in Louisiana was arrested and

is now facing charges of suspicion of battery of a school teacher after she allegedly attacked a 64-year-old teacher with a disability as a part of the challenge.

The "devious lick" trend isn't dangerous, but it involves stealing school property. Middle school, high school, and college students vandalized or stole school property, most commonly from bathrooms, and posted the footage. If you search the term "devious licks" on the app now, a message from TikTok would appear saying "no results found" or another phrase stating that the content violates TikTok's guidelines.

The "milk crate" challenge is more unsafe than illegal. The challenge saw TikTok us-

ers stacking milk crates into a pyramid and then attempting to climb across the unstable structure. The trend first made its appearance on Facebook by Kenneth Waddell in August, and the spine snapping challenge quickly took TikTok by storm with creators sharing the videos of their most worthy wipeouts. Many people see the Milk Crate Challenge the next Tide Pod Challenge--a public health hazard.

Many of these trends will definitely have a negative impact, digital or not across the nation. Many schools have been banning TikTok off of their WiFi, making the app unable to load. But students can still access TikTok from home.

Upcoming Events*

*subject to change due to COVID-19

- February 9-10: Student-Led Conferences
- February 15: PTO Community Meeting
- February 16: PSEO Informational Meeting
- February 17: African American Family Culture Night
- February 21: No School (President's Day)
- February 23: School History Day
- March 4: No School (Staff PD Day)
- March 15: PTO Community Meeting
- April 1: Last Day of Quarter 3
- April 1-10: Spring Break
- April 11: First Day of Quarter 4
- April 13: Latinx Family Culture Night