



# PINE-RICHLAND RAMPAGE

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"DELIVERING HIGH SCHOOL NEWS... ONE PAGE AT A TIME."



## JROTC Girls' Dodgeball Team Wins 2nd Place at Tournament

*Learn About JROTC and The Team's Fight for Success*

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On Saturday, December 2nd from 9 AM to 1 PM, first-time and returning Pine-Richland/Mars JROTC cadets participated in West Mifflin's annual dodgeball tournament hosted by the West Mifflin Major, a National Guard recruiter and a recruiter from the Army. Three home teams –two male, one female– marched into the competition and fixed their eyes on two main motives– passion and integrity.

Boys' teams Alpha and Bravo competed against five other male-cadet teams from around the area in a double-elimination-style tournament. PR/Mars' female team brought home second place after competing against six other female teams bracket-style. Read on to discover the secret to the girls' victory and all of the participants' feelings towards the event, as well as reasons why you should consider taking JROTC as a class in the future. This article also features an interview with 2023 Pine-Richland graduate Connor McHugh's thoughts about his time as a JROTC cadet.

### **What strategies were used that led the team to a success?**

Freshman Natasha Kuciak stated that the girls' team organized themselves so that their powerful throwers attacked from the front while their defensive catchers guarded the back. Kuciak added that the team was strong as a whole.

Another participant from the victorious girls' team stated, "Our strategy was just to be as aggressive as possible because otherwise you would get pushed back against the wall, and it would be sure death: nowhere else to go."



*JROTC's Female Dodge Ball Team Champions, photo by JROTC photographer Blake Danik*

### **Was it fun and would you recommend it to cadets that are hesitant to participate?**

All the participants agreed that yes, cadets should "100% absolutely" go because the people they played with made it fun, and it's not a long-term commitment. Plus, you'd get to see and meet friends from other schools.

### **Are there any specific teammates you feel should be recognized for good play, sportsmanship, etc.?**

Juniors Tim Bauer and Kuciak claimed that senior Chris Meyer "slayed."

According to sophomore Reagan Kirik, Meyer "clutched up for a 1v3 and 1v1 victory."

Bauer also clutched up for a victory in 2v1 and 1v1 matches.

Finally, members of the girls' team added that Mars junior Jordan Kemigisa did absolutely fantastic as well.

### **Silly Little Stories**

"Last year there was this guy with a Batman shirt. We called him Batman, and he clutched the victory. He was there again this year, but he took mercy on us. He was not letting all his demons out," said Kirik.

"We made friends with people from Ligonier. Unlike some of the other girls there, they did not try to fight us. Unfortunately some of the teams were overly aggressive and they cheated a lot. They kept trying to start fights," Kuciak said.

Kuciak also claimed that "chucking balls at people" was highly "therapeutic."

"During the last game we played we got more strategic, and Tim Ha decided it would be a good idea to bonsai charge the other team and got completely demolished by like seven balls," said sophomore Danila Nevzorov.

"For 15 minutes straight, I was a human target for Aya before the game even started. She used me as a practice target. It was like a shotgun straight to the leg. As she kicked the ball viciously, she stared straight into my soul and claimed it was an 'accident,'" Kemigisa said.



# CONTINUED...

## What do you like most about JROTC?

Two of JROTC's biggest long-term clubs are Drill and



*PR/Mars Cadets at Raiders Competition, photo by JROTC photographer Blake Danik*

Raiders, both popular answers to this question. JROTC's Drill Team focuses on practicing different marching patterns that are performed during competitions which judge each team's formation. Raiders competes in tournaments of their own which test the physical strength and teamwork of the group as a whole through challenges like truck pulling, giant-tire flipping, carrying one another, and more.

"Dodgeball wasn't something that we trained for, we just showed up. For the drill comp, we take a lot of time to train. Drill consists of a couple of teams, those being color guard, armed team, and unarmed team. With that we also have an academic and special team," Junior Alexander Friedrich said. In addition to military-skill-related activities, JROTC also hosts a variety of parties and fun events throughout the year.

Many cadets raved over this year's Bonfire and Christmas party. Mars senior Reva Kalbhor got hand sanitizer as a white elephant gift. Everybody desperately wanted it and kept stealing it from her as a joke.

For others like sophomore Reagan Kirik, the way the class is organized and the leadership lessons it provides are some of the best parts.

"We have a lot of confidence-building activities that help with public speaking. I had to give a presentation for Raiders at the middle school which was actually really fun and helped with me being able to present to people," said Kirik.

"I like the people here because a lot of them are quite nice and can often take a joke. I also like the Chief and Major. They are really good teachers and have a good balance of knowing when to be serious and when to be relaxed/joke around. I enjoy the sense of involvement and how even if you're not in a high leadership position or something commanding like Shop Chief, you can still contribute a lot," sophomore Danila Nevzorov said.

## If you could tell people anything about JROTC, what would you want them to know?

"This is my first year in the program, and I just wanted to say that I really like the leadership skills and the friendships that you make. I really appreciate what the program has done for me. It's not what people think it is –it's a commitment the way that you would commit to a club or any other program where you instill skills like communication and people skills. The reputation behind it is irrelevant; you can't say anything unless you have joined to make a fair assessment. I would say, at first, I was apprehensive because I just moved here. I didn't know what I was going into. I heard about it and it sounded kind of scary, but when I hopped in, it was really fun and I met amazing people –they brought me to my first tournament that I've ever been to before. JROTC has amazing experiences that I'll remember throughout my life." –Kemigisa

"It's not a lot of commitment at all. You can do as little or as much as you want. I try to do as much as I can. If you join a club of some sort like Drill or Raiders you do have to be committed. It's fun and you make a lot of memories as well. Me personally, I struggled with meeting people, but then when I joined last year I started really making friends- so it's really nice. It can be very interesting at times and you make a lot of great memories." –Sophomore Alex Morris

"JROTC IS SO MUCH FUN. You have so many new opportunities as a freshman; you don't usually get this many opportunities. I was the one who played tap with the veterans and talked with them, and it was a really cool experience. You meet a lot of people from different schools, especially Mars. JROTC also helps me manage my grades because it keeps me aware of what I'm doing. I'm more confident than I've ever been. There's a lot of self discipline." –Freshman Kayla Adams

"I like the people in it and the connections that I make and also the work I have to put into it because I feel like I'm not



*PR/Mars' Drill Exhibition Rifle Team, photo by JROTC photographer Blake Danik.*

committed to anything else; JROTC forces me to be involved since it's a big thing that's important. It brings me to that level of commitment. I like that it makes me a lot more confident and I've made SO many friends. Honestly, everyone is just so great –they just kinda let you in." –Freshman RhiAnna Crader



## CONTINUED...

“I love the opportunity that it gives me. To me, JROTC was never a stigma because my brother was always in the program and he was a high-ranking cadet. He always pushed me to join. He said if you join you don’t have to join the military. In the past we’ve had multiple people who wanted to join but their parents didn’t want their kid to have to join the Army or Air Force. Parents don’t believe us when we say that they don’t have to.” –Junior Alexander Friedrich

“I graduated Alex’s freshman year so... three years ago. 2020. JROTC helps build confidence and social skills so you can go out and talk to people. People here naturally make friends because we all want to be successful in life and be leaders, etc.” –PR Graduate Ben Friedrich

“I like the activities; they’re very fun and engaging. I was struggling to make friends until I joined JROTC. If you’re new here I recommend you join JROTC, you will meet tons of people here who probably have the same interests as you.” –Sophomore Jack Loiterman

“We try to say it’s not so intimidating! Join for fun. I’m telling you, the only strict thing is the uniforms. Most of the time we’re all just working out and playing games, you know? Having fun. Everybody knows each other. It’s fun and we’re

close with each other. It’s like a normal club just... more fun to me. I haven’t joined anything before. We work together. We have a lot of parties! NO, it’s not uptight –literally. Just be a normal, nice, decent person. If you’re rude though –just don’t. Don’t be like that.” –Freshman Aya Vainshtein

“Sometimes, since you don’t know anything about something there’s a false narrative. We try to set the record straight on what we are and what we aren’t. We have a goal to obtain –having more ninth graders take the class. We know there are some students who will take JROTC one year and it’s not for them, but our goal is to retain as many ninth graders as we can. It’s good that we have so many seniors, but since they graduate that’s a lot of people leaving, you know? Our recruitment goal this year is important. It’s true for Mars, as well. A big part of the problem is that students just don’t know what we’re about. I have people all the time who say to me, ‘I’m not really thinking of going into the military,’ but that’s not our goal. We aren’t a recruitment army. We just want to make better people who have focus. If you can write anything down or publish it then it’s that- you don’t have to go into service. That’s not what we’re about.” –JROTC Instructor Major Morrison

## Interview with Connor McHugh, Former JROTC Cadet and 2023 PR Graduate

**How has your time in JROTC affected you beyond high school?**

“It provided me with a more mature and level-headed view on certain issues that other people my age might not have.”

**Are you in college now?**

“I go to Slippery Rock. I’ll be enrolled in Army ROTC next year.”

**If you already graduated, what are you doing here at Drill practice?**

“I came here out of boredom and just wanted to see people to stay in touch with them.”

**What do you miss the most about JROTC?**

“Leading Drill.”

**What’s an activity that stuck with you over the years?**

“The C1-30 flight during my freshman year. I liked flying, and it was my first time on a military aircraft.”



# What is Forensics?

## Learn the Ins and Outs from New Members of PR's Speech & Debate Club

BROOKE DEEGAN STAFF WRITER

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Forensics, PR's fantastic speech and debate club, is an extracurricular organization that encourages students to step out of their comfort zones and exercise their public speaking skills throughout several highly competitive tournaments. It is one of the most enriching and worthwhile ways for people interested to improve their dexterity in creativity, performance, arguments, and, of course, overall confidence. This year in particular an influx of immensely talented and intelligent students decided to join this intriguing club. If you've ever wondered what being a part of Forensics for the first time looks like, well, then you've arrived at just the right spot. Below are these newcomers' opinions on their first Forensics season.

### “What event(s) do you participate in, and what is your favorite aspect of that/those event(s)?”

Generally, Forensics is divided into two umbrella topics: Speech, which consists of academic events such as reading pieces of poetry/prose or creating and presenting original oratories, and Debate, which focuses on inventing, strengthening, and later executing arguments against opposing sides of a selected issue. Of course, though, there are even more sub-categories and minor complexities to each set of events under both Speech and Debate that many of the students indulge.

Freshman Darren Lee has just begun competing in Prose, getting to interpret and portray excerpts of stories for the public to hear. When asked his favorite part of the event, he said, “For me, it’s being able to act out characters and tell an interesting story.”

For junior Matthew Miller, who participates in Duo Interpretation, his adoration of working with a friend is what he loves most about his event.

“I get to have a lot of fun and act with a friend,” he said.

“My favorite thing about my event is the spontaneous aspect of it. I can't necessarily prepare for it before I actually get my topic, so I have to deal with the stress, time limit, and information I need to give to my judge, which helps me with many skills,” said freshman Bianka Roman, who competes in the exceedingly thrilling (and equally stressful) Impromptu category.

Sophomore Jiwon Lee participates in Public Forum Debate, and cannot get enough of the exciting opportunities that it brings him. He said that his favorite aspect of this event is “exploring all the universities and high schools we get to go to.”

Not everyone participates in just one Forensics event.

Sophomore Josh Oklejewski takes on two magnificent Forensic feats- Original Oratory and Lincoln Douglas Debate (one in Speech *and* one in Debate- how impressive is that?)

He said, “For Original Oratory, I love performing and I am very passionate about my topic. For Lincoln Douglas, I am good at arguing and proving my point.”

### “Why were you interested in joining Forensics?”

Forensics is one of those clubs that just has so much to offer... So it makes all the sense in the world as to why someone would want to join it!

Darren Lee was quite interested in improving his public speaking skills, saying, “It looked very good for your resume and it also just seemed like a fun activity. It can also help build up public speaking skills which can be super useful for the future.”

Others seem to feel the exact same way. Bianka Roman said, “I was interested in joining Forensics to improve my speaking skills and confidence. Talking in public is a very demanding and challenging skill that is necessary for life and the future, and I thought Forensics would be a big step up into improvement in that field.”

“I love arguing and public speaking, and this is very helpful for both skills!” said Matthew Miller.



*Sophomore Josh Oklejewski and friends, photo by Bianka Roman*



## CONTINUED...

When thinking about joining, things were a little different for Josh Oklejewski, since his English teacher, Mrs. Harshman, is also one of Forensics coaches. Because of this, he was invited to be a part of the club.

As for Jiwon Lee, his reasons for joining the club were outright spontaneous and, arguably, hilarious as well.

When asked why he was interested in joining the club, he said, "I wasn't. I was late to my bus when all of the sudden my friend Neil Kakkassery and some random guy named Avyu Nagrath told me to come. I wasn't gonna come until he told me he had snacks, so it started from that day."

### **"Please describe what your first tournament was like. Were you excited, nervous?"**

First days of anything are always laced with a nerve-racking hint of thrill. Darren Lee described himself on his first day of Forensics tournaments as being "very nervous, I was still trying to figure out what I wanted to do for my piece and overall scared of presenting in front of a judge."

Josh Oklejewski felt the same, having said, "I was really nervous, but after the first round, I gained confidence and did really well for my first time!"

Others were met with a gust of enthusiastic anticipation. "I had a lot of fun, but realized my event wasn't for me. I was very excited but ended up losing my debates," said Matthew Miller, who participated in Public Forum before the switch to Duo Interpretation.

Jiwon Lee said, "I was kinda excited but I just didn't know what to expect."

Others truly felt as if their first tournament was a combination of multiple different feelings and expectations. Bianka Roman described this mixture of uncertainty extremely well.

She stated, "My first tournament was a roller coaster, and it was filled with a mix of emotions. I was very nervous, and that continued the whole day until I got to the bus and relief had passed me. I remember being clueless about what to do in my topic, but meeting people from other schools had helped me calm down and eventually reach excitement for the first time during the tournament. The tournaments are overall very fun and exciting, but my first tournament was definitely a little scary!"

### **"What does the preparation process look like for you? Do you think it will change as you continue to get better?"**

Although the preparation process surely looks different for everybody, it generally consists of a plethora of practice and making sure of getting a good night's sleep.

Bianka Roman said, "The preparation process for me includes a good night's sleep, pep talk, and sometimes going over fake topics and creating fake speeches. What I mean by this is that Impromptu includes a spontaneous topic I don't know about until I walk into a room. If I'm tired, unmotivated, not confident, or don't feel good, I know I won't do well. I think my preparation process will change a little bit as I continue to get better, and it will probably include more preparation/fake speeches."

These newcomers also are certain that they and their preparation processes will improve with time.

"Over time, it'll become a lot easier to prepare for tournaments and get into character. How I prepare is by looking over my piece until I feel like I know it well enough that I can do it under pressure," said Darren Lee.

### **"And finally, going forward, what do you hope to gain out of participating in Forensics?"**

There sincerely is so much that you can gain out of being a part of Forensics and consistently participating in its tournaments. Most people, though, seem to be looking forward to strengthening their skills and being academically enriched.

Matthew Miller hopes to improve his performance skills while simultaneously having a great time. When asked what he hopes to get out of Forensics, he said, "Fun and public speaking skills."

"I hope to gain immense speaking skills, confidence, vocabulary, and knowledge. With my little experience in Impromptu, I have boosted up some of these skills and I really want to continue doing so," said Bianka Roman.

Additionally, Darren Lee hopes to become "way more comfortable when it comes to public speaking and being able to win tournaments."

Josh Oklejewski said that his goal is to gain "confidence in debating and being a really good speaker."

The first Forensics season for these newcomers has undoubtedly been quite valuable and rewarding already. Over the years, it will only continue to benefit these (and other) dedicated students who devote themselves to bettering their public speaking.



# Escape From Reality

## *Freshman Golfer Sam Schneck Shares His Experiences*

CALLE HENNE STAFF WRITER

To most people, golf is a relaxing past time. To freshman Sam Schneck, it is his life.

Before beginning the school year, Schneck tried out for the golf team in early August.

“The whole summer I had been playing golf, so when it came to tryouts it was like nothing because I had already played in 12 other tournaments,” he said.

Schneck achieved the goal of many athletes: varsity as a freshman.

“Being a freshman on varsity isn’t actually that bad; I get picked on sometimes, but other than that it is really fun. They always include me in activities and going places.”

“My hardest competition is probably the people I go against in golf, because there will always be someone who is better than you. When you see them playing better than you it just is frustrating because you want to be playing that good,” said Schneck.

Although the sport is difficult, there are some positive sides too.

“The best part about golf is the feeling of hitting a good shot, either when you sink a putt for birdie or you put a shot close to the hole, it always makes me happy and feel good,” he said.

Schneck learned almost everything he knows about golf from his golf coach, Easton. But nobody supports him the way his parents do. His parents wish him luck before every match and want him to do nothing but succeed.

Golf is the only sport that Schneck plays, so when he isn’t playing golf, you can find him with his friends.

As much as Schneck loves golf, it is not always sunny.

Schneck said, “The worst part of golf is the mental side of it; whenever I play bad I always get mad

at myself, even though I know that the more I get mad the worse I will play. Golf is a very mentally challenging game, because one shot can turn your whole game around either bad or good. One shot can flip your mood in one second, and then that leads to even more bad shots.”

In order to overcome these mental challenges, Schneck tries to go over what went wrong in his head. If he doesn’t perform well while chipping, he will focus on chipping before the next match.

Playing golf is Schneck’s escape from reality. He hopes to accomplish his dream of playing golf in college one day.



*Freshman Sam Schneck playing golf, photo provided by Calle Henne*

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# Recap of the Travis Scott Concert

## *Did La Flame Live Up to Expectations?*

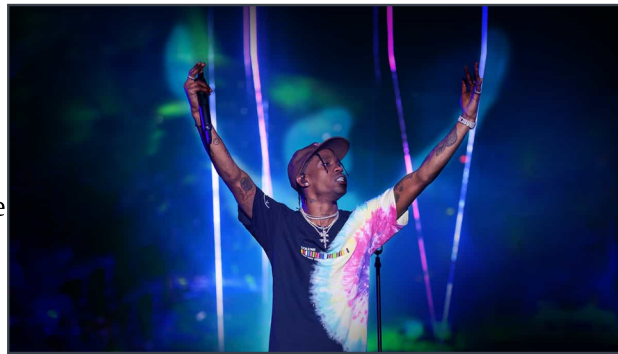
JACK HADLEY STAFF WRITER

On December 8th I got to see my favorite artist Travis Scott live. To say my expectations were high would be an understatement; seeing countless videos of the raging crowds or hearing Travis himself describe his concerts, I was thrilled to see how it would be. While I entered PPG my mind was racing: what kind of experience could this be? Walking to my seat I saw a group of my friends which took my mind off the concert for a little. To start off Teezoo Touchdown came out, another artist from Houston TX like Scott. I really did enjoy his performance and while admittedly, it was the first time I've heard a few of his songs, he was definitely a natural performer. After about 30 minutes of getting the crowd excited with different chants and showing off his pretty impressive vocals on multiple songs, the wait for Travis began. In the crowd we were clearly showing off our excitement with chants of "We want Travis" echoing in the arena.

Then smoke started to rise from the arena and the lights changed; a women's pre-recorded voice spoke over the speakers repeating questions: Were we ready for Utopia, his newest album? Once I heard the opening sample on *Hyena* and the beat dropped, I knew the show was ready to begin.

Coming up from the stage, Travis appeared. Already the entire place was on their feet. Travis played songs from the album and the entire arena loved it. Some of my personal favorites were when he went back in his discography to play songs from his older albums.

Some of these included crowd favorite *Mamacita*, or *90210*. Another highlight was when all the music stopped and the crowd sang for word of "I know." I think the moment we all knew this was going to be truly a special concert was when he played *Fein* 8 times, which may sound a little absurd. The energy that the song brought was unmatched.



Travis at the concert, photo by Jack Hadley

Sadly though I knew that this roller coaster of a concert had to end eventually. Only once I was sure Travis had left the stage and my voice was completely gone I started to exit the building. Looking back on it I can confidently say it was the best concert I have ever been to. While Travis had an unfair advantage already being my favorite artist before the concert it was more than just that. In between the unbelievable atmosphere and the way Travis was able to connect to the crowd truly was a once in a lifetime experience.

# Disney World in Photos

JOEY DELIE STAFF WRITER



Joey with his Grandfather and Grandmother at the Star Wars World in Hollywood Studios



Joey and his brother James with Goofy



Joey on the Thunder Mountain ride



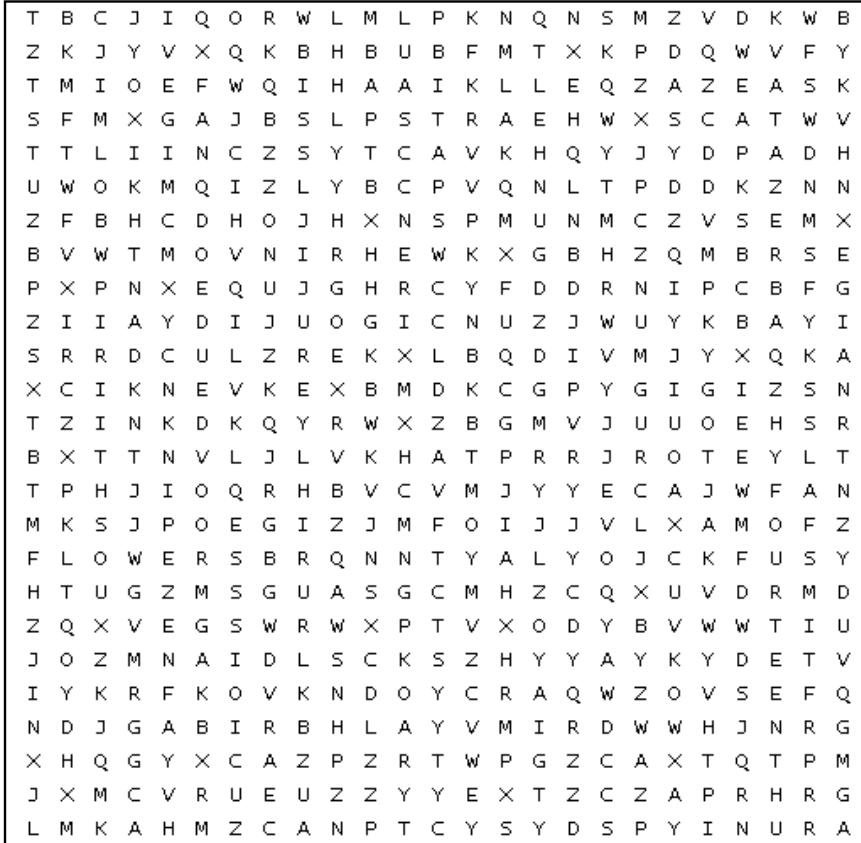
Joey's brother James at the German store in Epcot





# Valentine's Day Word Search

TRISTAN FARRAR STAFF WRITER



## WORD BANK:

- Chocolate
- Dates
- Flowers
- Fourteenth
- Hearts
- Love
- Pink
- Red



## Mamma Mia Musical This Year's High School Musical

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I had the opportunity to interview Mrs. Morrissey, the director for this year's musical. She is very excited to be able to direct "Mamma Mia" as she had said this is her "dream musical."

Morrissey said she picked "Mamma Mia" this year because she believed it went with the students' personalities and thought they would do an amazing job performing it. For the next few months until March the musical cast will have practices 4 days a week, 3 hours a day.

The whole cast deserves so much credit for devoting so much of their time into the musical. There are a total of 55 students on cast this year and the cast has not been this big in many years.

Mrs. Morrissey was asked who/what her inspiration was and she replied with "My father."

As of right now the most stressful part of putting on the musical is all of the lighting and the big pieces needed for the set. Mrs. Morrissey encourages anyone who can to come and help build sets. "It's very stressful but it's worth every second of it!"

The dates for the musical (as of right now) are March 14, 15, 16, 22, and 23. But there will also be a preview in school on March 13. Mrs. Morrissey said that the musical has a "tradition" of doing certain vocal warmups before the beginning of the musical. She is also hoping to start a new tradition to be carried on, choreographing a dance before the start of each musical.

Mrs. Morrissey's dedication and enthusiasm shows through in the cast. This year's musical is sure to be great.





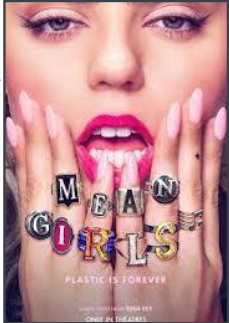
# Out With the New, In With the Old

## Sharing My Opinion on Various Musicals

ANASTASIA PUNOSEVAC DESIGN EDITOR

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Every year, our school gets amped-up for a spring musical. I mean, a two hour long performance filled with singing, dancing, music, funny moments, and more. What's not to love? This year, our school will be performing "Mamma Mia" and I couldn't be more thrilled, as it's classic in my opinion. This whole talk about our school's musical, without fail, makes me go down a rabbit hole of all the musicals I've ever seen or wanted to see.



Looking back at all the musicals I've ever liked, I realized that pretty much all of them are older musicals, and I tend to really dislike the modern musicals that are made. It's definitely a nostalgia thing, but I also think that musicals nowadays just aren't as fun and have less thought put into it. Now, before you come for me let me explain.

The two most recent musicals that have come out as movies have been *Mean Girls* and the *Wonka* prequel. Now, let me just say, I'm pretty biased in the sense that I really dislike movie remakes. If there's already a movie about something, why remake it?

There has already been a *Mean Girls* movie AND a *Mean Girls* musical, so the format was laid out for the makers. Next, with the *Wonka* prequel, from my viewpoint it's very... weird. Now, it stars Timothée Chalamet, which is always a plus in my book, but it's still a very weird movie. To be honest, the story line isn't very weird--it follows the same plot of all the other many Willy Wonka adaptations, but it's the music that really throws me off. Don't believe me? Listen to "You've Never Had Chocolate Like This" and then come back to me. This may seem like a bold statement,



but I think Pine-Richland Middle School's spring musical production of *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* in 2022 had better singing than this new movie.

Enough with the complaining and hating. It may seem like all I have is bitterness and distaste in my heart, but that's not true, I do like some things. In fact, I'm really fond of older musicals.

For example, *Phantom of the Opera* is outstanding. The movie stars Emmy Rossum and Gerard Butler, and any time I hear the songs I want to cry. Also costar Emmy Rossum was only 17, but she still gives the performance of a lifetime.



Another musical I really like is anything that stars Julie Andrews. *Mary Poppins*? Spectacular. *The Sound of Music*? Tremendous. What's not to love about Julie Andrews? All of her musicals from the 60s-80s just have the absolute best music too; it's not even a competition.

The last category of musicals I will be discussing are the modern musicals that are actually good. Now, 'modern' is kind of a broad term, but I'm going to count anything made from 2000 on and have a 'modern vibe' as a 'modern musical'.

First up is *School of Rock*. To be honest, whenever I watch this movie, it doesn't even feel like I'm watching a musical. It's so good, I love Jack Black, it's so funny, and all around a perfect movie. I've definitely daydreamed about being in a band and, instead of studying math or science, studying how to be a rock star.

Next is *Sing Street*. I feel like not as many people are big fans of this 2016 movie, but they should be. It too is another musical about starting a band, but is different to *School of Rock*. It's Irish, which is why I think not as many people know about it, but it's so great and the ending makes me crazy (in a good way).



Finally we get to *Mamma Mia*, which I obviously have to talk about when our school is going to be performing it this spring. It's perfect. Perfect Greek summery vibe, perfect cast, perfect songs, perfect pace. Everything. I love everything about it.

Looking back at all these different musicals was interesting. While I wouldn't call myself a theater kid, I definitely love a good show.



## What is a Serialized Novel?

ANASTASIA PUNOSEVAC  
DESIGN EDITOR

Have you ever heard of a serialized novel? You've probably read a serialized novel without realizing it. "David Copperfield" by Charles Dickens, "The Count of Monte Cristo" by Alexander Dumas, and "The Green Mile" by Stephen King are examples of books that were originally published as serialized novels.

A serialized novel simply means that the book was published chapter by chapter, or in pieces.

These books previously listed were originally published as serialized novels, but we know of them today in their full and completed form, but why write a serialized novel?

Well, for example, Charles Dickens. When he first started writing and publishing his stories in the 1830s, he didn't have a lot of money. Certainly not enough to pay for a publication. So, instead of just not printing his works, he bought out space in the newspaper and would publish his books chapter by chapter each week.

In fact, have you ever heard of the term "cliff-hanger"? I'm sure you have. Well, the term actually comes from Thomas Hardy's book (originally a serialized novel) "A Pair of Blue Eyes," where by the end of the chapter a character was literally hanging off a cliff.

There are many benefits to a serialized novel. One being that it obviously keeps the reader on their seat. Think of the last time you read a book or watched a TV series where it ended on a cliff-hanger, you probably couldn't wait to figure out what's going to happen next, and you came back to see what would happen. This is exactly why people write serialized novels.

All this being said, the Creative Writing and Journalism classes thought it would be a great idea if we hopped on the trend and wrote our own serialized novel.

Stay tuned as the Rampage publishes each chapter one by one. You won't want to miss any of the action.

## Chapter 1: Anthony and Rory

BY: ELISE DUCKWORTH, TRISTAN FARRAR, CALLE HENNE, CHOLE MILLER, AND THAI TILLMAN

For this tight-knit friend group, this road trip was their last opportunity to spend time with each other before college. But little did they know the things they would learn on this journey.

In a small town, Cedarville, Missouri, there were just over 1,000 people. One of them was Rory.

She was always around music. Her first time on a stage was at 4 years old while her dad was in a rock band and they were on tour. Her first time holding a guitar was at 6 and now that she is 17, she's following in her father's footsteps with her love of music and traveling. Rory glowed with deep brown eyes and red ginger hair. Freckles painted her face like stars in the night sky. She loved to show her girly personality through her dresses and skirts that she always styled with thorough planning. It took her a while to find her true self because her childhood was shadowed with the grief of her mom's tragic death. Since the age of 4, it was just her and her little brother, Issac, finding their way through the crazy life of tour.

Rory's best friend since the age of 5 was Anthony, but he goes by Tony. He was always dressed head to toe in designer brands from Gucci to Louis Vuitton to Dior. His signature item was his vintage Gucci leather jacket that he styled with every outfit. And he was always topped off with a mischievous grin and a gleam in his dark brown eyes. He never had to worry about finding his own way through his childhood because his parents' money always managed to guide him. He didn't have to worry about making mistakes because he didn't face consequences. Girls love him, but he only had eyes for one, but she never knew.

Rory walked two doors down and headed in the house without knocking- that's what you do when you're best friends.

"Hey, Ror," said Tony as he opened a bag of chips on the couch.

"Hi, Anthony," she said as she grabbed a Coke from the fridge.

Rory is the only person that Tony allows to call him Anthony. She walks over and sits on the couch next to him.

"You won't believe what happened today. I heard Megan talking to Liz about how she thought you were hot."

Tony shrugs, "Okay, whatever. What are you doing hanging around Megan and Liz?"

"What do you mean?"

"Everyone knows the kind of people they are, and I think you should be making smarter decisions and not associating yourself with them. C'mon Ror, don't make yourself one of them."

"I'm not sure why you care so much, and I didn't even hang out with them. Whatever, Anthony."

"No, no, no it's not like that! I want you to hang out with whoever you want, I just don't want you to change because of them."

She stood up to get off the couch but was stopped by what he said next.

"Hey wait, I want to talk to you about something. Listen, I found this cool concert scene and I think that-"

She rolled her eyes, "Anthony, not this again"

"Ror, I am being serious. It's our last chance to do something special before we leave for college."

"I really don't know. What about-"

"Don't worry, they're on their way over as we speak."



# Calling All Troubled Night Owls

## *Finding a Solution to Your No-Sleep Dilemma*



MARIANNA ZAHORCHAK STAFF WRITER

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Welcome to the Unconventionalist's Guide to Insomnia and How to Deal with It. Everybody has probably heard at some point in their lives that sleep holds importance. Failure to obtain the proper amount of sleep can have negative effects on all areas of health, including physical, mental, emotional, and social. Based on each individual's own personal experiences on varying amounts of sleep, some believe this statement to be more true than others. And while some people are perfectly content with the less-than-7-hours they may receive, others may find themselves actively trying to improve their sleep schedule – but they're struggling. Today, we'll be exploring 11 uncommon methods I have used that have personally helped me have an easier time falling asleep. As someone who can become very cranky on less than 7 hours of sleep and can barely function at all with less than 6, I know the pain of trying to get more sleep, but failing for a variety of reasons, often times out of your own control. My hope is that, if you have ever felt the same– or perhaps *have* been feeling the same for quite a while now– this article will assist in finding an insomnia-reducing method that works for you.

Before we begin, it is important to understand the various possibilities as to why one may experience insomnia or any difficulty falling asleep in general. Many physical influences can play into insomnia, including diet, level and frequency of exercise, bodily aches and pains, the temperature of your room, etc. However, I would like to focus in more on the emotional and lifestyle factors of insomnia. For instance, poor mental health is linked to a lack of sleep, and a lack of sleep is linked to poor mental health. The two go hand in hand, a frustrating cycle that can seem impossible to break at times. On the impactful decisions side of the matter, choices like caffeine intake, scrolling through your phone at bed time, and stimulating your mind right before bed can lead to insomnia, too.

Prior to searching for improvement methods, it may be beneficial to think about what the root cause of your sleep problems may be. There is a wide range of issues that could be the culprit, so your first guess may not be the right one. Don't let this discourage you – if getting good sleep is truly important to you, you must be willing to approach the problem from multiple viewpoints. Maybe right now, you don't know your

insomnia's weak spot. But if you wanna win the fight, you must learn where to hit it where it hurts, no matter how many tries it takes.

One of the major causes of insomnia that I'll be bringing up throughout this article is anxiety, the main driver of my insomnia which I experienced from the of August through October last year. Anxiety can result from a huge assortment of reasons and can have a colorful spectrum of symptoms. Personally, I have battled with overthinking and overanalyzing situations for a long time. Anxious thoughts are a bully and will stop at nothing to keep you up at night. How to cope? Let's find out.

### **Decisive Factors –Factors 100% in your control**

#### **• Method 1: No Caffeine Past 4:00 PM.**

If you need caffeine in the morning to wake you up, go for it. If you need caffeine to keep you going throughout the school day, go for it. If you need caffeine after the long school day, go for it! However, according to [houstonmethodist.org](http://houstonmethodist.org), who sourced the FDA, "...the half-life of caffeine — the time it takes for the starting amount of the substance to reduce by half — is between four and six hours. This means that up to six hours after drinking a caffeinated beverage, half of the caffeine you consumed is still present in your body — keeping you alert. And, if it's bedtime, potentially keeping you from falling or staying asleep."

Personally, I wake up at 6:00 AM and try my hardest to go bed at 10:30 PM so that I can receive 7 to 7½ hours of sleep each night, depending on how long the process takes. If you're someone who wakes up earlier, then you'll need to go to bed sooner; so your set time to stop drinking caffeine would be earlier, too.

Caffeine affects everyone differently, so while some may not have trouble sleeping because of it, if you are, considering the time you drink caffeine could potentially solve the problem.

#### **Method 2: Melatonin and the Holy Blue Light Filter™**

Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone in everyone's body. Melatonin is produced in high amounts at night, alerting the body that it is time to go to sleep. Even so, certain activities can decrease the amount of melatonin being produced. One of these is blue light. However, blue light intake can be managed. It's as simple as going to your phone or computer's settings and turning on the "night light" or blue light filter. It's easy to do and will not have any affect other than possibly increasing your ability to fall



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### • Method 3: Stay Off Devices in the 30 Minutes Leading Up to Bed

I know, I know, scrolling through your phone in the dark is the only thing that makes you tired at night. But looking at social media or texting people late into the night is stimulating to your mind. It's making you think about ideas, memories, or emotions that can lead to anxious thoughts or stress. Further, doing these things in the minutes leading up to bed could be detrimental to your sleep cycle. And now, an even more controversial suggestion: get your phone out of the room. It removes the temptation. You may not want to, but if getting some shut eye is truly important to you, it will be worth it.

### The Unconventional Methods – For Dealing with Anxious or Exciting Thoughts Outside of Your Control

### • Method 4: AVOID STIMULATING YOUR MIND AT ALL COSTS!!!

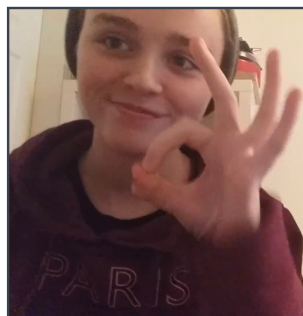
Any excessive emotion can keep you up. Activities that can lead to such are important to avoid in the time leading up to bed. Activities that make you think about a certain subject for a long period of time can also drive you crazy, especially if it's something you're struggling with, like homework, or excited about, like a new idea you want to try. For instance, I made the decision to brainstorm article ideas for the Rampage right before bed. I wanted to stop, but new ideas kept on flowing in, and it was difficult to end them once I had already started.

### • Method 5: Think of Blackness.

Complete and utter darkness. Close your eyes and stare at it. Become one with it. Focus on it and do not think of anything else but the color black. Imagine it. Imagine it getting darker and darker. Put the vision of it in front of your eyes so that nothing else can stand in its place.

### • Method 6: Listen to Calming Music/ Get that Annoying Song Out of Your Head

Music is a good friend to many people, but sometimes it can also bite you in the back, specifically in the late hours of the evening. For this reason, I am very particular and cautious when it comes to what type of music I allow myself to listen to before bed. If the song I choose to listen to makes me



*Sammy Copley after playing his song "We'll Find," photo by Marianna Zahorchak*

feel anything – happy, sad, angry, pumped up, whatever – there's a good chance it's gonna keep me up. That's why, before bed, I have a playlist of calming songs I like to listen to in order to put myself in a peaceful state of mind. These are songs I like that also calm me down – but they don't do anything more than that. I don't feel any other emotion besides calmness when listening to them, which is exactly what I'm going for. Sammy Copley's YouTube-exclusive songs are my go-to late-night music. Especially if I'm upset about something –or overly hyper about something, even– his voice is always comforting, and his songs are always relaxing. I recommend creating a playlist of songs *you* like that make you feel the same way. Keep in mind that the music that you listen to during the day may be completely different than what you listen to before bed. In general, I listen to the most upbeat music out there – happy pop and angry rock. Although having songs like this stuck in my head before bed may not cause issues, *listening* to it right before bed almost certainly will, because then it is fresh and loud in my head. In general, I've found that songs that have simple lyrics, yet aren't excessively catchy, are the best to listen to at bed time. If you do happen to have an annoying earworm playing on loop inside yourself, inhibiting you from catching some zzz's, my suggestion is to first try replacing it with peaceful music. If that song still won't give in, then it might be time to sing the lyrics of other catchy songs –ones that you *do* like– within your mind instead.

### • Method 7: Bob Ross

Yes, you heard me right. Bob Ross can have the most calming, happy sensation on your tired mind. If the anxious thoughts will not let up, turn to Bob Ross. Every single one of his episodes is available on YouTube for free. It's so nice to watch him paint happy little trees and beautiful lakes and skies when you're stressed. It distracts you from your troubles and pushes all your cares away. And while yes, this is stimulating your mind to some degree, it's forcing you to think about happy, calming things –essentially the same thing that calming music can do for you. Now, Bob Ross doesn't have to be your main man if you don't want him to (though you are severely missing out if



*Marianna's Bob Ross plushie, photo by Marianna Zahorchak*

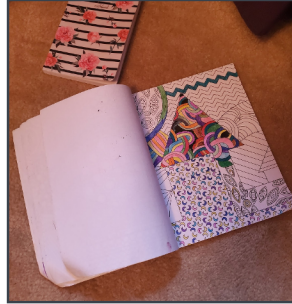


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he isn't). Any videos or podcasts made by somebody with a relaxing voice, talking about a non-emotional topic, could be used as well.

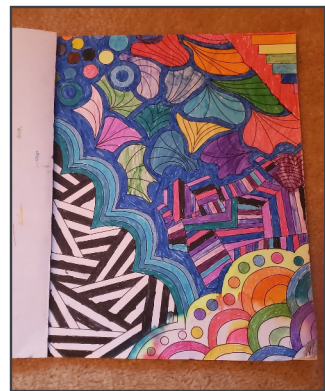
### • Method 8: Puzzles and Coloring – Focusing Your Mind without Consciously Thinking

A great way to take your mind off of stressors is coloring. However, this can't be meticulous, perfectionistic coloring-in-the-lines. I use a geometrical patterns coloring book and color with markers so there's no temptation to do fancy shading, outlining, or anything that would take too much brainpower.



*One of Marianna's colorings in her geometry coloring book, photo by Marianna Zahorchak*

Methods like these allow your brain to focus on an external matter without taking too much internal thought. Coloring is something that takes mere hand and eye coordination, something



that pretty much everyone has mastered by now, I would think. A similar example is puzzle-building. You have to think about where to put the pieces, but it doesn't take any inventive or intense thinking to do so.

### • Method 9: Unrestricted Journaling

This is one of my personal favorites. I'm sure you've all heard of journaling before, but allow me to reimagine your entire notion of what it means to journal. I tried, but I could never write about everything that happened in my

life, day after day. It took too long. This doesn't mean that journaling has no use though. Whenever something is really bothering you, and I you need to get it off your chest in the dead of night, write down that down. Make it as messy as needed. Do not confine yourself to the old "Dear Diary" with dates and proper grammar and dainty little paragraphs. Instead, let the page reflect your true emotions. No one else is ever going to see your journal to judge it, so you should feel free to let loose and write down whatever pops into your head. Worrying about

*Marianna's journal and another late-night coloring work-in-progress, photo by Marianna Zahorchak*

something over and over isn't going to fix anything since most mishaps can't be fixed until the morning. Writing down those worries, on the other hand, grants you the ability to express your concerns in a tangible way in order to satisfy your brain.

### • Method 10: Distract Yourself by Categorizing Random Things!

Here's a unique one for you: categorization. This is a great way to entertain your brain without letting it go off on a thought-tangent. It's kind of hard to explain what I mean by this, so I'll provide some examples. I love to watch cartoons, and I'm also quite interested in the Myers-Briggs personality theory (MBTI), which states that every person has one of 16 personalities. So, one of the things I do to distract myself from whatever path its about to go down is trying to assign types to my favorite characters.

Admittedly, I do the same thing with zodiac signs. For those who aren't into astrology or personality quizzes, I have an alternative approach. Think about all of your friends – how many of them have blond hair? How many have brown eyes? How many are introverted? All of these questions can be answered, but will not lead you to any new long-winded conceptualizations that could keep you up.

### • Method 11: Turn the Light On.

Sometimes, when all else has failed, the best you can do is start over. Trying to force yourself to fall asleep can cause more anxiety than the original scenario keeping you up in the first place. If you're too concerned about sleeplessness, your paranoia may end up causing exactly what you fear. Sit up, breathe, get a small snack, pet your animal companion –do whatever you need to reset your mind. Then try again once you're in a calmer, more sleepy state.

Getting good rest is something that everyone deserves. Gaining the proper amount of sleep can have a positive impact on many aspects of one's life. If you're someone who wishes they could gain more hours, then with hope, this article can help make your dreams a reality.

CCAC North will be visiting PRHS during all 3 lunch periods on Monday, February 12th . Students interested in learning more about classes available to current high school students and programs available after graduation are encouraged to stop by and speak with an admissions counselor.



# The Benefits of Being Kind

## The Easiest Thing that Can Make Someone's Day

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Kindness is a powerful force that not only shapes individuals but also transforms entire communities. One of its profound benefits lies in fostering positive relationships.

of kindness can inspire others to pay it forward, creating a chain reaction of goodwill. This collective kindness contributes to a sense of unity and shared purpose, fostering a more compassionate and empathetic society.

When kindness becomes a guiding principle, it builds bridges between people, creating a supportive network that enhances social bonds. This interconnectedness forms the basis for a harmonious and compassionate society.

Furthermore, kindness plays a pivotal role in promoting physical health. Scientific studies have shown that individuals who engage in acts of kindness exhibit lower blood pressure and improved cardiovascular health. The stress-reducing effects of kindness contribute to a healthier lifestyle, ultimately benefiting both the giver and the receiver.

Kindness has a remarkable impact on mental well-being. Acts of kindness, whether big or small, trigger the release of oxytocin, often referred to as the "love hormone." This hormone not only promotes feelings of love and connection but also reduces stress and anxiety. Consequently, individuals who practice kindness regularly experience improved mental health and a greater sense of overall happiness.

The benefits of kindness extend far beyond simple acts of niceness. Kindness weaves a tapestry of positive relationships, nurtures mental well-being, fosters community harmony, and even contributes to physical health. Embracing kindness as a way of life is not only a gift to others but a profound investment in one's own happiness and the well-being of society as a whole.



Beyond the individual level, kindness also ripples through communities, creating a domino effect of positivity. A single act

## Self-Love: Why it is Important to Take Care of Yourself

MADDY HOMER STAFF WRITER

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I am sure we have all heard the saying "you only live once," but have any of us actually taken the time to stop and think about what this truly means?

"You only live once" (YOLO) is a modern version of the Latin phrase *Carpe diem*, which means "Seize the day." Since you only live once, you should live life to the fullest, even when that means embracing choices that carry an inherent (safe) risk.

Because we only live once, we also need to learn how to love and take care of ourselves. Oftentimes, as a teenager, we start to lose the confidence we have in ourselves and depend on certain things that make us feel better about our self image, such as social media.

positive behavior while reducing harmful behavior. It both empowers us to take risks and to say no to things that don't work for us. It's a key component of building self-compassion. Self-love helps us take care of ourselves, lower stress, and strive for success. Self-care means taking the time to focus on

improving both your physical and mental health. When it comes to your mental health, self-care can help you manage stress, lower your risk of illness, and increase your energy.

Here's a list of habits you should try to help you learn to love yourself:

1. Stop comparing yourself to others
2. Don't worry about others' opinions
3. Allow yourself to make mistakes



Freshmen Maddy Homer, Francesca Guzy, and Ella Davis, photo by Maddy Homer

4. Remember your value doesn't depend on what your body

Self-love is important because it motivates much of our



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looks like.

6. Don't be afraid to let go of toxic people

Process your fears

7. Trust yourself to make good decisions for yourself

8. Take every opportunity life presents or create your own

9. Put yourself first

10. Feel pain and joy as fully as you can

11. Exercise boldness in public

12. See beauty in simple things

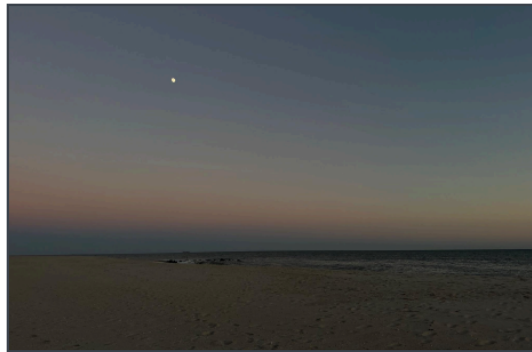
13. Be kind to yourself

We only have one life, so why spend it with hatred towards yourself rather than loving and being proud of who you are?

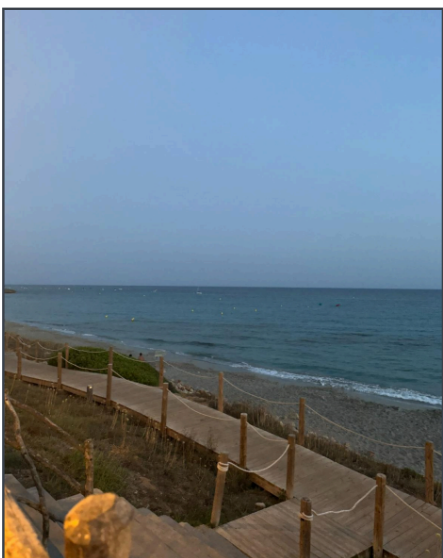
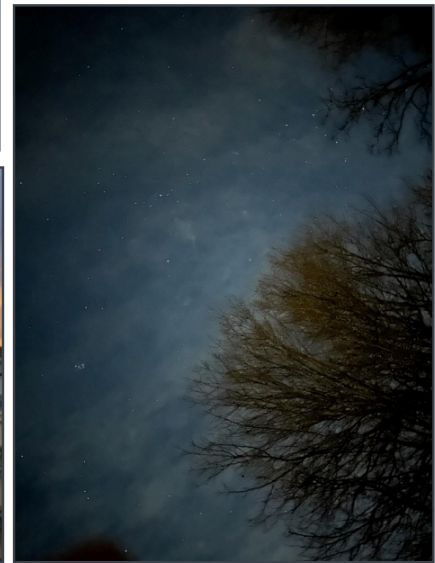
Take care of yourself and your body and always make bold choices.

## The Beauty of Nature

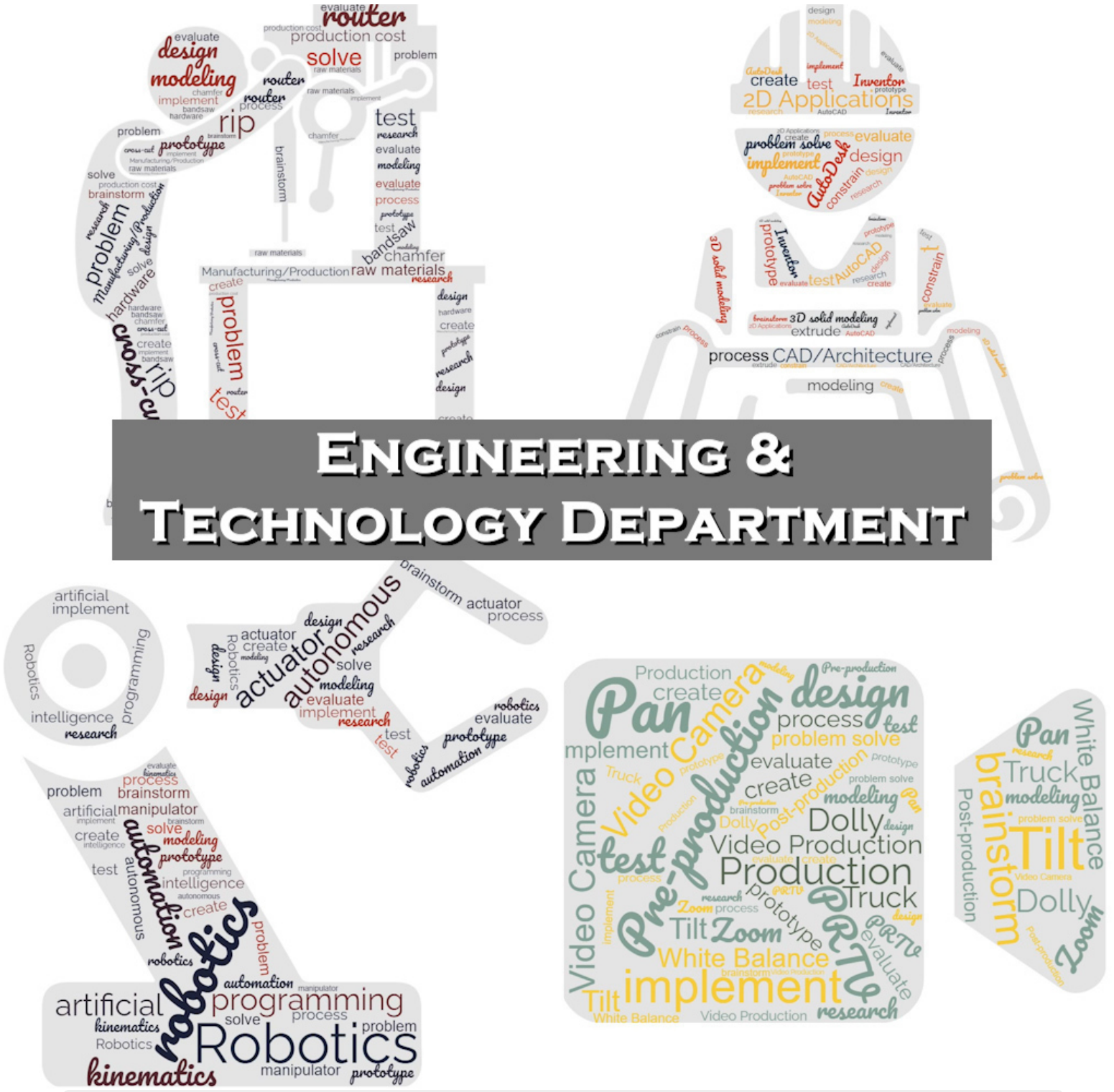
ELISE DUCKWORTH STAFF WRITER



*Growing up over the years.  
Photos taken by Elise Duckworth  
and family.*



# ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY DEPARTMENT



## Calling all future FASHION and COSTUME DESIGNERS!

We are excited to announce that this year's **Runway Repurposed** fashion show will be held on **Wednesday, May 22, 2024** at the August Wilson Center. This event is a student fashion show featuring designs constructed with unconventional and upcycled/repurposed materials. North Allegheny, Keystone Oaks, Pine-Richland, West Virginia University, and Carnegie Mellon University and are some of the schools supporting students in the show. We are excited to see all the designs come to life on stage!

If you are interested in participating, and you own your own sewing machine, click on this [link](#) to review the timeline. Email PRMS FCS teacher, [Ms. Graham \(egraham@pinerichland.org\)](mailto:egraham@pinerichland.org) with your **letter of interest** by **Feb. 16, 2024**.

**Runway Repurposed** is a student fashion show where materials get a 2nd chance. This is a fitting description, as the event benefits the **Salvation Army's Family Caring House in Pittsburgh**, dedicated to keeping families together during times of crisis.