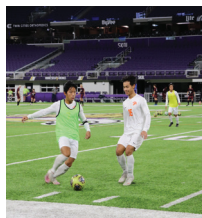
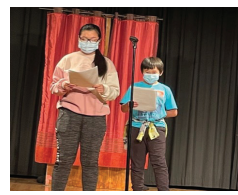


Fall play challenges set designers
- Page 2



Controversy at the soccer game
- Page 5



Asian Culture Night photos
- Page 8

Purple Press

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December 10th, 2021

OWL's new AP: Ms. Ma'Lene

New AP building relationships with both staff and students

Willa Champion
Staff Writer

From attending elementary school at St. Anthony Park to becoming OWL's newest assistant principal, Ms. Ma'Lene Walker has been a part of the Saint Paul Public School (SPPS) community for nearly 35 years as a student, teacher, and administrator.

Ms. Ma'Lene joined OWL's staff this year and has already become a friendly face around the building. She was born and raised in St. Paul, where she graduated from Central High School. Twenty three years ago she began working in SPPS as a classroom teacher, collaborating with mainly elementary and middle school students. Later, Ms. Ma'Lene

transitioned into a role as a restorative practices program coordinator and PBIS (positive behavioral interventions and supports) intervention specialist.

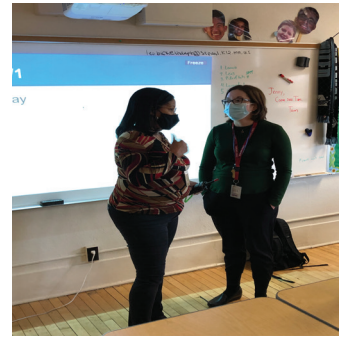
All of these roles have equipped her for her current work as an assistant principal who is making positive change with students. "I was an instructional leader first as

a teacher and then I branched out of the classroom and started to get into more problem-solving positions [...], so an assistant principal was a great combination of the two," Ms. Ma'Lene said, "All of those jobs, and those skills, really prepared me."

Whether it's from talking to nutrition services on how they're collaborating with

Humboldt or visiting crews to meet students, Ms. Ma'Lene is always busy. "I'm new to OWL, so I am always trying to find different experiences throughout the day," she said. Most of her previous work in SPPS as an admin and teacher has been in elementary and middle schools, so with her job here Ms. Ma'Lene is learn-

Ms. Ma'Lene, 5



Purple Press Staff Photo
Ms. Ma'Lene has already succeeded in forming relationships with students and staff, alike.

Archery rebuilds after '21



Purple Press Staff Photo

Students lined up on the range to practice last week during last week. The team has resumed practice after being shut down for over a year.



Purple Press Staff Photo

Paloma Leone-Getten
Staff Writer

After over a year and a half, the bows were taken out of their cobwebbed cases, the targets were wheeled out of a dusty closet, and the arrows set out for the action to begin again. Archery is back.

"Ultimately this is a rebuilding year. Due to the pandemic,

we lost a lot of talented upper-classmen who could have been able to compete for medals and championships," said archery coach Tom Totushek. Luckily, enough archers have joined to put together both a middle school and a high school team. "For me personally, and for others on the team, we are really just trying to get back

into the routine of the season and working on building that consistency that we lost during distance learning," said 9th Kathryn Totushek.

Safety amidst the COVID-19 pandemic is a top priority for the team. The season should continue relatively normally, with vaccines widely available and masks worn. "If

we get a bunch of cases I will have no reservations about shutting down practice for a week or two as necessary," said Tom.

Practices are held three times per week, with athletes required to attend at least two. "This makes it possible for participation in other after school activities," said Tom. At

practice, archers first set up the range together, warm up, talk about the plan for the day with their coaches, practice shooting, play games, and then clean up the gym at the end of the day.

All of this preparation comes into use at competitions. While in a normal sea-

Archery, 5

China bans video games

Isaac Wencil
Staff Writer

China has caved further into gaming limits for minors. As of September 1st, video game companies in China have restricted people under the age of 18 to gaming a maximum of three hours over the week. 8-9 pm on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and national holidays. Gaming during the school week isn't allowed. The new rule also states that players under the age of 18 must use their real names when signing in, to prevent people from disobeying the rules.

This isn't the first time China has tried to restrict video games for children. In 2019, new rules were made, stating that children could only play online games for 90 minutes at most, and not between the hours of 10 pm and 8am. Real names and phone numbers were mandatory too.

Besides this, China has a large history of problems with video games. They've blamed them for causing nearsightedness, banning any video games that contain disrespect to China's government, banning any games that contain explicit language or actions, etc. But this is arguably the farthest they have gone with video game restrictions.

The main reason for this restriction was to stop the negative influence of video games and video game addiction among children. Around 62.5 percent of minors in China play video games, and play an

Video game ban, 4

OWL continues to endure pandemic lunch guidelines

Meara Gunderson
Staff Writer

Imagine you walk into a crowded cafeteria excited to eat lunch with your friends. You look around for a couple seconds trying to find them before you remember. The new lunch rules. Right.

The rules around lunch during COVID-19 are that you can choose your seat the first day, but then you have to stay

in that seat until all the seats are changed, that you have to stay in your spaced out seat for all of lunch, that you can't go outside, and that you can't be on your phone. Most students follow the seating rules because they understand why they need the rules for COVID safety and contact tracing, even if they aren't the happiest with them.

"The lunch rules are a little

less restrictive than last spring (spring of 2021). Since a great percentage of older students are vaccinated, there is a little closer spacing allowed. We did need to create an additional lunch to help allow for the spacing," says principal Dave Gundale. The staff decided that this was the best way to continue back in April when we first came back in person,

Lunch, 4



Nina Laferla

Lunch at OWL has been under COVID protocol since returning in person last spring.



The
Purple Press

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Fall play challenges set crew, actors

Set leads focused on making sets fall safely

Paloma Leone-Getten
Staff Writer

Usually when building sets, the main focus of the crew is to ensure that the sets are stable and stay upright. Not for this play. In this case, OWLs set crew has been focused on making their sets safely fall down at the right time.

OWLs first indoor play since December of 2019, The Play That Goes Wrong, is among the most challenging the school has put on. The “physical comedy” features both complicated blocking for the actors on stage and the sets that come crashing down at just the right moment.

“The whole point of the play is that everything goes wrong so that means we have to create sets that function, yet ap-

pear dysfunctional,” said 10th grader Raina Rossell. Raina and Nox GebbenGreen are the set leads for this play, and have been working hard since September to find solutions. “Our sets have to be lightweight, yet have people crawl through them and lean against them,” said Raina. Some of the hardest pieces to coordinate have been a chaise lounge that needs to fit through a tight doorway and building a door—as the one used for other productions disappeared before the production began.

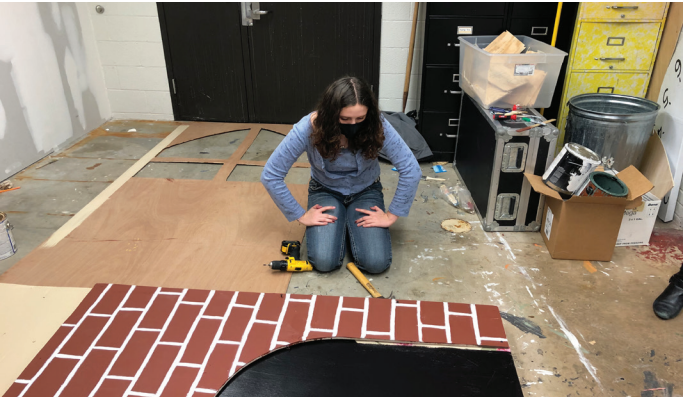
The set crew has been coordinating with the props department. “The props that are on the wall have to fall at precise times yet also stay on the wall when they need to stay. The logistics prove to be

very challenging,” said Raina. Nox agreed. “Negotiating with props was really important. Like when sets [crew] had the idea to use hooks to hold up the props, props [crew] had the idea to use magnets instead. So we had to communicate to make sure we were on the same page.”

Considering that several longtime members of the set crew graduated last spring, this play was a large undertaking. “I’d rank this play 2nd for difficulty. In The Addams’ Family, sets had to be built into more 3D shapes instead of just plain flats,” said Nox. Luckily, Nox and Raina have gotten some help from the community. “We did have a day where we came to the school on a Saturday for a couple of hours and volunteers worked on creating sets with us,” said Raina.

Theater director Rebekah Rentzelsaid that although this set is not quite as challenging as the multi-level set used in Macbeth a few years ago, it does present a unique set of challenges. “It’s definitely the most needy set – it has the most specific demands. Every single piece has to serve multiple functions, and be funny while it does that. Everything has to work perfectly, and it’s a little bit dangerous.”

The Play That Goes Wrong opened on Wednesday in the OWL auditorium, and the final show is tonight at 7:00.



Purple Press Staff Photo
Set lead Raina Rossell working on a set for The Play That Goes Wrong.



Purple Press Staff Photo
OWLs fall league ultimate frisbee team won their homecoming game against Great River School in early October.

Co-ed wins championship

Boys finish with a 5-4 record

Joe Lodahl
Staff Writer

Fall frisbee finished November 6th, so you’re probably wondering, how did it go?

The OWL Co-Ed team went 6-1, taking down Roseville to win the championship. All of the players were excited, including senior captain Jalen Bolton-Steiner, who said, “It went very swimmingly. The co-ed team won and the captains are excited to see the bright future of the team.” That’s great, but what is fall frisbee and how is it different from spring frisbee? “A lot more serious in the spring, and fall is like a more fun and learning experience to get better,” said 9th grader Danny Hobday. What was the experience playing on a mixed gender team? “I loved playing on co-ed. Super fun and differ-

ent experiences. I like it better because I get to play with people who I usually practice with when I can’t in the spring,” said senior Stian Asper.

The boys team wasn’t quite as successful, but they still finished with a winning record of 5-4, finishing in fifth place. The bracket was kind of weird for them too though, because they played two teams from the same school (East Metro) five times, beating them all five. Overall, it was a great season, and I personally also had a great experience on the team. If you want to get involved, spring league is coming up, and there will be a boys and a girls team, and though it will be more strenuous than fall league, don’t be discouraged from joining.

Back in person, but COVID still present at OWL

COVID-19’s everlasting grip on our school has caused socially distant lunches etc. to remain

Nick Christopherson
Staff Writer

Last year was no doubt challenging for everyone. For most of the school year we were all stuck inside, staring at a Google Meet filled with a bunch of random icons with muted mics, constantly wishing that we could be anywhere else.

Even though now we’re all back in person now, COVID-19 is still affecting us and the way that OWL operates.

Some of these effects are pretty obvious, like the fact that everyone is wearing masks, we have assigned seats at lunch, or that we suddenly have an abundance of hand sanitizer all over the school. But there are also a lot of small changes that affect things behind the scenes, which is what I’ll be going over in this article.

We’ll start with the library. Last year, getting books out to students who needed them was a bigger challenge than it is in person, as they couldn’t just walk into the library and grab it off of a shelf, and they had to have books delivered. This not only made recreational or assigned reading more difficult, it also impacted studying, as

textbooks had to be delivered to student’s houses as well. As a result, there was a strong push for kids to use ebooks for their reading.

This year is much different. “It’s so much better now that we are back in person,” said Caryl Mousseaux, school librarian. “Our library council did a survey and found that four out of five students at OWL prefer print books. Students can now browse the physical bookshelves and more easily find books that interest them, and I can come into classrooms to check textbooks out for students.”

Being in person has not only made the operations of the library easier, it has also boosted the spirits of Caryl and the students. “I love talking with students about what they are reading, recommending titles to them, and hearing students recommend books to each other,” Caryl said. “We’ve all learned what our masked faces look like when we smile -- we see the smiles in each other’s eyes. It’s wonderful to be together again.”

One of the main values that OWL holds as a school is providing service to our communities, so the COVID lock-

down had an outsize effect on our Outward Bound program. Outward Bound is a non-profit organization whose main goal is to bring out the best in students by providing them with unique learning opportunities.

At OWL, the Outward Bound program is mostly focused on doing service work to not only improve our community, but to help students get enough service hours to graduate. Before COVID, near the end of the school year, all the students involved in Outward Bound got to go on trips to other parts of Minnesota, and even across the country.

But when the lockdown first started, the plans were derailed. “When we transitioned to online learning in the early spring of 2020, our Outward Bound program pretty much shut down,” said Tim Leone-Getten, Spanish teacher and co-leader of the program. “The trips we had been planning to Ely, Colorado, and California were cancelled. The only thing that happened in the spring of 2020 was the plant sale.”

Last year, the Outward Bound program wasn’t having much more luck. They

did manage to put together another plant sale, but that was the only event that they could safely do. Luckily, much like with the library, this year shows a much brighter future for the program. “This year, back in person, Outward Bound is much closer to normal,” said Tim. “We are working at some school events--the Showcase for new families, the Homecoming event, etc.--but other events have been postponed this fall. As for the spring trips, we are starting to plan for them but have no idea if we will be able to travel. We really hope we can do some trips!”

Sports at OWL have unsurprisingly been affected by COVID as well. Our archery team has had a lot of minor rule changes brought on by it. For example, there used to be two archers at a time doing target shooting, but this year they’ve limited it to one archer, in order to keep people safely distanced from each other. They’ve also imposed a new rule that says if a kid can’t control themselves and is failing to maintain the proper distance, they will be asked to leave practice early for the safety of the other archers. The tournaments have an unclear future, as no one knows where



Purple Press Staff Photo
Students had fun guessing who was who on the Guess That Staff bulletin board this fall.

Guess That Staff engages OWL community

Photos provide entertainment, intrigue, & fun

Marjorie Borer Seabloom
Staff Writer

There are eight people gathered around a bulletin board pointing, arguing, and laughing loudly. This is what it was like most days since the Guess That Staff bulletin board went up. It has more than 30 pictures of staff members from back in the day. English teacher Leo Bickelhaupt said he has had to close his door multiple times due to people chatting loudly around the bulletin board.

The Guess That Staff board was up for people to just look at and laugh about for a while, then a QR code leading to a survey was put up to allow

people to guess who was who. It had numbers that corresponded with each picture for scoring. The teacher board was put up by Patti’s crew. They collected staff photos and stapled them up along with the numbers. “I have done it once before at another school,” said Patti.

There were mixed opinions on the hardest picture to guess, “I don’t remember the number, but the one where the kid is facing the side,” said junior Sophia Windingstad. “Prolly the one in the coke costume,” said eighth grader Lana Stevens.

Most people said that they thought that it was fun to try and guess. As for which pictures were the easiest to guess, most people seemed to say social studies teacher Dan Sullivan, theater teacher Re-

Guess that staff, 5

Senior Spotlight

Nora Verner



What pronouns do you use?
She/her.

How many years have you been at OWL?
7 years.

What are your plans for next year?
I plan to go abroad before college.

What’s been your favorite class in high school?
APUSH, because I like history and we learned a lot.

What extracurriculars are you involved in?
Frisbee, theater, Outward Bound, yearbook, art class, Homecoming Committee, theater advisory, and sledding.

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

If you had a walk up song, what would it be?
Picture to Burn by Taylor Swift.

That One Little Kid

Lulu Vargo

What pronouns do you use?
They/them.

How tall are you?
5’8”.

What’s your favorite class so far and why?
OT, because it’s a really fun and chill class.

Who’s your favorite senior?
Auria.

Where do you think you’re going to go for college?
The University of Minnesota.

What extracurriculars do you plan on getting involved in at OWL?
Drama Club and GSA.



How different is French from American music?

French exchange student Astrid reflects on the differences between French & American music

Astrid Piot
Staff Writer

While American music is popular all over the world, French music is not that well known. Some Americans may have heard of an old song from before 2000, but none of the most recent songs. By interviewing some of my classmates and teachers, I was able to certify more of my points about French music. Jenny Murray, who is a student teacher, and Spanish teacher Tim Leone-Getten could name some French musicians: Edith Piaf and Manu Chao. As for students, they didn't know

anybody or recognize any of the French songs I played, but they seemed to like the songs. Some of these songs have been a trend on Tik Tok. Stromae, who managed to make himself known internationally with his title Alors on danse, is one of the songs I played for people. 8th grader Patrick Toohey said it sounded good. I also got more general feedback on French songs from 10thh grader Willa Campion, who said the music was really nice to listen to. French music is good, but it’s not the only music we hear on the radio in France. De-

pending on the period of the year and the trending songs, we can get more exotic songs, but French radio has a policy saying that in one day 60% of the music played must be French songs. Beyond that, disc jockeys can put the latest song by Ed Sheeran or the Italian band Maneskin, who became known after winning the Eurovision, one of the many music shows that we have. The Eurovision Awards are more Europe centered, but if you really want to know the band of the year or the best song in France, you have to watch the NRJ Music Awards.

Organised by one of the most popular radio stations in the country, NJR stages and presents our favorite artists or new future hits of the year. The show takes the form of a concert where the artists come to present their songs live, then let the public judge and choose their favorite. Several categories are presented: the French male and female artists of the year, the revelation of the year, the french song of the year, the duo of the year, the international male and female artists of the year, the international song of the year as well as DJ of the year. Some of the French singers I like are Vanessa Paradis, Vianney, and Mika.

No more snow days for us?

Alexander Cowles
Staff Writer

The rumors are true. According to principal Dave Gundale, students will most likely be expected to participate in online learning in the event of a snow day this year. The COVID-19 pandemic led to all students staying at home doing their work online last year. The November 2nd online school day caused some to wonder if snow days would

also be replaced with online learning days this year. This has turned out to be the case. The current plan is still in the works, but it looks like online learning could take place during snow days. Students and teachers will be informed of the snow day by 6 am, but this still raises questions about how the teachers will be able to adjust their plans on such short notice. Eleventh grader Joe Gorton is not a fan of this idea.

“Honestly I would probably get more done if it was just a snow day,” said Joe. “To come up with a quality lesson plan within the short amount of time allotted (a minimum of 2-hours had been stated by the district) is not feasible,” says art teacher Kristin Moeller. “Even if the lesson plan could be contrived, for many school subjects, it would be not along the vein of a continued expedition but a side trip with the purpose of filler.”

This plan is not set in stone yet, and it is unknown if it will ever return to normal. Is it fair to take away the experience of finding out school is snowed out and being able to go back to sleep? In Kristin’s words, “EVERY student deserves to have the experience of waking up elated that the day is theirs and the feeling of living in the moment. And in the spirit of OWL, they can even do some community service work by shoveling snow!”



Motocross 101: riding the dirt

Atticus Brooks-Babcock
Staff Writer

You’re flipping through the channels bored when you see fast and loud bikes sweeping corners, big jumps, and big bumps. You’re looking at MX. MX stands for motocross, and is a discipline of motorcycles. Typically an MX track is 50-100 acres and is outdoors, creating an exciting variable nature. MX riders have to be good at all of the normal things like scrubbing (turning at the top of a jump to minimize time in the air), and cornering, plus whatever variables nature provides. It could be mud or massive ruts, all of which means the rider has to decide what line to take and how to handle the course. To win these races, you have to be quick thinking and experienced in every kind of terrain. The pro leagues have two classes 250cc and 450cc, which just means the size of the bike. They typically race for around 30 minutes plus two laps and 17 rounds over the season. MX is super physical. Riding a 215lb bike for multiple laps, standing up and sitting down, and absorbing big jumps pushes people to the limit. Along with the pro leagues like AMA, MX also has less professional leagues like A, B, C, and D class, and those races are held at most local tracks. Some of our local tracks are Cedar Lake Arena, Berm Benders, and Motocity Raceway. One of the best MX racers is 42 year old Ricky Carmichael, with an 80% win rate for his 11 year career that ended in 2007. Thirty five-year-old James Stewart is another famous MX rider who made his own trick, the Bubba Scrub, and is one of the only people to ever win every race in an AMA MX season; the other person is Ricky Carmichael. Another popular person in MX is Haiden Deegan; he is popular due to his father Brian Deegan being a good FMX rider and also having a very popular YouTube channel. SX or supercross is another discipline of dirt bikes. SX has massive jumps just inches from the other racers, super tight turns, whoops, and a big crowd cheering. SX is held inside of stadiums and is very tight. Due to it being indoors, riders don’t have to worry about nature. However, they do have to race in very technical tracks with sharp turns, different lines, and sometimes sand portions that are made to push their quick decision making to the limit. SX has the same classes 250cc and 450cc. However, the bikes are set up a little stiff-

er for cornering. The 250cc race for 15 minutes plus one lap, and the 450cc race for 20 minutes plus one lap, and both have 17 rounds per season, one of which is in Minneapolis at the US Bank Stadium. SX is more crowd-focused and action-packed, think more of a Monster Jam than MX. Twenty six-year-old two-time 450 SX winner Cooper Webb won the 2021 season with 27 year old four time 450sx winner Ken Roczen coming in second and 29 year old four timer 450sx winner Eli Tomac coming in third. SX riders typically make around 100,000, but it can be more depending on sponsors. There are smaller disciplines of dirt bikes too, one of which is FMX or freestyle MX. FMX has two main types, Big air and freestyle motocross. Big air is an event in which the riders have 2 75ft jumps to impress the panel of judges, and freestyle motocross riders have 90 seconds to 15 minutes to impress judges with two routines on multiple jumps. The biggest FMX event is the X Games. Enduro is another discipline in which riders compete on single track in the forest. The goal is to make it up fast and first from a mass start. Sometimes they are time trials, which means whoever got up with the fastest time wins. It is hard because trails have natural objects like boulders and trees. Hard enduro is a mix of SX and enduro, it has small tracks with obstacles like tires, concrete barriers, and logs. The goal is similar to MX and SX winning the race. Trials riding is similar to hard enduro. However, you can’t set a foot down when going through the obstacles and it uses a different kind of bike. This bike has no seat and is made for maximum maneuverability. Lastly there is supermoto. Supermoto races are held at smaller race tracks or go kart tracks and feature dirt sections and jumps in the race track. The bikes they use are similar to MX but have slick tires and stiffer suspension. The goal is to win the race from a mass start. If you want to watch any of these sports, you can find most live or recorded on YouTube. If you want to watch less professional videos, I would recommend Fooligan, Deegans Channel, and C-boys. If you want to get into MX and have no experience riding anything, I would recommend an old trail bike like an xr100 or KLX125. If you have experience I would recommend an old 2-stroke 125 like a yz125, kx125, or rm125.



Southwest Christian High School chose a USA theme for the state soccer championship game against Humboldt.

Fans at state tournament troubled by SWCHS fan behavior

Humboldt soccer’s opponent wore Trump and USA merch to final at US Bank Stadium

Lili Hobday
Staff Writer

As Humboldt senior defender Ar Ri Shae makes his way to the sideline for a throw-in during the Minnesota State Soccer Tournament final, Humboldt fans can see a sea of US flags and Trump shirts waved by the opposing team behind him. For principal Dave Gundale and many of the Humboldt fans who attended the game, there was something disturbing about this image.

Seeing this attire was a shock to Humboldt fans. “I was down on the field taking photos and I looked up and saw some people wearing Trump shirts and waving flags. I was so confused,” said Humboldt senior Hai Soe. “A soccer game has nothing to do with Trump. I thought everyone would just be wearing school colors.”

Theme nights are a common American sports tradition. Schools choose a theme, such as “pink-out” or “tie dye,” to encourage more students to attend and have fun. On the night of the state final, Southwest Christian High School chose USA as their theme. The school’s fans brought flags and dressed in red, white, and blue. Some even wore Trump clothing.

All but one of the Humboldt players are part of refugee families from Thailand or Myanmar, a population that has immigrated in the last 20 years “It was shocking that there was this level of tone-deafness surrounding the issue. You’re coming to a game where the team is predominantly immigrant. Is that appropriate? To me, it was a statement saying that the immigrant population is ‘not as American’ as this predominantly white school,” said Dave.

Along with the theme, various comments that some Humboldt fans found inap-

propriate were made throughout the night. A Humboldt teacher taking pictures of the game challenged the students on what they had said, and was told that “this is just what you do at games. You try to get under the other team’s skin.”

Contact with the schools athletic director resulted in an apology for inappropriate comments made, but not for the USA theme, saying that it was carried over from a section final volleyball game earlier that day. “What we’re trying to figure out right now is intentionality,” said Dave, “I’m trying to look at the situation from a 360. Maybe it wasn’t intentional but obviously the impact was great.”

Moving forward, Dave feels that there are a few things that need to be done. “I decided to look at it from more of a systems standpoint, through the MSHSL. I composed a letter asking for a few key things moving forward.” First, he asked that there be a clear message sent to each participating team that the games are not a place for political statements or harsh language. If this doesn’t stop the hate, his next request was for neutral observers in each section. “If they hear anything they should report to the officials and the announcers to pause the game and make an announcement saying that it’s not acceptable and if it happens again that the game will be terminated.”

The response from MSHSL was short. They received the message and understood the concern but said nothing about if the procedures would be put in place.

The Humboldt soccer team can look back on the most successful season in its history. The behavior of opposing fans at the historic final game raised concerns, but for now the issue remains unresolved.

Meet OWL’s French exchange student

Astrid adjusting to life in MN, misses family, friends, cheese

Lana Stevens
Staff Writer

Of course, when you go to another country as an exchange student, there will be things you miss from back home. Astrid Piot, for example, has something she misses about France. She said she misses, “Cheese.”

First of all, how does a student exchange program work?

A foreign exchange student is a student that takes part in a study program in which they travel to a different country’s school for six months to a year. Their goal is to learn about the community and try new things, finding out what it’s like to live in the place (In this case, what it’s like to live in Minnesota), as well as working on schoolwork as they would in their native country.

Astrid Piot, one of OWL’s own foreign exchange students this year, has been learning the ways of OWL and experiencing Minnesota culture. She is from Sèvres, France, and she is 17. She is with the Youth For Understanding (YFU) exchange program. She became an exchange student because her mother’s friend’s kid was doing it, and it sounded “super fun and interesting,” said

Astrid.

In France, she went to school at her local high school, Lycée Jean Pierre Vernant. According to Astrid, OWL is pretty different from her school in France. She’s noticed one of the differences between her school in France and OWL is the teacher-student relationship and classes. “The relationship I have with my teachers is not the same that I had in France,” Astrid said. In France, Astrid and the other students at Lycée Jean Pierre Vernant call their teachers Sir or Madam, and Astrid has noticed that some teachers ‘abuse’ their ‘power’ as a teacher by giving students extra work or detention for no reason.

“Some classes I have here are different, and back home I have more classes that I don’t have here,” said Astrid. Another difference she has seen is the required classes. “In France when you enter in high school you choose your classes and some of them are not necessary,” Astrid said. She said she is having a hard time in her science class, because it was not required back in her High School in France. Her favorite classes are creative writing and guitar. She loves to read, write

and draw, and she wasn’t too sure about if she would like guitar at first, but then it grew on her.

One of the biggest difficulties of being a foreign exchange student is language barriers. French is Astrid’s first language, but in Minnesota, she must speak English all the time. “It was hard on the first day, but now I’m used to it,” said Astrid. Astrid has started to get along with the people in her classes at OWL. Back in France, Astrid has two groups of friends, one group from high school, the other from ‘middle school’ (they call middle school something different in France). She said she really misses one of her middle school friends.

Astrid has two 13 year old twin little sisters. She usually gets along with them pretty well. As for her parents, she has a pretty good relationship, especially her dad, she said. She keeps in touch with her family with Whatsapp about once a month.

Here in Minnesota, Astrid has a host family. They have two little girls, one who’s eight and another who’s five. She gets along with both the parents really well. “At the beginning I was feeling strange, to have my ‘own place’ in somebody’s house but with time I got used to it,” She said. Her host fami-



Purple Press Staff Photo
Astrid has been enjoying her exchange from France to Minnesota.

ly also has a cat and two dogs. (Astrid said she’s Team Cat!)

Astrid has visited the capitol, and even went to the Minnesota State Fair. But still, she is disappointed in Minnesota’s cheese department. “First you don’t have much diversity, cuz’ from here I’ve only seen cheddar and a ‘fake’ parmesan. Second, mostly the cheese is not very old so the taste is different or the cheese hasn’t even started fermentation. Third, variety. It seems to me that for the moment I’ve only seen cow cheese, but there are a lot of other kinds, from goat, and sheep,” explained Astrid. Looks like us Minnesotans really need to up our cheeses!

Video game ban, 1

average of 12 hours per week. Along with that, billions of dollars in revenue are made by Chinese gaming companies like Tencent and NetEase, which means China has the largest gaming market out of any country, just ahead of the U.S.

A large Chinese newspaper outlet named Xinhua News described video games as “spiritual opium,” which made

the share prices of Tencent fall sharply.

“Teenagers are the future of our motherland,” said an unnamed NPPA spokesperson. “Protecting the physical and mental health of minors is related to the people’s vital interests, and relates to the cultivation of the younger generation in the era of national rejuvenation.”

Tencent stated on its “WeChat” account that they firmly support the rule and

will make efforts to follow it. They also said they’ve made efforts to prevent children from being addicted to video games since 2017. NetEase, China’s second biggest gaming company, has scaled down on projects and studios ever since September, as an effect on this restriction. Many of their programmers, designers, and creative artists have been fired from Their position, and told to look for new jobs inside or outside of NetEase.

This topic of the video game ban became widespread on Weibo (China’s equivalent to Twitter). Many users have protested or criticized this ban on games.

“Are (the ages of) 7 and 17 the same?” Asked an anonymous Weibo user. “This policy presumes that gaming is bad,” says another user. “This is so fierce I’m utterly speechless,” another comment said, gaining over 700 likes.

Lunch, 1



Nick Streng

Students eating lunch socially distanced.

because we could still have a semi-normal lunch, but be safe because we were so spaced out.

At first everyone thought these rules were a little strange, but pretty good. That was back in April when phones were allowed but now many students’ opinions have changed. Most students spend lunch talking to their friends if they found a seat together (and have the same lunch) or reading, because that’s really all they can

think of to do. Some students have found a bright side in the fact that they don’t have to find a new seat every time and can count on the fact of sitting in one spot.

Students mainly think these rules are going to end when COVID is better but what if this is the new normal? “I would be a little surprised if these were the new normal rules but I wouldn’t be upset because you still get to sit by

your friends and enjoy lunch. Though when I first heard how lunch would be I was not excited, but it’s actually not so bad,” said eighth grader Lana Stevens.

“I thought that we would be close to having COVID under control but the fact that more people that are vaccinated are getting it, definitely concerns me. We will keep the current lunch rules in place until the guidelines change. It is important to note that the COVID rates are still very high right now in our state. Even people that have been vaccinated are getting COVID so we have to maintain our commitment to these guidelines that are really helping keep things safe for OWL students, staff, and families,” stated Dave.

So even if students are unhappy with the rules, they might not be going anywhere for a while. “It completely depends on the COVID rates in our state and city,” said Dave. And right now, COVID rates are going up.

COVID, 2

COVID is going. The current plan is to see if they can limit the potential tournaments to four in-person ones and four virtual ones, although that is not set in stone.

The theater department faced a lot of challenges last year as well, as they did a performance outdoors while wearing masks. Fortunately, they were able to get microphones on loan for the show.

This year they are doing an indoor performance in the auditorium. The actors will be unmasked, but the audience will still wear masks. The attendance of the play will also be at half-capacity.

Even though we’re all back in person and we can interact face to face, COVID is still affecting us. The infection rates continue to rise, and there are no signs of the virus dying down. Really the only thing we can do is hold out hope that at some point we can finally (mostly) return to the way our lives were before COVID.

How is the pandemic changing over time?

Will masks have to be worn in public forever?

Jude Witt
Staff Writer

Now that’s a question everyone in the world has been asking for the past year and half. COVID-19 started slowly from Wuhan, China, then gradually spread out through the world. Airports were a really big way COVID spread from country to country. Even just simply talking, touching, within 6 feet is enough to pass COVID without a mask.

The first cases in North America were reported in the

United States in January, 2020. Epidemiologists have done a study on people that have gotten sick that were wearing a mask compared to people that were not wearing a mask. The studies found that masks can do a lot to prevent the spread. There’s a lot of reasons people have not been taking precautions with COVID.

Doug Hanson is an internal medicine resident at Broadlawns Hospital in Des Moines. He has been working for about 21 years now. Doug sees COVID as a long-term

problem. “I don’t really know, but I kind of think COVID-19 might be with us for a long time, maybe forever.” However, he thinks COVID could change over time. “At first, we were really worried about getting infected or bringing the infection home to our families and other loved ones. With time I suspect COVID will affect us more like a common cold virus.” Doug stressed the importance of getting vaccinated and expressed frustration over the fact that people

continue to die from what he sees as a preventable disease. “The last 18+ months have been really stressful as a physician. I’m tired of watching people die - especially when almost everyone that I see dying now (in the last few months) has not had a vaccine. It feels tragic and senseless.”

Colleen Richardson, the new nurse at OWL, was previously a pediatric nurse manager at Ramsey Hospital. She has been a nurse for over 37 years. “I have a daughter who’s also a nurse at a local hospital. This was her first year as a nurse and she had to deal with

many ill patients, including those with COVID-19. She has been very stressed with the sick patients and dealing with the problems. I noticed her the happiest when her friends finally got vaccinated. Our whole family is really careful with COVID and restrictions. We wanted to be together and hang out with one another but just couldn’t for safety reasons. For me, I would say the hardest part of all this is seeing sick people having to deal with that, and also going home and trying very hard to keep my family safe. Overall, we all have been very safe.”

For everyone to end wearing masks, there are a few steps that we all have to take, according to Doug and Colleen. For starters everyone should be wearing masks outside of their homes when they are around other people. Another simple thing you can do is wash your hands after touching anything that other people have touched. Also get the vaccines for safety for everyone, not just yourself. Overall everyone has to sacrifice some simple things for a better, and safer future for all of us.

Ms. Ma’Lene, 1

ing more about how to best support high school students. However, her experiences as a behavioral specialist, teacher, and restorative practices coordinator have prepared her to positively mentor students and teachers.

Ms. Ma’Lene has enjoyed working with student leaders in first semester. “I like that I have a support system with the student body when it comes to problem-solving with our youth,” she said. “I can reach out to some of our older students to talk to some of our younger students, I think it’s really amazing.” Ms. Ma’Lene is appreciative of the work she has done with teachers as well. “I love that we have great teacher leaders as well,” she said. “Teachers are really in

tune with their students, especially with crew, and so now I really like sitting back, watching and learning, seeing how I can be an active member of the community.”

Outside of school, Ms. Ma’Lene enjoys kayaking, fishing, and being outside. One of her favorite local recreational spots is Lake Nokomis. “I’m an adventurous person,” she said.

If you haven’t had a chance to meet Ms. Ma’Lene, feel free to stop by her office. “I’m always open, my door is open, for people to come and stop by,” she said, “I welcome the conversations and opportunities to get to know our students and staff so come on in anytime.”

Archery, 1

son the team participates in 8 competitions before regionals and state, this year they are aiming to compete in 4 in-person Saturday competitions and 4 virtual tournaments. “Tournaments are structured into 1 hour “flights” where archers will shoot their 10m and 15m arrows with other archers assigned to that flight time. All flight times compete together to determine the winning individuals and teams,” said Tom.

“I expect good things from this season. We have had so many people go to the open shoots. I see a lot of 6th graders who are just starting out that are much better than I was at their age,” said senior captain Gus Holtan. Having high numbers will help the

team as they attempt to meet their goals for the season. “My goals are to place in the top 10 range in all of the tournaments I go to. For the team, I hope we qualify for state and nationals again,” said Gus. Tom agreed. “I want to make sure that everyone who wants to participate can and make sure that we are ready for a trip to the national competition in Lexington, Kentucky.”

Several OWL archers have had great success at the state tournament and beyond. In 2017, class of 2020 graduate Jacob Rohde placed 2nd overall at state. In 2018, class of 2019 graduate Emily Yang won first place at state. And in 2019, Kathryn—just a 6th grader at the time—placed 3rd among middle school girls.



Archery shooting practice (above), Coach Tom Totushek coaching new archers at the beginning of the season (below).

Guess that staff, 2

bekah Renzel, Spanish teacher Tim Leone-Getten, and math teacher Clara Raineri. “Tim’s was funny because it is Tim with hair; Clara’s is like this is 100% Clara,” said social studies teacher Katie Craven.

All the teachers took a different approach to choosing their picture. “I was just studying in the hallway and my friends were being silly and came up and took a picture of me,” said librarian Caryl Mousseaux, who used a photo from high school. “I looked at

what I had actual physical copies of in my photo album,” said Katie. “I had a couple different ones that I was thinking about, and a couple where I looked really cool, and then I picked that one because it is the one where I looked the dorkiest and was most accurate for how

I was in middle school,” said English teacher Kevin Hansen. “I thought it would be fun to use a picture from when I was in elementary school to see if people could recognize my face. I was inspired by Tammy’s picture, because once I figured out who it was, I could

totally see it,” said Leo Bickelhaupt.

Patti has said that she would like to continue with school wide competitions and is hoping to do a new one every few weeks. The next one will be a door decorating challenge where each crew can

choose a theme and have their door judged by a committee. The three themes will be holiday/winter, the funniest, and the door with the most school spirit.

Leo excited about MN

Thai exchange student loves Minnesota and OWL, plans to return for college up north

Noah Hernandez
Staff Writer

Imagine traveling across the world to a new country and going to school in a place where you don’t know anybody and can hardly speak the language.

That is exactly what Leo Buapheng from Thailand is going through this year. She is studying abroad here at OWL for her junior year.

Leo said that she wanted to study abroad to learn more languages. She speaks English, Thai, some Spanish, and a little Japanese. She decided to come to Minnesota because she wanted to see snow and she thought Minnesota looked like a beautiful place. As for the cold in Minnesota, Leo said she is dealing with it pretty well so far. “When I get cold I just do exercise or wear a big jacket and drink warm drinks. I usually workout because it helps me a lot and it’s good for my health too.”

Although Leo is homesick, she said she likes school here a lot. “I think that the schools

here are a lot better than the ones in Thailand,” she said. At the schools in Thailand the days are longer--they begin at 7:15 and get out at 5:00. She said the teachers there sometimes don’t really care about the students. “They just tell us to do our work and teach. The teachers here at OWL really care, and want us to do good in school,” said Leo. She does, however, really miss her friends from school.

One important similarity between Leo’s school in Thailand and OWL is that masks were required, just like they are here. “We wear masks during school and every time we go out,” she said. One advantage to being here, she said, is that the vaccine is more widely available.

Leo said she likes Minnesota so much that she plans on coming back here after high school to attend college. She wants to major in engineering or piloting. “I think I’ll go to college in Duluth or Saint Cloud,” she said. Leo said, “the people here in Minnesota are

so nice, kind.” She feels comfortable here and wants to have a good education and learn how to speak better English. Some of the places she has traveled to in Minnesota are the Mall of America, downtown Saint Paul, and Minnehaha Falls.

During her free time in Thailand, Leo would hang out



Photo courtesy of Leo Buapheng



Purple Press Staff Photo

with friends every day after school. She said it was a normal thing in Thailand. They would sometimes play sports, hangout, skate, or study. She says she really enjoys eating spicy foods and misses Thai soups the most. “People really don’t eat a lot of spicy foods here,” said Leo.

Exchange Student Questions of the Month

What food do you miss the most?

Astrid: Cheese.
Leo: Spicy food.

What is a new food you have discovered here?

Astrid: Cheese curds at the State Fair.
Leo: Cheese curds at Dairy Queen.

What to you is the best thing about American food?

Astrid: (Searching for an answer) I have no idea.
Leo: It makes me full, for a long time.

What to you is the strangest thing about American food?

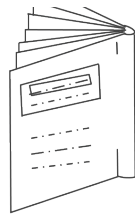
Astrid: I saw someone eating pasta for breakfast.
Leo: I saw eggs on pizza.

American food, turnt or burnt? Explain.

Astrid: So so. (waves hand in so so motion)
Leo: Turnt. I like it.



Reviews ‘n’ stuff



The Book vs the Movie - Harry Potter continued

It just gets worse

Nick Streng
Staff Writer

Welcome back, all, to my review of how the Harry Potter movies compare to the books. Having previously looked at the first three movies, I will now go through the rest of the series and conclude my complaining - um, I mean, analysis.

Let's begin with Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, which for me, marked the point where things really started to go downhill. As I said in the first part of my review, the first three movies were all pretty good but each one got weaker. This one crossed the line from passable to bad. There are still many things it adapts well from the book, most notably with Brendan Gleeson's amazing performance as Mad-Eye Moody. But unfortunately, this movie continued to struggle with the problems the previous movies had - unnecessary extension of parts of the story and introducing new things that weren't in the source material - on an even higher level. This movie features a prime example of just how poorly the source material can be adapted in this series - the character derailment of Albus Dumbledore.

Dumbledore in the book is the calm and kind headmaster

of Hogwarts and Harry's mentor. In this movie, he's an angry and dramatic lunatic. Normally these movies have a pretty good understanding of the characters, but this was one of the moments where it felt like the filmmakers had absolutely none.

Moving onto Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix, it fared no better, struggling even more to adapt the longest book in the series. Out of all the Harry Potter movies, this one illustrates just how damaging it can be to remove important details from the books. The fifth one was the longest because it had an extensive amount of world-building (in addition to the already-complex story) in which we got to explore other areas of the wizarding world, most notably the Ministry of Magic. Much of the detail in this world-building is absent from the movie, and as a result it feels like a shell of the original.

Surprisingly though, Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince ended up being an improvement. It still has a truckload of problems, notably the decision to add a completely unnecessary new scene of Death Eaters attacking Harry at the Weasleys' house, and the teenage romance from the book between Harry and Ginny is pretty awkwardly directed. But overall, this movie had much more details from the book, and the screenwriters also have my eternal respect

for writing Dumbledore properly this time around.

However, all three of these movies were still a huge step down from the first three, mainly because the books were only getting longer and longer, and the movies never went beyond the 2 hour and 30 minute runtime. The filmmakers finally got the bright idea to split one movie into two with Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows, the final entry in the series. Well now, this sounds like a spectacular idea! Two 120-minute movies should allow for a much more detailed and accurate adaptation! Right?

Well...nope. Not only did Part 1 of Deathly Hallows not use its time wisely, but it also suffered from mistakes the previous movies made. Many plot elements in Deathly Hallows had focus in the earlier books (characters, short scenes, magical objects), but their respective movies cut them out because they didn't have enough significance, so now they were introduced into this

movie with no context. For instance, when Harry looks into a broken piece of glass at the beginning of the movie and sees someone else's eyes for a moment, people who haven't read the book will be confused. The piece of glass is actually a two way mirror given to Harry by Sirius Black, but the movie doesn't explain that. And the it doesn't end there, as characters who showed up early in the books but not in the movies, such as Bill Weasley, Mundungus Fletcher, and Kreacher the house-elf, appear in Deathly Hallows Part 1 for the first time, and if their introductions seem forced and out of nowhere - it's because they are. It was a great idea to have two movies adapt one book in this series, but the idea came far too late.

And finally, we come to the last and worst movie of the franchise. The shortest and most effective way to express my feelings is to compare both versions of Harry and Voldemort's final showdown. In the

Harry Potter, 8



Elizabeth Hallanger

Should Santa Claus face charges for breaking and entering?

A conviction seems unlikely due to a lack of credible evidence

Aanen Kulseth
Staff Writer

Everyone has heard of Santa Claus. He has appeared in countless movies and shows, and he delivers presents every year on the night of December 24th. However something has bothered me lately, Santa never uses a key. Santa still goes into houses despite doors being locked. Even if he comes through a window or down the chimney, Santa is still intentionally entering a locked house. So, should Santa be charged?

Now what is a breaking and entering charge, and how is it different from burglary? Well, I will explain it here. Breaking and entering is a fifth-degree felony, with minimum jail time of six months. The charge itself consists of two sections,

- "No person by force, stealth, or deception, shall trespass in an unoccupied

structure, with purpose to commit therein any theft offense, as defined in section 2913.01 of the Revised Code, or any felony."

- "No person shall trespass on the land or premises of another, with purpose to commit a felony."

The main thing to focus on here is "stealth". This refers to trying to avoid discovery when entering. The charges for this are a maximum of one year in prison, with a minimum of six months in prison. The court also has the ability to issue a fine of up to \$2500. Now since Santa isn't stealing anything, I'm uncertain if he should receive this charge. On one hand, he is definitely sneaking into houses. But on the other hand, he isn't stealing anything and he is leaving gifts.

Now the other question is, should he receive a burglary charge, and how is it different from breaking and entering?

Well, a burglary occurs when a person "enters a home or structure and remains in the structure with an intent to commit a crime. The severity of the crime increases if a person is in the dwelling or is likely to be within the dwelling." I think the key words here are "with an intent to commit a crime." As Santa does not intend to commit any crimes, I do not think that he could receive a burglary charge.

Since we know that Santa probably won't be convicted of breaking and entering or burglary, the last potential charge he could receive would be trespassing. Trespassing is defined as committing any of the following charges:

- Knowingly enter in and/or remain on another person's property, land, or premises
- Knowingly enter in and/or remain on another person's property, land, or premises where access is restricted by specific factors like hours or persons
- Refusing or failing to leave land or premises after

being given notice to leave by appropriate signs and fencing restricting access

- Refusing or failing to leave land or premises after being given verbal notification to do so

The key section here is "Knowingly enter in and/or remain on another person's property, land, or premises." This sentence lets us know that Santa has committed trespassing by knowingly entering another person's property, but without evidence it would be difficult to prove.

I don't think that he would be convicted for any of these charges due to the evidence required in proving them. The charges require eyewitness accounts or forensic evidence. Santa has planned for this on both fronts, since he is a master of remaining unseen and unheard. For the forensic evidence, the way he plans to get rid of it is quite simple. First he wears gloves while delivering presents. And second, the morning after he breaks

Santa, 8



Dear Evan Hansen

Great as a musical, not so great as a film

Elizabeth Hallanger
Staff Writer

In a film age of remakes and remasters, many have taken on the task of translating an on-stage musical to a movie, but when doing so, a lot of changes have to be made, many of which could either make or break the product.

This brings us to the recent Dear Evan Hansen movie. Dear Evan Hansen was a popular play on Broadway, about the titular Evan Hansen, and his elaborate lie about a friendship with a dead classmate. So, the question remains, did it make a successful transition to the screen, and use the new medium to improve on it's story? Or will "words fail" to describe just how awful the movie is? Spoiler alert, it trends awful.

The plot of the movie follows Evan Hansen, a socially awkward and anxious teenager. He's recently been recommended to write positive letters to himself by his therapist, which he bizarrely writes and prints out in the school library. He's also begun to develop a crush on Zoe, the sister of Connor, a kid who's also struggling with issues regarding mental health. One day, when printing out his letter, he comes across Connor, who signs his cast, then notices that Evan's note mentions Zoe, and angrily steals it.

Evan Hansen, 9

Should schools ban phones?

Maybe a less extreme solution is the answer to this problem

Aurora Hull-Williams
Staff Writer

Everyone must sit six feet apart from each other to keep others safe. The room is relatively quiet, and the people seem bored. Sometimes someone will look up from their food to glance at the clock, only to discover that time is moving even slower than they thought. In a pre-COVID-19 world, you might think this was describing a prison lunch

break, but this is just the new reality for OWL students at lunch.

We now have COVID safe lunches, where everyone must sit six feet away from others, in assigned seating that can make it hard to talk to people. With the new phone ban in place, all you can do is finish your food and wait for lunch to end. The no phone ban extends past the classrooms into the hallways

Phones, 10

An album made up of dreams

Lil Naz X puts a new twist on his music

Ghost Olatunde
Staff Writer

Lil Naz X — Montero Lamar Hill a musician who just came out with a new album titled Montero. I love this album overall. It's very smooth and fluid. There are some odd parts, but I really love this album. It's powerful.

One of my favorite tracks is "Call me by your name." A lot of talk has been going around about this song. I have a few opinions. Overall, it's a great song with lots of crazy lyrics and images. This song has lots of meaning behind it about coming out and being who you are. Some lyrics that stood out to me are "I'm not fazed, only here to sin if Eve ain't in your garden, you know that you can." He seems to be indicating



that he is homosexual and that he is keeping it secret. I think Lil Naz X wanted people who are in the closet to feel like they are not alone, and he did that. I give this song an overall 7.5 out of 10.

Another notable song is "DOLLA SIGN SLIME." This song is very different from what I expected. This song has a different style from Lil Naz X normal rhythm, and I love that. The song is very upbeat with a nice pace. Lyrics that stood out from that song are "They can't stop me say I can't do it,****, watch me." I love these lyrics because they are saying no matter how much hate you put on me, I will keep going. I also love that Meghan was in this song. She ate with that verse and really brought a new spin to Lil Naz X songs. I rate this song a 8 out of 10.

The last song I'm going to talk about is "Am I dreaming." This is absolutely my favorite song by far. It is breathtaking with Miley Sirus in it, and different from anything Lil Naz X has done before. It has a slow pace and a Lullaby melody

that make it feel like you are dreaming. The lyrics that stood out are the most simple: "never forget me and everything I've done." It feels like a new beginning and a new start. I love it. I just lost someone very important to me and these lyrics make me feel so safe. I honestly feel like this was a perfect song to end with for the album. It just wraps up the whole album and keeps us satisfied. Overall I would give this amazing song a 9 out of 10.

Honestly I don't think there are any bad songs in this album. "Scoop" and "That's what I want" are some really good upbeat songs that are as expected. These have a faster pace and bring up the mood with Doja Cat ft in "Scoop". "Life after Salem" is very gothic and slow and I honestly love that it's so different. "Tales of Dominica" "Dead right now," and "Void" are all very similar in pace and stunning. They have the type of sweet sounding calming music yet still have a little spice and I love that.

Overall this album is really amazing. It's not perfect, but it's just great. This album may have been hyped a bit too much, but I still want to give it 8 out of 10.

Danny ranks xmas songs

What songs make it on Danny's exclusive list?

Danny Hobday
Staff Writer

For me, Christmas music trumps any kind of music. Rap, pop, and country have nothing on Christmas music. So when Christmas music started coming back on the radio, it got me thinking. What Christmas songs are the best of the best?

So, I made a list of the top five Christmas songs for the holiday season. Not many people will agree with my choices, and some great songs may be left out because there's so many, but trust me, every song on this list is top tier.

Number Five: All I Want For Christmas Is You by Mariah Carey

"All I want for Christmas is You" is a great song and every year it's the first Christmas



song you hear on the radio. The song is great, don't get me wrong, but it's almost played too much. I had to include it in the list because it's a classic, but the overplay factor for me held me back from putting it any higher than here at number five.

Number Four: Silent Night by Frank Sinatra

This is such a good song I was debating putting this higher. "Silent Night" is the perfect song to listen to on Christmas Eve night. It's slow



and soft and super easy to sing along to. Frank Sinatra's and Amy Grant's versions are the only acceptable ones though.

Number Three: Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree by Brenda Lee

"Rockin' Around The Christmas Tree" is a very upbeat festive song. This song brings back great memories, including dancing in the living room with my family while putting ornaments on the tree. Not many people would put this even close to their own top five, but for me it can immediately change the mood and definitely deserves this number three spot.

Number Two: Christmas



(Baby Please Come Home) by Darlene Love or Mariah Carey

"Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)" is about Christmas activities and things you see around Christmas time. It's a song you can jam to in the car because it's so upbeat. In the song, by Darlene Love, you can tell that it isn't like many songs. Her voice is incredible and unique. Overall, this is a great song and you can't go wrong listening to it anywhere at any time.

Number One: Agnus Dei by Amy Grant

"Agnus Dei" is the clear number one for me by a mile. I love this song because every



time you hear it you want to start singing. It's a super soothing song and it flows really well. Growing up, I would hear this song a lot leading up to Christmas and it brings back so many great memories. The song is also a whopping six minutes long, so you get to listen to a fantastic song for twice as long as a normal-length song.



Maren Sletten
Staff Writer

You're here because you were given the chance. Like the other contestants, you are millions in debt. You are lined up for a simple game of red light green light, right? When it says red light, someone nearby falls forward onto their face. They get shot. You look around and away, anywhere but the now blown open head of the person you didn't know.

That is the essence of Squid game, a TV show that was released on September 17 2021 on Netflix. The show originally aired in South Korea. It is set in South Korea around the main character, Seong Gi-hun -- or player 456. Throughout the show, he competes against other players for the grand prize of approximately 45.6 billion dollars.

I was one of the many people to watch this despite my younger age. The show's targeted demographic is the 18-34+ age range, because of the inappropriate scenes and high levels of gore. Multiple people are killed off in the first episode during a deadly game of red light green light.

Throughout the nine epi-

Squid Game lives up to the hype

The characters are compelling and the plot keeps you guessing

sodes, 456 players participate in children's games, such as red light green light, tug of war, ddakji (a game about throwing square piece of paper until one of them flips), and dalgona (a game about caramel honeycomb). All of these games are life and death situations, because of the operator of the course, who isn't revealed until the end.

I found it fun and fascinating, this is one of the many shows I didn't skip ahead and sat through all the eight plus hours. I found it enjoyable and full of twists leading to a surprise ending.

I felt a High amount of excitement watching the character. He has a daughter and an ex wife, making him relatable to single fathers, and ends up making a lot of friends along the way -- many of whom die.

There is also the second female character we get introduced to that becomes your favorite whether you like it or not. She has a little brother who is currently in the foster care system because she can't care for him on her own. She tries to be stone cold and not get attached to anyone, but is only partially successful.

The cast is very good, but the games themselves were the most enjoyable part. They had me sitting on the edge of my

seat, and I had to wait until I got home to find out what happened in the next episode.

The show overall has 111 million views as of the time of writing, and a second season has been teased. The TV show held the top show in 94 different countries. It also has been dubbed and subbed in 37 different languages. Because of this it is a very easy to watch show world wide, which most people can. Because of this it became very popular and seemed to sprout the second it was released on Netflix.

I think they did a great job when it came to the way the shot the show. The lighting really sets the scene, but it was really a slow burn. I must admit I'm not a patient person, and as I waited my eight hours, it was sometimes very slow.

If you like slow burn I believe you would like it. The outfits, like the red jumpsuits that the manager, cleaner, and military wear, along with their shape coded masks help set the scene, along with the green track suits that the players wear with numbers sewn onto them. It's become iconic.

Overall, it's a good show with the right amount of character death, tear-erking moments, and "wait what?!" If you're interested in this show or haven't watched it yet, do it! With your parents permission.

Super Smash Bros impresses over the years

Thumbs up for the new updates

Oliver Juvland
Staff Writer

You're having fun playing your favorite game: Super Smash Bros Ultimate. You have all the DLC (that's downloadable content, to you non-gamers) and have gotten all of the characters into Elite Smash. Now, you might be wondering how this all happened... Well, let's start at the beginning.

Smash Bros Ultimate is the latest installment in the Super Smash Bros series and is coming up on its third anniversary of release. After the Nintendo Switch was revealed in 2017, Masahiro Sakurai randomly out of nowhere showed a trailer for the next Super Smash Bros game in a Nintendo Direct video. It was very, very, (as some would say) hype. After the initial reveal we were told that every character from the previous Smash games would be there plus some newcomers. People were told that the game would have paid DLC and the initial price of \$60.

When you first start up the game you hear the Life-Light song and the opening sequence. It is magical. The menu is very unique when compared to the other Smash Bros menus. When you go into

the smash mode you choose the rule set that you want and get to play 89 different characters (without the DLC it's 77 characters), each with 8 costumes that can either change the characters slightly with a different color palette or a different character that has the same move set.

Each character (excluding the costume characters) has their own move set. The moves available include but are not limited to: walk, run, jump, double jump, use basic attacks, use tilt attacks, use aerial attacks and even taunt. The more attacks a character takes the more damage or percent that character builds, the more percent a character has the further the character will be launched.

The graphics of smash ultimate are amazing. They are 1080p when the switch is connected to a TV and 720p when it is in handheld mode. Every character looks more cartoonishly realistic than any other smash bros game. Every character looks like they have even more details in their model, a lot more than the other smash games.

There have been many updates for smash ultimate from 1.0.0 to 13.0.0 so how good

are they? Well they are amazing! With every update the underpowered or less played characters get buffed and the overpowered or more played characters get balanced. In each patch, bugs that come with each new character are patched, for example Joker, if he used his final smash in classic mode the game would be softlocked and in the next update/patch it was fixed!

The developers are very good at seeing the bugs and fixing them as well as seeing what characters are underpowered or underplayed and what characters are overpowered and balancing them. I think the strengths of the new set up are developers looking at characters and making them more fun to play and developers being able to fix the bugs

Super Smash Bros, 9



Looking back on four years of highly damaging policy

Trump did a lot of damage that Biden is working hard to undo

Claire Hulson
Staff Writer

We all know not a lot of people don't like former president Donald Trump. But it makes sense for us to not like someone who has no clue what they're doing, has unjust motives, and is leading our country into a downward spiral. Like for someone who hates illegal immigration, you would think that supporting and assisting in the amount of lega. immigration would be the right move? This was not the case. During Trump's term legal green cards were reduced by 50%. Smart huh.

Now while making over 400 executive acts and orders, you might think that Trump wouldn't have time for hobbies, but you would be wrong. They include golfing, being a steak connoisseur, separating families, and trying to build

walls. As for current president Joe Biden, his hobbies include being too old for hobbies and cleaning up other people's messes.

Trump's term was a very, very bad four years for immigration policy.

Would you agree it's not the best idea for a president of the U.S. to support an Act that would hurt so many lives that he relies on without knowing or recognizing? One of Trump's most infamous acts was something which has many names, such as, unethical, unjust, or even inhumane, or the RAISE act. Close to 1 million people immigrate into the U.S. by green cards or Visas, The RAISE act will cut 50% of these Visas by eliminating categories like the diversity program, the current family Visa, and if you think it couldn't get worse, it would cap the number of refugees

seeking shelter in the U.S. allowed, at 50,000 annually.

Another one of Trump's most damaging policies was the dismantling of DACA (Deferred Action of Child Arrivals). DACA is a policy that helps undocumented minors who were brought to the this country stay in the U.S and eventually earn citizenship. This policy was implemented during the 2012 Obama presidency and was around for five years before Trump ordered the Department of Homeland Security to "begin an orderly transition and winddown of DACA." Yes he spelled winddown instead of wind down, which makes sense for someone who can't give anyone space, especially women. He does, afterall, have rape and sexual assault alagations against him. Dismantling DACA was a bad idea for the 800,000 refugees that have

used DACA and the 690,000 who are currently enrolled and using DACA to get jobs and stay in the this country safely.

Now whether Biden is 100% good or not is up for debate, but he has managed to undo huge problems Trump caused during his presidency, including stopping the building of the Mexico border wall, Executive Order 13815 to Resettle refugees, Executive Order 13993 that stopped noncitizens who did not pose any threat from being deported for 100 days, and undoing Executive Order 13780 which banned people from African or Muslim countries from entering the U.S. for 90 days.

Overall Biden is on the path to setting up the next presidency for a productive term, but it will be challenging because he will spend much of his energy undoing harmful acts and orders Trump made.

Santa, 6

into houses involves opening presents and leaving a mess of wrapping paper, as well as having family over. All of this combined covers up any forensic evidence that would have been left behind.

Should Santa face charges? I say no to the breaking and entering charges, as well as the burglary charges. But, I say yes to the trespassing charges. I don't think he would receive either of the first two charges as he is not committing crimes in the dwellings he is entering.

But by simply entering another person's property, he is trespassing.

Overall, I think Santa would not be found guilty for breaking and entering, as there is simply not enough evidence. At most, he could be found for trespassing, but someone

would have to see him enter their house for him to be convicted. However, I don't think anyone would try and convict him, since he delivers presents to houses every year and is a pretty nice guy. Nice enough to the point where some people leave out cookies for him.

The best movies of 2021 are coming very soon

Classics, action films, family movies: Hollywood has a bit of everything coming out this winter

Bennett Vaughan-Fier
Staff Writer

Even though COVID-19 slowed down production of a lot of movies, the movie business has come back with a bang, releasing movies like Shang Chi, and No Time To Die, Dune, and many others. However, I would even go out on a limb to say that these new upcoming movies are going to be better than the ones that have already come out. I will break the new releases into three helpful categories: classics, action, and family movies.

Classics. These movies are continuations of classic movie lines, catering to people who are older or like the classics.

The newest Matrix movie Matrix Resurrections is about Neo, whose life takes an unexpected turn when he finds himself back inside the Matrix. I sadly haven't seen many of the Matrix movies, but this movie from the trailer looks really good, because it feels like the first matrix movie but updated with its effects to a modern version. I would recommend this for people who like dystopian movies, but I would recommend that you watch at least a few matrix movies first. This movie is definitely going to be exciting and many fans have waited a long time for it.

Top Gun Maverick is about Pete "Maverick" Mitchell, who

keeps pushing the envelope after years of service as one of the Navy's top aviators. He must soon confront the past while training a new squad of graduates for a dangerous mission that demands the ultimate sacrifice. From what I know about this movie, and the movies that came before this, it's classic. However, I dont think I'll watch this movie because it just doesn't look very interesting, and it feels like the same idea as the other movies. I would recommend this movie if you want to feel nostalgia from the movie, or you liked the other ones.

Jurassic World Dominion will wrap up the Jurassic World franchise, but will not be the last movie that they will make. This Movie I am definitely going to see because it is one of the franchises that has been around for a long time, and it looks really good. I would definitely recommend this for everyone, whether you watched it or not. However, it would not hurt to watch the other Jurassic World and Park movies.

Action. These movies are movies that include a lot fight scenes, car chases, etc. These movies are mostly for everyone.

Spiderman No Way Home is an action movie about the troubles of Spiderman when

his identity is revealed and his world spirals out of control. Personally I would go see this movie. However I would recommend that if you haven't watched Spiderman Far From Home I would watch that first, because Spiderman No Way Home is a continuation of that movie. This movie is definitely for action lovers, and I would recommend it for everyone who either loves action movies or just loves Marvel.

The newest Resident Evil movie is Welcome To Raccoon City. This movie is about a group of survivors who must work together to survive the evil that lies below the wasteland that is the former home of pharmaceutical giant Umbrella Corp. I honestly have only heard of the video games produced, and I haven't ever seen any of the movies. From the

Movies, 9



Sir Nakhai Guy-Cornelius
Staff Writer

Halo is a military science campaign battle focused game created by Bungie. The franchise is currently managed and developed by 343 Industries, and owned and published by Xbox Game Studios. The peak of the game was about mid-November 2006, Halo 2 was the most popular video game on Xbox Live. It had seemed to be the "peak of the game" after its release.

But Halo was has been re-

Harry Potter, 6

book, Harry confronts Voldemort in front of everyone at Hogwarts and they engage in a compelling battle of wits. Whatever I say about this climax won't ever truly describe how great it really is, so I'd suggest you just read the part in the book.

But any trace of that brilliant writing is completely gone in the film. Instead, we get a pointless CGI wizard duel between. I honestly find it impressive how this scene managed to feel so hollow and empty. Even the musical score didn't try to make the fight feel dramatic until it's about to end. Out of all the times these movies picked style over substance, this is the most insulting as the worst possible ending for this



New Mine-craft update

Caitlyn Christensen
Staff Writer

Minecraft is a staple of stay-at-home covid classics, which gave us something to do when there was nothing else to do. With yearly updates it can sometimes be hard to keep up, so lets go over the upcoming one.

The big news is that caves and cliffs part two has been pushed to release with the wild update. The warden and deep dark will finally be coming, but that waiting was well spent because with the new update abandoned cities are coming to the game! They will also introduce a family of blocks categorized as skulk blocks. Just remember to be careful in the deep dark, because one wrong step will be your end.

On a lighter note, frogs and a focus on the swamp biome will be coming. With the swamp part of the update the mangrove tree will be added,

a swamp tree with huge roots, and with a new tree comes a new wood type. The mangrove wood type looks very similar to jungle wood, but there will be different designs for doors and trapdoors. The mangrove wood type will bring a new side to the building community adding more options to create more diverse builds.

Back to the frogs, they won't exclusively spawn in swamps, but they will have unique textures for different biomes. For all your adventures with your pet frogs, boats with chests will be coming to make your sea travels longer with the extra storage. Part two of caves and cliffs and the wild update will be one of the most exciting yet! Be ready to play it in 2022.

Personally I'm very excited for the deep dark so i can explore the endless cities, also for the loot of course. Overall the update looks very fun and I can't wait to play.

Halo, was it really that bad?

New Halo Infinite game out December 8

ceiving hate from original fans, due to new updates and bugs. COVID-19 had also delayed the release of 'Halo Infinite' which upset fans. Another complaint was that the campaigns were "repetitive," but some adored the campaigns.

Halo to me can be repetitive, but 'cool'. It can get a little repetitive with each game being mostly a campaign, although there is halo online in some games, but it is very buggy and unfun due to the

siencere amount of exploiters in the game. The Halo campaigns are a little repetitive, but definitely add on to the deep story of the game, which can be confusing to younger players. I had only played the game on an xbox 360, I didn't find many bugs other than some occasional lag spikes or being booted off of the game.

Halo Infinite release date is now December 8, 2021, Microsoft has revealed, and will include the game's campaign and multiplayer modes. Microsoft and 343 Industries originally made a 2020 release date that coincided with the launch of the Xbox Series X.

franchise.

These eight films had the ambitious objective of adapting what is in my opinion one of the best book series of all time, but ultimately ended up proving that it is impossible to recreate something so amazing on the big screen. I do have to say, though, I feel more sympathetic for these movies after critiquing them, because I've realized just how difficult of a task they had. Obviously, the mistakes they made dragged them down, but the studio also just didn't have the time or money to adapt the books in all their detailed glory.

And at the end of the day, despite how much I dislike these movies, it's still impressive that what they managed to get right from the book. They put together an amazing

cast, a breathtaking set design of places like Hogwarts and Diagon Alley, and recreations of many memorable scenes.

I want the final takeaway of this two-part article to be - the books are better. You should read them. And if you have read them, you should go reread them. But another takeaway I want is - something I remembered while rewatching and rereading the series to write this article - is that even if a book is better than its movie version, that doesn't always mean the movie is automatically bad. Even if it misses things from its source material, it can still be good in its own right.

Well, except for Deathly Hallows Part 2. And Goblet of Fire. And Order of the Phoenix. And -

Amazon’s new game is im-mersive, visually beautiful

Patrick Toohey
Staff Writer

Imagine yourself walking. You still have another 5000 meters until your destination, with the reward of your travels being exactly what you want. So, you walk. In the distance you see a figure gathering materials. His armor shines bright silver. He is swinging his axe quickly and timed perfectly; his level exceeds yours by at least 30. He’s standing 100 meters away across a field of un-cut grass. You sneak away, silently hoping that you’re in the same faction, or that he has an ounce of respect for lower level players, because if he doesn’t... all your current progress on your missions will be gone.

New World is a game that puts you on a variety of different missions; but the main focus is a mineral that amplifies a person’s strength and

character, not dissimilar to the super soldier serum in Captain America. You play an adventurer coming to the world of Aeturnum in hopes of finding and gathering the rare mineral, but it all goes downhill when a storm breaks your ship into pieces, you then learn how to adapt to the new world.

Developed by Amazon Games, New World will greet players with a similar, but not too similar experience. Taking place in a mystical world, you’ll find yourself exploring Aeturnum, a vast world filled with wildlife, caves, and a variety of creatures, ranging from mountain lions to zombies.

Filled to the brim with detail and fun, your journey will most likely be different from your friends, depending on your faction, skills, and play style. The game can be severely addictive, as seeing your stats

and levels going up provides more and more dopamine.

Though the game can be dull at times -- it can get repetitive walking from one place to the next fighting similar enemies -- one thing that can spice this up is the combat. By turning pvp on before leaving a settlement, you leave yourself vulnerable to player attacks. Sometimes this leads to really fun encounters that leave you with a feeling of accomplishment. Like one time, I encountered someone at a similar level and we both agreed to a duel. Duels, unlike random encounters, leave no actual consequence for losing. You just get revived at the same spot you started the duel.

But other times you’ll be randomly attacked by a level 50 player and in an instant you’ll be dropped on the ground, angry that someone at such a higher level than you completely ruined all your progress on your missions. Although this does suck, it leaves a lot of interesting player encounters, especially with the proximity chat features, allowing you to basically talk to people within a close proximity. Sometimes you meet goofy people who

say the weirdest things.

A common complaint among the playerbase is the lack of mounts (things like horses, wagons, etc). It would spice up the experience and create faster-paced gameplay, and allow for a lot more freedom and creativity. Another thing that is arguably way more important is the lack of swimming in the game. Though there are large water masses, your character will continue walking as if it was still on land, but after twenty seconds of being submerged your character will drown -- a very annoying defeat that will almost surely confuse uninformed new players.

Overall the game is a beautiful experience -- immersive and intense, taking only minutes to understand how the core mechanics work, and then taking hours upon hours to master every aspect of the game. Though the game does have its hiccups, you can see that at its core Amazon focuses on a new fresh experience for players of all kinds. So if you have the means, and have a few friends... the game is a great MMORPG ready to show you a whole new world.

Evan Hansen, 6

health, and how they play a tragic part in his elaborate lie. In the movie, however, the feeling doesn’t seem to translate. Instead of being sympathetic towards Evan and his struggles, I was focused on two things. One: how bad the things Evan was doing truly were, and two: his strange aura of creepiness, likely caused by Evan’s weird, middle-aged-man-baby face.

Evan’s performance, and more importantly, his face, are possibly the biggest points of contention for me. The main actor for Evan in the play, Ben Platt, reprises his role in the film, which is somewhat of a problem, because he’s older than he was during the show’s Broadway run. The movie makes an attempt to try and de-age him, but it doesn’t work.

The caked-on foundation, that is very clear and distracting in close-up shots, as well as the curly-haired, poorly-styled pseudo-mullet, makes Evan look like a 30 year old man who snuck into a high school. The way he moves, hunches, makes awkward hand movements, and sulks around make him seem not like an anxious teenager, but a creepy old man.

His character’s middle-aged-ness makes it hard to sympathize with him. When Evan looks like a teenager, you get the sense that he’s still a kid, and that he really doesn’t know better or truly understand the consequences of what he’s doing. However, when the character looks like an adult, you lose that sense of innocence. His actions feel less misguided or driven by poor

mental health, and far more purposeful and sinister. It’s unfortunate, because I found all of the other characters to be decently enjoyable. Evan’s mom and the Murphy family all had great performances.

Another problem is the music. This may just be bias from my middle school days as a hardcore theater kid, but the songs in the movie just don’t seem as good as the ones in the musical. They feel a bit artificial. Plus, they cut one of, in my opinion, the best songs in the musical, “Good for You,” where Evan is confronted about his lie by multiple characters, and everything comes crumbling down.

In the end, I thought the Dear Evan Hansen Movie was silly at best, and downright bad at worst. As a whole it’s a tolerable film, but if you decide to actually pay attention to what’s happening, or just look at Evan Hansen, you start to lose that feeling. Whether it’s from Evan’s distracting face, general creepiness, and poor characterization, the plot’s removal of key elements, or the mediocre songs.

Overall, if you want to experience the story of Dear Evan Hansen, I wouldn’t recommend the movie. You’ll probably enjoy the story far more if you read a play synopsis, check out the soundtrack or even go see the play live. Unless, of course, instead of enjoying a tragic tale of mental health struggles, you’d much rather prefer the story of a man-child lying to a vulnerable family, breaking into song at inappropriate intervals, and awkwardly naruto-running down the hallways of his high school.



Super Smash Bros, 7

as soon as possible in the next patch. There are weaknesses in this setup though, for example some characters can have loops (a sequence of moves that the opponent can’t escape

if they are hit by it) that aren’t fixed until the next big patch, and sometimes the hitboxes on some moves can be really crazy.

The great thing about the Super Smash Bros updates is how beginner friendly it is.

There is a wide variety of characters, so you can pick one that suits your playstyle. Want to combo your opponents? Pick lightweights like Mario, fox, or Kirby. Want to do a lot of damage with just a few moves? Pick heavyweights like Don-

key Kong, Bowser, or Ridley. Super Smash Bros Ultimate is a game that has many characters and modes that can fit your playstyle, you just need to decide what you want to do.

Movies, 8

trailer it looks good because of the graphics and the storyline that it follows. I would recommend this movie for people who like horror, and or have seen the other movies or liked the games. This movie doesn’t seem like it needs any backstory, so you don’t have to go fishing for the lore or backstory of the characters.

A new addition to the many villainous themed movies is Morbius. This movie is about Biochemist Michael Morbius, who tries to cure himself of a rare blood disease. When his experiment goes wrong, he inadvertently infects himself with a form of vampirism instead. This movie is worth watching because you don’t need any backstory, and I guess if you get scared easily it might be frightening, but this movie doesn’t look like a full on horror movie. I would recommend this for action lovers, and or marvel fans.

In Doctor Strange’s Multiverse of Madness, Dr. Stephen Strange continues his research on the Time Stone. But an old friend turned enemy seeks to destroy every sorcerer on Earth, messing with Strange’s plan and also causing him to unleash an unspeakable evil. I personally liked the first Doctor Strange movie, and this sequel looks even better. This movie will definitely be one of the most impactful on the marvel universe, and I think it will be one of the biggest movies of

the year. I would recommend this movie for all marvel fans and or action enjoyers. however, if you haven’t watched the other doctor strange movie, I would watch that first.

Family movies. These movies are movies that are directed to kids or ones you should see with your family.

Encanto is a new disney movie about The Madrigals. They live hidden in the mountains of Colombia in a place called the Encanto. The magic of the Encanto has blessed every child in the family with a unique gift, every child except Mirabel. However, she soon may be the Madrigal’s last hope when she discovers that the magic surrounding the Encanto is now in danger. I think this is a cool new addition to the diverse new Disney movies. I personally probably won’t see this movie, but I do recommend that you watch this with your family.

Sing 2 is about Buster Moon and his cast of animal performers preparing to launch a dazzling stage extravaganza in the glittering entertainment capital of the world. There’s just one problem, he has to find and persuade the world’s most reclusive rock star to join them. What begins as Buster’s dream of big-time success soon becomes “an emotional reminder of the power of music to heal even the most broken heart.” This movie looks okay. I probably won’t see it because it’s targeted more to kids, and it doesn’t look that



interesting. However, I think it poses a good message. This is definitely a feel good movie and would be good to watch with a younger brother or sister, or your family.

West Side Story is an adaptation of the 1957 musical, which was originally adapted from Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet. This movie explores forbidden love and the rivalry between the Jets and the Sharks, two teenage street gangs of different ethnic backgrounds. I would recommend this movie for theater fans, and others because this is not only a film that’s being directed by Steven Spielberg, but also this story’s plot is very interesting.

With all these new movies coming out in these next few months I would recommend heading to your local theater and checking some of these movies.

Fraquetball update

Jude Witt

Staff Writer

Fraquetball just started this week after a long layoff. The last complete season wrapped up in the spring of 2019.

Fraquetball is a game invented at OWL over 20 years ago. It was created by Liam Shramko and Nathan Jesson, students at OWL in the early 2000s. The game originated when they got a ping pong ball and started hitting it back and

forth after getting bored. They ended up inventing a game that has lasted for generations.

The rules are simple. One side serves, and if the ball crosses the end line then that’s a point. The goal is to get to seven points and win by two.

There are three commissioners for Fraquetball this year: Ian Brooks, Jalen Bolton-Steiner, and Stian Asper. Stian is excited about “keeping the legacy of this game going,” and will put his

role as commissioner on his college applications.

As for the teams to watch, Stian named two teacher teams. “I think Tom and Damon will be a good team. Leo and Tim are usually a really good team too.”

There are 60 people that registered to play this year. They are hoping to start the finals for the tournament after winter break. There may be another tournament after spring break.



Purple Press Staff Photos

7th grader Joaquin Paez hits the ball during a game on December 7th (above, left), 7th grader Dylan Bickelhall playing in a game this year (above, right), 7th grader Luke Hobday ready to defend in his first fraquetball game of the year (below).



Phones, 6

and the lunchroom, with a zero-tolerance policy for having your cell phone out. The phone ban is in place to keep students on track and focused in school, but is it effective in accomplishing this? And is the new phone rule reasonable?

The idea of banning phones in school is hardly a new one. For years upon years, different schools in the SPPS district and beyond have tried to get students to unplug and pay attention to their teachers. After the lockdown, things began to change in regards to phones and school. If you have a class on the first floor, you have probably noticed the Wifi problems in school, with connections to the Wifi dropping, apps like Notabili-

ty and Schoology freezing up or glitching and downloading apps or updating your iPad taking so long that most students only do it at home. With around 450 students possibly using the WIFI at any given time, connectivity can be a bit of an issue. Using your phone as an educational tool to connect to Schoology or access a slideshow is very handy.

Students also just got back to in-person learning after a year of virtual school. Expecting students to start instantly transitioning from using technology for 6-10 hours a day to only using your iPad when class might call for it is unrealistic. The idea of leaving your phone in your locker during the school day, the way that teachers suggest you do, is both unsafe and impractical.

Parents and guardians need to reach a student throughout the day for various reasons.

Then we have lunch, where students have designated seating. They sit six feet apart from one another to protect everyone from COVID. Although this setup is safer for students, it also makes positive interactions or socialization harder. Because of this, students have to entertain themselves throughout the lunch period, but because of the phone ban, students don't have a lot of things to do. Most students leave their backpacks in their classes since they go back to those classes after lunch.

The phone ban isn't a completely terrible thing, a lot of parents/guardians appreciate it because it gives kids a chance to focus entirely on school

instead of splitting their attention. Teachers like it for a similar reason because without phones kids become more focused on their education. Many people even think that students aren't mature enough to handle having cellphones with them at school, and will automatically be distracted by them. While it's true that cellphones can be distractions, the extremity of the ban is unnecessary. Students can learn and practice responsibility through phones, and even use them as educational tools, and when learning isn't actively happening there's no reason that phones shouldn't be allowed. Students use their phones to talk to people, to share information and things they enjoy, and to listen to music and consume other forms of me-

dia. There is nothing inherently wrong with any of those things, so long as they are happening at an appropriate time.

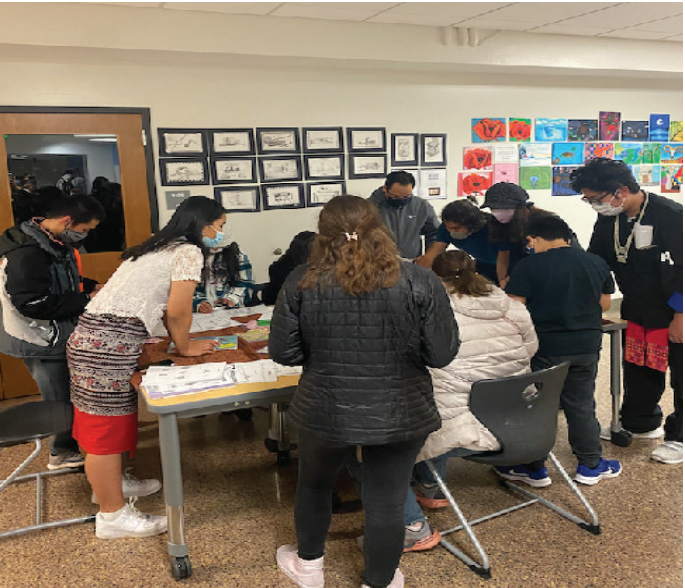
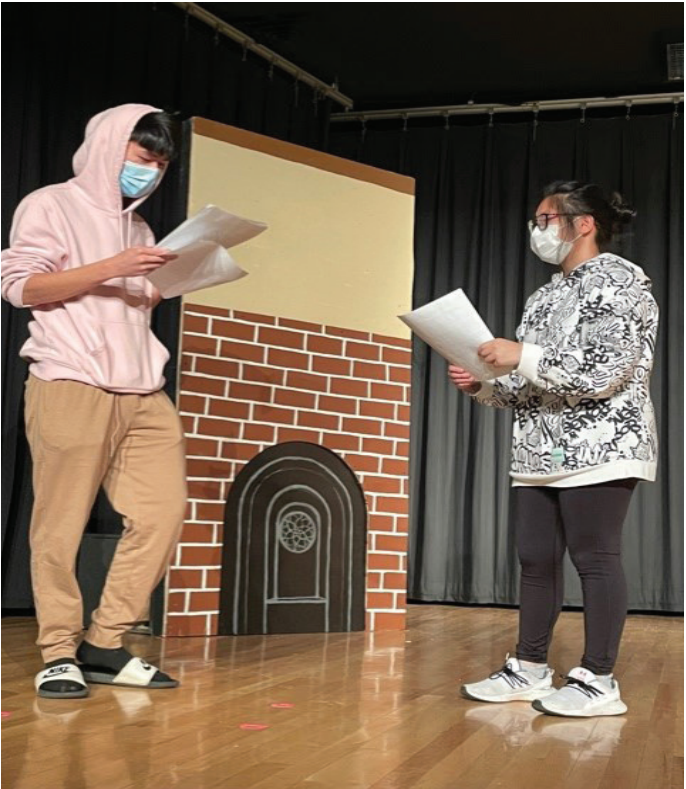
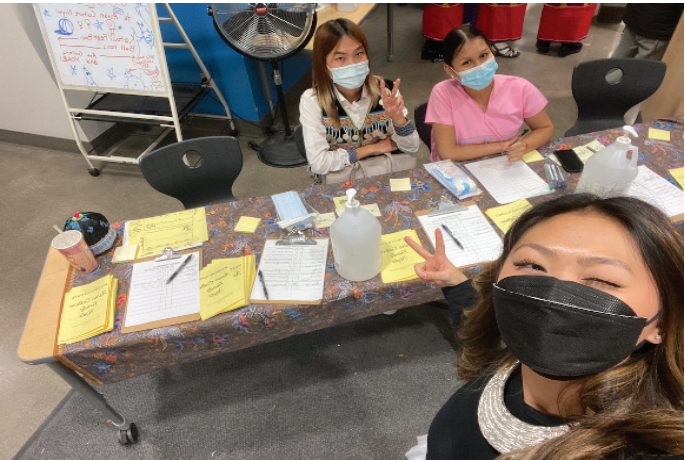
Instead of the complete ban, I would propose a less extreme solution. One that bans phones in classrooms and other learning environments, but still allows students to carry their phones and use them outside of class. Students would be able to use phones

during lunch break, for example. This solution requires more trust and faith in students, but I would argue that this is a great opportunity and a solution that makes more sense for OWL's values. Giving students a chance to prove that they are responsible enough to handle phones could create a better, more positive school community built on trust and respect.



Asian Culture Night memories

OWL celebrated Asian Culture Night last week, on Wednesday, December 1st. When guests arrived, they were invited to do origami or participate in the spicy noodle challenge. There was also a display of books and cultural artifacts to look at. Following these activities, there were performances in the auditorium, including dances, a short play, a taekwondo demonstration, and speakers. Food was available in to-go boxes for guests to take home with them. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the evening was capped to 150 people, so the event was at full capacity.



Students acting in a Reader's Theater play at Asian Culture Night (left, above), counselor Jolene Yang and volunteers passing out to-go boxes of food at the end of the event (left, below), students at the sign-in table at the event (middle, above), students in the OWL cafeteria for Asian Culture Night (middle), the organizers of Asian Culture Night, Mo Aung, Lue Lor, and Wawa Khin (not pictured: Ryuki Walker) (middle), guests at the event in the cafeteria (middle, below), some of the helpers who put on the event (right, above), guests working on origami with the help of volunteers (right, middle), and teachers Tim Leone-Getten, Luke Turvold, Preston West, and Bridget Leba with security guard Eric.



Upcoming Events

December 8-10: The Play That Goes Wrong at 7:00pm in the Auditorium

December 10: College March to the Mailbox at 9:45am in the Auditorium

December 14: PTO Meeting at 6pm in the Cafeteria

December 16: Picture Retakes

December 18-January 2: Winter Break

January 3: Classes Resume

January 13: Choir Concert

January 17: No School (MLK Day)