



PINE-RICHLAND RAMPAGE

THURSDAY DECEMBER 7TH, 2023 Nº5

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



PR Students Celebrate World Kindness Week

What Can YOU Do to Make Someone's Day?

MADDY HOMER STAFF WRITER

Did you know that every single thing you say, and every single thing you do affects someone in some way? Whether negative or positive, your words are powerful, extremely powerful, and sometimes that's easy to forget. Imagine what would happen if everyone in our school took time out of their day just to make someone else smile. All they would have to say is, "Your shoes are cute" or "Your smile lights up the room;" something as small as that can change someone's entire day. We don't know what everyone is going through. Someone could be having a bad day: maybe they failed their science test and then realized they forgot to do their homework last night; just reminding them that they are enough and that they are okay can help them out so much.

Acts of kindness can make the world a happier place for everyone. They can boost feelings of confidence, happiness, and optimism. They may also encourage others to repeat the good deeds they've experienced themselves, thus contributing to a positive community.

Freshman Sofia Dent said, "Spreading kindness is so incredibly important. It fills people with a happy feeling and boosts confidence. Kindness can brighten somebody's day by saying something as simple as a compliment or helping somebody when in need."

Sofia tries to compliment people whenever she can, but it is not always based on appearance/clothes. She tries telling people how smart they are and how incredibly funny they are. She

thinks everyone deserves to feel special.

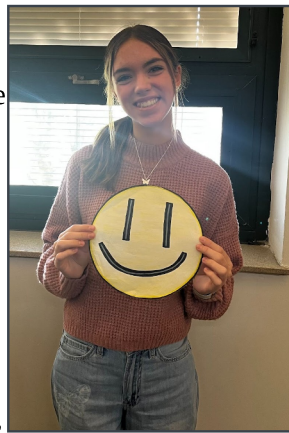
Freshman Allison Rishel explained, "Being kind to people is important because most of the time you do not know what people are struggling with or how they really feel. Showing kindness makes people happy because they appreciate the favor you did for them or they feel seen because of how you waved to them. This boosts the moods of people and can lead to them being kind and then more people being happy. And isn't that what we want, to be happy?"

Allison shows kindness by being friendly and smiling and saying hi to people she knows. She likes letting people know that they are appreciated and that she is happy to see them. Allison also tries to do favors for people such as giving them a pencil to borrow, sharing gum if she has any, and helping people with assignments at school.

She feels: "Another way to be kind that people overlook is actually asking your friends or family what they need you to do for them. If you don't know how to help someone with a situation, sometimes simply offering to help and asking what they need is just as kind."

Lastly, I love giving compliments. I know that when people compliment my sweater or handwriting or anything it makes my entire day. So, when I notice something impressive or interesting or anything I like about a person I make sure to tell them about it.

The Rampage staff wants to encourage you to spread kindness. You might make someone's day.



Freshman Sofia Dent, photo by Maddy Homer



Freshman Allison Rishel, photo by Mady Homer



WEEKLY WEATHER REPORT Dec. 8- Dec. 14



FRIDAY
Dec. 8

SATURDAY
Dec. 9

SUNDAY
Dec. 10

MONDAY
Dec. 11

TUESDAY
Dec. 12

WEDNESDAY
Dec. 13

THURSDAY
Dec. 14

HIGH: 53
LOW: 43

HIGH: 57
LOW: 48

HIGH: 54
LOW: 31

HIGH: 39
LOW: 29

HIGH: 43
LOW: 29

HIGH: 40
LOW: 28

HIGH: 38
LOW: 26



Freshman Francesca Guzzy explained, "I think kindness is extremely important mainly because it makes the world glow and the world needs that glow."

She believes that saying something positive to someone has a huge impact on their day and no matter what the compliment is, it brings a smile to their face and brightens their mood.

Freshman Alessia Miller feels, "Being kind to people is important because you never know what kind of day someone is having or what is going on in their life. Even the smallest act of kindness in someone's day could make all the difference."

To show others kindness Miller always tries to do something that can bring a smile to a person's face and make their day better. That could mean making them laugh, complimenting them, or just having a conversation with them.

Sophomore Ava Coons expressed, "It's important to spread kindness so that everybody, no matter where they come from or who they are, feels wanted, cared for, and happy. Even the littlest thing, such as a 'hi' in the hallway or a fist bump can go a long way."

Ava makes sure to always stay respectful towards those she interacts with. She will also compliment the little or big things, no matter how well she knows that person.

Junior Jillian Uzelac said, "It is important to spread kindness because everyone deserves a little bit of happiness in their lives. Everyone needs to know they are loved and appreciated."

Jillian likes to spread kindness by cheering people up through jokes. "If you can make them smile and laugh, then you could make a sad day better."

Freshman Loren Prisuta thinks, "It is important to spread kindness because you could never know what a person is going through. A small act of kindness performed by you could really help someone out or change their way of looking at themselves."

Every day after her health class, Loren and her friend write out a small compliment and hand it to someone random in the hallways. They tell them that if they would



Freshman Alessia Miller, photo by Maddy Homer



Freshman Loren Prisuta, photo by Maddy Homer

like to, they can pass it on.

She says, "Kindness is the key to success."

Pine-Richland is filled with a bunch of different students and staff. You never know what someone is going through. One kind remark could change someone's day. Staying kind helps make Pine-Richland a positive environment and a place that people enjoy coming to.

2023 Fall Crew Season: *Final memories in photos*

JOEY DELIE STAFF WRITER



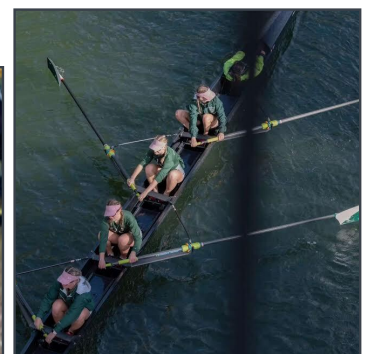
The crew team, at dinner



The varsity four men's team launching preparing for the Cuyahoga race. (Seniors Dante Pittorino, Ben Pickles, Liam Francis, and Junior Parker Mehlhorn)



Joey the banana



(both photos) The varsity four girls racing at head of the Ohio (Juniors Ava Spagnolli, Josie Arthur, Bella Folmer, and sophomore Maddie Gross)



Novice double (Freshman Sophia Zottola and Ava McKenny) having practice at Coriaoplus



“Please, Won’t You Be My Neighbor?”

Learn about Mr. Rogers’ Lasting Impact on Our World

ELISE DUCKWORTH STAFF WRITER

“I have always wanted to have a neighbor just like you. I’ve always wanted to live in a neighborhood with you.” These lyrics have touched hearts all around the world. The kindness that Mr. Rogers showed his community is a beautiful thing. He has changed children’s television for the better. During the time that “Mr. Roger’s Neighborhood” was running, our world was divided. He used his platform to fight for unity and often showed complete inclusion.

In the 1960s, the Civil Rights movement took place. During this time, racial tension was high: in fact, in many communities, white people refused to share pools with black citizens. On May 9th, 1969, an episode of “Mr. Roger’s Neighborhood” aired that involved inviting Officer Clemmons, played by a black actor, to join him and soak his feet in his pool. Officer Clemmons responded that he didn’t have a towel, so that was when Mr. Rogers offered to share his. By airing this on live TV, he was able to show children an example of kindness and inclusion. This put out a message to communities that we shouldn’t be divided and continue on as one.

As divorce ravaged the country, Mr. Rogers took the opportunity to describe this hard and relevant topic. In these shows, he reassures children that almost all parents fight

and that’s normal. He also describes how divorce is not the child’s fault and that even if parents fight, divorce is not necessarily always considered. By normalizing and breaking down this hard concept, he allowed younger children to relate to more mature issues. In an episode aired in 1989, he had Mr. McFeely run off-screen whenever divorce was mentioned.

By doing this he showed how uncomfortable the topic can be, even for adults and parents. He offered constant kindness and reassurance.

Throughout the show, Mr. Rogers shows trust in medical personnel and others. He often shows confidence in dentists and doctors. By doing this he helps children understand that these important people want to help and shouldn’t be seen as scary.

Overall, Mr. Rogers is important to Kindness Week, as he always showed absolute warmth as he pushed inclusion, positivity, and compassion.



Mr. Rogers, photo from National Today

**“There are three ways to ultimate success: The first way is to be kind. The second way is to be kind. The third way is to be kind.”
- Mr. Rogers**

GUIDANCE NEWS:

- The following scholarships, contests and workshops are now available, stop in the guidance office or check on Naviance under Colleges tab, scholarship list:
- UPMC is hosting a Career Fair at the Peterson Events Center: Date- December 6, 2023
- American Legion 89th Annual Essay Contest: Deadline- January 1, 2024
- GE Reagan Foundation Scholarship \$40,000: Deadline- January 4, 2024
- Trib Total Media’s Jim Borden Scholarship, Scholarship for Diversity in Media and Business, Marketing, and Technology Scholarship: Deadline- January 4, 2024



Prominent Pine-Richland Alumni: Where Are They Now?

ELLA BARKLEY STAFF WRITER

Pine-Richland High School might just seem like a normal suburban school in Pennsylvania for current students, but for some famous graduates, it's where their career began. These alumni that you may now watch on TV have been in your exact shoes. They have walked the same halls you have, and maybe even had some of the same teachers. Take a look at some of the most famous alumni from our high school and learn about their career path. Maybe you'll learn something new.

Jackie Evancho, an American opera singer, grew up in Gibsonia and attended Pine-Richland High School graduating in 2018. She rose to fame at the young age of 10 when she was first runners up on America's Got Talent in 2010. Throughout the years, she has released a total of six albums. She has held many concerts around the country and has grown her fan base over the years. Evancho is now 23 years old and continues to develop her love for singing.



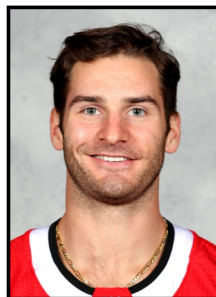
Jackie Evancho, photo from Google

Meghan Klingenberg, a professional soccer player, graduated in 2007, and helped lead the girls' soccer team to the PIAA Championship in 2005 and 2006. From there, she attended the University of North Carolina. She then became a member of the U.S. Women's National Soccer Team and won the World Cup in 2015. She then went on to become part of the U.S. National Olympic Team. Klingenberg currently plays for the professional team in the NSL, the Portland Thorns, in Portland, Oregon.



Meghan Klingenberg, photo from Sports Illustrated

Brandon Saad, a professional hockey player, attended Pine-Richland High School freshman and sophomore year before leaving to go play for the Ontario Hockey League. Saad was drafted 43rd overall in the 2011 NHL Draft by the Chicago Blackhawks. He then went on to win the Stanley Cup with the Blackhawks in 2013 and 2015. Throughout his career, he has played for the Chicago Blackhawks, Columbus Blue Jackets, Colorado Avalanche, and currently the St. Louis Blues.



Brandon Saad, photo by Elsa from Getty Images

Ben DiNucci, a professional football quarterback, graduated in 2015, setting Pennsylvania records as well as leading PR's football team to the WPIAL Class AAAA championship. He went on to play football at the University of Pittsburgh and then transferred for the rest of his college career to James Madison University. In the 2020 NFL Draft, he was drafted by the Dallas Cowboys. Since then, he has been traded to and has been playing for the Denver Broncos.



Ben DiNucci, photo by Patrick McDermott from Getty Images

Stephen Frick, an astronaut, graduated in 1982. He went on to attend the US Naval Academy, and he received his bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering. He was trained to be a F/A-18 fighter pilot and flew combat missions during the Gulf War. At the US Naval postgraduate school, he earned his masters degree in aerospace engineering in 1986. In 1996, he joined NASA as an astronaut candidate. He retired in 2010 from NASA.



Stephen Frick, photo from SpaceFlight Insider

Neil Walker, a professional baseball player, grew up in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania, and attended Pine-Richland High School as a dual athlete playing baseball as well as football. He graduated from PR in 2004 and since then has grown to fame in the MLB. He started off his career with the Pittsburgh Pirates, but was traded around to other teams such as the New York Mets, Milwaukee Brewers, New York Yankees, Miami Marlins, and finished off with the Philadelphia Phillies. He recently retired in 2021 and is now with the Pittsburgh Pirates broadcast team. He lives with his wife and daughter in Pittsburgh.



Neil Walker, by Jason O. Watson from Getty Images



Teacher Feature: Meet Mr. McKown

MADDY HOMER STAFF WRITER

Meet Mr. McKown: an English teacher in his 17th year of teaching at Pine-Richland. Mr. McKown wants every student to develop and embrace a willingness and a curiosity for learning new things. However, their curiosity doesn't have to be related to literature: the goal is to develop and pursue individual questions.

Mr. McKown went to the University of Delaware; he earned a degree in English literature, and he also earned a degree in interpersonal/mass communication. Go Blue Hens! After Delaware, he attended graduate school at the University of Pittsburgh.

While he was in college, his favorite book was *On the Road* by Jack Kerouac, but after his student teaching experience, his favorite book changed to *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. The author, Malcolm Gladwell, inspires Mr. McKown with every book he writes.

Mr. McKown expresses, "I am always left in awe of his ability to research and write about different topics."

This teacher motivates his students by trying to bring enthusiasm, liveliness, and positive energy to every lesson he teaches.

He explains, "My hope is that students react and respond with a similar energy and willingness to engage in class

activities."

A piece of advice Mr. McKown would give to his students is to: "Keep your eyes and your mind open."

Q&A

What is your hidden talent?

"Once I challenged Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson to an eyebrow lifting competition and I won! He couldn't match my arc or intensity."

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

"I enjoy exercising and playing lacrosse. I also enjoy completing the Wordle each day; I am undefeated. I also LOVE podcasts! Shout out to Dr. Andrew Huberman and the Huberman Lab podcast."

Who or what influenced you to want to be an English teacher?

"Professor McKay Jenkins inspired me to become a teacher. I had several English literature classes with him at the University of Delaware. He knew a little bit about nearly everything (and a lot

about literature and writing). He was extremely effective at explaining complex concepts through analogies and anecdotes."

Mr. McKown is a wonderful English teacher and all of his students love how witty and funny he is. Hopefully you learned a new thing or two about Mr. McKown.



English teacher Mr. McKown, photo by freshman Francesca Guzzy

The Rampage is a student-created publication of Pine-Richland High School, 700 Warrendale Road, Gibsonia, PA 15044. The newsroom is room 221.

The RAMPAGE is available online every Thursday under the high school Resources Tab. It is written by students, for students, and will make every attempt to report all school-related news. We welcome freelance submissions, suggestions, comments, and story ideas from students and staff. Since this is a student-publication, we realize we make mistakes: we encourage readers to report mistakes to the staff writers; you may win a prize if you locate any/all mistakes.

Teacher: Mrs. Harshman



She Said / She Said: Students Share Thoughts on Mock Trial Case

BROOKE DEEGAN STAFF WRITER & ADDISON BARNES DESIGN EDITOR

Each November, the PA Bar Association releases a false case that students who participate in their school’s Mock Trial club/team have to deduce, analyze, and interpret leading up to the massive “mock trial.” Last year, we Mock Trialers were presented with an immersively interesting civil case, revolving around waivers and negligence within companies.

This year, though, we are met with a new challenge: a criminal murder case. Below are our opinions on the new case, and our hopes for the upcoming Mock Trial season.

Addison's thoughts: This year marks my third year on mock trial; while all the cases in the past two years have been great, this year's case is especially special to me. If you are wondering, “Addison, why is a fake case special to you?” well, the main murder suspect has the same first name as me and the same initials. With that being said I am really hoping that I get to play the part of Addison Booker.

I am going to give you a little run down of the case so you get a better understanding. It takes place in Wisawee Pennsylvania, where there are two restaurants involved. "Onomotopizza," Addison Booker's restaurant, and "Hole in the Wall," Geoffrey Esper's restaurant. There is a rivalry, and it's pretty well known in the town. One day Geoffrey Esper is found dead (as well as his dog), and Addison is the main suspect. This rivalry, as well as the time that Addison jumped on stage during a festival, and said something about killing (this is the part where the two sides disagree on what is said) makes this case. Both the prosecution and the defense have a strong case and I can't wait to see how it plays out in trial.

Brooke's thoughts: As a sophomore, this is my second year participating in Mock Trial. I am beyond ecstatic to get started working through a case with some of my closest friends once again. I found it to be the highlight of my year as a freshman, and it taught me more than I could have ever imagined, so I can assume that this year will be equally (if not more) rewarding.

The case this year is extremely fascinating...

It is all about a gruesome murder that seemingly stems out of a vicious rivalry between two restaurants and their owners. It is highly intriguing, and I can't wait to dive into the depths of it soon.

While most people find this case to be much more interesting than the civil one that we were presented with last year, due to its criminal nature (and specifically the “murder mystery” appeal), I find them both to be similar in terms of how entertaining they are. In fact, I may even argue that last year’s was a little bit more interesting, but that may just be a result of the fact that we only just received case details for this year, and I am a little biased

towards civil cases- I find them to be less black and white than plain old murders that are committed, and I absolutely love room for interpretation and the chance to manipulate evidence/whatnot to fit your argument.

However, don't get me wrong... There is still a rather large gray area in this case, and no matter what side I end up on for the trial, I know there will be a fantastic argument for my friends and me to uncover and carve our way.



Sophomores Annastasia Punosevac, junior Addison Barnes, and sophomore Brooke Deegan, photo by Elise Duckworth



Spire & Co.: ASpire To Be InSpired

ELLA DAVIS STAFF WRITER

If you're interested in doing fun activities and making new friends, then Spire Club is definitely the place for you. Spire is a **“women’s empowerment club with a goal to create a welcoming environment in order to educate and strengthen the social powers of women through projects inside and outside of school.”**

This club offers so many fun activities and bonding experiences. After a long and stressful day of school, Spire & Co. allows you to relax and have a good time with your friends. Spire also gives you the opportunity to make new friendships that will last forever.

Freshman and new club member Anya Wickard said that the first meeting was “a fun way to connect with friends.”

During the first meeting, we learned about the club and made paper pumpkins that can be found all around the school. The meeting ended with fall cookies and chatting with friends.

The club has many fun activities planned throughout the course of the year such as pumpkin picking at Soergel's and many other events.

Club secretary Sarah Wu said, “Be in Spire to



Making paper pumpkins at first meeting, photo by sophomore media officer Ella Yanni

inspire.” If you want to inspire others, then join Spire & Co. to find many opportunities to make our school a better place! If you're interested in joining Spire, use the classroom code **vtwklbh!**



Junior club secretary Sarah Wu and junior club officer Kennedy Lutz photo by Ella Yanni

This club is a safe space for anyone to share their personal struggles and ask for guidance from each other.

Social media officer Ella Yanni stated, “Spire has such a welcoming community. The people are what truly make it special. It is a more relaxed club, however, I feel as though that allows for a less stressed environment. Our sponsor Dr. Switala is amazing and she is always there to support each of us.”





Softball Signing Day

Three PR Players Sign NLI's to Play in College

CALLE HENNE STAFF WRITER

About 8.4% of high school softball players go on to play in college. Three of Pine-Richland's own are part of that percentage. Seniors Jocelyn Langer, Izzy Sulesky, and Kenzie Gillis made their decision final on November 8 by signing their National Letters of Intent (NLI).



Kenzie Gillis, Jocelyn Langer, and Izzy Sulesky on signing day, photo from MAXPRESS

Jocelyn Langer, PR's centerfielder, signed to play softball and study technology and engineering education at Millersville University. Langer said she decided to play in college because she knows the sport won't last forever.

She states, "I love this sport

and it has brought me so many lessons and honestly, I'm just not ready to give that up. College is a scary thing but as long as I have my team with me, there is nothing that I won't be able to do."

Langer is one of the biggest leaders on the field of the PR softball team, serving as one of three captains during the 2023 season. When on the field, she communicates with her left and right fielder in order to be the most successful. When in the dugout, her voice is always heard encouraging her teammates and leading the team in cheers. However, regarding college, she said, "I am not looking forward to losing my voice from cheering my teammates on. I am not looking forward to my voice being hoarse the next day after screaming and yelling for my teammates, nothing will stop me from doing that though."

Langer, #12 on the field, has had softball in her life for as long as she can remember. That's what makes playing at the next level so rewarding. She said, "The most rewarding part is making younger me feel accomplished. Remembering getting ready for my first ever T-ball baseball game, pulling my hair back and putting on my tiny uniform just going to have fun without a care in the world."

Although the final result of the recruiting process was worth it, Langer said the process wasn't all positive. She said she struggled with self doubt and realized that softball is more mental and physical, but her teammates and coaches kept her confidence up. She considers her teammates to be her family, and she couldn't have gotten through the process without them. Going into her last year of high school softball, Langer said, "I am looking forward to spending one last year with the people who mean so much to me. I have a feeling we are going to be going far this year."

"I am looking forward to spending one last year with the people who mean so much to me. I believe we will go far."

Izzy Sulesky, PR's pitcher, signed to play softball and study early childhood education at Susquehanna University. Sulesky knew that she wanted to play in college during her sophomore year of high school because she can't imagine her life without softball or without the friendships that she has made and will make in the future.

Sulesky is the life of the party on her PR team. She recalls her favorite memory being when she stuck her head out the window on the bus, or when she would lay over the seats and acted like it was a roller coaster. She is also famous for her dance to the "Hoedown Throwdown" by Hanna Montana.

Although she acts silly off the field, she plays for the love of the game on the field.

Sulesky stated, "I love softball because the game gave me a place where I belong and friendships that will last a lifetime." Sulesky is a huge role model for the underclassmen on the softball team. During the 2023 season, she struggled with performance anxiety on the field. The strength and perseverance she showed to get through the struggles is something that everyone could learn from.



Jocelyn Langer celebrating a double vs North Allegheny, photo from MAXPRESS



Continued...

Throughout the recruitment process, Sulesky said, “My family and coaches have helped me the most in getting over my problems that I have had with anxiety and just being there for me every step of the way.”

Now that the process is over, she is relieved that the stress has ended and she can just enjoy the game she loves. After four years at PR, it is time to move on.

Sulesky said, “I am excited but also nervous at the same time. I am excited to start a new part of my life but I’m nervous because my family will not be close to Susquehanna which is in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania.”

“I am just hoping to have fun and enjoy the memories that I will make because before I know it, it will be over.” -Izzy Sulesky.



Izzy Sulesky on 2nd base, photo from MAXPRESS

Gillis is a strong leader on the PR team, as she is one of three captains, along with Millersville signee, Jocelyn Langer.

Gillis’ journey has been full circle as she used to look up to the older girls and realized she wanted to be like them, and now the freshmen and sophomores, and even the juniors, look up to her and want to be just like her.

Kenzie Gillis, third baseman for PR, signed to play softball and study exercise science at Mercyhurst University. Ever since she was little, it was her dream to play in college.

“It was so rewarding to see my hard work finally pay off after all the years, and my dream since I was little was finally achieved,” she said.

Throughout the recruitment process, Gillis struggled with stress and the unknown. She said,

“The hardest part was not giving up because it is very stressful, and getting a hold of college coaches is a very hard thing to do.” -Kenzie Gillis

However, her consistency and determination led to her finding her home for the next 4 years in Erie, PA. Throughout all her years of playing softball, Gillis’ favorite memory is “creating the families, friendships, and lifelong sisters along the way that will be a part of [her] forever.”

As her senior year is almost halfway through, Gillis hopes to get a competitive season, and have fun with her teammates for one last time.

These three future college athletes along with the rest of the PR softball team will begin their season in March 2024, and hope to bring success to all the seniors one last time.



Kenzie Gillis making a play at third base, photo from MAXPRESS

March–June 2024 SAT Test Dates

Dates: Mar 9, 2024 Registration Deadline: Feb 23, 2024

Dates: May 4, 2024 Registration Deadline: Apr 19, 2024

Dates: June 1, 2024 Registration Deadline: May 16, 2024

To register go to:

<https://satsuite.collegeboard.org/digital/digital-testing/dates-deadlines>



Veterans Day Celebration

Pine-Richland High School Celebrates Local Heroes

ELLA DAVIS STAFF WRITER

On Friday, November 10, Pine-Richland High School took the day to honor local veterans in the community who served in the military.



During a Veterans Day assembly, the school paid respect to those who have served in the past, those currently serving in the military, and those who have fallen in order to keep our country safe.

Local veterans were asked to stand as students and

staff members gave a round of applause to show their appreciation and respect. This assembly truly showed how much the school appreciates those who have fought for our country. State Representative Robert Mercuri joined the school to discuss the importance of service and the importance of recognizing those who served. The school also got to hear from a very important speaker. US Marine Corps Lt. Daniel Telep talked to students and staff about his experiences serving during the Vietnam War. After his presentation was over, one part of his speech caught everyone's attention.

He explained that he met up with one of the soldiers, whom he had been enemies with and fought against in the war, and they met up to set aside differences and are now great friends.



Photo of all the staff and veterans that attended the ceremony, photo from @pr_schools Instagram

This was so astonishing, as no one could imagine being friends with someone they didn't like in school, let alone an actual enemy that they fought against. This changed everyone's perspectives on how we should treat others at our school. If everyone could put aside their differences, they could make the school a better place. Thank you Lt. Telep for your inspirational words and thank you for taking the time to share your experiences defending our country.

The assembly concluded with a flag-folding ceremony, narrated by Air Force JROTC Cadet Kenzie Roy. Each fold of the flag was thoroughly explained in great detail as everyone paid their respects. After the assembly, local veterans enjoyed a breakfast at the school along with AFJROTC members.



AFJROTC members during the flag folding ceremony, photo from @pr_schools Instagram

Veterans Day honors those who have served, but our school showed our utmost appreciation and took the time to listen to each of their stories and bring back the memories of those who

have been forgotten. Without these veterans, our school wouldn't be here today and that is something that we can't forget.

Overall, the assembly was a

beautiful and respectful representation. Thank you, veterans.



Attitude of Gratitude: *Why I'm Grateful for Music*

ANARELLA PENA STAFF WRITER

A really good song can transport you to places you've never been before. At least once a day I find myself in my bed staring at the ceiling just listening to that one song. It's like a magical journey that takes us on an emotional rollercoaster, allowing us to escape from reality and explore new realms of imagination.

One of the reasons why music is so special is because it speaks to our emotions in a way that words alone cannot. It has the power to evoke a wide range of feelings, whether it's joy, sadness, excitement, or nostalgia. When we listen to a song that resonates with us, it can instantly transport us to a specific time, place, or memory. It's like pressing a play button on our emotions and reliving those moments all over again.

Moreover, music has the ability to create a sense



Singer Lana Del Rey, photo from Ana Pena Gonzalez

of unity and connection among people. Regardless of our cultural backgrounds or language barriers, we can all appreciate and be moved by the same piece of music. It brings people together, fostering a sense of belonging and shared experience. Whether it's at a concert, a festival, or simply singing along to our favorite songs with friends, music has the power to create lasting memories and forge deep connections.

Not only that but music has the remarkable ability to stimulate our imagination and transport us to different worlds. It can paint vivid pictures in our minds, like a soundtrack to our own personal movies. Whether it's a soothing melody that takes us to a serene beach, or an epic symphony that transports us to a fantastical realm, music has the power to ignite our imagination and take us on

incredible journeys without ever leaving our seats.

Attitude of Gratitude: *Why I'm Grateful for Chipotle*

ADDISON BARNES DESIGN EDITOR

Yes, you read the title right. I am extremely grateful for Chipotle. Now you might think, "Wow that is something dumb to be grateful for," but I live on Chipotle. After a long day of school or even a hard workout, Chipotle is always there. Now I do try to limit my Chipotle addiction because it is quite pricey and I don't have that type of money.

What makes Chipotle so special to me is the customization: whether it is a burrito, salad, taco, or bowl there is something

to everyone. Not only that but it is one of the few fast-food restaurants that I can eat at, now that I am gluten-free. My order has been the same for a year now and I don't plan on changing, because why change something that is perfect? Now you're probably waiting for: my order-- (shocked face) which is a bowl of brown rice, steak, lettuce, sour cream, and cheese. Sometimes I like to add Polynesian sauce, if I have any (trust me, it is so good).

One thing about Chipotle is that my dad and I always go together, and if one of us goes without the other, then we get it the next day as a way of "getting" back at each other. The pact also makes sure I am not buying

a Chiptole every day now that I can drive. Since we get Chipotle so much (not really but kind of) we like to judge how well the worker does, with loading us up on toppings. My best experience was when my dad went to get me Chipotle, because sadly I could not drive, and this angel of a worker loaded me up on toppings. I almost didn't finish it.

Before you tell me spending ten bucks on a bowl is not the best financial decision when I can easily remake it, every time I try to

remake my bowl it never comes out as delicious as the ones there. So I am "sadly" stuck paying ten bucks for a bowl, but you know what, I do not have a problem with that because the food is genuinely so amazing.

I know writing a whole article might seem crazy and dumb. I just really wanted to share my appreciation for my love of Chipotle. I also really recommend trying my order because your mind will probably be changed by how delicious it is.

Even if you don't try my order, you should definitely try some Chipotle. You can never go wrong with Chipotle. It's the best food for any occasion. I highly recommend.



Addison's Chipotle order, photo by Addison Barnes



The Four Learning Types: *What Helps You Attain Information*

IZZY BANJAK STAFF WRITER

A lot of teachers have been asking their students the same question this year. "What kind of learner are you?" At first, I was very confused because this had never been asked of me before. But now that I've done my research I'm here to share.

There are four main categories of "learning styles." They include: visual, auditory, reading and writing, or kinesthetic learners. Now that I've named them, let's dig into what they mean.

Visual Learners

Visual learners seem to absorb more knowledge when they see something. This may be a video or a picture, but nonetheless, they are able to physically see this thing in front of them. Does this sound like you? Well, let's talk about the characteristics of a visual learner. You remember things by sight (photographic memory) and picture what you are learning in your head. You may also have been told you have a "photo brain," meaning your brain remembers things like it took a picture. A simple example of this learning style is if you were watching a video and associated the info you learned with the pictures you saw.

Auditory Learners

Auditory learners comprehend information better when they're being "talked at." They don't have to write this information down or make a mental note; that information is just in their head now. If you have an easier time absorbing information when being spoken to or remember things by the way they sound, this may be you. For instance, reading a book outloud is helpful to auditory learners due to the fact that they can hear themselves speaking.

Reading and Writing Learners

Well, being a reading and writing learner is just as it sounds. These students tend to grasp the material better when they can read it to themselves or write it out. Being this type of learner involves reading notes or text, preferring to read silently, and writing out your own notes. Of course not limited to just those characteristics. Here's an example, some reading and writing

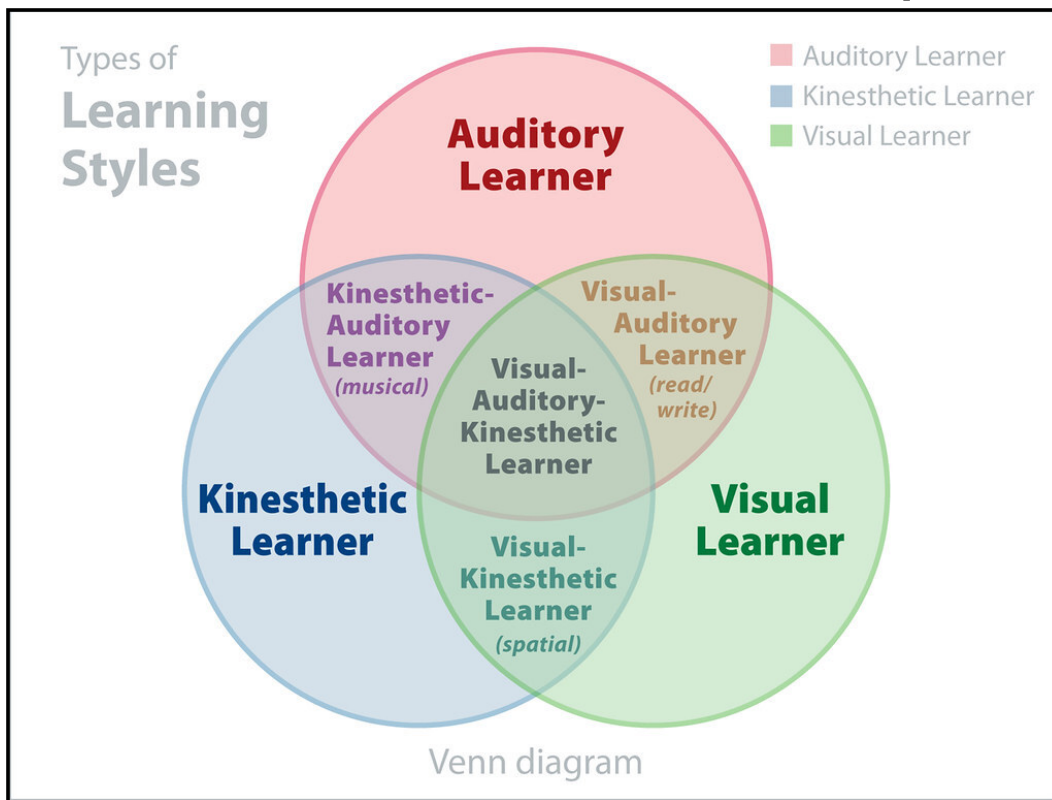
students tend to take notes of what is being said to them so they can write it out, then read it to themselves at a later time.

Kinesthetic Learners

Lastly, we have our kinesthetic learners. These people need to physically feel something or be doing an activity to learn their materials. If you

are a kinesthetic learner you will work best with hands-on activities, learning how to do something by physically doing it, and real-world experiments are also very helpful. To some of these types of learners, science class may be a favorite because of all of the hands-on experiments and labs they get to participate in.

Now that you know about all the different learning types, think about what type you are. Learning *how* to learn is a great skill and is necessary in life to be successful. If you are struggling in school, and don't understand what could possibly be the issue, think about trying a different learning method. Sometimes changing the way we study or approach a problem is the issue, not the problem itself. You never know, changing one small thing could make all the difference.





NBA Opening Week Review: *The Season Begins with a Bang*

ALEX BYWALSKI FREELANCE REPORTER

NBA Basketball has finally returned after a long off-season and is roaring back to life. The off-season was filled with exhilarating trades, a stacked draft class, and immeasurable hype. It began with the NBA Draft, and the 2023 rookie class carried some of the highest potential in players that fans have ever witnessed. However, one player in particular stole all of the attention.

The first overall pick went to the San Antonio Spurs, and they took the Frenchman, Victor Wembanyama. At 7'3", with incredible skill and agility, he has been highly regarded by most NBA analysts as the best draft prospect since 4-time Finals MVP LeBron James. NBA fans tuned into his preseason games, providing record viewership numbers, and he delivered, putting up two great performances. In addition to the hype surrounding the rookie, after the preseason, many free-agency moves and trades were made by teams that furthered the excitement of fans.

The first blockbuster trade was between the Milwaukee Bucks, Phoenix Suns, and the Portland Trail Blazers. The Trail Blazers dealt 7-time All-Star Damian Lillard in return for Deandre Ayton and Jrue Holiday. Another headliner was the trading of 2-time Gold Medalist, 9-time All-Star, and 7-time All-Defensive First Team point guard Chris Paul to the Warriors in exchange for the Wizards getting Jordan Poole and a couple of future picks. The third and potentially most impactful trade for both teams involved was the Celtics getting the 7'3" sniper Kristaps Porzingis, a 2023 first-rounder, and a 2024 first-rounder in exchange for the Grizzlies getting the lockdown guard Marcus Smart and the Wizards picking up key role players Tyus Jones, Danilo Gallinari, Mike Muscala, and the 2023 No. 35 overall pick.

All of these moves, along with the draft hype, sparked a renewed interest in multiple generations of NBA basketball fans. The opening weekend began on October 24th, and fans loved what they were seeing. Viewership records were broken as ESPN saw an 80% increase compared to the viewers in 2022.

In Wembanyama's debut, he may have succumbed to the pressure, as he did not play very well. Rookie Dereck Lively took over against him for the Dallas Mavericks, dominating

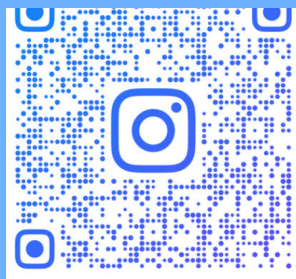
on all ends of the floor. However, Wembanyama's next games were much different. Over his next 5 games, he averaged 21.6 points, 8.8 rebounds, and 3 blocks, lighting up all the highlight reels, and showcasing skills that have never been seen before from players of his size.

Fans are convinced that the rumors are true, as of now, that he could be the most unique and possibly one of the most skilled players of all time and he is already proving himself 6 games into the season. The season looks incredibly promising right now, as there are few injury problems and every team is star-studded. Fans have a lot to look forward to in the future, as players like Wembanyama will provide boundless entertainment for years to come.



Wembanyama, right, in his 38-point performance against the Phoenix Suns, photo from Sports Illustrated

We made an Instagram! Scan the QR code or follow us **@pinerichlandrampage** .





Jolly Rancher Debate: *What Flavor do You Savor?*

FRANCESCA GUZZY RAMPAGE STAFF WRITER

BLUE RASPBERRY:

Blue Raspberry is the flavor to beat at Pine-Richland high school, as Blue Raspberry came out on top compared to all the other 5 options, both with the tallies and the google form. Blue is obviously a fan favorite, as I predicted myself. The sweet artificial flavor came out on top with 13 votes out of the 50 tallies from the students of Pine-Richland, and 58 votes from the google form with 132 responses, almost half of all responses.

WATERMELON:

Watermelon is the runner up for both the tallies and the google form, as it got 9 tallies and 26 votes out of the 132 google form responses.

Sophomore Natalie Stewart states, "It tastes really good."

The Jolly Rancher flavor really captures the fruit's essence. Maybe it's popular because the taste reminds students of summer, especially due to the harsh and the brutal upcoming winter, it's nice to have a little taste of summer during winter.

CHERRY:

Cherry was 2nd to last out of the tallies and third to last on the google form. Cherry is more of the happy middle of the flavors. Most think if they grab Cherry out of a bag of Jolly Ranchers.

they would not put it back into the bag, but would not be as excited eating the sweet treat if it were Blue Raspberry or Watermelon.

GRAPE:

Grape was not a fan favorite, but out of the 2 tallies and 11 google from votes, some people enjoy the underdog. Some dislike Grape because of how strong the flavor while others think it's what makes the flavor so good.

STRAWBERRY:

The flavor, strawberry, was not a fan favorite either, coming in last place in terms of tallies and second to last on the google form. Freshman Ella Davis even predicted that, "The strawberry jolly rancher doesn't have a chance against the other flavors." Now that you know what others' favorite flavors are, what is yours?



Sophomore Raeden Cicconi showing off a bag of Jolly Ranchers, photo by Francesca Guzzi

"What's your favorite Jolly Rancher Flavor?"
(Google form responses, 132 votes)

Blue Raspberry- 43.9%

Watermelon- 19.7%

Cherry- 18.9%

Strawberry- 9.1%

Grape- 8.3%

MATH CLUB

"Problem of the Month" is the monthly math competition posted by the Math Club. All students can participate by solving the problem on the posters located around the school building. Students can submit their answers by scanning the QR codes. The winner earns a 5-dollar gift card to Sheetz, a certificate, and will be recognized in our next poster and on the PRTV morning announcements.



Five of the Most Beautiful Places in the World

Trees, Oceans, Mountains, Waterfalls

TRISTAN FARRAR STAFF WRITER

The world is adorned with breathtaking landscapes and captivating destinations that showcase the wonders of nature and human ingenuity. Among the countless stunning places, five stand out as some of the most beautiful, each offering a unique blend of awe-inspiring features.



Santorini Greece, photo from Forbes

Santorini, Greece: Nestled in the Aegean Sea, Santorini is renowned for its iconic white-washed buildings perched on dramatic cliffs overlooking the crystal-clear waters. The contrast of vibrant blue domes against the whitewashed architecture creates a postcard-perfect scene that has captivated travelers for centuries. (Some information is from Visit Greece)



Banff National Park, Alberta Canada, photo from National Geographic

Banff National Park, Canada: In the heart of the Canadian Rockies, Banff National Park unfolds a panorama of majestic mountains, turquoise lakes, and dense pine forests. Moraine Lake, with its vivid blue waters mirroring the surrounding peaks, is a particular highlight, making it a paradise for nature enthusiasts and photographers. (Some information is from Parks Canada)

Machu Picchu, Peru: The ancient Incan citadel of Machu Picchu, situated high in the Andes Mountains, is a marvel of architectural and engineering prowess. Surrounded by lush greenery and shrouded in mist, the site's terraced landscapes and intricate stone structures create a mystical atmosphere that transports visitors to another era. (Some information is from Peru Travel)

The Maldives: A tropical paradise in the Indian Ocean, the Maldives boasts overwater bungalows perched above coral reefs teeming with vibrant marine life. The azure lagoons, pristine white-sand beaches, and the dazzling array of underwater ecosystems contribute to the Maldives' reputation as one of the world's most idyllic destinations. (Some information is from Visit Maldives)

Fiordland National Park, New Zealand: The remote and rugged landscapes of Fiordland National Park showcase New Zealand's natural grandeur. Milford Sound, a fjord surrounded by towering cliffs and cascading waterfalls, is a testament to the country's breathtaking scenery, offering a serene and awe-inspiring experience. (Some information is from Fiordland Park)



Fiordland National Park, New Zealand, photo from World Atlas

These five destinations represent a mere glimpse into the world's unparalleled beauty. Each place possesses a distinctive charm, captivating the senses and leaving an indelible mark on those fortunate enough to explore them.

Sources:
<https://www.visitgreece.gr/islands/cyclades/santorini/>
<https://parks.canada.ca/pn-np/ab/banff>
<https://www.peru.travel/en/attractions/machu-picchu>
<https://visitmaldives.com/en>
<https://www.fiordland.org.nz/visit/fiordland-national-park/>

BUY YOUR YEARBOOK: The price is 70 dollars December 1st through December 31st. The final price increase to 75 dollars will happen January 1, 2024. To purchase go to yearbookforever.com.



“It’s the Most Wonderful Time of the Year”

Let the Holiday Festivities Begin

ELLA BARKLEY STAFF WRITER

It’s that time of year again. When the air gets colder, the drinks get warmer and people become filled with joy and happiness. Some may disagree, but for most, their favorite time of the year starts on November 1st. This is when the Christmas tree lights start being hung and the Christmas music starts playing everywhere. But what is so special about the holiday season that makes people want to start celebrating so early? People feel so much delight and contentment during this time of year. They enjoy furnishing their house full of decorations, giving and receiving gifts, and most importantly hanging out with friends and family. Now when thinking about all the fun things that come during this season, you think to yourself why would anyone not want to celebrate so early. But when Pine-Richland High School students were asked when they started to celebrate the holiday season, some controversy came along with it. Over half of the results stated that they start celebrating after Thanksgiving has passed compared to starting right after Halloween is over.

Although Thanksgiving has its benefits with the gigantic amount of food options, football practically all weekend long, and giving thanks to the things we love most, Christmas has so much more to offer. Let’s be honest, when you start hearing Christmas music and see decorative lights hung up around town, you have to agree that it puts you in a happy mood. You would be considered the Grinch if you think not.

The winter season has so much to provide for all ages when you think about it. When you head up to the mountains, to go skiing with your friends or head downtown to skate around the Christmas tree at PPG Place in Market Square.

Now just imagine the snow slowly falling where you feel like you’re stuck in a snow globe. It’s hard to name a more magical and surreal feeling. You practically can’t feel your hands anymore and soon enough you get back into your warm, cozy home sitting next to the



Christmas tree displayed at PPG Place in downtown Pittsburgh, photo by Ella Barkley

fireplace sipping on the hot chocolate that is filled to the top with dozens of mini marshmallows. You’ve got Elf playing in the background and hear the timer go off for the sugar cookies your mom made earlier that are just begging to be decorated. Just looking at the sparkling Christmas tree makes you feel so giddy and excited. And when you think it can’t get better than this, the snow starts piling up high, and the next thing you know, school is canceled. This just made your workload a whole lot easier. Who knew a smile so big could stay on a teenager’s face for so long? And on your way to the mall to find the perfect gift for your family members, you listen to Micheal Buble’s Christmas songs and feel so thankful for this special time during the year. You just can’t wait to see the look on your sister’s

face when you find the gift she has been wanting most. The ugly sweaters make their yearly appearance and you still can’t imagine you would wear something so hideous, but here you are going ten years strong. You add making gingerbread houses to your list of activities to do with friends knowing that they won’t stay standing for longer than two minutes. And when you get into bed that night with blankets galore, dressed in your plaid pajama pants, you think of the amazing day you just lived.

There’s no need to start celebrating this holiday so late in the season when there are so many fun things to do. During this holiday season, try and embrace the season of sharing memories with your family and friends because as soon as you know it, spring will be here and the magic and joy of the holidays will soon be forgotten until next year comes around.



The Man Who Came to Dinner: PR Fall Play Stuns Students

BROOKE DEEGAN STAFF WRITER

November invariably graces the students and staff of PR with many enthralling activities to attend and look forward to, but among all of the pursuits that the school has to offer throughout this season, there is one that seemingly happens to shine the brightest: The Fall Play. Each year, the Fall Play proves itself to be more monumental than the last, as it is consistently jam-packed with a cast full of brilliant actors who work arduously for months on perfecting their crafts. This year, *The Man Who Came to Dinner* was put on. It is a show about a hysterically grumpy radio personality, Mr. Whiteside, who unexpectedly ends up having to stay with a family known as the Stanleys for a lengthy period of time. The entertaining plot combined with the sheer talent of PR's finest actors and directors allowed this play to become so fantastic, and it surely left its imprint on the district.



Seniors Lauren King and Nicolai Ezolt, photo from the PR website

Last autumn, we witnessed the eerie story of *Clue* come to life on the auditorium's iconic wooden stage. This show was incredibly well-received and met with more positivity and praise

"The actors were very impressive and clearly passionate about their roles. They brought so much life to the stage, and I was thrilled." -Sophomore Sanika Das

The Fall Play here at PR is no typical autumn show... It is a significant aspect of our school's culture that brings students, faculty, and the artists themselves together.

than had ever been seen before regarding the Thespian Society's fall endeavors. Its undeniable success laid the groundwork for what this year's show was to become.

The Man Who Came to Dinner was nothing short of spectacular, and the Fall Plays to come will undoubtedly be just as great, too.

"*Clue* had amazing production and hilarious dialogue," said sophomore Evelyn Lawler, who watched it last year. "I loved it. I thought it was wonderful, which made me excited for this year's, too."

The Man Who Came to Dinner was somehow equally as (if not more) impressive. Its intricately adorned set, miraculous cast, and remarkably comedic storyline all interlaced to create one of the most unforgettable plays that PR has seen yet.

Leading actors, Nicolai Ezolt and Lauren King (both beloved seniors here at PR), as well as the rest of the uber-talented cast, evidently honed in on their comedic skills in order to make this show one that was extremely comical. Between their humorous facial expressions and the dialogue's amusing nature, the whole crowd was roaring with laughter... Especially on the lively opening night.

"It was really funny, and I laughed a lot. Everyone did. I went on opening night, and it was a great time. I look forward to seeing it again next year!"
-sophomore Isaac Kraus



Senior Lauren King and Junior John Folino, photo from the PR website



Is Animal Crossing Truly All That?

Marianna & Meredith Share Their Dangerously Questionable Opinions

MEREDITH ROBINSON & MARIANNA ZAHORCHAK STAFF WRITERS

Introduction: THE ANIMALS NEVER CROSSED ANYTHING. WHY?

Once upon a time, a long, long time ago, in the year 2014, an animal crossing game emerged. Yep, that’s right, *Crossy Road*: a charming game that promotes such a simple, effective way to transfer an animal from one street to the next; it takes less than 5 minutes (unless it gets hit by a car). Now, *Crossy Road*’s pathetic little counterpart, calling itself “*Animal Crossing*,” has apparently been trying to teach the animals how to cross the road for the past 22 years and still hasn’t succeeded. But, there’s a problem: the animals in *Animal Crossing* never crossed anything— at least nothing of importance. Diminishing the meaning of the game’s title further, *New Horizons* removed the train station entirely! The iconic station that was a part of every *Animal Crossing* game prior— now completely gone! What’s even the point of calling it *Animal Crossing*, huh? Why not “Animals Flying” if you’re gonna replace the train with a plane? Despicable, utterly despicable. Get that “crossing” crap outta here, I’m tired of hearing it. Stick to *Crossy Road*, kids, if you’re looking for true animal crossing.

Alas, if you’ve already fallen down the pit of *Animal Crossing* lore and gaming, then I guess you’re here to stay, so you might as well allow us to share our (often contentious) experiences with the series.

UNNECESSARY HISTORY LESSON (I KNOW, WE’RE SORRY) & OUR LOVELY GAMING EXPERIENCES

• *Animal Crossing*

Marianna: The first *Animal Crossing* game was originally released in Japan on the Nintendo 64 in 2001 with the title “Dōbutsu no Mori,” translating directly to “Animal Crossing” or “Animal Forest.” The game was remastered for the Nintendo GameCube and released in North America with its English title in 2002. Following that, Europe and Australia received the game in 2003 and 2004, respectively. The goals of the game do not differ much from the goals of most *Animal Crossing* games – expand and decorate your house; pay off your mortgage to Tom Nook, an infamous capitalism-oriented racoon, by selling items/natural materials you collect; talk to and do favors for your animal neighbors; and donate any fish, bugs, or fossils to the town museum.

I first played this game at my cousin’s house when I was a wee little munchkin. It was always a good time. I don’t have many specific comments about the game, but I mean, I had fun.

• *Animal Crossing: Wild World*

Released in 2005 on the Nintendo DS mobile console, *Animal Crossing Wild World* introduced several new elements to the

plot, but there’s three I’ll be honing in on most.

The first being the addition of the Observatory, a new room in the town’s museum which allowed you to “create” your own constellations which you could see in the night sky at a certain in-game date and time. This was definitely my favorite part of the game when I played it on my 3DS (as DS games were also compatible with the 3DS console), but that’s only because I seriously didn’t have much else to do.

You see, when I first began playing *Wild World*, Tom Nook hired me to run errands for him at Nook’s Cranny. It was fun, yes, but it took me around 30 minutes to complete the tasks and then that was that. I finished the job. I have to look far back into my mind to remember, so my memory may be a little bit fuzzy or off, but I from what I can recall, I don’t believe I ever got paid for those tasks; I was supposed to report back to Tom Nook once I had finished the jobs, but I SWEAR I tried everything in my power, yet there was absolutely no way to inform that man of what he needed to know. I tried paying more attention to the instructions Nook gave me, I altered the ways I went about the assignments, I even reset the entire game on multiple occasions solely in an attempt to pass this point in the game. It never worked. Who knows, maybe there was a way around this dilemma and my tiny 7-to-11-year-old brain couldn’t figure it out, but MAN it ticked me off, so much so that I eventually just gave up and donated the game to Half Price Books. (So if you ever go there in search of an *Animal Crossing* game and find *Wild World*, you have me to thank.)

Nook’s seemingly impossible mission wasn’t the only reason I ditched the game, however. The second reason had to do with the software’s internal clock which was supposed to be set to match the system’s clock. The problem was, no matter which clock I adjusted –the 3DS’s or the game’s– it was always 3:00 AM. No matter what. That, or some other outrageous hour. Normally this wouldn’t be much of an issue, except for the fact that in the kid-friendly world of *Animal Crossing*—where they encourage healthy sleep schedules, apparently— all stores close before 12:00 AM and most villagers are asleep during this time as normal people tend to be.



ACNH cover.



Therefore, I had nothing to do in the game but make constellations, so that's what I did. What did I do when I ran out of room in the sky? I got rid of the game. So yeah. Controversial opinion here, but either I was a dumb child who didn't understand how to work a simple game, or *Wild World* kinda sucked.

Note: There's another cool aspect of the game that I didn't mention called the Roost. I would talk about it more, but I only half-remember what it was all about and don't feel I have enough solid knowledge to write a section on it. However, I do remember going there, wasting my Bells on coffee from Brewster, having philosophical conversations with depressed characters, and occasionally chatting with K.K. Slider (the Harry Styles of the *Animal Crossing* world) before listening to one of his banger songs and calling it a night. The Roost, like the Observatory, was another new room within the museum and was the only other activity keeping me occupied at the time.

• *Animal Crossing: City Folk*

City Folk was released on November 16, 2008 for the Wii U. Sadly, I never had the chance to play it for myself, but from what I've heard, it's essentially an enhanced version of *Wild World*. (Hey, maybe they finally fixed the clock...) If I ever have the opportunity, I would love to check it out and see what it's all about.



"Marianna's campsite decor in *Pocket Camp*"

• *Animal Crossing: New Leaf*

Now *this* is where I can start talking. This game was the definition of my childhood. I played it religiously for 6 years straight, ever since I first unwrapped it in February 2014, two years after its initial release on the 3DS.

Oh, where do I even begin?

In this game, you don't

simply move into town – you take it over. Swooped into the role of Mayor without any warning, you may wonder to yourself, "what does this mean for me?" Not much, honestly. Occasionally you create an ordinance, sometimes you construct expensive public work projects that no one else funds but you... wait, I thought I was talking about positives.

Anyway, this game is amazing. It was the first in the series to introduce the Retail Shop – a moral, civilized alternative to selling your furniture (and your soul) to Mr. Nook. Let me tell you, that man rarely got an extra cent out of me. The Retail Shop was also a unique concept in the way that animal villagers could put up their own furniture for sale

or could buy yours. The best part? *You* got to set the price for your own furniture. IT WAS AWESOME. This chill dude named Cyrus worked with Reese, the shop's owner, and could imprint your custom designs onto furniture, a great leap forward in the endless world of personalization possibilities within *Animal Crossing*. In addition, I formed my most valuable, precious relationships with the villagers here. Lucky the mummy dog, Caroline the squirrel, Shep the dog, Alice the koala– these were my people, and I loved them dearly, and they continue to live on dearly in my heart.

My favorite part of *New Leaf*, though, I'd have to say, was the island– an online game feature that was bundles of fun. If you traveled there, you would meet people from around the world and could participate in mini-games with them. If you earned enough tokens from the mini-games, you could buy exclusive furniture or clothing only available on the island.

Overall, I loved *New Leaf* so, so much, and my 350 hours of gameplay should be proof enough.

• *Animal Crossing: Happy Home Designer*

This was the turning point for *Animal Crossing*. The evolution of customization options skyrocketed to almost – almost– their peak. In *Happy Home Designer*, players take on the role of both interior and exterior designer, as well as landscaper AND architect. It's a daunting task, yes, but it's an ingenious concept that allows your imagination to run wild. The possibilities are on the cusp of limitlessness, for the design options are entirely, totally up to you! In the game, you design not only villagers' homes, but also stores, buildings, and public gathering locations. It's *insane*. The game developers truly saw the potential of the game's home design feature and shared the players' visions of what it could become. They recognized how much more freedom players desired in this area of the game and *gave it to them*. I almost reached 100% completion in the game. Actually, I might have. I know I constructed the vast majority of homes and buildings, possibly even all of them, due to the fact that this game never dulled.

• *Animal Crossing: New Horizons* (with a Rant by Marianna About AC: *Pocket Camp*)

You've heard me blather on for a good while now, so I'll let Meredith take the lead on this one. Please, Meredith, enlighten us on what makes *New Horizons* so gosh darn special.

Meredith: I don't enjoy the spotlight being all over my greasy face. But, it's fine, I'm not the one being emotionally humiliated because obviously I have the right opinion. Speaking of: I have many of opinions; most of them are extremely aggressive and aggravate most people. *New Horizons* isn't necessarily an action-packed game, and I know I've done a decent amount of complaining so far- but, it's not all bad. Let me explain. It's a cute indie game with annoyingly happy characters that you can't relate to because 1) I'm a depressed teenager and 2) I only play *Animal Crossing* because I'm *not* the kind of person that wants to go camping and be "in touch with nature." I'm a fraud. In reality, if I see a bug I either pee myself or smack it with the nearest object and try not to hear the cereal crunch



sound effect. Finally, 3) I have more Bells than I do real money because I'm a serial spender, so living through my character vicariously is a must.

On the flip side; I see them as background noise; like, the kind of sounds people fall asleep to that sounds oddly like a librarian aggressively shushing you for all of eternity. Point being that they bother me and I only give them "gifts" so that they give me free gifts back (even though half of the time they're items I want to give right back to them because why do I need FULL BODY TIGHTS?) because they're kind and I'm not. I don't give to give, I give to take, okay? Survival of the fittest.

Sometimes I wonder how far I can go with giving the characters weird gifts. I gave someone a scorpion once, and she truly liked it which was extremely disappointing. Hence, why I don't like the new characters. They were better when they called me a filthy ogre (for real), and now it's just boring because they all sound like they're quoting your Mom's posters in her office telling you to 'live, laugh, love.' If I ever have to see that on someone's car as a bumper sticker I will "accidentally" run into you in the next car up in the Wendy's line when you're just trying to get your extra-lactose-chocolate-frosty in, and then you end up getting in a fender bender and therefore never return.

However, there are some valuable reasons why you should talk to the villagers- not because I like talking to lifeless NPCs- but because the game often progresses the more that you talk to each character. For example, the Able Sisters used to be vendors until you supported them enough, aka giving them money. (See, even in video games I'm subjected to capitalism and it's unfair. I already bought the game; I don't want to buy my happiness, too.) Therefore, they moved their shop into your village permanently. If you talk to Mabel's sister (Abel) more, you'll start to strongly like her. She's one of the only villagers that I actually like and that says something, right?



Marianna's campsite decor in *Pocket Camp*

BUT above all of that, I do like the graphics much better than in the previous versions and the little secrets you can learn in *New Horizons* like planting money trees, wishing on a shooting star, cooking, festive events for holidays- it's cool.

It seems like *New Horizons* feels kind of tedious, but that's just because you have to put a good amount of work and Bells into the progression of the game. The farther you get, the easier it is. Therefore, the more you can first-hand learn about the extremely irritating aspects of the game. Along with the updates and creative events that happen each month- like Halloween parties, 4th of July celebrations, etc. It's not all bad. I make it seem like so, but that's just because when I'm given the opportunity to complain, I take it in stride, and when I say stride, I mean I speed-away in a kidnapper van. *Vroom vroom.*

Marianna: I'm assuming I'm the one who's being kidnapped. But I'll make you regret it, I'm gonna rant about *Pocket Camp* so hard you're gonna wanna defenestrate me.

Here we go: for starters, *New Horizons* can be incredibly boring. I remember being so excited when I first got the game because of how much I loved *New Leaf* for all the days of my youth. I played *New Horizons* for a solid 20 hours before I gave up. I know how amazing the game can become, I know how much creative expression and fun you can have, but it just takes too long. I don't wanna start out building simple little wooden blocks and wooden stools and wooden this and that - I don't wanna make monkey clothes out of literal weeds I ripped out of the roots of the ground. The problem is, you *have* to craft these items if you wanna progress any further in the game, and I have no motivation to do so. Starting completely from scratch on a blank deserted island was, in my opinion, a poor decision. The game developers have you start at rock bottom and build your way up to greatness which, for some people, might sound like game-grinding Heaven, but for me, it's too much work for a game that's supposed to be light-hearted and relaxing. I feel like I'm too limited in the activities I can do at the beginning of the game. I've already fished and caught bugs and dug up fossils in every other *Animal Crossing* game before this. The appeal fades away and I have no motivation to "discover" treasures that I've already uncovered many times before. I've lost all drive towards helping out villagers as well. I agree with Meredith, the villagers suck now. Their personalities are so generic and the dialogue is bland and uneventful; I have no reason valuable enough to talk to such uncultured, unopinionated swine.

Since all aspects of the game that would typically be fun just aren't doing it for me, I chose to spend my time wasting all my money at Able Sisters buying an excessive amount of accessories and outfits. I water my flower garden, and then I sign off. I quit playing for a solid 6 months at least (partially due to the fact that I was obsessing over a new love interest... *Stardew Valley*) and only recently came back to give it another go. My opinion still stands; nothing has changed on that lame-o island.



Animal Crossing: Pocket Camp, on the other hand, did everything right. “But Marianna, how on Earth could a mobile game that’s basically a ripoff of the real deal possibly be better than *New Horizons*? The graphics just suck, so do you really want to be perceived as someone who likes sucky things??” Meredith says, judging my life choices as per usual. But he’s wrong. *Pocket Camp* is the epitome of endless possibilities done right.

When playing *Pocket Camp*, the player takes on ownership of a campsite which they truly have free liberty to decorate in whatever fashion their heart most desires. There are brand new locations to visit and collect materials at, and a wide variety of characters show up on the map, so if you don’t like one of them (or all of them, *ahem*, Meredith), then hey— it doesn’t matter ‘cause they’ll be gone in an hour anyway. And if there are villagers you like and wish to hold hostage forever, you can invite them to stay at your campsite ‘til the end of time! Speaking of which, this game gave me the motivation I needed to talk to villagers. I’ve actually begun to befriend them again, since doing so allows you to level up your friendship using a scaling system never before conceived within the *Animal Crossing* collection. When you reach a higher friendship level with someone, you achieve crafting materials, new furniture blueprints, Bells, and more.

That’s not all – say you run out of space on your campground; it’s not a problem because you have a cabin and RV you can decorate, too! Both the cabin and the RV are expandable, and even if you spent hours upon hours up sizing until you had maxed-out every room, you could always put items in storage. And if there’s items you don’t want in storage, you can ship them off to Gulliver in exchange for rarer items you *do* want.

Pocket Camp also provided meaning to so many previously pointless pursuits. For example, fishing tourneys occur far more often in the mobile game than any of the console versions, as well as bug-catching competitions, hunts for the highest amount of gyroidites, and more. Best of all, the flowers! In every game prior to *Pocket Camp* (which came out between *New Leaf* and *New Horizons*, by the way), flowers had no purpose other than to simply be flowers and sit still, look pretty. Now, you can exchange the flowers you’ve grown for specialized furniture. During flower-growing competitions, you can even win limited-edition, themed prizes.

Finally, *Pocket Camp* added an online friend feature that accommodates as far more user-friendly than any other friend system in the past.

It’s easy – you bump into someone else’s character at one of the sites on the map, you like something about their character or campsite, and you send them a friend request! There’s no communication feature so there’s no stress, and it’s completely safe. Friends can help each other complete tasks, sell materials to one another, and send reactions to each others’ designs and decor.

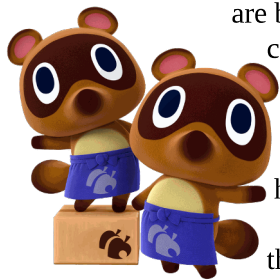
All in all, *Pocket Camp* should have been what *New Horizons* should’ve been. In *Pocket Camp*, just like in *New Horizons*, you start off with a limited selection of items you can craft. The difference, however, being that the items in *Pocket Camp* are actually cool so you want to build them. *Pocket Camp* provides motivation for you to progress in the game and take part in every aspect of it. *New Horizons* doesn’t do this. It’s lacking, and after experiencing *Pocket Camp*, you’ll start to wonder if the entire *Animal Crossing* saga was meant to be a mobile game all along.

Let’s Be Real: The Characters were Better when they Trashed my Self-Esteem:

Meredith: Mom- my fake, NPC Mom who sends me weird letters that could honestly be triggering with no context. (Hence, why there’s no context.) Also, who decided it was a good idea to name their animal crossing character JEFF? Were you born in 1983 and your parents hated you enough to name you after the Jif peanut butter so you ended up having peanut butter allergies? That would serve them right. (If anybody reading this is named Jeff, please take no offense to this comment. It’s all in good fun.

If you feel the need to get revenge go ahead and make up a mean backstory for our names and tell all your friends. –Marianna.) So, what I’m trying to say is that you often get letters from your Mom, HHA (Happy Home Academy) and the other villagers. I particularly get extremely degrading mail from Tad. He has a liking for working out and he won’t shut up about it and it just makes me feel like crap every time I have to look at his mail that says something like, “I worked out today. It looks like you’re getting more buff, too!” No, Tad. I am not. I don’t exercise. I eat junk- therefore, I *am* junk. We have physically become one. Molded like Play-doh that looked concerningly edible as a child. But, Marianna has much to say about Gaston and the apparently extremely itchy sweater she bought him. So, let’s hear some first hand experience of emotionally abusive NPCs that are chronically ungrateful. Yippee!

Marianna: Oh, do I have words to say about my dearest Gaston. That man-bunny with his stupid, little, nasty, squiggly mustache emotionally manipulated me for several years. To think I willingly gave my precious red striped sweater to this man. Ever since that day, any time I approached Gaston to have a calm, friendly conversation, you know what response I got? “The tag on this sweater is so itchy. Makes me wonder why I put it on in the first place. GAHAHA.”



“What did I ever see in this man?”-Marianna



Um, excuse me, sweetie, that top was a *gift*, and this is the 20th time you have said this to me within this week alone. I deserve better than you. Goodbye forever! The time has come for the Kyle Era to rise. At least *Kyle* has a sense of style, Mr. Cardboard Box house. (And no, that's not just a metaphor – everything in Gaston's house is literally made out of cardboard. It would be your worst nightmare, Meredith.)

Meredith: Oh my God, it really would be. Do you remember the cardboard chair? Don't even get me started on that- you know what? Maybe Gaston made that recipe. It would make so much sense: a radish-looking rabbit with all cardboard furniture (it can't even be called that. I can guarantee everybody reading this would break a cardboard chair.) creates recipes to make cardboard furniture. Wow, what a theory.

Timmy+Tommy

THE TWINS: TIMMY & TOMMY. DO THEY REALLY NEED TO TALK AT THE SAME TIME? NO.

Maybe you gave up, maybe you didn't even get this far yet in New Horizons- again- because you GAVE UP. BOTTOM LINE IS: if you ever get to Nook's Cranny, you will truly realize the absolute WRATH Timmy and Tommy have on your mental health. They do not need to talk at the same time, and they definitely don't need to harass me around the store to tell me that a glass of water is a glass of water. Thank you.

For some reason, Marianna- who honestly likes to do a bunch of things normal people don't do, such as: not breaking a Kit Kat, hating coffee, saying "shut the front door" (which I've actually never heard her say, but it's her vibe) –gives me the impression that she'd brush Cheeto dust off of my white shirt lovingly. Anyway, she acknowledges all the traits that make annoying people annoying- ie, Timmy and Tommy- yet also manages to somehow find the good in them throughout the process. This I don't do. I'm not a pessimist (yes you are –Marianna)- it's just that if you're annoying, then you're annoying. (*COUGH* Timmy and Tommy.) Honestly, I encourage you to just give up as soon as you hit the roadblock where you are forced- hint: CHILD LABOR- to build an entire store on an island with less than 4 people to spread your potential plague to. Working alone = no fun; I like to suffer together. Well truly I'd prefer not to suffer at all, but if I have to I will eat a cup of overcooked they're cooked to the point where I'm not sure if what I'm chewing are noodles or styrofoam. Tom Nook's just cruel.

Marianna: The funny part is, I've consciously been thinking about starting to say 'shut the front door,' but up to this point I

haven't. I'm going to start saying it now, though.

Meredith (Quoting Marianna): "You say Timmy and Tommy support child labor, but maybe the truth being that they're trying to RUN TOM NOOK OUT OF BUSINESS. HE'S A BAD MAN. What if Tom Nook has forced his nephews into child labor, and the reason they terrorize you by chasing you around the store so that you'll leave the store and escape the possibility of also getting sucked into child labor, too? If anything, Timmy and Tommy are actually our saviors."

Marianna: Meredith is wrong. Go ahead and hate Timmy if you want, but Tommy doesn't deserve such slander against his name. Tommy, easily the better twin, and the only one that matters. Timmy, nothing more than a mini Tom, learned the ways of retail and how to be a pain in everyone's butts. Tommy, on the other hand, actually has a personality. He's the quieter of the twins– the one that you have to go out of your way to talk to (since Timmy generally blocks it). Tommy is sweet, and this aspect of his personality can be seen further in *New Horizons*.

Prior to the construction of Nook's Cranny, you can find Tommy wandering around the town center of the island. If you talk to him, he'll often make cute little comments about nature or share a happy, somewhat philosophical thought with you. I may have even seen him chasing a butterfly once, though that may have only been my imagination running wild. So I disagree, personally it's clear as day that there's a superior twin-and that's Tommy.

As for your comment about Timmy and Tommy encouraging the game's moralistic, ethical issues– I don't wanna hear it. The entire game is essentially child labor and child abandonment so I don't think you have the right to pin all that on Timmy and Tommy alone. If anything, blame Tom Nook. If you called him a supporter of child labor then yes, that would be accurate.

Meredith: Absolutely child abandonment, and your NPC mom's just like "you're on your own kid." Then you're thrown into this world where a capitalist racoon holds a gun to your head if you don't pay your mortgage in time.

Marianna (Quoting Meredith): "I actually did have a dream about running Timmy over with a garbage truck; I'm being so for real. I went to sleep after I played *Animal Crossing*, and I was so upset because I had picked up one of the message bottles, and it was legit a recipe to make a CARDBOARD CHAIR. Like, that's so rancid and pointless- I was ticked off, so I went to sleep and had that dream. It made me so happy when I woke up."



Note



Shop



Meredith: Let me explain. It's NOT how it looks. Although I was genuinely satisfied with my imagination to an unhealthy extent, it's not that I want to murder video game characters- I'm not homicidal, it's just that those twins find a way to pull the devil out of you unwillingly. You just have to think, 'well at least I tried (to be half-decent),' but then you realize that you kind of need them in order to buy products at Nook's Cranny because shoplifting happens to be illegal. Don't shoplift. Seriously. I'm just kidding. I hope I don't need to say that, but I will for legal reasons. I can't afford (literally) to go to jail for this. I need to normalize my constant stream of thought and if you don't like it then pull a Marianna and go shut the front door. Okay? Cool.

Marianna: We've been through a lot together over the past 7 pages, and I sincerely hope that if you've made it to this point, you have been pleasantly surprised by our insightfulness and unconventional way of thinking. Maybe we even managed to convince you of one of our opinions on a certain point or another. Or maybe we just ticked you off. Either way, thanks for listening to us rant about our opinions. If you wanna share yours with us, shoot us an email and shower us with compliments (or, the more likely scenario – release your rage (in a polite manner, please)). Better yet, write your own article sharing your own thoughts on the matter.

Many *Animal Crossing* games exist out there, and though one can clearly superior to all others (*Pocket Camp*), Meredith and I recommend you come to your own conclusion on the matter. If you've only ever played *New Horizons*, perhaps you could expand your horizons further by sampling an older game that caught your eye from this article. If you've never played any

Animal Crossing games at all, then buddy, you are missing out. Despite our often enraged and pessimistic stances on aspects of the game. I think I speak for both Meredith and myself when I say that this series is amazing. The overall good of the series majorly overpowers any flaws it may have– in the same way it does for Tommy, you see.

Meredith: In the end, what we're trying to say in an unnecessarily long way, is that if we're given the chance to complain about something, we will take it (more myself than Marianna). Of course, we can agree to disagree, but I just so happen to be the kind of person who needs to be right, yet Marianna beats me every time with her extensive research. She gets curious about something and goes down a rabbit hole of research about it until she finds an entire *PowerPoint* of sources. I, on the other hand, volley between aggressive opinions and...well, no, actually that's it. Anyway, the time has come for me to at least try to be slightly more mature than I actually am, so, what do you say Marianna? Can we agree to disagree on this one?

Marianna: nah.
Fin.

Meredith: Well,
At least I tried.

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