



Northern Light



SUPER SPELLER AT NMS

6th Grader Brian Liu Finishes in 22nd Place in the Scripps National Spelling Bee



Journalist Jayden Wen asked Brian what it was like to compete in the Scripps National Spelling Bee:

“Personally, I think it was a great experience, and I had a great time. It’s more important to enjoy the moment, and not stress out. On stage (or really anywhere), don’t panic, and relax. (As the pronouncer said, take a deep breath.),” said Brian.

Author Stacey Lee Virtually Visits NMS

By Abigail Bernstein



During the third quarter, every student at NMS read the book *Under a Painted Sky* by Stacey Lee. It was a story about a 15 year old Chinese girl and a runaway slave traveling westward on the Oregon Trail to escape the law. Although it was set in 1849, there was a lot to learn from every character, and each twist made everyone sit at the very edge of their seats.

On April 27, Stacey Lee visited our school virtually, and taught us about how she writes, why she writes, and her personal literature preferences.

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School News

Stacey Lee grew up in a small town in Southern California, surrounded by an Asian-American family. Through middle school, she tried to hide her Asian-American identity by doing things like requesting lunchables for lunch instead of the “smelly” food her mother prepared for her. She spoke about one time where she was forced onto a national TV trivia show, because everyone thought “she’s Asian, she knows everything.” As one of the only Asian American families in this small town, Stacey Lee thought this was a normal occurrence from people. However, an older, more experienced Stacey Lee admits that it should not be like that, no matter how small the town.

A lot of people think that when authors were kids, they were obsessed with literature. However, Ms. Lee revealed that she actually hated English class when she was a kid. She talked about how in her English class, they would read Shakespeare and James Joyce. She wanted a more relatable author, with more relatable stories, which she hopes to provide to us, the younger generation. She participated in school just to get good grades, and get out of there. She always loved to write, just not for English class.

Upon being asked, Stacey Lee revealed that she herself is still a bit shocked that she writes historical fiction novels, claiming that she hated it as a student. As an author, she wants historical fiction to stray away from only wars, allowing for novels such as *Under a Painted Sky*, which took place on the Oregon trail in the mid 1800’s. She also talked about how this book was inspired by her own family history, such as her relatives who immigrated to the U.S. during the time of the Chinese Exclusion Act.

All in all, this year’s author visit was considered a success by students and teachers alike, who were educated by Stacey Lee’s speaking.

NMS Relay Field Day

By Reese Yan

On May 19, 2023 North Middle held a field day to raise money for cancer, and even sold purple items.

On field day, each grade sat down in the auditorium. It was lit up with the beautiful paper bags that we all decorated. During the 6th graders’ period, Dr. Cozine and Ms. Weissman gave a speech about hope and happiness. Then we all went to the field and enjoyed all the fun activities that the teachers had planned. We played things like box ball, jumped in the bouncy house, and even ate popsicles.

But the one thing that we really went out there to see was the teachers get DUNKED! So many people donated to dunk the teachers! For the sixth grade Mrs. Nagle, Dr. Cozine, and Mr. Mongan all got dunked.

I think it’s safe to say that this Relay Field Day was a blast, and we raised a lot of money for cancer

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Gift of Life Walk-a-Thon at North Middle School

By Richard Yi

On Tuesday April 25 and Wednesday April 26, students at Great Neck North Middle stumbled out of their gym class for the annual walk-a-thon. It took place on the track and kids walked or jogged around the track for the whole period and remembered the amount of laps they walked. Then they would find a person to sponsor them. For each lap they walked, the person that was sponsoring them would give them a certain amount of money per lap. Then they would send the money to the guidance room.

You might be wondering, what was this all about? The whole event was centered around one girl: Nadha, a girl from Sri Lanka that desperately needed a heart surgery. Sri Lanka does not provide the heart surgery that Nadha needs, so North Middle School is sponsoring her this year. All the money is going to the surgeons who are going to Sri Lanka to do the surgery there.

“Some people did 8 laps! I am so amazed how many laps a student can do in just one gym class!” said a sixth grade student.

We all hope that Nadha can get her heart surgery after we have raised so much money for this surgery.

GNNMS Spring Band Concert

By Abigail Bernstein

Every year, NMS has its 7th and 8th grade musicians perform in two concerts: one in the winter, and one in the spring. Usually, from winter to spring, you can hear how the musicians have learned and increased in their musical knowledge. This year’s spring concert blew the others out of the water. Instead of just having band, orchestra and chorus as we’ve had in previous years, we had band, orchestra, chorus, big band and philharmonic: two shiny, brand new ensembles.

To kick off the concert, a big band took the stage, and knocked everyone’s socks off. A big band is a term for a specific style of jazz band which is, ironically, very small compared to the average band. They played two pieces: “Mercy, Mercy, Mercy” by Joseph Zawinul and arranged by Michael Sweeny, and “Listen Here” by Eddie Harris, arranged by Victor Lopez. Both pieces featured improv soloists, who made up their solos as they played them. “Mercy, Mercy, Mercy” featured Abby Bernstein on the trombone, and “Listen Here” featured Elliot Kane on clarinet, Aaron Gorjian on clarinet, Abby Bernstein on trombone, and Emet Greenblatt on drum set.

After a quick transition, GNNMS’s 7th and 8th grade concert band played two pieces, “Affirmation” by William Owens, and “Celebration Overture” by James Swearingen. Both pieces are upbeat marches, and both used a plethora of different dynamics. “Affirmation” had a section that used a different tempo, something unheard of to many student musicians at NMS.

Whether in both the Big Band, or just the concert band, every single student at NMS who participated in the band program this year learned more about their chosen instrument, music as a whole, and how to work alongside their peers to create said music. (Is the ending too abrupt? Also, is it grammatically correct? It feels weird.)

2023 8th Grade End of Year Field Trip

By Luke Zhong and Harrison Albin

For the 2022-2023 school year, the 8th graders went to Coleman Country Day Camp as their final middle school trip. This was the first time the 8th grade trip took place there.

Now, what was Coleman like? Coleman is a day camp in summer in which there are many offered activities to take part in. Some of these are bungee trampolining, ziplining, rock climbing, and various other activities! The 8th graders split into groups of their choice and were allowed to go to different locations throughout the trip. Food was provided at the campground, with the inclusion of kosher food.

The 8th graders arrived at school at 7:15 on May 31st, and left for Coleman at 7:45 on one of six large buses. At Coleman, they split into their groups, starting off by going to separate areas, doing different activities like rock climbing, volleyball, soccer, Gaga ball, and boating. Lunch came, and pasta, pizza, and grilled cheese sandwiches, all homemade, were served with watermelon and the option of a salad bar on the side. Toward the end of the day, the students competed in a Gaga ball tournament, where two students were crowned the champions. Then, students were allowed a free choice block of time when they chose their own activities to complete. All in all, the 8th graders had a great time at Coleman and were very content with the trip.

The NMS Art Show

By Danai Bezerianou

On May 15 and 17 the NMS Art Show commenced. Many students' artwork were displayed. I asked many students that were featured in the art show, and the teachers who ran it, Miss Delsignore and Miss Kirleis. This is what they said, "We always try to show a selection of projects that represent all grades. We try to have at least a few examples of each project created. We also do a special of high school. We especially showcase the work of the art 9 students."

Additionally, students Chen Chen, Amelia, Chang and Karen Chen were interviewed. Karen Chen said, "I felt really weird having my artwork in the show, and I didn't really want my art being in the show."

Amelia Chang stated, "I was very honored that Ms. Teich put my art in the art show. I was thrilled that my parents and friends would get to see my art, and I was excited to see all my friends' art, too. It was a show that my family, friends, and teachers could see and admire. The art show was a marvelous experience and I was happy to be a part of it. I did not expect my art to be in the show, partly because I didn't even know there was going to be an art show at first, and even when I was told by Ms. Teich it would be in the art show, I had no idea what the art show was. Besides that, I have never seen any of the other classes' works, and I wasn't sure what to expect in the art show."

Chen Chen said, "We are very fortunate to have a school that puts a lot of effort towards showing our students' hard work, and the Art Show has been one of my favorites over the years. Having my artwork displayed this year was something that I did actually expect, but it doesn't take away from how grateful I am to be able to be part of it. Many of us have worked so hard on our pieces through the past year and this was an amazing chance to showcase the skills we have been building upon for years. It was also an opportunity to show our parents and friends why us Art 9 students had blue hands or charcoal covered fingers for a week (haha!). Overall, I'm just so honored to have been part of the Art Show of North Middle for the past two years and I sincerely hope that people will continue enjoying it in the future."

Ultimately, the art show was very beautifully put together, in order to show the progress of NMS students.



Artwork by Lindsay Sollen



Artwork by Mia Li

School News

NMS 6th Grade Spring Concert: Orchestra

By Genevieve Xu-Ferguson

The NMS 6th grade orchestra performed on May 15.

The pieces performed were, *And So it Goes* by Billy Joel, *Burst* by Brian Balmages, and *Spring* by famous musician, Antonio Vivaldi. Finally, both the orchestra AND the band played *The Batman Theme*, by Neal Hefti.

The orchestra consisted of the violinists (1st, 2nd, 3rd), violists, cellists and a pianist! The teacher for 6th grade is Mr. Virgilio! In the song *Spring*, there were three solos for violin! They were: Hayton Chan, Aron Xu, and Brian Liu!

POPS Concert Choral Performances

By Liel Kafaierad

On June 1st the POPS concert was held at North Middle School. After putting this concert on hold due to COVID, they were able to put it together for this year, and it included performances by musicians from NMS, NHS, and JFK students.

This year's theme was "A Trip to the Movies." Iconic songs from amazing films were played by the students. The choirs from each school sang songs that sounded phenomenal. The JFK group sang "I See The Light" from the Disney film *Tangled*. The NMS show choir sang "The Rose" from the 1979 film *The Rose*, with soloists Deuay (Niuniu) Kong and Ellie Segal. The highschoolers sang the song "1650 Broadway" from the Broadway musical *Beautiful*. The piece that all 3 groups put together was a song from the movie *The Greatest Showman*: "This Is Me." The song featured soloists Makayla Kohan (JFK), Lindsay Stoller (NMS), and Dylan Brenner (NHS), with Taj Malhotra on the piano. All in all, it was a sensational event!

Orchestral Performance

By Abby Bernstein

Before the amazing choral ensembles took the stage at NMS on the evening of June 1st, the stage hosted a sensational orchestral ensemble filled with students who played wind, string, and brass from JFK Elementary, North Middle, and North High. The group was conducted by NMS 7th and 8th grade band and orchestra teacher, Mr. Trinkwald. The group was also joined by Ms. Tomlet, the NHS band teacher and (I'm not sure if there was anyone else there might've been I don't know about Jfk teachers I'm getting info right now). The ensemble played three pieces that, as Mr. Trinkwald said, "don't even need an introduction". They kicked off the concert with "Over the Rainbow" from the revolutionary 1939 Metro-Goldwyn-Mayor film "The Wizard of Oz". Following that, they played a rousing rendition of "Raiders March", the classic theme of the Indiana Jones movies. Their phenomenal performance came to a conclusion with "Star Wars" which, as the name suggests, is the ageless George Lucas tune of all the *Star Wars* movies. JFK, NMS, and NHS students alike enjoyed partaking in this performance, and felt they learned tons from playing with people above and below their levels. They, along with the rest of the music department, can't wait for next year's Pops Concert.

Advice from Miss Know-It-All

Dear Miss Know-it-All,

This kid in my class keeps causing disruptions that make it hard for me to concentrate. As a result, my teacher keeps making us lose class participation points, and canceling blookets & gimkits. What should I do?

Thanks,

Melody Martinez.

Dear Melody Martínez,

Thanks so much for reaching out! To begin, you should ask a teacher to have your seat moved as far from the kid as possible. The further away you are, the less distracted you will be. And secondly, communicate your feelings with your teacher. Explain if you find it unfair to lose points and games due to your classmate's behavior. If your teacher continues making you lose class participation points, and/or will not change your seat, try speaking to a counselor. If you don't think you're learning enough and falling behind, the counselors will try their best to help you have the best learning experience possible. I wish you the best of luck with your situation!

Sincerely,

Miss Know-it All

Dear Miss Know-It All,

I have too many tests to study for at once, and I can't focus because of how many distractions I have. How do I balance studying and playing? What should I do?

Thanks,

Jennifer Graham

Dear Jennifer Graham,

Thanks for reaching out! One great way to balance study and playing is to remove distractions. Having things like game controllers for gaming devices, or just anything that distracts you around should be removed from your area. This allows the time you do have to study, to be completely focused on studying. You should also try and find somewhere quiet to study. If you can't get that at home, the lunchroom/library at school works well too. You should not study on a bed or in a very comfortable area because it's good to have a set place to study, being too comfortable is still a distraction! You could set a schedule where every time you complete something in particular you can use distractions for X minutes, or finish all your work & studying and use distractions for all the remaining time you have. I wish you the best of luck with your situation!

Sincerely,

Miss Know-It All

Traditional Summer Festivals Around the World

By Lila P Halpert

Ah, summer: the time to kick back, to relax, and to have fun — and also the time for many celebrations around the world! Ranging from food festivals to celebrations of the warm and bright days, summer has many kinds of fascinating and intriguing holidays.

Midsummer: Scandinavia is mainly known for the aurora borealis during the winter; however, the summer months hold the festival known as Midsummer. Celebrated largely in Sweden, Midsummer commemorates the almost constant daylight in the region after cold and dark winters. Traditions generally involve traveling to the countryside, constructing festive maypoles, decorating said maypoles with flower wreaths, and more. Originally a pagan holiday, Midsummer almost always occurs on a Friday between June 19th and 25th. Many dress up in traditional outfits to celebrate the occasion, as well as eating classic meals such as pickled herring.

Obon: A yearly Japanese-Buddhist celebration, Obon remembers one's ancestors. Like other similar holidays, such as El Día de Los Muertos in the fall, the spirits of the dead are believed to briefly return to Earth to visit their living relatives. Typically falling between August 13th and 16th (though Obon can also be celebrated in mid-July), traditions include burning incense, visiting graves, offering food at altars, and performing dances called *bon odori*. At the end of the festival, floating lanterns can be put into bodies of water or released into the sky as a way to metaphorically show the spirits the path back home. As with all celebrations, however, the customs can vary immensely from region to region.

Krishna Janmashtami: This holiday, also known as Gokulashtami, celebrates the birth of Krishna, one of the most important deities in Hinduism. In many parts of India, festivities are held over the two days of Krishna Janmashtami, while other customs include fasting, listening to and reading religious texts, and making offerings to various gods. Images of Krishna are cleaned and adorned with decorations for the celebration, dances and traditional tunes called *bhajans* are performed, and dishes made from milk and curds (believed to be Krishna's favorite foods) are prepared. On the second day of the holiday, Dahi-Handi, a traditional ceremony, occurs. Dahi-Handi entails suspending a pot of butter, milk, and honey high in the air, building a human pyramid, and eventually reaching and breaking the pot, which commemorates the way Krishna stole butter and milk as a childhood prank.

La Tomatina: Occurring on the last Wednesday of August, La Tomatina is a giant food fight, attracting thousands of participants each year. Approximately 15,000 overripe tomatoes are thrown through the streets of Buñol, a small town in Valencia, Spain. La Tomatina is a relatively new celebration in the grand scheme of things, though over 22,000 people, including both tourists and locals, flock to Buñol to join in on the (quite chaotic) festivities. The origins of this tradition are unknown, but it is believed to have started in 1945, when a group of young children began to pelt tomatoes at large statues during a parade and quickly started a town-wide tomato fight. At the end of each annual festival, firefighters wash the people and the streets down with hoses, where the acidities in the tomatoes act as disinfectants and cause the streets to become squeaky clean.

These four festivals are just a few of the many, many holidays, traditions, and celebrations spanning cultures from around the world. If you liked this article, you can take it further and do your own research! You may just stumble upon an extraordinary celebration.



World News (cont'd)

2023 World Chess Competition

By Harrison Albin

This year's world chess competition was held in Astana, Kazakhstan, from April 9th to April 30th. It was different from other world championships for many key reasons.

The world chess championship's participants are decided by 2 criteria: either winning the Candidate's tournament, one of the most prestigious tournaments for genius level super Grandmasters, or being the past defending world champion.

Last year, the world chess championship was a battle between Ian Nepomniatchi and Magnus Carlsen, in which Magnus defeated Ian with a dominant 10/13 score, riding off his brilliant games and a few critical and well exploited blunders made by Ian.

The world championship is held as a best of 14 games, with a win being worth one point, a draw a half point, and a loss zero points.

Now, what were the differences this year? First, we must look back on past years. Magnus Carlsen was the world chess champion for the past 10 years, defending his title since 2013. He is possibly the greatest chess player of all time, but that is yet to be fully agreed upon.

What caused the difference was something Magnus said last year which stunned the chess world. A new, up and coming chess prodigy, by the name of Alireza Firouzja, was the youngest to break the threshold of 2800 in terms of FIDE rating. Magnus stated that if Alireza did not win the candidates tournament and challenge him for the title, he would abstain from the competition and not participate in the world chess championship.

This was a groundbreaking statement. The candidates tournament this year could decide both candidates, with the runner-up also potentially being a contender for the title of world chess champion.

That is exactly what occurred, with the candidate tournament being dominated by Ian Nepomniachtchi, with Ding Liren putting in a strong performance for second place. Alireza was held out of contention. Ding and Ian would be the competitors for the title of world chess champion this year.

Their match was a close one. Game 1 was a draw. Game 2 was an amazing victory by Ian with the black pieces, making a statement. Black is usually the defending position, and a win with black at the top level is fairly rare.

Game 3, draw. Game 4, a win by Ding with white. Game 5, a win by Ian with white. Game 6, another win by ding with white. Game 7, yet another win by Ian with white. Game 8, a draw. Game 9, a draw.

At this point, it was looking grim for Ding. The score was 5/4, with Ian in the lead. Ding was being completely shut down. Game 10, another draw, game 11, another draw. Yet it was not over. Finally, with 2 games to go, Ding Liren managed to defeat Ian with white, evening the score.

The last 2 games were draws. This meant the match would move on to a tiebreak. The tiebreak consisted of a 25 minute game with an additional 10 seconds per move played, compared to the classical format before, with a 90 minute game with no additional time until move 40.

The first three games ended in draws. It seemed they would be moving on to 5 minutes of time, finally, the deciding game was played. With a mistake by Ian, Ding capitalized in stunning fashion and snatched an underdog victory, claiming the world chess champion title for China for the very first time.

This closed the competition, but the drama still continued. After the tournament, Ding was interviewed. When asked if he ever wanted to quit chess in the past, he stated that his plan had been to quit the next year. After winning the tournament, he realized he would no longer be able to do so. He also stated that he felt his victory felt undeserved, as if Magnus had participated he would not have even been a competitor.

This year's world chess championship was exciting and brilliant, but it is impossible to overlook the cloud of drama it brought to the chess world.



Entertainment Pages

Book, Movie, Music Reviews, & MORE

Book Review: *Death on the Nile*

By Lila P Halpert

I only recently discovered Agatha Christie's expansive collection of mystery novels, but of all of her books I have read so far, *Death on the Nile*, originally published in 1937, is by far my favorite. From the fully fleshed-out characters, something seldom seen in the mystery genre, to the satisfying conclusion to the murder, *Death on the Nile* has everything one could ask for, all in a brisk just-over-300 pages.

Linnet Ridgeway has everything one could ask for — wealth, a manor, and a best friend in Jacqueline de Bellefort, who would have Linnet's back through it all despite their drastically different social classes. In fact, Simon Doyle, Jacqueline's equally penniless fiancé, has just come to work for Linnet to earn more money for the love-struck couple. However, just two months later Mrs. Linnet Doyle and Mr. Simon Doyle are on their honeymoon in Egypt, while a pistol-toting Jacqueline has resorted to following the duo around — *everywhere*. But while on a cruise down the Nile River, Linnet is found dead in her bed, and it's up to Agatha Christie's famous detective Hercule Poirot to solve the seemingly impossible case. Obvious suspects like Jacqueline are cleared, secrets are revealed, and more murders occur as Poirot races to find the culprit of the crime.

Death on the Nile, as well as being a classic with countless film adaptations, is an intriguing mystery with multiple layers that is difficult to put down. Each character has a motive for killing Linnet Doyle, and a perfect alibi as well. Like all of Christie's books, the story is filled with twists, turns, and surprises around every corner, with a case that will keep you guessing until the end. In fact, even though the clues are laid out throughout the entire novel, the discovery of the murderer in the book's final pages is still a shock.

With shocking plot twists, a fascinating cast of characters, and a compelling mystery that has even Hercule Poirot stumped, *Death on the Nile* is a mystery you will not soon forget.

Love and Gelato Book Review

By Danaï Bezerianou

Romance novels have increased in popularity. In fact, 70% of people discover the genre at the age of 11 to 18.

In the romance book *Love and Gelato*, Lina visits the charming land of Tuscany, Italy. However, she is not there for sightseeing, or exploring. It was her mother's dying wish that she get to know her father. She wonders what kind of father isn't around for sixteen years. All she wants is to go back home.

Then, Lina is given a journal that once belonged to her late mother. Suddenly, she is uncovering a world of hidden bakeries, art, and secrets. Lina follows her mother's footsteps with the company of the ever-so-charming Ren, and she uncovers a secret that's been hidden for years. This will change everything for her mother, her father, and even for herself. She was told that people come to Italy for love and gelato, but she discovers so much more...

Let me start with saying, what a book! This had me captured from beginning to end, and all the characters had their own interesting personality. Everything is narrated so well by the skilled author Jenna Evans Welch, the gorgeous settings come to life, and it's almost as if you can hear the snarky comments made by Mimi and the teasing jokes made by Ren.

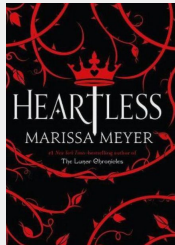
Overall, this book is perfect for anyone looking for an emotional and uplifting book. And if you like this book, you could also read the rest of the series, *Love and Olives* and *Love and Luck*.



Book, Movie, Music Reviews, & MORE (cont'd)

Heartless Book Review

By Sophia McLaughlin



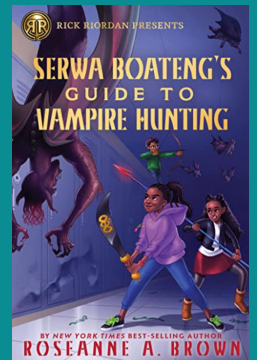
In Marissa Meyer's stand alone novel *Heartless*, she beautifully tells the story of the Queen of Hearts before she became the evil queen of Wonderland. The novel is set in Wonderland, before the time of Alice but still with the same lovable characters. The main protagonist is Catherine Pinkerton, daughter of the Marquess and Marchioness of Rock Turtle Cove. She is around the age of 16 when the book takes place, and she lives with her parents and her best friend/maid, Maryanne. Her parents want her to get married to the King of Hearts and become the queen, but she has a secret desire to open a bakery with Maryanne. Catherine wants to do this because she is a very talented baker, and some people have even said she is the best baker in all of hearts. Maryanne would help with the business side of the Bakery and they would be the most successful Bakers in all of Hearts. The only problem is her parents will never approve of her bakery, and in order for Catherine to get the bakery, she needs money, which she can only get from her parents. Her parents disapprove of her bakery because they want her to become a fine lady. As she tries to decide between fulfilling her lifelong dream and making her parents proud, she will meet many friends and foes, and face the consequences of true love.

This book was truly amazing and captivating, always making me want to read more. The book was so detailed that you could almost feel as if you were actually witnessing the events as they were happening. You could feel Catherine's emotions, understand her perspective, and realize what wholesome feelings led to her becoming the Queen of Hearts. Marissa Meyer geniusly tells the story of a great adventure through Wonderland while still representing concepts in our world today. I would highly recommend this book to anyone who is interested in fantasy and likes an exciting adventure! Marissa Meyer has also published another book series called The Lunar Chronicles, about a cyborg who must navigate the challenges of the future and her past, which I would also recommend.



Book Review: *Serwa Boateng's Guide to Vampire Hunting*

By Lila P Halpert



Who doesn't love a good book about mythology? Many have monsters, deities, and folklore for the ages; few have heart, humor, and characters with real struggles and challenges in addition to their supernatural adventures. However, *Serwa Boateng's Guide to Vampire Hunting* by Roseanne A Brown has the best of both worlds in this witty, intriguing introduction to the world of Serwa's Ghanaian legends come to life.

Twelve-year-old Serwa Boateng lives the good life, traveling the world with her professional vampire-slayer parents hunting down *adze*, or vampires, for the Abomofuo, a secret society of Ghanaian Slayers. But one day, an obayifo, or user of dark magic, named Boahinmaa attacks Serwa and her family. So while her parents get to have all the fun searching for Boahinmaa, Serwa is dropped off in the small town of Rocky Gorge with her aunt and cousin "for her own safety." Once there, Serwa must brave the perils of middle school, including food fights, detentions, and cliques. And while Rocky Gorge is supposedly 100 percent magic-free, Serwa begins to realize all is not as it seems, and that an *adze* is loose at her school. With all communication to her parents and the Abomofuo cut off, Serwa must instead train a group of fellow misfits: her cousin Roxy, class clown Gavin, teacher's pet Mateo, and mean girl Eunju. Serwa will have to teach her newfound crew how to be Slayers, find the *adze* hiding on her own turf, and get to know each person who will now be her only allies in battle. She'll have to confront truths about herself and the past, and all of this is on top of her constant conflict with students and teachers. What could possibly go wrong?

Serwa Boateng's Guide to Vampire Hunting is a fantastic book that will have you gripped from beginning to end, each page leading up to the final battle with the *adze*. It also does not shy away from America's dark past with slavery, including the fact that Rocky Gorge Middle School was built on a former slave plantation. Author Brown also draws on her own experience with immigrating to the US from Ghana at age five in building the struggles of Serwa, also a Ghanaian-American immigrant, who constantly wonders if she belongs in Ghana, America, or anywhere. These struggles, in addition to the other characters' journeys, are incorporated naturally into the flow of the story in the race against time to catch the *adze*. But don't expect to leave Serwa's magnificent world any time soon — an explosive, shockingly dark plot twist in the book's last pages, followed by the cliffhanger ending of the century, will leave you begging for more. (The next book in the series, *Serwa Boateng's Guide to Witchcraft and Mayhem*, is due out September 12th.)

So what are you waiting for? Do yourself a favor and dive into the wonderful world of Ghanaian folklore, supplemented perfectly with real characters, an action-packed plot, and humor and heart, with *Serwa Boateng's Guide to Vampire Hunting*.

Entertainment Pages

Book, Movie, Music Reviews, & MORE (cont'd)

Melanie Martinez: Portals Album

By Noah Nerayoff

On March 9th, 2023, famous singer and songwriter Melanie Martinez announced that she would be releasing a very long awaited album, *Portals*. She had hinted at this for almost three years, through many interviews. Melanie Martinez fans are known as Crybabies because of Melanie Martinez's main character in her movie series, *Crybaby*. She named the main character in her movie series Crybaby because she said she wants to take the power from the insult "Crybaby". This is due to her being teased as a child, and called a "crybaby." Crybabies popularized the album before it even came out. I, and many others, bought merchandise including sweaters, vinyls and other items. She released it on March 30th, 2023 and it had 100 Million streams by the end of the first week after release, and the song boosted her to 20 million monthly listeners by the end of week one.

At the same time, she released the tour dates, the first being on May 30th and the last one being July 15th. She also made, and is making many guest appearances on TV, Lollapalooza, and meet and greets. Fans around the world are flying, driving, and finding any way to make it to these events, and saving up money for funds. And for those who can't make it, some kind fans record the appearances and post them on social media for them.

For those who don't know, all of her songs are created to help people going through a rough time while being fun to listen to. For every album she creates, she makes a movie that includes all of her songs and adds a story to them. Her main albums are the main character growing up. The albums are named *Crybaby*, *K-12*, *After School*, and now *Portals*. Up until *Portals*, *Crybaby* has had supernatural powers and has dealt with problems some children face and helps them cope. By no means does this mean happy people don't listen to her songs. Helping specific people cope is just an extra bonus to her great and catchy songs. Once *Portals* came out, it introduced an abnormal theme because the main character (who hates her current life) goes through a portal and is "reborn" as an alien. The special effects in her music videos are great and portray this well. She is a great actress in her music videos and the special effects are great, and seeing the movies are very fun and entertaining, while having the best plot including a lot of foreshadowing, songs, acting, and special effects. The only downside is that it is very time consuming to make a movie and causes her to have less time to write songs and enjoy life.

How the Internet Has Changed Our Lives

By Emily Toch

The internet these days has changed our lives a lot. It started as nothing. But then as time went on people started inventing lots of different things. First the computer, and then the smartphone and much more. This kind of technology has pros and cons.

Pros

Some pros of having technology are that people can easily get in contact with others. For example, if you need to get in contact with your parents for them to pick you up from a friend's house, then you can text them. A second pro is that you can learn a lot from researching on the internet. For example, when I hurt my knee I went to the doctor, they wanted me to have surgery. My mother didn't believe that a 12 year old should have surgery. So my mother and I researched if I should have surgery or not. A third pro is that it makes things faster. For example, it lets you know where people are faster.

Cons

Some cons of having technology are that people can get addicted easily. For example, kids can get addicted and then they lose focus on other things. Another con is that kids might forget about their school work and get bad grades. A third con is that it distracts people. For example, people might not look where they're going, walk on the street, and get hit by a car. A fourth con is that people can develop mental health issues by seeing things online that bring down their self esteem.

These are some of the ways the internet has changed our lives these days.

Entertainment Pages

Book, Movie, Music Reviews, & MORE (cont'd)

Taylor Swift: The Era's Tour

By Erica Grande

The moment Taylor Swift announced The Era's Tour, her fans who are known as *Swifties* all over the world went wild. Everyone was finding a way to raise money for tickets. As soon as they were dropped, people really went through "**The Great War**" as many Swifties said referring to one of Taylor's songs on her most recent album *Midnights*. During the process of getting tickets Swifties had some trouble with Ticketmaster. Some people's tickets were getting canceled, and other people were just having trouble with the website itself. A group of Swifties actually sued Ticketmaster, but in the end all was solved, people got their tickets, and soon came "**The Very First Night**" of The Era's Tour.

The first night of this tour was Friday, March 17th and will be ending on Wednesday, August 9th of this year. Swifties all over the world have been preparing for this event. Even though many people got tickets, there were still people who couldn't get any, so to help each other out swifties who are going to the shows are live streaming every night.

At every show Taylor Swift performs different songs from all her albums and Eras. Each night she sings 42 songs, and 2 different surprise songs, all in 3 hours. There really isn't a dress code, but fans are dressing up in costumes based on her 10 different albums. Some people are dressing in different costumes from her previous tours, some as her 3 cats, Olivia, Meredith, and Benji, others are wearing costumes based on her songs, while others are going out in "**Style**" wearing her merch.

Taylor Swift fans started a fan project that was inspired by lyrics from her song "**You're on Your Own, Kid**". The lyrics say "make the friendship bracelets, take the moment and taste it." and they did. It was all over social media where Swifties showed their journey of making these bracelets with lyrics, acronyms, and other inside jokes. Ever since Taylor released her most recent album, and announced her tour she started becoming an even bigger star. Many new fans were welcomed, and they dedicated their time to learn old and new songs for when their time came to attend The Era's Tour. During these past few months fans all over the world were coming up with many theories of announcements Taylor could be making at one of her shows, and then it happened; on May 5th, at her first night in Nashville. She announced *Speak Now (Taylor's Version)*.

"I felt incredibly excited, I was screaming and jumping everywhere," said 6th grader Kaitlyn Feng.

8th grader Nuinui Kong exclaimed, "I WAS SO EXCITED WHEN I SAW THE INSTAGRAM POST! I think the album cover is perfection, and I can't wait for the vault tracks."

Many people from our school are Swifties, some have even attended Taylor's concerts. One of the lucky people who was able to attend the Era's Tour is Ms. Andreacchi, a 6th grade reading teacher. When asked, she said her experience at the Era's Tour was amazing. "It was easily the best show I have ever been to, and I have been to many, many concerts, including Billy Joel who is known for putting on a good show. The costume changes, set changes, and dancing were all incredible. My favorite moment of the night was when she played *Shake It Off* and I got to dance with my nieces, who are HUGE Swifties. After the show was over, we hit the merch tent because there was no line. I would definitely recommend trying to go on your way out, it was much better than standing on line and missing the show. Overall, it was 100% worth it to travel all the way to Texas to see her perform. I would do it again in a heartbeat!"

Though many people might not agree, this is definitely one of the biggest events of 2023, and will be talked about for a long time. It has already started to make history. Taylor and her tour have brought many people together, many people have created friendships through her music. For those attending the show in the future, Swifties should definitely take Ms. Andreacchi's advice, and most importantly have fun!



Entertainment Pages

Book, Movie, Music Reviews, & MORE (cont'd)

My Taylor Swift Experience

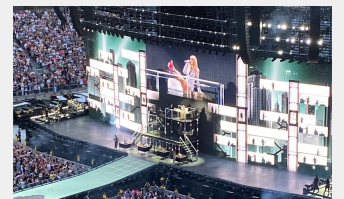
By Sophia McLaughlin

On Friday, May 26, 2023, Taylor Swift performed her Eras Tour at MetLife Stadium. The crowd was packed with more than 80,000 people attending the concert, including me. My opinion of the concert is that Taylor really tried her hardest to give fans something to remember and was an overall enchanting experience.

Before Taylor actually got on stage, the stadium was packed with people waiting for merchandise, food, and there were even lines for the bathroom. When my mom and I got on one of the merchandise lines, it seemed to go on forever. We were waiting on the merch line for about two hours, and we almost missed Taylor's first song. I suspect that the lines were so packed because Taylor had just released that day a new CD version of her album *Midnights*, The Late Night Edition. It included all of her regular album songs with another version of "Snow on the Beach" with more Lana Del Ray and "Karma" featuring Ice Spice. It also has a new song, "You're Losing Me", which is only on the CD. The CD is also a concert exclusive, along with some hoodies and shirts.



Taylor's entrance on stage was super exciting and extravagant. After the countdown on screen ran out, dancers came onstage holding large pieces of colorful fabric flowing in the air. The fabric pieces seemed to form petals, and after all of the dancers got to the center of the stage, or the diamond-like part, they came together to form a flower. They laid the petals on the stage, and Taylor came out of this flower and started singing "Miss Americana and the Heartbreak Prince," from the Lover Era. It was a very magical moment and I loved it. Taylor would continue to sing songs from her Lover Era, including "Cruel Summer," "The Man," "You Need to Calm Down," "Lover," and "The Archer." She had many outfits including a glittery suit, which I liked, but thought she could have put more effort into its design. When she sang her song "The Archer," projected on the stage were many arrows shooting into a center point that got faster with her tempo. I enjoyed this moment and thought it was smart planning by Taylor.



She also sang songs from her other eras based on all her albums, from *Fearless*, *Speak Now*, *Red* and *1989*, to *Folklore*, *Evermore*, and *Midnights*. She also had transitions into her different Eras, where she changed the sets, costumes, and she even had different microphones for every Era. The coolest transition was when she went from her Fearless Era to her Evermore Era. The stage changed drastically and trees sprouted from the ground of the stage. The backdrop changed into a forest scenery and smoke came from the stage as well. It was very intriguing and I felt like I was in an actual forest.



One of my favorite songs from the *Evermore* album is "Champagne Problems" and I was really excited when she sang it. Other fans also loved the song and everyone was singing along. Taylor also sang "Marjorie," about her late grandmother. Everyone had bracelets that lit up during songs, but during "Marjorie," the bracelets weren't on and everyone used their phone flash. I thought it was really kind of everyone to do that for Taylor. I was also really mad at myself because I wanted to turn on my flash, but I couldn't because I was taking a video of the song. After the song was over, everyone was cheering and someone in my section started a chant and everyone was very loud and showing their support for Taylor. We were chanting and screaming for so long that Taylor was just looking at us with disbelief and I even saw her mouth "Oh my god." I think she was so grateful that we showed her support and she even said we deserved a surprise.

Entertainment Pages

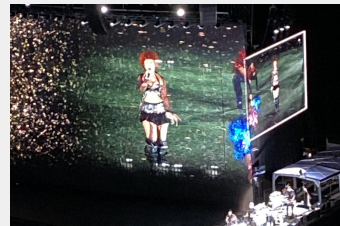
Book, Movie, Music Reviews, & MORE (cont'd)

After the Evermore Era, she sang some songs from *Reputation* like “Delicate” and “Don't Blame Me” and moved onto her Speak Now Era. There were only two songs in this Era, but I loved when she sang *Enchanted*. The stage was purple and filled with flowers, and she had a poofy dress which added to the girly feel of the song. She then moved onto the Red Era, which I was very excited about. I was most excited for this Era because I knew that she was going to sing “All Too Well (10 Minute Version)” and that is one of my favorite songs. She also sang the first surprise song of the night, “Nothing New” with Phoebe Bridgers. Even though this wasn't one of my favorite songs, I think they sang well together and the performance made me see the song in a new perspective. After “Nothing New,” she finally got to “All Too Well,” which marked the halfway point of the concert. I was so happy to see her perform the song and she did such an amazing job. Everyone was singing along and it was truly a magical experience. I also loved how the stage wasn't overly decorated and it was just her, which added to the emotions in the song. She then went to the Folklore Era, Which had the most amount of songs. There were songs like “The 1,” “My Tears Ricochet,” “Cardigan,” and “Betty.” She brought out the Folklore cottage also, with a grassy roof and an inside too! She sang “The 1” laying on the grassy roof, and sat on the steps in some of her songs.



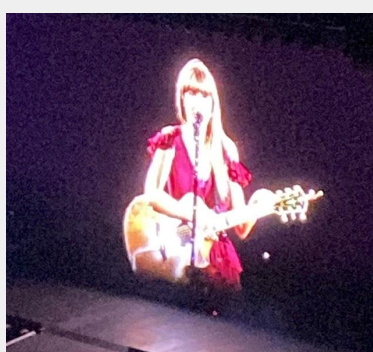
After the 1989 Era, Taylor had the biggest surprise of the night. She gathered herself and all of her dancers to the front of the stage and talked about her *Midnights* album and preparing for her Eras Tour. She also mentioned how Ice Spice wanted to collaborate with her and how she recorded a new version of “Karma” featuring Ice Spice. She then mentioned that they had made a video. The crowd went wild, and I was so surprised and excited. She then showed us the video and turned the stadium into a world premiere of the music video. It was so astonishing and I have never experienced anything like it. Ice Spice was also in the video and everyone cheered when she was on screen.

After the video was over, everyone cheered some more and Taylor started speaking about one of her old friends and Jack Antonoff got onstage to sing “Getaway Car” with Taylor. They did an amazing job and everyone was screaming. She also did an acoustic version of “Maroon,” making it three surprise songs, plus the music video. She then fully transitioned to the Midnights Era. Taylor's transition was when she swam under the stage. I expected it to be really cool since everyone was talking about it, but it was very underwhelming. From my angle, it just looked like she had flopped into an opening in the stage. It also looked like the screen was just playing a recorded video of her swimming.



She then sang other songs from the Midnights Era like “Midnight Rain” and “Bejeweled.” Afterwards she sang the big finale, “Karma.” While she was singing, she paused and introduced Ice Spice to the stage. As she came out from under the stage and sang her part, I was blown away by how much effort Taylor put into the show. I wasn't even sure if Taylor was actually going to perform “Karma” live after the music video, but I was so glad that she did and did it with Ice Spice.

Overall, the concert was one of the best experiences of my life and I was so grateful that I could experience it in person.



Entertainment Pages

Book, Movie, Music Reviews, & MORE (cont'd)

Weird Food Review

By Riley Cheng

Overview

Welcome to the summer issue of Weird Food Review. There is no explanation since I've done 9 issues by now. Today's drink is bacon soda. Anyways let's get into it.

History

I already told you about the history with the buffalo chicken soda so I'll just copy and paste that into here. The company is a chain of stores in the US that specializes in soda, candy, and novelty items. Rocket Fizz specializes in candy and soft drink products. For example, the franchise store in Beaverton, Oregon markets over 4,000 varieties of candy and over 500 varieties of soda drinks. The company's franchise store in Cary, North Carolina markets over 1,200 varieties of candy and over 430 varieties of soft drinks. Some of the company's beverages have been described as "novelty soft drinks". The company's soda products are marketed with the brand name Rocket Fizz. A popular soda they produce is a bacon soda, which is also simply named "Bacon Soda." At the company's Denver, Colorado store, bacon soda was described as the store's best-selling soda in 2012. The variety of soft drinks offered by Rocket Fizz has been described by Indianapolis Monthly magazine as "overwhelming," and the quantity of candies offered was described as coming in "copious amounts." In 2017, the chain began rollout of a line of sodas as part of a marketing deal with the band KISS; as of September 2017, the line consisted of Destroyer Kola, KISS Army root beer and Rock And Roll Over Cherry Kola. Rocket Fizz also produces ranch dressing-flavored soda, buffalo wing-flavored soda, coffee soda, and one named dog drool, among others. The company also markets novelty items such as retro memorabilia and prank gifts.

Taste

I don't want to bash the soda that much since it's a joke product made to taste bad but this soda really is bad. It's bacon (I know half the school can't eat it because of kosher laws) and what could go wrong? This savory concoction of whatever is amazing, no matter how fatty it is. Putting it into a drink, however, isn't as good an idea as it seems. It tastes like BBQ sauce which sounds good, since BBQ is probably the best condiment. The thing is, it's not good BBQ sauce. It felt like the sauce was put into the food processed and then directly put into a blender. And blam some food coloring and that's it. I know it's supposed to be bad, but come on. Nobody in their right mind ever said, "Hey let me drink this unironically with my burger. That sounds nice." Ain't nobody ever said that. However, as a joke product it's pretty good. The novelty is through the roof worth these weird sodas. I'm bumping the rating slightly as it's not supposed to be a serious product.

Rating: 3/5

Conclusion

So yeah, bacon soda is terrible, no surprise there. Well, this is the final issue of Weird Food Review since I'm going to high school. Anyways— bye.



Entertainment Pages

Book, Movie, Music Reviews, & MORE (cont'd)

Popular Vacation Destinations

By Noah Nerayoff

Summer is coming up and here are some fun vacation destinations to travel to!

- #5: The 5th best (and most popular) place to go is the Swiss Alps! It's very cold and snowy, so it's good for all sorts of snow sports. It's great for hiking, photo taking, and is a lot of fun.
- #4: Rome! Rome is a great place with a lot of history. It's good for sightseeing and traveling. As well, there are some great-tasting delicacies.
- #3 is Glacier National Park. It's great for hiking and sightseeing, and can even be driven around for those who choose not to walk. There are good temperatures and paths cleared to make it easier. It is absolutely perfect for hikers and sightseers.
- #2 is Bora Bora. It's a small island that makes up for its size in absolute beauty. With miles of tropical areas and tons of nice hotels, it's perfect for a relaxing vacation or a trip with friends. Although the prices for such luxury are high, travelers say it's "worth every penny."
- #1: Paris. Paris is a beautiful land with tons of famous landmarks and sightseeing destinations. Paris is also known for its amazing food and lakes. It's also a very nice city with a kind public and many tourist attractions. The most popular things to do and get are climbing on the Eiffel Tower and getting some iconic fresh fancy pastries.

NMS Plans for Summer 2023

By Hannah Hyman

When the final bell rings on the last day of school, hundreds of NMS students will burst through the doors, not to return for another two whole months. What will they be doing this summer? Students were polled and the results are in.

Over 33% of NMS students are going on a vacation. One 6th grader, Reese Yan, explained she is traveling up north. "I'm going to Canada this summer to see my mom's friend and her house. I also want to see her kids because they're both younger and very energetic." Danai Bezerianou will also spend time abroad, "I am going to Europe, London specifically, which is where I am from. Then I'm flying to Greece and visiting different islands such as Kythira. I am most excited to go to Kythira because I have friends there that I haven't seen in a while."

Another popular choice is to go to a camp. About 33% of students are either going to sleepaway or a day camp. "I can't wait to go to Parkwood day camp where we go on trips to Adventureland every summer. I go once a year and it is fun to ride the scary roller coasters with my friends," said a 6th grade girl. A boy stated, "I'm going to a sleepaway camp in Massachusetts with four friends who live in Queens."

Other students are taking it easy this summer. Nearly 22% said they will relax at home. Gabby Grande explained she is planning to spend time with friends. She commented, "This summer I'm going to hang out with my friends. I'm excited to have sleepovers and play at the park." Lindsey Ramirez, another student, answered "I can't wait to hang out at the pool with my three cousins and younger brother."

Not as popular of an answer is playing sports. Roughly 11% of students will participate in some kind of sports activity. One boy stated he will try out for a basketball team with some friends instead of going to sleepaway camp. "It will be a good experience for me and my friends because we've never done this before and I love basketball." Another 6th grader commented, "I am on a volleyball and swim team this summer. I have been on these teams in the past and find them enjoyable."

Clearly NMS students have interesting plans for this summer. Whether they will be traveling, going to camp, playing sports or enjoying time in Great Neck, it will be a fun two months. Have a great summer and see you in September!

Creator's Corner

Summer Desserts

by Victoria Xu-Ferguson

Recipes from: <https://www.bonappetit.com>



Blackberry Pie!

Ingredients:

- 6 cups blackberries
 - 1 cup granulated sugar
 - 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
 - 1 teaspoon lemon zest plus 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 - One 14.1-ounce box refrigerated rolled pie crusts (2 crusts)
 - All-purpose flour, for dusting
 - 1/4 cup cornstarch
 - 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
 - 1 large egg, lightly beaten
 - 1 tablespoon turbinado or raw sugar
1. Toss together the berries, granulated sugar, vanilla and lemon zest and juice in a large bowl. Let stand at room temperature for 20 minutes.
 2. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.
 3. Meanwhile, unroll one pie crust and press it into a 9-inch pie plate. Roll out the other crust on a floured cutting board. Using a 2-inch round biscuit cutter, cut the entire crust into rounds, rerolling until all the dough is used (about 28 rounds).
 4. Sprinkle the cornstarch over the berry mixture and toss to combine. Pour the berry mixture into the crust and spread into an even layer. Dot the top with the butter pieces. Brush the border of the dough lightly with the egg wash.
 5. Place the rounds around the border of the pie plate, overlapping them slightly and using the egg wash as an adhesive when necessary. There will be empty space in the center. Crimp the edge of the pie. Brush the entire crust with the egg wash and sprinkle with the turbinado sugar.
 6. Put the pie plate on a baking sheet and bake until the center is set and the crust is golden brown, 45 to 50 minutes. Put on a wire rack to cool completely. Serve at room temperature.

ENJOY!!!



Strawberry-Biscoff Cheesecake Tart!

Ingredients:

- 5 Biscoff cookies
 - 8 oz. cream cheese, room temperature
 - 1/4 cup (50 g) plus 2 Tbsp. sugar
 - 1 large egg, room temperature
 - 1/3 cup sour cream, room temperature
 - 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest
 - 1/2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1/4 tsp. Morton kosher salt
 - 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
 - 10 oz. fresh strawberries, hulled, halved, quartered if large
 - 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1. Arrange rack in middle of oven; preheat to 350°. Line a 9x5" loaf pan with a piece of parchment paper, leaving overhang on long sides. Evenly space 5 Biscoff cookies crosswise across bottom of pan.
 2. Combine 8 oz. cream cheese, room temperature, and 1/4 cup (50 g) sugar in a medium bowl and mash together with a rubber spatula until well combined. Add 1 large egg, room temperature, and whisk until incorporated. Add 1/3 cup sour cream, room temperature, 1 tsp. finely grated lemon zest, 1/2 tsp. Diamond Crystal or 1/4 tsp. Morton kosher salt, and 1/2 tsp. vanilla extract and whisk until smooth. Scrape into prepared pan.
 3. Bake cheesecake until edges are puffed and starting to turn golden brown but center is still wobbly when pan is gently shaken, 25–30 minutes. Transfer pan to a wire rack and let cheesecake cool in pan.
 4. Run a small paring knife or offset spatula along short sides of pan to loosen cheesecake. Using parchment overhang, carefully lift cheesecake out of pan and transfer to a platter; remove parchment paper. Chill cheesecake until cold, about 1 hour.
 5. Gently stir 10 oz. fresh strawberries, hulled, halved, quartered if large, 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice, and remaining 2 Tbsp. sugar in a small bowl to combine; let sit until berries begin to release their juices, about 10 minutes.
 6. Spoon macerated strawberries and their juices over cheesecake. Slice into bars to serve.

Do ahead: Cheesecake can be baked 3 days ahead. Cover and keep chilled. Top with macerated strawberries just before serving.

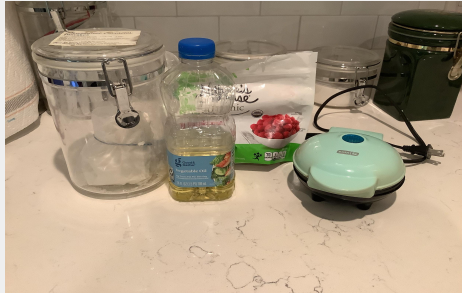
Creator's Corner (cont'd)

Raspberry Waffles Recipe

By Sophia McLaughlin

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of flour
- 1 cups of milk
- Vegetable oil
- Raspberries
- 1 egg
- Waffle maker



Step 1:

Combine the flour, milk, vegetable oil, and egg in a medium or large mixing bowl. Mix the ingredients until they have formed into a liquid-like batter.

Step 2:

Add a handful of raspberries (frozen or fresh) and gradually mix them into the batter. You can choose to either mix the berries into the batter or leave chunks in. The more mixed into the batter the raspberries are, the more consistent the raspberries will be in the waffles.

Step 3:

Use a mini waffle maker and pour about half a cup of batter into the waffle maker. The more batter you add, the more fluffy and full your waffles will be.

Step 4:

When the waffles have been cooked, place them on a plate and let them cool for five to ten minutes. Serve and Enjoy!

About the Recipe:

The modern waffle has been around since the 15th century and has been bringing smiles to the faces of millions since then. The 15th century was when people first started using the square shaped waffles we know today, but other ancestors of waffles were seen as early as 4,000 years ago! During that time, waffles did not have their distinct look, and people used heated rocks to heat both sides of the waffle. The name ‘waffle’ was not introduced until the 14th century. From then to now, people have tweaked their waffle recipes, and have even added things into the otherwise plain waffle.

This particular waffle recipe is a family recipe recently discovered in a family tradition. In my family, my mom and I like to have Saturday morning waffles as a family tradition. One Saturday morning, my mom was experimenting and made raspberry waffles. They turned out so well that I decided to share them with you so you can enjoy them too!



Summer's Tension

By Catherine Wang

Grades drop as attention spans shrink;
There's one thought that every student has in
common, which,
Doesn't happen often in anyone or thing.
The thought? Summer.
Its consumption of minds spreads as the long break
draws ever closer.

Summer does something to one's mind,
And it starts at a rather academically important time.
It's a process of corruption that starts as a tingle —
Until it bores through you.

Summer brings a mass of tests,
Of plans,
Of vacations,
Of freedom,
And..
boredom.
You simply cannot deny the feeling entry.

Yet, when summer comes,
No one minds the dry-hot air;
The same air that is humidified by human sweat —
Or maybe,
It's the human mind working itself again,
Refusing to let summer's drowsiness drown out its
fun.

Fun.
Carefree.
Beautiful.
Bright.
Abloom.
Family-time.

That's how you describe summer,
That's how they describe summer.

Creator's Corner (cont'd)

Summer Craft

By Madisyn Chan

Are you bored this summer? Do you need something to do? Well, here is a craft that is fun and easy to complete within one day!

How to make a Sunflower 🌻:

Before we begin, you will need some materials:

- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Yellow paper
- Light brown paper
- Light green paper, dark green paper
- A brown marker
- A pencil.

Step #1: Trace one of your hands on the yellow paper with your pencil. (Trace five or six-- it'll help you later.)

Step #2: Cut out the traced hands you made.

Step #3: Now, glue or tape them together (in a circle.)

Step #4: Once that is done, cut out a circle* from your light brown paper. (It's okay if it isn't perfect!)

Step #5: With your brown marker, draw tiny seeds onto the light brown circle.

Step #6: Glue or tape your light brown circle on the middle of your yellow paper hands (which SHOULD be glued or taped together already. If it isn't, do it before gluing these two together.)

Step #7: Cut out a leaf (or two) from your light green paper.

Step #8: Cut out a stem from your dark green paper (in the shape of a thin and tall rectangle-- not TOO tall though!).

Step #9: Glue or tape the leaf and stem together (I recommend doing this towards the bottom.)

Step #10: Once you have glued or taped together both parts, glue or tape it with the flower.

Step #11: When this is finished, you can add some realistic designs wherever you'd like! You can do this on the leaf (x2), petals, etc.

There you have it! I hope you loved this Summer Craft!

*A tip to make a PERFECT circle is to trace something circular close by! Your cup, small plate, or a coaster! You name it!

Note: Just so you know, you don't need to get the EXACT colored paper and marker that is shown. If you don't have these colors, it's completely fine!

This is a picture of what the final product should look like:



Spring Track 2023 Overview

By Liel Kafaierad

This year the track coaches for the girls track team are Coach Kasdorf and Coach Bruno, for the boys are Coach Jabbs and Coach Mangan. They have had many track meets away from home, and they have had a competitive season already, with everyone working hard.

So far both teams have had a pretty good season. They have never lost a track meet. As of the beginning of June, two boys have beaten the school record for a few events during the meets. Adrian Cheah beat the 800m time. It previously was 2:21.4 minutes and now is 2:22.1 minutes. Also, Patrick Yan broke the school record for the 55m hurdles. It was 9.1 seconds and now it is 8.6 seconds.

The track teams go through intense practices to prepare for the track meets. It is safe to say that their hard work paid off. They ended their season by winning their last track meet. They had an extraordinarily strong season this year. Hopefully next year there will be even more school records broken.

New York Knicks Playoffs Misery

By Noah Hourizadeh

4/27/23:

The first round has marked the finish line. The whole crowd is cheering for us. Bottle caps and free towels with our names on them are flying all over. Everyone is cheering that beautiful chant, "Let's go Knicks, Let's go Knicks!" Donovan Mitchell regrets his decisions which led him to Cleveland, and players are all thinking of the city that never sleeps. The New York Knicks have beaten the Cleveland Cavaliers in just 5 games. This is what everyone has been waiting for.

The next game is against the Miami Heat. Their hot streak against the Milwaukee Bucks and Giannis Antetokounmpo leaves a scared face on all fans and players. Jimmy Butler is an underrated player who showed what kind of skills he has in the first round. The fights that these two teams had in the past left the Miami Heat and New York Knicks former players scars. All the pressure is on the 2023 rosters, not 2024, and not 2022. The future can be bright and the die-hard fans can feel the amount of excitement and joy that they haven't felt in a while.

5/15/23:

This wasn't the outcome we wanted. This wasn't the Nick's story that would be passed on for generations. This isn't what John Starks and Patrick Ewing wanted to see happen during one of the biggest rivalries in history. Jalen Brunson almost took this team to the end but couldn't finish. In the 96-92 battle for game 6 against the Miami Heat, the New York Knicks couldn't make their shots or keep the ball in their hands (like normal people).

The New York Knicks season is finished, but the time is coming. The time that everyone is crying for. The time for the Knicks to beat the biggest and most powerful teams in the playoffs when it matters most. This is the ride to the best time of our lives. These are the cries of joy and laughter from all the fans and families of New York. This next season will be revenge time for the Knicks at last.

Sports Pages (cont'd)

The NBA Playoffs

By Jayden Wen

What are the NBA Playoffs?

Millions gather around this time of year, whether it be in large stadiums or on a comfy couch. The NBA Playoffs are a yearly basketball event that captivates the joy of millions nationwide. This year's 2023 NBA Playoffs are no exception.

Teams and Players

The NBA is full of generational talents, but only sixteen teams can qualify for the playoffs. This year, the Bucks, Heat, Cavaliers, Knicks, 76ers, Nets, Celtics, Hawks, Nuggets, Timberwolves, Suns, Clippers, Kings, Warriors, Grizzlies and Lakers all qualified for the NBA Playoffs.

After several rounds, the Nuggets will play the Lakers and the Heat will play the Boston Celtics for a spot in the finals.

Predictions - Who Will Win?

Between the Nuggets, Lakers, Heat, and Celtics, no one knows who will win the NBA Finals. However, it might just be the Boston Celtics. Last year, Boston made it all the way to the Finals (only to be defeated by an experienced Warriors roster). However, this year the Celtics are back, and with more experience after their past loss and huge improvements in players like Jayson Tatum, Jalen Brown, and Marcus Smart. It's safe to say that the Celtics have a serious shot at this title. With the Warriors out of mind after a saddening loss against the Lakers, Boston may win.

Or could the Nuggets win the Finals? After all, led by Nikola Jokic, who is the reigning, two time MVP, Jokic is arguably the best player out of the four teams right now, and under his leadership they could win the Finals. His ability to create plays is unmatched and will be vital if the Denver Nuggets hope to win the NBA Finals.

Put those two teams aside, the Miami Heat are also a valid candidate in this conversation. With Jimmy Butler and Kyle Lowry playing vital guard positions and Bam Adebayo as the unstoppable center for the Heat, Miami could win it all. In addition, with Max Strus taking up major responsibility without Tyler Herro, who is out due to an injury, and key role players on the team, Miami is undoubtedly a serious threat to the other four teams.

Lastly, but definitely not least, we have the Lakers. Currently, Anthony Davis is pretty much unstoppable. We can't forget about LeBron James as well, who is arguably the greatest player of all time, and Austin Reaves who has become an uprising star. With talented role players such as Rui Hachimura, the Lakers are a force to be reckoned with. Who do you think will win the NBA Playoff Finals?



Sports Pages (cont'd)

Boys' Track

By Derek Gao

The Boy's Track season. In short words, utter domination. Let's take a quick exploration of what happened.

The Boy's Track team went undefeated, 21-0 to be exact, beating teams like Port Washington, Friend's Academy, Syosset and Great Neck South. In addition to beating all of those amazing track teams, many school records were broken. Patrick Yan broke the school record for the 55m hurdles with a time of 8.6 seconds, and Adrian Cheah broke the 800m school record with a time of 2:21.

We also had some close finishes. The 4x100m team was 0.2 seconds away from the school record with a time of 52.5 seconds. Additionally, Adrian Cheah also was 0.3 seconds away from beating the 200m school record with a time of 25.3 seconds.

We also cannot forget to mention how dominant the long distance for the team was. The team, almost getting 1st, 2nd and 3rd in every long distance event, was mostly carried by Nathan Zhong, Alex Goldstein, Zev Berkowitz, Warren Harilal, Michael Zhou, and Adrian Cheah. The season was an incredible success with an incredible team filled with incredible potential from the students moving up as well as the 7th graders who will hopefully be back next year.

PHOTOS FROM RELAY FOR LIFE

