







## Students Will Love Mr. Reiersgaard

By Jocelyn Heacock

Pleasant Hill High School has been through three different principles over the past couple of years. But, the school has never had a principal like Mr. Chris Reiersgaard. Mr. Reiersgaard is a friendly, social, and passionate person who genuinely cares about his students.

Mr. Reiersgaard has been a teacher, a football, baseball, and track coach, as well as an administrator and a principal.

When Mr. Reiersgaard was in high school, he was active in not just three different sports, but in clubs, yearbook, newspaper, band, and choir. "At Springfield High School I started a student club called the "Miller Mob" to increase school spirit and support activities at school. This club was student led and had many members from all grades and demographics. This club was really fun to watch grow and contribute to events in a positive and sportsmanlike way."

Reiersgaard jokes that "I've spent 30 years in high school. I like everything about it. There is nothing I don't like about [working with high school students]."

"I love the energy, the smell, I love going to band and choir concerts, I love games, I just love everything about it. A person in this job has to love everything about high school because it's just the best place to be."

Mr. Reiersgaard places a lot of emphasis on public education, and it is something he feels passionate about. "There is nothing more important than education. We are learners throughout our life, not just in school. A free and appropriate public education is one of the cornerstones that make America great. Regardless of anyone's personal situation, they have the opportunity to go to school and pursue whatever career passion they have at no cost. Public education also serves as a microcosm of society where we have to interact and work within a diverse population, learning that we may need to put our differences aside to reach personal growth and

## Mr. Billie Coast Retreat Adventure

#### By Abigail Blatch

On January 19th, 21 students connected to The Mr. Billie Pageant gathered in different parents' cars to set off to Depoe Bay. The three hour drive may have seemed exhausting but with fun music and laughter filling the car the journey to Depoe Bay passes pretty fast. We left at about 11:30 from Pleasant Hill and we got to the rental house at about 4:30. When we finally arrived, I stepped out of the car and my legs were relieved to be free from sitting for so long.

Participating in the Mr. Billie program is such a great opportunity. We do so many fun activities: one event is the coast retreat. As everyone excitedly unloaded their pillows, blankets, and duffel bags from their car it was like watching kids pile into the house from the movie "Cheaper by the Dozen."

After we managed to bring everything inside the house and begin assigning rooms to each group. We ran upstairs to find a pool table, a ping pong table and a foosball table. The rest of the evening we played games and talked and just had a time where we were able to become closer.

Most of the time spent at the coast retreat the coordinators and contestants work together to write their "mom" letters and figure out their skits and their talents.

We did a lot of bonding activities. For example: sandcastle competition, scavenger hunt, and played lots of games where we were able to get to know each other. By the end of the retreat, we bonded and got focussed for the pageant which is happening March 16<sup>th</sup> in the Gymnasium.

Mr. Billie crew at the coast: Kat Willardson, Camble Ellis, Jack Perini, Delaney Fischer, Jon Fitzpatrick, Hunter Allen, Braedyn Hazel; Addie Bahen, Hannah Huff, Reagan Luiz, Gabby Roper, Tessa Hammond, Karley Bloxham, Merin Cunningham, Sophia Longworth, Abigail Blatch, Alyssa Basaraba, Alea Blatch and Sawyer Ireland and Dj Holman in front.



common goals."

Mr. Reiersgaard has worked at several schools, including Cottage Grove, Thurston, and Springfield. But for him, working in a small school is a favorite experience. "I had in my head what I almost imagined working at a small school would be like and the students and staff completely exceeded the expectation I had going in. I've only been here four weeks, [but] this is my favorite job I've ever had!"

The small school appeal was great for Mr. Reiersgaard after working at large schools with extensive campuses. "I can walk down the hallway and see the whole school. I love it."

To Mr. Reiersgaard, there's nothing better than working with the kids at this school. "They've given me such a warm welcome [and] reception at this school. The kids are amazing, [the] teachers are amazing. I love it. They've been super warm, super welcoming, I love it here."

Our new principal loves the school, the students, and the staff. He says you can always hear him before you can see himhe's always talking with someone. He enjoys walking around and being with the students, hearing about their days, and spending time with them. "I think high school students are genuinely authentic. They tell you what they are thinking, they're honest."

"My hope is that students begin to understand that the world doesn't revolve around one person and it is rewarding to be a part of something bigger than themselves."





## A few of the teachers we like

#### By Raelynn DuBose

We conducted a survey among students to gather their opinions about their favorite teacher. We asked them a few questions, such as who their favorite teacher is and the reasons behind it. We interviewed five students to ask for their opinions.

During the interview, we spoke with Benaiah Carrera who had good things to say about Mr. Gray. According to Benaiah, Mr. Gray is a kind and interesting person. He has various hobbies such as playing Dungeons and Dragons, studying physics, and robotics.

Benaiah also appreciated Mr. Gray's teaching method during their time in robotics. He mentioned that Mr. Gray would always try to find the good in a student's mistake, which was quite helpful.

Then spoke to Greta Gramzow. She mentioned that her favorite teacher is Mr. Meinzen. According to Greta, Mr. Meinzen is always kind, smart, funny, and attentive. He's curious and always willing to help his students.

When the classroom gets noisy, Mr. Meinzen is always there to assist and he understands his students' needs.

Another person we talked with was Jay Griffith. Jay appreciates Ms. Jampolsky as a very chilled and funny person who often makes jokes with her students. He also mentioned that the projects he has worked on under her guidance, if you are in a ceramics class, you can still be productive even if you choose not to work on ceramics.

The fourth person we spoke with was Kesslyn Bell. When asked about her favorite teacher, she mentioned Mrs. Watne. According to Kesslyn, Mrs. Watne has a great sense of humor and often makes funny comments during her lectures.

Autumn Smith also shared her thoughts on Ms. J. According to Autumn, Ms. J is a lovely person with a great personality. She appreciates how open and free Ms. J is, and how she does not force her students to stick to a specific medium.

She also narrates funny stories and jokes which

## Are we in for more great ice storms?

By Andrew Taylor

What caused the Great Freeze? Well there's a simple answer and a more complicated answer. Simple answer: The atmosphere above is at freezing temperature, while the ground below is colder. This causes the precipitation to freeze.

This is actually why Oakridge and other places up on the Cascades didn't get as affected as the valley floor.

But, why did it get so cold so quickly? Scientific American says, "Typically, very cold air in the Arctic is trapped inside a high-altitude swirl of winds called the polar vortex, which is surrounded by a lower-altitude band called the polar jet stream. If the polar vortex gets disrupted, however, the jet

stream can

in an Arctic

jet stream is

southern air

mixing with

become wavy

and carry frigid

air much farther south than usual

blast". The polar

formed by warm

colder northern

air. This brings in

more questions.

like does climate

change affect

The polar jet

stream, and

making arctic

storms more

prevalent? The

UChicago

answer is yes,

News says "by

about 2% for

every degree

world warms.

Furthermore,

winds will speed

**Celsius the** 

the fastest

therefore

kinda.



up 2.5 times faster than the average wind." The article also says that there needs to be further information on what the effects of this increased wind speed will be. We can't be for certain but there is a possibility there will be more violent winter storms.

### THE STORY OF VALENTINES DAY

By Izabella Patterson Giles

Today's Valentine's Day celebration is about love and giving gifts like chocolate, candy, or flowers, but Valentines did not start like that.

The holiday is supposedly named after Saint Valentine, but there might have been two different Valentine's. They were executed on February 14, possibly in different years by Roman Emperor Claudius II, around the 3rd century A.C.E.and it's believed that a Catholic church had set up St.Valentine's day in honor of those two men.

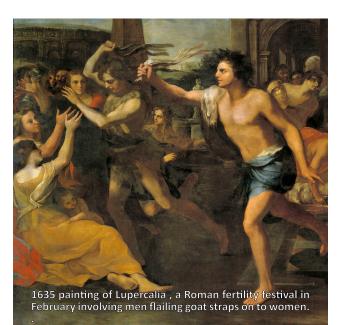
Another legend says that one of the men, Saint Valentine of Terni had secretly officiated Christian weddings for a few Roman soldiers since it was against the emperor's wishes. That is how he was seen as a prominent supporter of love.

Another story is about practicing love letters to your Valentine. It's believed that St.Valentine wrote a love letter to a girl he had tutored and fell in love with while he was in prison for marrying soldiers in secret. While he was on his deathbed, he wrote one last letter to her and signed it using, "from your Valentine." This closing many people still use today.

What does cupid have to do with Valentine's day?

The small winged god Cupid, is usually found on Valentine's cards or advertised for romantic stuff. But in Roman mythology, he was the son of Venus, goddess of love and beauty.

Cupid is known for shooting a bow and arrow at humans and gods, which made them fall in love instantly. Cupid was originally not seen as a baby, he was seen as an adult for his more important roles other than being a matchmaker. He was depicted as a baby because babies usually symbolize two people loving each other.



## How a concertmaster and composer changed my life

By Aria Verma

Let me tell you a story. Our band teacher, Mr Tendick, told us about an opportunity that our school was offered. We were able to listen to a composer named Michael Djupstrom and the concertmaster of the Eugene Symphony Orchestra, Searmi Park.

applause. Many students stayed after school to help clean up. I talked to Mike Djupstrom and I told him that I was stuck with my composition.

makes the class more enjoyable. Kesslyn appreciated Mrs. Watne's teaching style, as Watne explain the concepts very well, and even lets the class watch educational shows.



It brought my excitement to new heights when I found out that the composer played piano. As a hopeful pianist myself, I thought of all the questions that I could ask him. For example, what do you do when you are stuck? How do you arrange for piano accompaniment? And more.

Caroline Carlson and I got front row seats. I was going bonkers! As Caroline said "Aria, I know this is just like a five-year old going to Disneyland but we need to stay calm." I was elated to be in the presence of great musicians who started out just like us.

As they started playing, I listened to how the players sounded together and apart. Listening to the pianist playing I was inspired on how to continue my own composition.

I loved broadening my music vocabulary by seeing another composer at work. After they finished performing the room erupted with

Left: Pep Band, led by India Isaacson and Robbie Casey, takes a break from inspiring school spirit. So we walked over to the piano and he said "play me what you have." After I played, he took my place and started to play around with octaves and notes while talking to me. In the end, he took my motif (a melody that is repeated throughout the song) and turned it into a song on the spot.

My jaw dropped.

I was starstruck to see someone take what I wrote and make it his own.

This moment has changed my perspective on composing. Next time that I'm stuck, I will just think of this moment. It was an honor to have a professional musician play something that I wrote.

Later I sat back at the piano to work on my composition. When composing I started to experiment with octaves and notes just like he did. I was able to take myself out of this bubble of my hands being stuck in just one position.

Now I want to become a professional pianist and composer more than ever.

# What is DE I and why do some people hate it?

#### What is DEI?

By Angel Calva

To comprehend why others might criticize DEI, we need to understand what exactly it is. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are three values that many organizations uphold to be supportive of different groupings of peoples like other races, ethnicities, religions, abilities, genders, and sexual orientations.

Often Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are grouped because they interconnect with one another, but they still have many differences. Diversity is the practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and various genders, sexual orientations, etc. There can be gender diversity, age diversity, and ethnic diversity.

Maybe diversity perhaps means something more. Nobel Prize winner Richard Thaler says, "We tend to think about that (diversity) in terms of things like racial diversity, gender diversity, and ethnic diversity. Those things are all important. But it's also important to have diversity in how people think. (McKinsey & Company)." This is a strong statement because it stresses that we need to have diversity in as many ways as possible. And that diversity is a good thing because it brings into any experience a variety of experiences and insights.

Some often mistake equity for equality, they have a slight but important difference. Equality is where all people are treated the same. Equity takes into account peoples' specific circumstances adjusting accordingly.

Inclusion refers to a person's sense of belonging and ability to participate, whether in a workplace or school.

DE&I seems like a positive implementation we put into organizations, but why do some hate it? Some criticism of DEI comes from the conclusion that such a goal acquisition that they have ignored antisemitism. Some have argued that the DEI framework categorizes people into "the oppressors and the oppressed."

Because of the war happening in Gaza, some claim that Jews are categorically placed as oppressors and that they are "white oppressors." When Tabia Lee, a former DEI director, attempted to get Jews under the DEI umbrella, she was denied and was ousted from her role. One counselor explicitly referenced her attempts to place Jewish students "on the same footing as marginalized groups."

There was another incident at Stanford University where two students complained about antisemitic incidents on campus, and were told by the DEI committee, "Jews, unlike other minority groups, possess privilege and power, Jews and victims of Jew-hatred do not merit or necessitate the attention of the DEI committee."

Another criticism of DEI comes from the claim that at the heart of pushback against DEI, is the threat to "white supremacy." Some right-wing activists and individuals maintain the view of diversity and inclusion as a direct challenge to their perceived dominance in American society. Some might also claim that DEI is too "woke."

It is important to understand why DE&I might be values that we all should have whether in the workforce or at school. But also to understand that it might need more work as it is still new and changing with us.



By Kyra Bebb

Many people end up in toxic relationships. But why is that?

From the way I see it, such people look like they are copying how they were treated when they were younger.

I see people in toxic relationships and when I hear stories of their childhood one can see connections. Some people are just so scared of commitment they force themselves into toxic relationships because they know nothing will come out of it, while other people just want to be in a relationship so the first person who seems interested in them they go for. Looking at one family's past relationships it seems that it's a continuous thing.

When looking at this family's relationships it seems that they get into trouble because it is "normal"—or how they understand "normal.' Change can be terrifying so as humans we tend to stick with what we are used to even if we know that it is bad for us.

People go out looking for love anyway they can to fulfill the love they missed out on during childhood.

How do you stop toxic relationships?

You can't. There will always be toxicity.

The trauma comes from the parents. Kids may then perpetuate the neglect or abuse.

The one thing we can do is try to prevent the harm by helping parents to do doing a better job at raising their kids.

## What makes a relationship toxic?

#### By Aurora Brott

Recognizing signs of a toxic relationship is crucial for maintaining emotional well-being. Red flags can manifest in various ways, such as constant criticism and belittling. In toxic dynamics, one partner may undermine the other's self-esteem, creating a power imbalance.

Communication breakdown is another warning sign. Healthy relationships thrive on open and respectful communication, but toxicity often involves manipulation, stonewalling, or passive-aggressive behavior. Trust issues can escalate, leading to controlling behaviors like monitoring phone messages or isolating a partner from friends and family.

Jealousy and possessiveness are alarming traits in a toxic relationship. Partners may feel threatened by each other's independence, leading to an unhealthy need for control. Emotional or physical abuse is an extreme red flag, with any form of violence being unacceptable.

Constant drama and instability may indicate a toxic relationship. Healthy connections foster a sense of security, while toxicity breeds chaos. It's essential to recognize these red flags early on, as they can erode emotional well-being over time.

Vigilance in identifying signs of toxicity—be it through communication, control issues, jealousy, or abusive behavior—empowers individuals to prioritize their mental and emotional health, fostering a path towards a healthier relationship.







#### The Billie Bulletin

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Above: Pleasant Hill's first book club in many years has begun at the inspiration of Dakota Hyland who gathered a group of bibliophiles and selected a book, "The Midnight Library. Hyland then got funding from the PHEFoundation for the books and is working toward her National Honor Society project. Dakota said "I started the book club because I wanted to reinstill a love of reading, literature and community at PHHS. As for the book. "The Midnight River" was one of ten on a diverse list of novels chosen by myself and voted on blindly by the girls.

# Love in Literature

on love

#### By Sienna Malekzadeh

Romeo and Juliet (The Tragical History of Romeus and Juliet), Noah and Allie (The Notebook), Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy (Pride and Prejudice), Scarlett and Rhett (Gone with the Wind) are some of the greatest love stories of all time. But, what makes these character's love stories so famous?

As a book lover myself and an aspiring writer, I am fascinated by what makes these stories so successful.

Is it that the stories are an escape from what love actually is? Are they idealistic and perfect stories that let us get away from the broken hearts and tears, making us believe that everything will be okay, when in reality things rarely go how you want them to.

Or could it be the excitement of their love stories? The ones that won't happen but make you wish they had. The exhilarating forbidden loves, and the feeling of unlikely relationships. It's once again an escape from the humdrum attraction, to such adventures that could never happen to a normal person.

Maybe it's just simply their happy endings (except for Romeo and Juliet). The reassurance that no matter what happens, love will prevail. Knowing that every problem can be solved as long as there's love.

Think about The Notebook, a book which contains all three of these. Starting off as a boy who does everything to get the girl of his dreams, climbing a ferris wheel, and risking his life hanging from the edge just to get one date. It's such a fantastical thing to want to happen, but maybe it's more than the excitement. Maybe it's how committed he was just to one girl, who at that time was on another date herself. Sure, the couple goes through ups and downs just like in reality, facing disapproving parents, a line that must not be crossed between "poor" and "wealthy" people, and another man she has to choose between. But with all odds against them, they still find a way to have a happy ending together. Sadly, some love stories just aren't that simple, but maybe it's the books like this one that fulfill some type of emptiness or desire we all have inside ourselves.

Whether it's any of those, we can all agree that there is just something that captivates us in these stories. One can only hope to have their own love story written, and hopefully, it becomes their favorite.

### Love isn't always "Romantic"

#### By Zoe Harr

We all know about romantic love and familial love, right? But have you ever considered platonic love? Why do we frown upon it? Sometimes it's just as simple as not understanding it? But whatever the reason, the big question is why?

The first key to understanding platonic love is knowing what it is! Platonic love is loving someone unrelated to you in a non sexual or romantic way. Not everyone is into romance shenanigans, you know. But platonic love can even be as simple as caring about your friends very strongly! It's endearing!

However, a lot of people think it's weird. "I believe that platonic



## PARENTS! Don't tease us about "love"

Billie Bulletin Staff Member "Oooh, you have a crush!"

"Grr, I hate when parents do that!"

When parents tease their kids about liking someone it can be mean and discouraging.

This can make kids embarrassed and perhaps upset. I know everyone has felt this way at one time.

This embarrassing and humiliated teasing is why kids don't want to tell their parents things.

Parents listen up!

Stop making fun of your kids. Such teasing can upset and hurt your kids at an already vulnerable time. This is why some kids stop everything and go to their rooms(some people like it though).

Please parents, stop saying stuff around their kids' presumed "crush" that's weird and embarrassing. Also, stop commenting on stuff they do if they see their crush. It's super weird and really annoying for your kid.

Parents, you also don't get how it makes teens feel. We can feel hurt, sad and not understood. Kids might also feel mad about the teasing because parents have no right to tease just because they are parents.

So parents, please stop.

# Bringing back personal ads

By Murphy Sprague and Charlie Neal

I am Wesleigh Harr, age 17—a wonderful guy. I am tall, strong, absolutely hilarious, honest, and romantic—just kidding. I am passionate about music -- jazz in particular -- and am proficient at many instruments, especially bass. Other skills of mine shine in the kitchen; My coffee is outstanding and I make some downright amazing carbonara too. If you're willing to put in the effort to get past my tough exterior, you could possibly discover the light of your life.

If you're in search of some silliness and whimsy in your life, look no further than me, Robbie Casey. I am a video game lore enthusiast, Mr. Billie candidate, and the goofiest guy you'll ever meet. With me by your side, your world's guaranteed to be a whole lot brighter.

## **Prom: Then and Now**

#### by Greta Gramzow

In 1968, Cindy Curry (my mom's mom), went to her senior prom, 56 years ago! Nine years before that, was Eugene Gramzow"s, (my dad's dad), senior prom, 1959. Things were certainly different back then.

Granny was typically chaperoned by a friend's parents. Between 1959 and 1968, not many high schoolers had their own car. They either borrowed a ride from their parents, a friend, or met at the dance that was themed "April Love". How funny, because Granny went to school at Sherwood High School with her future husband without knowing it—only to be married to him later in April!

For the party of 1968, students would wear their Sunday church clothes. Some of the boys would borrow a stylish jacket from their dad and the girls would roll their hair up into sweet, tiny curlers and wear satin shoes. Girls showed up in their curlers a few hours before the dance to help decorate.

Granny dressed in a pink satin, floor-length dress with a matching coat and a necklace with a pearl. "I thought I looked like Jackie Kennedy," she said.

Music was played on a record player, while everyone danced together and fruit punch was

s e r v e d . " M o s t l y , everybody was pressured into a date." she said. Including my granny though the person she attended with was not a boyfriend.

Granny said about her prom in 1959, "It was a total formal affair, but we were country



folk. We left our long white gloves on to sip punch."

As for Pappy, the theme of the 1959 dance at Springfield High School was "Ebb Tide" meaning a Hawaiian type of under-the-sea dance. The ladies all wore full skirt fancy dresses that draped just above their ankles. While the boys dressed in a white sport coat, white dress-shirt, black pants, and black bow ties.

## Getting real about Astrology

By Caroline Carlson

Astrology: It's Amazing, right? Depending on the date and time you were born, you instantly have a celestial sign. You are born during a special time in the stars and planets.

Only one in a million chance someone has the exact same horoscope. That makes you just that special. I mean at this point you deserve your own statue for being this awesome, right? Wrong. If you think this, then you may be a bit narcissistic. Now, I am not a hater. I love astrology. But when people say things like "Leo's just want to be the center of attention" or that "Cancers can't control their emotions." Grr, it drives me crazy! We need to understand that all signs have their ups and downs. Lots of people look to astrology for clarity and answers but astrology is so broad and everyone is so different that you can take some of the information but you can't take ALL of it literally.

love is something that definitely exists," says Aria Verma, a 7th grader. "I definitely have platonic love with all of my friends, and I don't think it's weird."

Talk of "love" can be heinous in some people's eyes if you have very close friends of different genders. The classic, "Oh my gosh! You guys are so cute!" Or, "I ship you guys, you should get together!" gets old over time, you know? Loving your friends doesn't have to be romantic! Such love shows we care about them on a deeper level.

"I mean, I definitely feel platonic love with my friends, definitely." says Dominic Hammond-Mendez, another 7th grader. Duke LaRoche also joined our conversation!

"Having a crush is like, I think you're pretty and I want to date you and you're just hot. Having friends like platonic love, it's like dude, you're my friend, I love you. It's a different kind of way."

In another sense, friends are people we care a lot about, but we wouldn't want to date. Something to keep in mind, though, is that sometimes things change. You may end up having feelings for a friend!

But it's important to draw the lines between friendship and a crush. "When I think of loving a friend I think kind of like a Sisterhood, or a Brotherhood, or you think of them as family, and less like a romantic crush." said Caroline Carlson. She explained, friends can be family! However, friends might mean different things to everybody. Now that's up to you.

If it's confusing sometimes, then that's okay! You have all the time in the world to figure it out. And on the bright side, your friends will be there for you every step of the way. Kathleen Willardson, 17, seeks a partner who enjoys long drives in the wilderness, judging people's taste in cars, baking, and being social. I do not know what a tyrosine kinase receptor is and I am too afraid to ask, but I do know about the potential chemistry between you and me.

Meet me, Brandon Tobey, 15, the gregarious athlete and artist bringing a much-needed gusto to our halls. I am "exceptionally tall," an expert at spur-ofthe-moment nicknames, rap battles, and various marine creature trivia. If you're down for "dad rock" and unforgettable conversations, I, Brandon might be the missing piece to your puzzle.



#### The Science: Why Do We Fall in Love? By Abbie Landers

Why do we fall in love? What is it about us humans that make us long for love in the first place? Well, let's find out the science behind it!

From a young age we are dependent on love from our parents, the love you receive from your parents determines how you will love in your adulthood. But that isn't 100% accurate. When you reach adulthood you begin to look for the love you received as a child.

When people fall in love it is said that we fall into a state of "limerence," which is just a fancy way of saying you become infatuated. This happens because the hormones in our brains go crazy when faced with a genuine love interest. When we are faced with someone we love, our brain produces LOTS of serotonin which then gives us a sense of "well-being." But does this happen for everyone? So we asked some love "experts," our teachers.

"Love for me is a sense of safety and comfort. Combined with a desire to do my best for my partner." - Mr. Gray.

Serotonin isn't just limited to romantic relationships, it can also be that feeling when you look at nature or a very cute puppy. With serotonin comes oxytocin, which is known as the "love hormone."

"In order for us to find love, we must first be able to give love, and we must have this love to give within ourselves." - Dr. Beverly Palmer(author of "Love Demystified: Strategies for a Successful Love Life.") Once you're committed to loving yourself, finding the right person is just a matter of timing, chemistry, and finding common ground.

At the end of the day love isn't something to worry about. You don't need to be in a relationship to feel love. But for some reason, many people long for this as the fulfillment of their dreams

### Why is love associated with the heart? (Why not other organs in your body?)

What organ do we associate love with the most? The brain, the appendix? It's our hearts. The reason behind this is not just because of its shape. "Every heart is different" Or so we think. Every person is different but that does not mean our hearts differ. They can be on either side of our bodies in some cases, but they are all used for the same thing. To keep us alive. Our hearts pump blood through our veins to our brains, this is how we function. If our hearts stopped, we would stop living. So, why are our hearts the main symbol of how we feel love when their main function is to transport blood through our vascular systems?

"Medicine, law, business, engineering, these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life, but, poetry, beauty, romance, love, these are what we stay alive for"

-Robin Williams (Dead Poets Society)

First of all, the symbolism of hearts and where they originated is unknown, but there are a few theories. One is that it represents the pointed leaves of the Silphium plant which was used as an

## Teenage Love vs Adult Love

By Rhianna Prakash and Ellie Thebo

If you're a teenager you've most likely heard the phrase "you don't know what real love is," or "that stuff doesn't matter, especially in high school." Maybe it was from a parent, a relative, or even a peer. The problem with this "adult" reaction is that it dismisses the power of the emotions swirling around love for young people.

In some cases, teenage love can be even more intense than adult love. For some teens, the feeling of "love" is new and exciting. It's a good feeling, and when you feel it once, you of course wanna feel it again. It's nice to have a distraction, and in this case the distraction is in the form of another student.

Teenagers have very intense emotions, this is due to hormonal changes and brain development. This makes us feel like we fall in love faster.

This leads to us being more passionate about things, especially love. It can also make us impulsive with our actions, jumping to conclusions. These intense feelings can feel like a drug. The feeling when you actually do make eye contact, or catch them looking at you is an addicting feeling. Then, you start taking a new route to class, just to see them and hopefully make eye contact with them, or dressing up just in case they happen to look your way.

Many teens like to call this feeling "a delusion" because the smallest things get us excited. The most insignificant gestures could mean the world to us, accidental eye contact from across the hall could feel like a full love confession.



## Things that guys\* love

By Billie Bulletin Staff Member

Boys love a lot of things, some dumb, some cool, but they all love different things. Here are a few things boys love.

A BIG thing boys love is video games. Some popular video games include : Fortnite, Valorant and Call of Duty. And there are a lot more. Fortnite is most likely the most popular of the boys at our school.

I don't really get why so many boys like it, but I barely play it so I can't judge. Another game most boys play is Call of Duty. I have never played Call of Duty, but all I know about it is that it can sometimes be fun unless you aren't playing with someone else or you are really good. A game that I play a lot is Valorant. I only play it with my friends (besides when they aren't online.) It can be really fun if you are good or have a good team.

More things boys like are food. Personally I like spicy foods. One of my favorite foods is chicken alfredo. It is very easy to make and can be either eaten for lunch or dinner. I also love spicy food and most people can relate. Some other foods that most boys like are: cheese burgers, pastas and other junk food.

## It's complicated

by Ellie Epperson

Love is a complicated thing. It has been for centuries, at the very least.

The legend of Saint Valentine and Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet might have you believe "love" is purely romantic and all that gushy stuff.

It's not. Love is not something that can't be placed in one box.

Even the ancient Greeks say so, and we tend to believe things really old people say.

The ancient Greeks believed that there are seven different types of love: *Eros, Philia, Storge, Agape, Ludus, Pragama, and Philautia.* 

Eros is romantic love, named after the Greek god of fertility. It represents intimacy and romance in its most cliché form.

Philia is a platonic love, hopefully something we all have in our lives. This is the kind of love you have for your friends. These kinds of relationships are close and affectionate in a friendly kind of way.

The bond that connects a parent to their children is known as Storge by the ancient Greeks. Sometimes it's referred to as "unconditional love" because it can be one-sided, like a mother that loves her child even if it is not returned.

Agape is interesting because not everyone receives or can give this kind of love. Agape is selfless love. People with agape can love nature, people they've never met, the less fortunate and more. Those who express agape can be left with a feeling of euphoria and joy.

Being in high school, you might've experienced Lupus: the flirtatious and playful kind of love. Lupus is a playful kind of endeavor. Sometimes "butterflies in your stomach" can accompany this type of love. It's casual, fun and lighthearted.

A happy, long lasting marriage will exhibit the love called Pragma. Pragma is a committed and loyal type of love, although even this will require effort to "make it work". This is a rare type of love because it requires sacrifice and effort but in turn is the longest lasting type of love.

Self love has gotten loads of attention in the past decade or so but the Greeks named it Philautia. Self-love is about more than simply relaxing and bubble baths and stuff like that. Philautia is about having good self-confidence and self-compassion. Philautia is best utilized when paired with other types of love. Too much philautia can lead to narcissism. This is not what the Greeks pictured when talking about philautia.

Love can be expressed in so many ways and most of them are not simply romantic love. High school is a time for having fun and getting to know people, even if just as friends. Focusing on developing different types of love will strengthen your relationships at home, in your families, at school and for the rest of your life.

Rider, E. (2023, November 6). 7 types of love (and what they mean): Elizabeth Rider. Elizabeth Rider - Modern Healthy Living. https://www.elizabethrider.com/7-types-of-love-andwhat-they-mean/

ingredient in love potions during the time of the Roman empire. Second, Saint Valentine, who is the famous character for Valentine's Day, used the symbol to arrange secret marriages. And, third, because of the heart chakra. It is believed that every part of your body has a chakra, simply put (an area of energy). Your heart has a chakra too. It is supposedly bright red, depicting that this is where all of the love you feel comes from. Have you ever felt a warm and fuzzy feeling in your chest when thinking about someone or something? This is described as your heart chakra expanding, carrying good energy to those around you. Who knows?

But, the main reason why love is focused on our heart is because of the way our bodies respond to exciting events or time periods in our lives. This is the boring answer, bear with me, whenever you see someone you like, doesn't your heart beat faster? Or someone you are dating when you get the chance to see them again, you could get butterflies in your stomach and your heart may pump faster! We notice our heartbeats when we are in certain situations that have to do with feeling love or observing love. Give some love to your heart by acknowledging how much it does for you this Valentine's Day. \*And of course girls love these too.



**BEST IN STATE** Sienna Malekzadeh holds her award from the Veterans of Foreign Wars essay competition called Patriot's Pen. Sienna won first place for Oregon. Local VFW representative, Lt Col. Bob Baker, has encouraged student writers for many years.



# **6 sports** The Billies punch their State tickets in winter



Jace Harris with victory over his opponent. Jace qualified for the State Tournament



Claire Crawford dominates the paint and was chosen player of the year.



Photos and story by Jocelyn Heacock

The Pleasant Hill Winter Sports teams have done exceptionally well this season and all finished with tops marks.

The Boys' Basketball team has been very successful this year, with an overall record of 20-4 and a league record of 11-1. Currently, the team is ranked #4 in the OSAA 3A Rankings. They have been dominating the court and are looking forward to heading into the state championships. The boys' highest scoring game during the season was a non-league game where they beat Coquille 109-32.

The Girls' Basketball team has hit the ground running with their new coach, Paxton Miller. They currently have a 17-6 overall record and a perfect 12-0 league record. Their current ranking is #6 in the OSAA 3A Rank. The girls are gearing up for state and are ready to take on who ever is next. Their highest scoring game this season was 57-15 vs. Siuslaw. The team's awards include Coach of the Year, Paxton Miller and Player of the Year Award to Claire Crawford. Their next game is February 24 at Nyssa.

This has been the first year the Pleasant Hill Cheer team has competed in many years. They placed 3rd at OSAA Cheer Competition under the guidance of Coach Chelsi Toles-Wallace.. In the future, the team is hoping to grow to have both a JV and Varsity team. The team's accomplishments include placing third at all of their competitions and having two cheerleaders, Sarenity Peters and Laynie Reed, compete in All State Cheer.

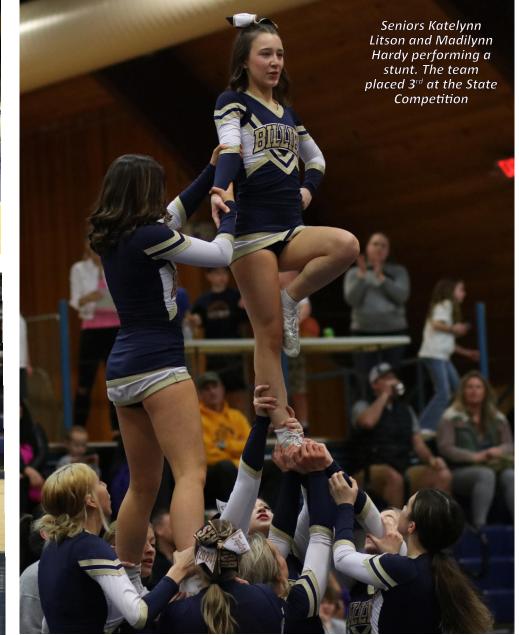
The Wrestling team has had a successful and dominant season. Consistently over the course of the season the team has managed to place top wrestlers. Dean Scott, Bryson Boyles, Gavin Haratyk, Vedder Anderson, Jace Harris, and Boone Marquess all qualified for the State Wrestling Tournament. The team overall placed 4th at the Central Linn Invitational.



Seniors Madilynn Hardy and Chloe Gates preforming at a halftime performance for the basketball games.



**Gavin Haratyk will be competing at 120lb weight class at the state** tournament. Here he twists his opponent into a pin.



Karsyn Stapl<mark>eto</mark>n sailing over a La Pine Hawk. The girls won 53-17



# issues 7

## **Memories of the Big Freeze**

Compiled by Alea Blatch

The ice storm of chaos but fun... we could say.

We all know what happened on January 11th through the 19th or even longer for some. I got to get some different perspectives of students from the ice storm we had. It was quite an experience for me, but here are some different stories from fellow students here at PHill.

"I woke up at around 11:00 am to look outside and see what I originally thought was snow. I was overjoyed that there was snow and that school might be canceled on Tuesday if this kept up. So I went outside to see it better. However the moment I stepped out I slipped onto the ground. I seemed to be fine but when I felt the ground it wasn't soft or fluffy it was solid and slippery." -

"I woke up six hours later to find out my family had taken a camping stove out of the garage and cooked beans and steak that we had so I ended up having an actual dinner which was nice. After that I went back to sleep. When I woke up the next day passed like the one before. I read, Ate, slept, and thought about random things. Around 10:00 pm I was just hanging out when the power came on."

"It was like Christmas part two. My family watched a movie and after I went to my room played games with my friend. The next day I woke up to find out my second Christmas miracle was gone. The power was out again. So just like before I did very simple things. I got the chance to practice drawing and I was pleasantly surprised that it actually looked decent. My mom found out there was power at my uncle's place where almost my entire mom's side of the family was staying so she sent me there after hearing that there might not be power in out area for quite a while." -

"My dad had hurt his back before the freeze, so I had to help carry the propane tanks, the bags of pellets, setting up the generator, etc. I wanted to play a lot of board games with my family because when the big snow storm happened we all played a bunch of board games. Sadly, no one wanted to play board games with me. I also listened to a bunch of music, I didn't really watch tv, which is weird because I love watching tv."

This past week has been the single handedly <u>most</u> boring week I have lived through. I never realized how much I rely on the internet to keep me entertained day-to-day. C Bernardo

This week was one of the <u>least</u> boring weeks of my life, I had to read a lot and play on my Switch or my phone. When I wasn't on my phone or reading I was outside looking at the trees and sliding around. I started out the storm at my dad's. On Saturday I lost power at around 2:30 in the afternoon. I spent the rest of Saturday reading and being on my phone.-J. Hoopman

"The day the ice storm hit is the day I began to freeze.

That's a bit exaggerated but you get the point. The power goes outs, your heater shuts off and the house begins to chill.

Now, people who have lived in the country, or are even remotely smart, would have prepared for this situation. Meaning, have gas ready, making sure your generator works and ensuring that everything else also works.

My family, who have lived here for around 6 years, still haven't figured this out! The power goes out and the generator powers on and decides to only power 3 specific outlets and the microwave.

Already off to a bad start, we conserve the energy till we need it and wait till morning. The morning after became a blur. I woke up to seeing my breath as if I was a dragon. My window, completely frozen, was opaque. The ice that laid like a solid ooze over the grass and trees.

At least we had the microwave! It tripped the breaker.

Well there goes all of our warm food."-A Brott

"This is where it's going to get bad." He pulled on his coat and after we said goodbye to him, he traveled down our driveway in his Utility work truck. That was the last time we could see him until a week later because of the ice storm. The next morning I woke up to our power flickering and then...bloop it was off. All our machines stopped whirring, and our little pug puppy stood on the window ledge looking out at the frozen sea of ice and white that covered everything on our property. The ground was so slick it was hard to even step on it let alone walk on it. My brothers and I drove through the neighborhood of Dexter the 3rd day when we were looking to see what we could do to help, there were broken trees everywhere. Power Lines laid on the ground overlapping houses, and had been dragged down by tree limbs into ponds. It was bad. "

The ice storm brought down a few trees on our property which my brothers and I cleaned up. On Wednesday morning one of my brothers and I decided to walk down the road to see the damages to our neighbor's yards and see if we could offer help. At the very end of the road a tree had fallen from one of our neighbor's yard across the road, blocking any attempts for cars to get around it. My brother raced back down the road and brought his truck and together we cut up the tree and picked up all the debris on the road. Finally after an hour and 30 mins in the cold we had cleared the road of the fallen tree. The neighbor came out to thank us. We were very grateful because we had not been sure he was home. The following days and weekends were spent helping neighbors and people cleaning up fallen trees and ice.

As difficult as it was without showers for a little while, cold temperatures that I am not used to, sibling fights about the unfairness of the non existent internet, I have taken away one word from this experience. Gratefulness. We were doing better than most people even though we lost our power immediately, didn't have a generator and had to haul buckets of water through a pasture full of ice and carry armloads of wood everyday, and wash our faces and hands in cold water, I have learned that you must be grateful for Everything that you have. No matter how small it is, it matters. So, at the same time this storm is a curse and a blessing." M. Gunn

#### "We knew the storm was coming, but we didn't expect this...

During the night branches broke and fell from the highest points of trees. Rain pounded against my window. Even in my wildest dreams I never expected to see an icy wonderland the next morning. We woke up with panic assuming this wasn't the worst of what's to come, we still had power we had to use



#### Recollected by Billie Bulletin staff member

As someone who was taken into foster care pretty early, I can say it's not an easy life to live. I was taken into foster care from at age one and a half, and I spent the first 5 or so years in foster care. For the most part I lived with my relative which wasn't the best experience given they had some issues.

Since my cousin and I were foster kids, my caregiver would prefer their own kids. They bought more gifts for their own kids. ``This information comes from my cousin who wasn't their daughter so I kinda have to take her word for it. "

I know my foster parents didn't PHYSICALLY abuse me but there were definitely a lot of other types of disciplining happening. Spankings for "cursing," or for not eating my food involve me being hauled into the laundry room and hit with a red plastic spoon on my booty. And we got our mouths washed out with soap. I was three to five years old. We got spanked for saying curse words from adults who regularly cursed.

At some point I wouldn't eat my eggs and I remember that my caregiver made me sit at the table all night until I ate it. I don't remember if this is my child brain exaggerating or not but I remember waiting at the table all night.

I was somewhat independent, so I'd often be on my own, which isn't that good for a 3 to 4 year old... I don't remember a lot besides that I slept under beds when I was scared, I think.

When I finally moved out of my caregiver's house, to another relative, I remember crying on the floor because I had to eat beans. I told my uncle a little bit, which personally I feel like was a better experience, even though I don't remember a lot.

I lived with a smaller family at the time, still related but it was obviously still difficult. I can't remember a lot but I was told they used to tell me, specifically my uncle, that if I wanted to live with them I wasn't allowed to go see my parents—which is a hard thing to go through at 4-years old.

I loved my uncle but I also loved my mom and dad. How was I supposed to choose?

I can't remember a lot from this time in my life because not only was I young but I was going through trauma. Trauma makes remembering difficult.

There were good parts, such as making my first friend, playing "build a bear" games online, having a lot of cats, etc, but just because there were good parts in my life doesn't mean it was a good experience. I didn't get to have a childhood that was normal, and even when I got home to my mom I didn't have a normal life. Before I got home, I would switch between strangers' houses and my uncle's house. I've always known that it wasn't normal to move around that much. I knew my parents but I didn't live with them, which was confusing.

At some point I started to see my mom in counseling, at this point I was living with the first family, not the second. I would go see her in some counseling meetings that were supposed to reconnect us I think? I would occasionally see my dad but he never would do "girly" things with me, so we never really reconnected. I never really got to have a dad in my life until my mom met my step dad!

I liked my step dad don't get me wrong, but it never felt like I had a real dad. I felt alone since the only person I related to in my family was my mom. I didn't really feel a part of my family I guess? I'm not sure what I felt but from how I acted this is what I assume.

I didn't have a bad life growing up with my step family, they were often mean but I assume that's because I'm not their real sister. At this point in life I was around 6 or 7, and I was losing myself to depression because of my car accident which launched me into kid depression.

My advice to foster parents and teachers is to not treat a kid poorly, you don't know (for the most part) what they've gone through, how they feel etc.

During the night branches broke and fell from the highest points of trees. Rain pounded against my window. Even in my wildest dreams I never expected to see an icy wonderland the next morning. We woke up with panic assuming this wasn't the worst of what's to come, we still had power we had to use it to our advantage. Wash the dishes, do the laundry, make some brownies, take a shower. Then it happened. Just as our brownies were finishing in the oven the whole house went dark.

The house was getting cold quickly so we needed the generator. Quick go outside and get the generator. Stepping outside sounded as if I stepped on the battlefield, trees breaking in half branches snapping created the sound of gunfire. Rush back to the house without slipping on the thick sheet of ice covering the ground, set up the pellet stove, get the fridge working, and we're set. Little did we know how long this would last.

We're running out of fuel and pellets fast. We head to Lowell, since they still have power. Trees are broken everywhere, power lines laid across the road, I don't think we're getting power back for a while. Lowell is swarming with people needing fuel. Cars lined the road waiting to get their gas. Thankfully we made it just in time the gas station had run out of gas. We carefully made it home, it's quiet and dark, something I'm not used to seeing.

it to our advantage. Wash the dishes, do the laundry, make some brownies, take a shower. Then it happened. Just as our brownies were finishing in the oven the whole house went dark. The house was getting cold quickly so we needed the generator. Quick go outside and get the generator. Stepping outside sounded as if I stepped on the battlefield, trees breaking in half branches snapping created the sound of gunfire. Rush back to the house without slipping on the thick sheet of ice covering the ground, set up the pellet stove, get the fridge working, and we're set. Little did we know how long this would last."

"That night we celebrated my brother's birthday, and shortly had to turn off the generator. That night was cold, but I'd think the following day was even colder. I covered up my entire body with the heaviest clothes I could gather. I wandered off into the great cold, I ice skated down the stairs, and along the pathway. The first thing that pointed out to me were the trees, branches, and grass. Douglas firs tops began to bow down to the ground desperately trying to shrug off the ice encasing them. Branches from smaller trees, shrubs, and bushes were encased and trapped by ice, I tore off some branches to simply look at them, the ice encased even the thinnest twigs. I didn't measure the thickness of the ice but I'd believe it to be at least an inch in diameter. And then the grass, the grass almost baffled me. I'd think the grass would be relatively unaffected because it's so close to the ground, and the grass would be slightly brittle and icy alike to former ice storms. But the grass was frozen in place slightly leaning to the ground. The best way I can explain how the grass looked was like to sprouts of river plants frozen in the marsh. A.Taylor

"I almost died during the freeze.

My uncle brought over 2 four wheelers and we drove them on the ice. I did not drive (because I'm not allowed to drive). My cousin's husband drove me around and we drifted a lot. Then we drove under a downed power line and when he was turning the tires didn't have enough traction so we then slid and almost went into a ditch."

"I didn't measure the thickness of the ice but I'd believe it to be at least an inch in diameter. And then the grass, the grass almost baffled me. I'd think the grass would be relatively unaffected because it's so close to the ground, and the grass would be slightly brittle and icy alike to former ice storms. But the grass was frozen in place slightly leaning to the ground. The best way I can explain how the grass looked was like to sprouts of river plants frozen in the marsh."

"There was no way we were getting home that night. So we decided to stay at my grandmas for that nighWe knew the storm was coming, but we didn't expect this...

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Two days have passed and the ice hasn't melted a whole lot but we get power back! Take a shower, do dishes, wash clothes. It feels nice to wake up to a warm house. Yet, luck isn't on our side. We lose power, this time for five days. We're all stinky, tired, and a little more broke than we were at the beginning of this. Finally the ice began to melt away, everything was damaged but thankfully it's over. EPUD came to fix our power, although our internet is still down, not everything can be fixed I suppose.

Although the ice was beautiful to see, it wasn't fun to live in. I can't personally imagine living in these conditions all the time, it would drive me insane. Something like this is cool to see once every eight to ten years, not every month." A. Landers

"Ah, the big freeze. The ice, the wind, the trees. Power outages, roads blocked, driveways iced over. These were the elements surrounding our houses, but they tell us nothing about inside our homes, the places we have been confined since the beginning of the storm. I write this at school, in the light and power but tonight I will go back home. No power, no water, but fortunately a radiating fireplace my mom keeps burning hot.

Having moved to our new house in the summer, we didn't have water barrels filled up as a preparatory measure so we resorted to methods I only remember watching in Sleeping Beauty: lowering a pitcher into our well and pulling water up, half-gallon-by-half-gallon.

So this started our week of staying inside, playing games, sleepovers with our cousins down the street and dvd movies--which was a luxury. We are very lucky. The roads stayed iced over for a few days, with no signs of melting so often we would walk to our cousins house, the Andersons. Sometimes, these walks would be filled with anxiety, carefully listening for any trees or large limbs falling on the road. There were a few near misses but we were carefully watched over. As we walked--more like slid our shoes across the slick ice-- we passed fallen lines, broken trees and crushed sheds." E. Epperson

"My mom and dad had to hook up the generator themselves since our electrician didn't do it right. However, it's only able to run our refrigerators and let us plug stuff in directly with an extension cord. No heating, no water pump or anything. And I really need to take a shower but can't. The ice has only gotten worse. You won't believe how thick it is! All of the trees look like willow trees. And we don't have any willow trees out here!

Branches are breaking off everywhere. You can hear it from a mile away since it's all so quiet. There were blue flashes everywhere last night from trees falling and things exploding. I saw a huge one miles away from us. It seriously lasted for a solid 5 seconds." G. Gramzow CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

# The Billie Backside

### The Birth of Valentines Day By Alexis Moch

Where did Valentine's Day come from? Who, in the world, came up with Valentine's Day?

Time for a history lesson. I know how boring it sounds but just read on.

Valentine's Day is thought to have originated from the Roman festival of Lupercalia in mid-February. People from all over gathered to celebrate the coming spring. Women were paired off with a man by lottery that included fertility rights. By the 5th century, the celebration was forbidden by the Roman Church. Some believe that this celebration transformed into what we know as Valentine's Day today. Valentine's Day didn't become a day of romance until the 14th century, but who created it?

Valentine's Day was not created by just one person. Some believed that a priest during 270 CE wrote a letter signed "from your Valentine" that he wrote to "his jailer's daughter."

Others believed it could have been St. Valentines, a bishop who defied the the Roman emperor's orders and married couples in secret. It is also believed they could have been the same person. No one really knows!

It wasn't until the 1500s that formal messages were sent. When the 1700s rolled around, Valentines were being commercially printed. The first U.S valentines were printed mid-1800s. Cupid was commonly put on valentines. Cupid is based on the Roman god of love.

Still to this day, Valentine's day is a big part of our lives. Traditional valentines gifts include candy and/or flowers such as red roses which are the symbols of beauty and love.

## Do electric cars pollute just as much as gas cars?

#### By Wes Harr

Do electric cars pollute more than gas emissions? How much does battery production play into pollution? The EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) states "...an EV (Electric Vehicle) is typically responsible for lower levels of greenhouse gases (GHGs) than an average new gasoline car.".

Most of the emissions that "result" from the use of electric cars come from local energy production as well as battery manufacturing. It is fair to say however, that the initial production of an electric car produces more carbon emissions than the production of a gasoline vehicle. However, looking at the carbon emissions throughout the life of both cars, those of a gasoline car are much higher than those of an electric one.

"Recycling EV batteries can reduce the emissions associated with making an EV by reducing the need for new materials."Overall, electric cars make it easier to prevent and limit the amount of carbon output more efficiently than gas cars, despite the earlier mention of the carbon emissions from EV production.

With all this in mind, it is also important to remember that we are still getting better at re-using and saving materials needed for EV production. The EPA mentioned in their "Electric Vehicles Myths" article, "While some challenges exist today, research is ongoing to improve the process and rate of EV battery recycling."This refers to our continued efficiency and ability to further cut down on emissions.

# The Heart: Why does it symbolize love?

Humor By Carson Bernardo February is here. The season for "immense" love and "deep" depression. That all depends on who you are and who you are to someone else. This month can make or break someone's year because it is the season of love, after all. A certain holiday that lands on the 14th brings this whole month together in a heart shaped box with a ribbon on top. But this isn't what this

article is about. It's about the heart and why it is universally shown as the symbol of love.

Some could say the heart is the symbol for love because the heart makes us who we are. If anything, the brain defines us because it conceptualizes how we feel and think—but hey, to each their own. It would be rather weird if the symbol for Valentine's Day was a pink, mushy blob, though. I think the heart gets the point there.

Another reason people may have started to believe the heart is a symbol of love is the fact that whenever someone

sees another person they have an interest in, the heart speeds up. If this were the case, then why weren't the hand(s) a symbol of love? They start to sweat when approached by a person of interest.

I guess the true answer to our question here is: we don't really know. The heart found in the human body is not shaped like a love heart, contrary to popular belief. I do think it would look weird if people drew hearts like they were found in the body. Many believe that the soul is found in the heart, so that's another theory.

The ice created art in addition to terrible destruction. Here are example. Wires were brought down by ice encrusted branches everywhere. Amid the weird beauty was the misery of days without power and hours upon hours of work by utility workers.



#### THE BIG FREEZE CONTINUED

"I can't even walk outside without slipping and sliding all over the place like a fish out of water! Okay, well, I guess it is pretty fun to slide on the ice. But still! The cow troughs are frozen solid, the house is frigid, all the trees are literally breaking apart and I swear to god if I have to heave open ONE MORE electric garage door, I will scream bloody mary. Ugh.

However, while the Icepocalypse is annoying and stupid, I might add, it is just as fascinating. Long icicles drip from nearly every surface. I can't stop looking at them! It's like someone pressed pause on a rainstorm. It's also quiet. Deathly quiet. The only thing to be heard is the sound of trees cracking and breaking in the distance. Oh and the crunching of my footsteps, which I'm actually quite fond of. Everywhere I go, save for the sleek surface of concrete. I hear it constantly.

Crunch.Crunch.Crunch." Ź.Harr

"I hung out with my family but for someone who doesn't leave their room often I didn't stay long. I had really missed my friends, online or not. I really wanted to talk to someone that wasn't family. I wasn't even sure if my friends were okay because if it's freezing here, imagine how it is down there you know? (it wasn't that bad.) I felt alone in my dark room and I just slept and waited for power so I could turn my tv on, and repeat the cycle of waiting, occasionally talking, sleeping and watching tv in my cold, cold room."

"I spent most of my time during those 12 days curled up on my couch, wrapped up in blankets, trying to keep warm. I had several ways to keep myself entertained, such as playing with my guinea pig, doing homework, and painting. However, these activities became dull, so I spent most of my time sleeping. Throughout these days I was very lonely and longing for some interaction. " R. DuBose

"It was a Wednesday, and it was super cold, extra cold. My dad and brother never wanted to play games with me so I was pretty bored. All I wanted was to play Monopoly. At night, it was pitch black. All I could hear were trees breaking and my cats walking around my house, yowling for my dad to go to sleep. I hope the power turns back on tomorrow, I have a feeling it will. "

"I woke up and cracked the blinds —then I cracked a smile. I knew that there couldn't possibly be school tomorrow. I was more right than I knew. The first da was no problem, I still had power. My day was occupied with teasing Tressa and Noah, anyone without power I could get my hands on (Steven's phone must have been dead). I ate hot food, my family watched TV, and then I slumbered.

The next day was very similar to the day before, until about three pm. That's when we lost power. That's when the terror struck, our well couldn't supply water, we were low on food, our cars and gate were frozen over. My friends and I reminisced about the olden days, how carefree we were. I lurked in the candlelit rooms, thinking abstractly about dark, dismal, ugly things - such as doing homework. When all of a sudden, late at night, the power was restored. Hallelujah! The grace of God must bless this household. I retired to my chambers, once more content with my luxuries (running water and light)

I awoke once more - to a house devoid of power. DRAT. It was only a matter of time before we went full Donner Party (and I've been told my outfits are tasteful). So Dad and I fired up the heat gun with our generator - unfroze the car and gate - and my family made a pilgrimage to Albertsons. After the great hunt we stopped at a nearby restaurant for a quick bite. Four hours later I left hungrier than before, after the most meager meal of my life.

We spent that night in the heat of the wood stove (our one saving grace). I dusted off my cross country headlamps and went spelunking through the house. And then, akin to Columbus discovering America (well not really), I found an ancient device - the DVD player. Every night thereafter we would watch a few episodes of Wings, while the generator was on for the refrigerator. I don't think I've ever displayed more heroism.

Then I hightailed it out of there to go on the Mr. Billie coast trip. The promised land - where I could shower. Virtue is always rewarded."

"During this experience it really showed me what we take for granted. Losing power, being trapped inside, no internet, etc were reminders of what we take for granted. But the Big Freeze also brought me closer with my family and I got make a lot of memories with them this week. I won't forget this time and I have learned from it. Even though there are some unfortunate things that happened like a tree falling on my power line. We were scared to walk on our grass because we thought we might get electrocuted. There were some positive things too. My cousin lives a couple blocks away from me so he would walk over to my house, my family would play card games and find unique ways to make food. In the mornings it was fun to see our family get creative when they wanted coffee, using tea lights in a muffin tray to heat water. Something I learned was how unprepared we were and how we'll be ready if this happens."



McIntire, M. (2023, April 20). The truth is electric cars reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Friends of Animals. https:// friendsofanimals.org/the-truth-is-electric-cars-reducegreenhouse-gas-emissions/#:

~:text=Myth%20%232%3A%20Electric%20vehicles%20are, even%20when%20accounting%20for%20manufacturing. plctured below, Chevy Bolt





"This week was one of the least boring weeks of my life, I had to read a lot and play on my Switch or my phone. When I wasn't on my phone or reading I was outside looking at the trees and sliding around. "