



NORTHERN LIGHT



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GREAT NECK NORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL

FALL 2021

NMS Music Department Versus Covid

By Abigail Bernstein

Some people reading this may have read my last article, published about a year ago. Those same people may be thinking “Why is she writing about the same exact thing as she did last year?” Well, there are so many changes that have happened within this one year, it deserves its own article.

I am excited to report that the North Middle Band is back! Instead of playing in the auditorium, as bands did last year, we are now playing in the band room. We are still taking some precautions however, as we are sitting in every other seat. Since we are in the band room all together, that leaves the auditorium open, and makes it less of a hassle for the players of the band to go to the band room, to the auditorium and then back to the band room like we did last year.

After a quick interview with Mr. Trinkwald, the 7th and 8th grade band and orchestra teacher, I learned that we are definitely going to have a winter concert. However, it will be in the gym, so we can keep socially distanced, especially with all the germs going around from the wind and brass instruments. Many teachers agree that however strange the circumstances of this year are, it's imperative to give students at least a somewhat normal school year. However irregular this concert will be, Mr. Trinkwald is expecting to have a “fun and good time!”

Red Ribbon Week

By Skylar Bijari

The Meaning

Red Ribbon Week is a week for students all over the world to show how they support being drug free. The red ribbon is to spread awareness about how kids definitely shouldn't take drugs. It also shows that you can have fun being drug free by participating in all of the fun days.

Drug Free Looks Like Me

This year's theme is *Drug Free Looks Like Me*. Each year there is a new theme. To find out the theme just go on the website redribbon.org and scroll down and you will find this year's theme and a couple of sentences about the theme. The section is mainly about who created the theme and what the theme means.

Spirit Week

There is no specific theme for each day of the week so every school that participated in this awareness week did different things for every day of the week. Our school decided on great themes for the days of Red Ribbon Week. Monday was Red Ribbon Day and all we had to do was wear red. On Tuesday we had the power to be drug free so we dressed up like a superhero. On Wednesday we teamed up against drugs and wore a team jersey. On Thursday we got to put those drugs to sleep and we wore pajamas. Finally Friday was Halloween, so we put on a costume or we wore school colors.

Interviews

I asked one 6th grader and one 7th grader from North Middle School the same question: What is your opinion about Red Ribbon Week? One 6th grader said, “Although all the dressing up was very fun, it would be a little better if we did someone to show more about how nobody in the school should be taking drugs.” A 7th grader stated, “I really like the way Red Ribbon Week is not just people telling you to stop doing drugs but you can also show that through your outfit. I really like that the school decided to participate in this event because I had lots of fun dressing up, but also learning a little bit more about drugs.”

As you can see these responses were similar but different in multiple ways. I hope you learned a couple more things about Red Ribbon Week. Stay drug free!

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THE NIGHT OF
THE ONE ACTS
IS BACK!!!

Read all about the performance on page 3!

New Teacher in North Middle School: Ms. Murray

By Mia Malhotra



Ms. Murray is a new English teacher at North Middle School, teaching eighth grade. She can be found in room 118 or the English Office. Keep reading to get to know our new English teacher Ms. Murray:

How long have you been teaching?

"I have been teaching since January 2017. I started teaching in Port Jeff while I taught middle school. Then I switched to Herricks and taught high school."

What makes being a teacher so exciting?

"Having so many different students in our class to connect with, that all come from different backgrounds is one of the most exciting things about being a teacher. I also love being able to get involved with the students throughout the year."

What qualities in a student sets them up for success?

"A student who is not afraid to make mistakes, a student who is organized, a student who isn't afraid to ask questions, and a student who is scheduled."

Why did you choose to teach English?

"I decided to teach English because I always loved English class growing up and loved to read. When I was younger, I had a huge bookshelf and every night my mom would make sure we read 3 books to her or we would not go to bed. No matter what, I was always into reading and loved being in different worlds and characters. As I got older, I saw how I was able to relate to the characters so much and this made me understand that I wasn't alone and other people are going through the same things as me. I feel like English connects us, as well as entertains us."

What is one of the most memorable moments in your career so far?

"When I was teaching middle school, I loved going on our Frost Valley trip with students. We would stay in a cabin together and the girls in my cabin stayed up with me eating chips and doing face masks. We really enjoyed connecting and having each others' company. We went hiking and experienced a camping trip outside of the classroom with each other which was so special."

Describe yourself in 3 words:

"Outgoing, Patient, and Resilient."

If you were to pursue any other job, what would it be?

"If I were to pursue any other job, I would have my own floral company for weddings. I do floral arrangements for weddings outside of teaching in my basement with my friends, so I would love to have my own floral business if money didn't matter."

Favorite teacher you have had to date and him/her impact on you?

"My favorite teacher growing up was when I was in fifth grade. My teacher's name was Mrs. Donnelly and she loved nature. She was so patient, caring, and more. She loved nature and brought us outside a lot. She connected us with nature which I really appreciated. I remember when we went outside of our school and we all picked a leaf. We created a frame and took a picture of it close up and used watercolor to make a beautiful frame and leaf."

Best advice you have been given?

"The best advice I have ever been given is to be yourself. Never let others tell you or make you feel like you have to be a certain way in order to get something or get somewhere."

Something you wish you could tell your middle school self?

"I wish I could tell my middle school self to 'do it for you not for them'. If you really don't want it, and you are passionate for something else- do it for you."

Biggest Strength:

"Letting things go."

How Might the Pandemic Permanently Change Schools Forever?

By Naomi Zarnighian

Due to the pandemic, there were many changes put in place in schools. Some of the changes that took place in our school were desks being 6 feet apart, the mask mandate, not having lockers, hand-sanitizer in the hallways, mask breaks, hybrid and fully remote learning, and many classes being completely reliant on technology (i.e. google classroom, zoom, etc.). Even though we now have many of the things we couldn't have last year due to the pandemic, will we ever get the so-called "normal" school life back?

I remember when all students finally had the option to come to school everyday, how kids were saying that everything would go back to normal, but did it? It was normal in the way of having a full classroom again, but everything was still different in the way of technology. "Before COVID[-19], some teachers had already flipped their classrooms or were using Google Classroom, etc., but now everyone knows how to do it, and that's great." Says high school science teacher Maurice Telesford. He believes that the switch from traditional pen and paper to google classroom might be a good thing. Although we shouldn't switch them out completely, electronics can be used to our advantage. In the remote-learning situation, there wouldn't have been any sort of school without technology. Because of this, many educators have grown a dependency on technology to be able to conduct a class.

When presented with the question, "How did the use of technology in school during the pandemic affect school and education forever?", an anonymous eighth grade student responded with "I feel that my education has been altered significantly from technology during the pandemic. Between having bad wifi and learning how to use so many new apps, I think that the education of our generation has been lessened. Even though before Covid we still used iPads, we have become dependent on them now. Not only has the curriculum had to change, we couldn't get questions answered at our disposal, and many weren't able to take in any knowledge during at-home learning." I completely agree with them. Out of 21 students, 33% of them said that they don't miss Zoom and remote learning. Most of their reasonings were included in the above quote. Even though there were some upsides to remote learning, the downsides completely took over the upsides for the long run.

Do you think schools' technology usage during the pandemic had a positive or negative affect on education? Do you think we will be using electronics instead of paper forever?



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Breast Cancer Awareness: North Middle School's Relay for Life

By Elaine Xing

On October 19th, North Middle started hosting its own Relay for Life fundraiser to support Breast Cancer Awareness. It took place on both Polo Road and the school bus platform. The coaches of this event were Ms. Bliss and Ms. Demodna.

Achievements

Ms. Demodna, who was one of the advisors, informed us about how amazing their members were, and that they were able to fundraise \$500! The items that were sold at the event were: socks, masks, and bracelets. Unexpectedly, both the socks and the bracelets were completely sold out this year! The entirety of the money raised was sent to the American Cancer Society.

The Obstacle

There was no doubt this year would be different from others, and in a challenging aspect too. Ms. Bliss explained to us, “One of the most challenging obstacles for the Relay of Life fundraiser was that it was held for the first time ever, during Covid-19. This prevented us from holding the event and selling everything inside the building. This was a big change for us.”

What They’re Doing Now

The Relay for Life fundraiser ended on October 22nd, however Relay for Life club members are still continuing to be grateful and kind to others. They are currently working on a “Thank You Card Project,” where members will design cards for nurses, doctors, and other hospital workers. The club is also awaiting approval to initiate a “Sneaker Collection,” which recycles sneakers and donates them to countries in need.

From Ms. Bliss, one of the club advisors for Relay of Life: “We are always looking for fellow members!”

NMS Opinions: School Lunch

By Julia Reed

Question:

How many minutes do middle schoolers think it takes to make lunch?:

A: 1-2 hours each day including everything they make

B: 2 hours each day including everything they make

C: 30 minutes for the chicken burger each day

D: 10 minutes for the Smiley french fries

Students favorite lunches:

- Smiley French Fries
- Chicken Burger
- Sandwich
- Pizza

How many students out of 20 actually buy school lunch:

12 kids out of 20 eat school lunch.

Students suggestions on what school lunch should be:

- Sushi
- Bento boxes
- Ice cream
- Spaghetti

Teachers:

How many minutes do teachers think it takes to make lunch?

“I think there is more time and effort that goes into making school lunch than anyone realizes. Between creating a menu, the preparation, cooking, cleaning, and serving, there are a lot of steps we forget and our lunch crew does not get the credit for. While I do not order school lunch as I bring it from home most days, I appreciate the hard work my colleagues put into their role in our school building.”-North Middle teacher.

Based on all of this, school lunch is not as appreciated as it should be. For example, the people who make the school lunches work really hard but a lot of kids just throw most of it out. Plus, the suggestions will take a lot of time and money!Also, there's a lot of time and effort put into making lunch and a lot more time than people realize since they have to make lots of options for the whole school.

Correct answer for how many minutes do middle schoolers think it takes to make lunch:
B

One Acts

By Diana Smolens

On Tuesday, November 23, students from NMS performed in the One Acts. Even though the One Acts were different this year, it is still amazing we got to do an in person show as well as in person rehearsals. Last year, it was all on zoom. The rehearsals and the final performance was recorded on zoom. We did have to wear masks but it is different and so much better live. Performing live felt different than hitting a button for the final performance, and I think everyone realized that, I would also like to point out the teachers. Every teacher who was involved in the show did an incredible job and that should be recognized. It was also great to meet new people. I hope I can get to know my peers no matter what grade they are in throughout the year. I'm so thankful I got to be in this fun and great performance this year.



Weird, but True

By Darren Chen

1. Some hummingbirds can weigh less than a penny.

2. Bats are the only mammal species that can fly.

3. Panda droppings can be made into paper.

4. You could reach the planet Pluto in 4 hours if you traveled at the speed of light.

5. 97% of earth's water is saltwater.

6. A 4,000+ year old piece of cake was found in a tomb in Egypt.

Resource: National Geographic



Dear Miss Know-It-All,

I was out on vacation for a few days and I missed a lot of classes. How can I catch up on what I missed and keep my grades up?

From, Jimmy B.

Well, Jimmy, there are many ways to get around this problem! First and foremost, you can go to extra help! Contact your teachers and ask them when you can come to extra help to catch up on missing topics. Secondly, study your class notes! If you have time at home or a free period, try to memorize the information if you missed it!

Sincerely,
Miss Know-It-All

Dear Miss Know-It-All,

My friend has started hanging out with a new group of people, and they have started making fun of me, and even my friend is joining in. What should I do?

From, Royman G.

Royman, your friend is not a true friend. You should contact an adult or teacher that you trust to stop them, and find some friends who really care about you.

Sincerely,
Miss Know-It-All

Dear Miss Know-It-All,

I'm having trouble in my French class. It's really hard to learn a new language, and the words and phrases are getting harder and harder to understand.

From, Barney McCarl

Barney, if you are having trouble with your language, try to study your notes and pronounce the words out loud yourself. And if you can't do it on your own, contact your teacher and go to extra help!

Sincerely,
Miss Know-It-All

Comic

By Elaine Xing



Halloween Poem

By Sarah Zheng

Going to the
Haunted house
Of course that's their home
Still, they float about
Tangled in spiderwebs

Many
Of them open their eyes
Now finding themselves in a great deal of surprise
Start to creep around
They meet up with the ghosts
Each and every one
Right now they are Ghosters

Very creepily they come out
At exactly 12:00 AM
Matching the Ghosters
Peeking out of their coffins
Inside and out
Really
Every one of them are Vhosters

Zebra striped skin
Of all the monsters
Many are green
But they sense brains coming from the Vhosters
In the crooked attic
Each one are now Vhosties

Happy Vhosties
All of them
Letting darkness fall over them
Letting darkness take its place
Ow! They're each a horror
With what each monster
Each one and
Every
Now have the most horrid features of each horror



Fall Crafts

By Mia Malhotra

Polaroid Wall



Materials:

- Polaroid Pictures
- Tape
- OPTIONAL: Stickers, markers, stamps, etc.
- OPTIONAL: Paper, Printer

Remember all of those fun memories you captured with your Polaroid camera! Now you can display them beautifully, and enjoy all the memories!

1. Find polaroid pictures you have taken in the past or take more!
2. If you don't have any, you can find photos on your phone and create a Polaroid border around it, and then print it out!
3. OPTIONAL: Using stickers, markers, stamps, etc, you can decorate them if you would like!
4. Use tape, and start placing on a blank wall! You can make a design or just simply do a square or rectangle.
5. TIP: Make sure they are equally spaced apart, so find a measurement to use and stick with it!

You finished! Now you can look at your Polaroids and remember all of the fun moments you had!

Book Review: *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*

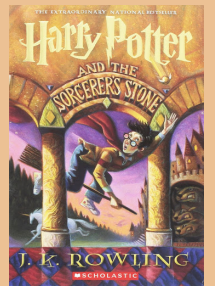
Reviewed by Elizabeth Guan

Have you ever read a book and couldn't drag yourself away from it? Do you reread it more and more times, only to want to read another book just as good? If so, then try *Harry Potter*! *Harry Potter* is action packed, funny, and thrilling!

Harry Potter lives with his aunt and uncle on Four Privet Drive. Harry doesn't remember his parents at all and his uncle tells him that his parents died in a car crash, which is a lie. His uncle, Vernon Dursley and his aunt, Petunia Dursley have absolutely no interest in Harry. As an orphan with no kind family members, Harry is desperate to find something that gets his attention away from his food - depriving aunt and uncle.

Soon, Harry receives letters from a mysterious place - Hogwarts. Unfortunately, Vernon Dursley isn't happy about these letters. On Harry's birthday, when Harry and his "family" were on an island in a cabin, on the ocean (to prevent letters from Hogwarts) a half giant, Rubeus Hagrid, comes to accept Harry to Hogwarts. Hagrid, reveals that Harry is a wizard. That's why Vernon hates the fact that Harry was getting letters - because he hates wizards and witches. Harry has a choice to attend Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry or stay back with his relatives. Obviously, Harry chooses to get away from his uncle and aunt. Hagrid takes Harry to school, and now Harry can finally be at a place where he belongs.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone is only the first book in the amazing series Harry Potter. There is so much that is lying ahead of Harry's journey. J.K. Rowling uses incredible descriptions to make the wizarding world really come to life. Although Hogwarts isn't real, the details that are included really gives readers an imaginary sense of Harry Potter's fantastical life. Not many people realize how few authors have the talent to create a whole different lifestyle or world like J.K. Rowling can.



Sources: <https://time.com/5383334/best-books-like-harry-potter/>

<https://www.vox.com/culture/2017/6/26/15856668/harry-potter-20th-anniversary-explained>

Technology Update

By Elliot Gangian

Since 1983 Apple has held events at least once a year. In the past two years due to Covid-19 Apple has held more than one event and released products in each event. In the past years, there have been 6 main software releases along with 6 different main products released every year. The 6 main software and products are:

- MacBook (mac os)
- iMac (mac os)
- Apple Watch (watch OS)
- iPad (ios)
- iPhone (ios)

September 14, 2021 was the last event and here is a quick recap:

iPhone 13 Pro

- More powerful camera system
- OLED display with ProMotion
- Fast smartphone chip
- Better battery life



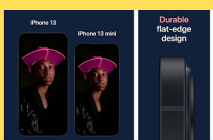
Apple Watch Series 7

- Advanced Always-On Retina display.
- Up to 33% faster charging.



iPhone 13

- Advanced dual-camera system ever
- Brighter OLED display
- Faster chip
- Better battery life



iPad mini

- Powerful A15 Bionic chip.
- New all-screen design.
- Fast 5G
- Four colors.



iPad

- Advanced A13 Bionic chip
- 64GB of storage



Book Review: *Stargazing* by Jen Wang

Reviewed by Noya Zarnighian

Christine has spent her whole life paying attention to only her studies and violin. Her parents are very strict and don't let her do many things, like paint her nails. One day at church, she meets Moon, the new kid who is going to move into the apartment her grandfather used to live in. Christine and Moon can not be more different. Moon is vegetarian and confident. She's artistic and rumored to get into fights. Still the girls' parents encourage them to become friends, and they quickly become fond of one another. They bond over their shared love of k-pop and art.

One day, Moon shares her deepest secret with Christine: she sees cosmic beings that communicate with her from outer space. Moon believes that that's where she belongs and that one day she will leave earth to go live with her celestial friends. Christine isn't so sure, but still supports her best friend. After the pair have a fight, things turn rocky for our protagonist and her star-filled friend.

Stargazing is available at the Great Neck Library in each of the branches' children's rooms, and on Sora as an ebook from Nassau Digital Doorway and Great Neck Public Schools. It is a graphic novel and is fiction, though it's inspired by Jen Wang's childhood. The book received a 4.2 / 5 review on Goodreads, a 4.6 / 5 on Barnes & Nobles, and a 4 / 5 on Scholastic. Stargazing is a heart-filled novel about an unlikely friendship that's full of hope.



Taken Too Far: TikTok

By Liel Kafaierad



Everywhere you go you hear about TikTok's Hear famous trends, but whenever you look at the videos do you ever look at the consequences too? Some of the most famous trends are the most dangerous as well. Will you risk it all for one video? In this article you will hear about some famous trends that have taken it too far. You will hear teacher's perspectives, opinions and even some other social media trends that have happened in the past.

Earlier in the year Dr. Cozine talked to the school at the end of the day during dismissal about a trend. You might have an idea about which trend I'm talking about.....Devious Licks. He expressed that these trends needed to stop around the school. Many expensive materials have been stolen. Some of them have been returned in good condition and some of them look like they have been run over by a truck. The worst part is that some of them have not been returned at all. I have asked Ms Carmody (a math teacher for grades 6, 7, and 8) about her opinion on these trends. She said that they are attention seeking and that kids do it for the thrill and don't look at the consequences to come, both mentally and physically. She also said that kids see influencers doing it and want to do it as well. Although influencers do these trends that are out of hand and obnoxious, you should not do them as well.

The past year has been boring. There are not as many things to do or places to go to. Some hospitals are closing specific centers. But I think they need to open a new one for TikTok trends. Yes, you heard me, a new center for TikTok trend treatment. This trend has killed so many high school students around the U.S.A. It's called the skull breaker challenge. It's when a person is told to jump up and then is tripped by two people, one on each side. Most of the people who were told to do this have passed away or have gotten severely injured. In an interview with Ms. Wang (a 6th and 7th English teacher), she said similar things to Ms Carmody. Something she had said during the interview was that trends are taking advantage of students by making them look intense and "exciting" for them to watch. Then influencers do it as well which makes kids have the mindset that if they do it as well then they will also become famous.

Some other social media trends that have caught my attention were the milk crate challenge, the milk chug challenge, inappropriate monthly trend, and at home dentistry. These have been going on for a while. Clearly, these trends are going on and are affecting students in a negative way. No matter what, all of them need to stop.

Recipes from Around the World

By Avital Shakiban

Every part of the world is different. Especially in terms of food. Food ranges from spicy to sweet to sour. You can explore tastes around the world from your own kitchen with these different recipes.

The first dish comes from the Middle East. It's called Kholesht Sabzi (kho-resh-te sahb-zee). It's an herb stew made from different herbs, beans, and spices. It's a classic food from Iran, an unofficial national food if you will. People from different cities in Iran make it differently, but no matter what, it is some of the best middle eastern cuisine. Here's how to make it and taste it for yourself:

Ingredients for Kholesht Sabzi:

- 1 Large Leek
- 4 Bunches fresh Parsley
- 1 Bunch fresh Fenugreek (if you can't buy it fresh, 2 Tablespoons dry fenugreek would do [you can find it almost anywhere])
- 1 Large Onion diced
- 1 15.5 oz. Can Dark Kidney Beans
- 4 or 5 Dried lemon (4 or 5 depending on how sour you want it, putting the seeds is also a choice, but too many could make it too sour to eat!)
- 1 Teaspoon Pepper
- 1 Tablespoon Turmeric
- 1 Tablespoon Salt
- 1 pound Cubed beef meat



Preparance:

- 1.Wash and chop all the greens. Sauté it a little bit in oil for a few minutes. Set aside.
- 2.Wash the meat.

Cooking:

- 1.Put the meat you just washed into a large pot with a few tablespoons of oil (depending on how much you're making) and sauté.
- 2.Then take your diced onion and add it to the meat. Sauté again for another few minutes
- 3.Add turmeric and pepper.
- 4.Add 2 cups of warm water and cover the pot. Cook on low flame and check after an hour to see if it needs more water and then leave it to be cooked for longer.
- 5.Once the meat has started to cook (depending on the meat, this could take 1 to 2 hours) add the greens and the dry onions. Poke holes into the lemons before adding it to the stew, this makes the stew more flavorful.
- 6.Once the meat is cooked, drain the can of beans and wash them. Add them to the stew along with the salt. Mix. Check again to make sure there is enough water, if not add more warm water.
- 7.Now, on low flame, simply let the stew cook until ready.
- 8.You can make rice on the side and pour the stew on top of it for extra flavor.
- 9.Enjoy!

Trendy Halloween Costumes for Middle School

By Elizabeth Sheydina

It's that time of the year again; Spooky Season! Although some people know what they're going to be months in advance you might not, so here's some trendy Halloween costumes in case you're stuck with costume block. Many awesome movies and tv series came out in 2021, so there are also many more fun things to be if you want inspiration or are wondering what was popular than read on!

Costume #1: Squid Game

I'm pretty sure everyone has heard of the new Netflix series, "Squid Game." The series came out on September 17th 2021. It instantly became extremely popular, therefore making it a costume trend. Whether you are planning to dress as a worker or player or something else the costume is simple and trendy.



Costume #2: Cruella De Vil

The movie Cruella was released on May 21st 2021. It was an origin story centered around Cruella De Vil, the villain from the Disney movie 101 Dalmatians. Her bold and dramatic persona can definitely be reflected in a costume. With a fur coat, black and white two toned hair, long black dress, and long red gloves you'll be all set!



Costume #3: Inflatable Dinosaurs!

Although this popular and hilarious Halloween costume doesn't come from any recently released movies. It's definitely a lot of fun!



Costume #4: Harley Quinn

The famous D.C character was one of the most popular costumes of 2021. The costume represents her sweet yet crazy personality with bright two toned hair and jacket.



Costume #5: Spider-Man

This classic costume is back again! Although no Spider-Man movies have been released this year(yet!). This costume was once again very popular. Although this costume isn't the easiest to put on it sure is fun being like Spidey!



Costume #6: Fairy

This is probably the easiest costume yet! It was also very popular this year! Just put on a fun colored dress or outfit get some wings and a wand and you're all set!



Weird Food Review

By Riley Cheng

Welcome to the first installment of Weird Food Review (for this year). If you forgot or if you are new, Weird Food Review is a column telling the history of "weird" food as well as tasting them. I made I refined ranking which is

- 1.Just terrible
- 2.Dog water
- 3.Average
- 4.Thumbs up
- 5.A gift from the sky

As you can see these all mean different things from worst to best. Anyway, back to the main topic of the article. This time I'm trying Buffalo Chicken Soda from Lester Fixings. Sorry only one.

Buffalo Chicken Soda

If you're wondering how and where I got it I'll tell you. Over the summer I went to Myrtle Beach. I went to a store called Sugar and Love to get candy. I was walking all over the store when I saw the soda section. It was between PB&J soda or Buffalo soda. I chose Buffalo because I liked it more.

Background

It sounds like how it sounds. It starts with an orange-like flavor turning into acidic and tangy/spicy wing sauce. At the end it tastes like sugar cane though. To be fair it does include cane sugar.

History

Instead of the drink history I'll just tell you about the company Rocket Fizz history. 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 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 "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'm going to do it by 2 criteria. Does it taste like buffalo chicken and is it actually good to drink? For tasting like actual buffalo chicken it falls flat on its face. It just tastes tangy at the end and not really spicy. After that though it tastes like cane sugar. So it's ¾ for imitation. Now for the taste. Honestly it's pretty good, like an alternative for orange soda even. The tangy flavor gives it distinction from other orange soda as well as the cane sugar included. I'll give it a solid ¾. I could see myself drinking it every Saturday. The only complaint it has is that it's kind of underwhelming.

Conclusion

Sorry for the short article, but I'll see you next time. I don't know what food I'm going to try next.

Fun Facts

By Darren Chen

- 1.The length of your arms stretched out is about the height of your body.
2. Your eyes can see about 10 million different colors.
3. All the blood in your body travels through your heart once a minute.
4. Halloween has been celebrated for about 2,000 years.
5. Gorillas burp when they are happy.
6. Star Wars creators designed Yoda to look like Albert Einstein.

Resource: *National Geographic*

(G)-idle Becomes 5 Members

By Elena Zhuang

Before the official announcement, k-pop artist Soojin of (G)-idle was accused in March 2021 for apparently “bullying” classmates. The accuser posted that Soojin had hit and bullied her little sister for no reason. Cube Entertainment who manages (G)-idle spoke and denied all of the accusations saying they would take things to court if this continues on, but that wouldn't be enough to calm the fire that has started.

Somewhere in between the mess a Korean actor said that she was also bullied through her school days. This made fake-fans connect dots and realized that Soojin most likely bullied the Korean actor. With this going on for 6 months, Cube Entertainment finally on August 14 announced that Soojin has left (G)-idle and that (G)-idle will proceed as a 5 member k-pop group. This shocking news made many fans furious, and they signed petitions that had over 150 thousand people, but many fans have realized that Soojin will never come back.

Although this has impacted Cube Entertainment, they seemed to not care. They are now erasing the existence of Soojin. Removing her photo in their main page, blurring out her name in vlogs. The new song they had released had quickly been made into a 5 member song, removing Soojin who had also worked on it before. Although the song has been moved into a 5 member song only, in the MV Soojin was still in it. Cube Entertainment stated that it was too expensive to create another MV so, they would use the same MV with Soojin in it. Many people were furious, since Cube Entertainment said they would try their best to edit out Soojin in everything.

Of course fans aren't the only ones who are sad. Soojin the leader of (G)-idle is sad too, and she even cried when she heard Soojin singing. Now that many things regarding this matter have been deleted, you might not even find much information about this incident at all. Many people still believe there might be a chance that Soojin is coming back to (G)-idle, but it's a very less likely chance. Do you think that Soojin being kicked out of (G)-idle was right? Or was it wrong?

Hispanic Heritage Month

By: Eva Halimi

Starting from September 15 all the way to October 15 lies Hispanic Heritage Month, which a lot of Hispanic countries celebrate. Those include Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and last but not least, Guatemala.

Did you know that the celebration starts in the middle of September because it marks the Independence Day for the countries listed? According to Hispanic Outlook on Education Magazine, Hispanic Heritage Month was made to celebrate the history and cultures of Americans who have ancestors who are Hispanic. I interviewed Ms. Rodriguez, a Spanish teacher, about this beautiful celebration and here is how she responded...

“I celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month by remembering the contributions from Latinos [or Latin Americans] in the arts like music, art, film, theater and their obstacles. One example is the first female pilot persisted to overcome different circumstances and obstacles in a positive way regarding who she is. At home, I watch the news with my family, and discuss modern Latinos and how they affect us with technology. We also watch commercials in Spanish and channels that highlight modern Latinos. Hispanic Heritage Month is a really good time to accept people who are different and that they can contribute a lot.”

Hispanic Heritage Month was declared a holiday by former President Lyndon Johnson and later was expanded by former President Ronald Reagan to continue based on the information of National Hispanic Heritage Month. In the USA, 18.5% of the people of the whole country are Hispanic and Latino. This means that about a fifth of the people in the USA are Hispanic and Latino, which is huge! Many Spanish people live here so quite a few of them celebrate this holiday.

Culture is a big thing to Hispanics and their country. The five main parts of their culture are family, fiesta, faith, food, and fútbol. A lot of famous Spanish foods are tacos, enchilada de pollo, stuffed peppers and more! Hispanics are big about food and everything has a purpose why it is so important. Food like tacos can have many different toppings which is nice because you can make them your style. Hispanics seem to be very party people with the fiestas they have. Many fiestas are very colorful, crowded but definitely and certainly fun. Fiestas also can mean parading through streets roaming around.

Our school, NMS [North Middle School], had also decorated the place a bit. During Hispanic Heritage Month, the school had decorated the bulletin board on the second floor, near the language rooms, with many different famous Latin Americans! You might know some of them and it is cool to know their culture. There are quite a few Latinos in the arts that you might know and Hispanic Heritage Month might be their celebration time.

In all, Hispanic Heritage Month is one long celebration for some Hispanics and is for culture and family. You might not celebrate this holiday but that doesn't mean other people don't celebrate it and it doesn't exist. Plus, you learn something new every day. For the people who do celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month, hope you had a great one!

Covid: Back to School

By Zoe Goldring-Nuriel

Living with Covid-19

Going back to school during Covid-19 was very hard for most students and teachers. There were many guidelines that we had to follow like: having your mask on at all times, staying socially distant, and more. Covid has decreased since last year, but it's still hard to keep your mask on and maintain a social distance.

Before Covid-19

We were allowed to go places without masks and we didn't have to maintain a social distance. Instead, we got to enjoy school without worrying if we were social distancing the right way. We didn't have to go to stores and worry if we had a mask with us and we got to hang out with our friends more!!!!!! "Our lives were much better before Covid happened," stated Kylee, a seventh grader at North Middle School. A previous student from North Middle School Daniella says, "We got our lockers a week into school and was surprised to hear we are only getting them three months into school because of Covid."

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Why is it good we're back at school?

We were virtual for a long period of time and some of us might have even forgotten how it was like to go back to school. However, it's a good thing that we're back because we now get to have a full middle school experience. We get our lockers and we can all eat in the cafeteria/auditorium and we can actually go learn in classrooms. Last year there were days where we would stay home and learn virtually and then the days where we would actually come to school. We even have *Blazers Live* to watch and hopefully if we all keep our masks on and social distance we can continue to stay in school!

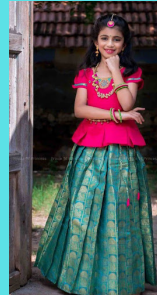


Clothing in Different Countries

By Sydney Ng

Clothing in different countries is impacted by the culture they are surrounded by, and the environment. It has impacted people through decades and each country has a unique and special wardrobe. In this article, you will be reading about what people wear in different countries.

In India, lots of people wear varieties of dresses; but the Sari is worn for traditional ceremonies. Saris are worn with a skirt and blouse, and the skirt is worn underneath the Sari for the purpose of it being held around the waist. Most Saris are worn with choli tops, and long skirts like the lehenga or pavada. The outfit together is called a gagra choli when assembled with a dupatta scarf. Though, most women wear saris, while their children wear pattu langa.



Although it is hard to find Indian men wearing traditional dresses in the present day of India, Indian men wear a Dhoti which is paired with a Kurta and Oagri or Gandhi Ttopi. Dhoti is rather worn with more of a pant effect than a skirt effect. Another type of dress Indian men wear is a Sherwani, which is a style jacket below the knee. Churidars are tight pajama pants worn with the Sherwani. Although you can hardly see a man wearing a traditional Indian dress, you may see him wearing it during special occasions.

In Scotland, people love to travel there because of their kilts. Kilts are worn by both men and women, but they are mostly worn by men. Kilts can be seen at weddings, ceremonies, Christmas parties, and football matches if Scotland is playing. Accessories like fur pouches, wool socks, and brogue shoes. Despite all the accessories worn with the kilt, they are commonly known to not be worn with an underwear!



Overall, each country has its own cultural style of clothing, and there are many more countries with different wardrobes.

The Last One

By Sarah Zheng

When the last animal of a species dies, the whole ecosystem is messed up. For example, if sharks went extinct because humans hunted them too much, their prey, like seals, would have no one to hunt them and their population would grow. Then, the seals start growing in population and their prey go extinct. Since they then don't have any prey, the seals die out. Then, the prey of the seal's prey starts growing in population, and it's prey goes extinct, and it goes on and on. There are many animals that have recently gone extinct, and humans are the cause of it. Though we are blinded by our thoughts about how much money we can get out of selling animals, the truth is sooner or later, animals are going to perish.

The Pinta Giant Tortoise, also known as the Pinta Island Tortoise, went extinct on July 24th, 2012. The Pinta Giant Tortoise extinction was caused not only from hunters, but from whalers that were fishing near the islands. The last known individual, Lonesome George, had all the pressure squeezed on him in a game of survival while living in captivity at the Charles Darwin Research Center. After his death, he was brought to the American Museum of Natural History. In fact, you can visit Lonesome George at Galápagos National Park.

George and the Pinta Giant Tortoises are not the only animals who have suffered - the Bramble Cay melomys, a cute, fluffy rodent, has gone extinct too. The critters were declared to have perished on February 18th, 2019. On the island of Bramble Cay, these melomys were living in the only place they could live. The cause of their extinction is global warming. Global warming melts icebergs and glaciers, which causes sea levels to rise. The island of Bramble Cay, already having a low enough altitude of 3 meters above sea level, was flooded because of sea levels rising, and the only place Bramble Cay melomys have called home was drowned.

The Western Black Rhino went extinct in 2011. The Western Black Rhino is believed to have different genes than other subspecies of rhinos, making more black market poachers target them. A rhino's horn is thought by many to have medical uses when the horn itself is made of the same substance as... drumroll please... your toenails. However, a poacher's client doesn't know it, and buys each horn for over 1 million dollars. MORE than 1 million dollars for something that's made of toenail substance. Now, the poachers kill the rhino, get the horn, and possibly the skin, and leave the rhino dead so that they get 1 million dollars from the horn after crushing it into powder. The Western Black Rhino was a species killed directly by humans. Though there are conservation efforts, there are also rhino assassins that aren't helping.

These three animals are only a small fraction of the animals that have become extinct in the past decade, not to mention the dozens of species gone each day. Species are vanishing as you read this. Why? There are many species that perish from these causes of extinction: overconsumption, land development, habitat loss, human population growth, pollution, and many other causes.

You may ask, "Why should I care?" You should care if you don't want to become extinct. Why will you become extinct? You will become extinct because eventually, an important species, such as bees, will go extinct. If bees went extinct, all we can expect in our future is DOOM and DEATH DEATH because bees help flowers and fruit grow. Without them, plants wouldn't grow properly and since plants give everyone oxygen, we eventually would run out of oxygen, not be able to breathe, and then all die. So there you have it: three animals that went extinct in the past decade and why you, yes, YOU, should care about them.

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Exotic Animals

By Daniel Goldberg

Our planet is filled with incredible creatures. All of them with their own special features and abilities. Today we will be going over some of the most interesting and most spectacular creatures.

The Barreleye fish is a very strange fish that lives in depths of 2,000 to 2,600 ft, drifting around the water motionless for most of the time. The Barreleye, just like many other deep sea fish, is a very strange creature. A transparent, fluid filled dome on its head allows us to see the lenses of its eyes. Everyone can read this fish's mind!



Some animals just really blend in. The Satanic leaf-tailed gecko is a critter hard to spot. Being the color of dead leaves, and having a tail that is shaped like one, this small reptile is unspotable on its home island of Madagascar.



Have you ever seen a living cactus? Well now you have! This is a thorny devil, or a thorny dragon. These strange lizards live in the Australian deserts. They are colored in desert browns and tans which change from light to dark depending on the season. If they are spotted though, their spikes are not fake! Those thorns are very sharp and dangerous. As well as this, they are able to present a fake head when threatened.



Video Game News: Quarter One

By Gavin Zhao

This article covers the top video game in the current quarter of the year and in fall 2021 Roblox is currently the top, industry leading, and most popular game in the USA. The article you will read covers what Roblox is doing in the industry to become the top game.

Roblox no doubt has made some big changes in the video game and tech industry in the last month. For example the recent change in Facebook's name from Facebook to Meta is inspired by the new industry aim of creating a virtual environment known as the "Metaverse". (Metaverse: a theory of a futuristic internet made up of 3D objects and gives a broader sense to a virtual universe that can be linked to other theoretical universes that includes the entire augmented reality.)

This bar was set when in 2006 Roblox announced that it would be creating a Metaverse built up by a private developer/developers group. Since then Roblox has made countless attempts to improve this Metaverse including voice chat, Rthro, and Roblox studio improvements such as 0.005 dimension limits to 0.001 dimension limits and auto updates that don't include the old manual saving and closing the software. Roblox has also started partnering with music creators, and music studios. This list includes: Lil Nas X, Bertelsmann Music Group, and Sony Music Entertainment. These are one of the few partnerships Roblox has had to incorporate Roblox into the whole tech industry. After these ventures Roblox's Player count peaked in August 2021 and stock price (RBLX) jumped up 12\$ to 90\$ for the third time since Roblox went public. But we haven't talked about the player side of all of this. The players on Roblox have received some of these improvements with welcoming arms but others with great dislike. The first indication of this separation is when Roblox announced Rthro avatars. The old Blocky Roblox avatar was since 2006 what made up the Roblox community and Roblox users feel that the changes forced upon the community are changing what Roblox used to be. Many content creators have quit upon these changes as they remember what is now called the "good ol' days, Nostalgic times", and other terms and references. Though as the idea that Roblox was changing settled in Roblox users began to accept the fact that Roblox now cared more about business than the player base itself. Though when the announcement that voice chat would be implemented the community did not show disgust, the complete opposite. The community welcomed the idea that chatting would soon be outdated and efficient fluent communication networks would soon be added. But the most interesting and in a way funniest moment of this ordeal came soon after. The music industry had filed a lawsuit against Roblox for allegedly illegally using their music in Roblox games. Though after this was filed Roblox partnered with BMG, and soon after Sony. After this incident Roblox has been pretty stable on the player base and business sides. The stock has been wandering around 80\$ and Roblox users are fine with the situation. Though very recently on Friday 10/29 the Roblox servers crashed due to an internal data problem. During this segment of time Roblox has lost millions of dollars and other small companies that copied Roblox are earning more than usual. Roblox at the time of writing this has not given any context to why Roblox crashed beside it was not a Ddos attack or an experience problem. Roblox was called "Roblox Maintenance" during this time. When you read this article Roblox is probably back up and running but the stock price may have dipped under the average. So not a very good ending to this quarter of the year. The biggest video game corporation in America broke and no one knows why but Roblox themselves.

I hope you enjoyed this summary and maybe next quarter a new game arises to surpass all others. Thank you for reading!

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Roblox
Stock Price October: 75.55 - 84.02
Stock Price November: 81.13 - 126.10
Average Daily Player Base: 32.6 million

Minecraft
Stock Price October: 281.92 - 331.62
Stock Price November: 329.37 - 330.59
^Microsoft Stock Price^
Average Player Base per Day: 4.3 million

Wedbush ETFMG Video Game Tech ETF
Stock Price October: 83.54 - 90.56
Stock Price November: 92.90 - 92.68
^Industry Average for Video Game Tech^



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The New York Knicks

By Noah Hourizadeh

The New York Knicks are off to a magnificent 2021-22 season. They have been helped by the addition of point guard Kemba Walker, and forward Evan Fournier. They have lost key players to the Dallas Mavericks, prior to this season they lost Kristaps Porzingis and Tim Hardaway Jr. They have lost their key three point shooter, Reggie Bullock, and their best defender, Frank Ntilikina. Evan Fournier had a great 3-point shot this season so far. Kemba Walker has been able to spread the ball around and when he needs to take the shot he will make it. Julius Randle doesn't need to do everything all by himself this year with Mitchell Robinson back.

The Boston Celtics were not very happy when the Knicks beat them with some of their former players. This was a big game for the Knicks, it was opening night, and they were trying to prove that last year's loss in the playoffs was not going to happen again. There was only one problem, that the Celtics took the Knicks to double overtime, which allowed Celtic's shooting guard Jaylen Brown to score many points.

The Knicks' coach Tom Thibodeau has been very impressed by his team. He is a great coach because when he takes timeouts he means what he says and he makes everyone believe in themselves. He will call the timeouts at the right time, and he is good at putting players in at the right time but he could be better.

The General Manager for the Knicks has made some bad decisions but also some great ones. People think that Obi Toppin and Kevin Knox haven't been playing what they should be. Immanuel Quickley, Jericho Sims and R.J Barrett have been playing amazing. The General Manager for the Knicks is also the one who let Frank Ntilikina and Reggie Bullock go to a different team.

Overall, I think that the New York Knicks will be great this season and their only struggle might be their defense and decision making from the staff. If they are able to fix those two problems then they will easily be one of the best teams in the league with their great record.



Meet the Mess; How Injuries and Under Performance Led the Mets to a Losing Season

By Liana Kase

For me, it's weird thinking that when school ended last June (June 26th), the Mets were in first place. In fact, the Mets were 41-32 with a 5.5 game lead against the second place Washington Nationals. Fast forward to the first day (September 1st) of the 2021 to 2022 school year, the Mets are 65-67 and 4.5 games back of the first place Atlanta Braves. For those of you who want to know what happened to the Nationals, they ended up finishing in last place, which just goes to show you how much the division standings changed. Obviously, the main reason for their downfall was underperformance, specifically their offense, but there is more to it. In addition, the Mets had their yearly bout of injuries, but somehow, it was plenty worse this year. The Mets went from having a 77.7% chance of making the playoffs at the all-star break, to having a 0.5% chance of making the playoffs by early September. This article will talk about how it all happened.

Under Performance

Many factors can go into a team doing poorly, but what affects the team the most is the overall performance on the field. The Mets underperformance mainly came from offense. Dominic Smith, Jeff McNeil, J.D. Davis, James McCann, Michael Conforto, and the \$341 million man Francisco Lindor all had down years offensively. Throughout the first half, the Mets salvaged a .231 batting average, placing twenty-fourth in the league.

However, in the first half, our pitching was spot on. Led by Jacob deGrom, the Mets had a 3.43 team ERA, which placed fourth in the National League. The stellar rotation featured

Continued on page 10

Marcus Stroman and Taijuan Walker, who was selected to his first career all star game (deGrom got selected, but skipped it to rest up). One of the Mets weak spots had always been the bullpen, but this year, it was one of their greatest strengths. Among the bullpen, Aaron Loup shined the most. In 65 appearances, Loup posted an 0.95 ERA throughout the entire season.

The Mets also did really well defensively, averaging 0.54 errors per game. Due to the pitching and defense, the Mets could score three runs, but be able to piece together a win. However, in the second half, that wasn't the case.

The Mets offense was still terrible, finishing the season with a .238 team batting average. In addition to the slumping offense, the Mets pitching was starting to deteriorate.

After a stellar first half, Taijuan Walker fell off a cliff. In the first half, Walker posted a 2.66 ERA that jumped to 4.47 in the second half. Jacob deGrom went down for the rest of the season, and when we got Carlos Carrasco back from the IL, he wasn't the same pitcher. Carrasco went down with a hamstring injury during Spring Training. When he came back, Carrasco went 1-5 and had a 6.04 ERA.

Lastly, to top it all off, the Mets defense made a lot more errors. After averaging 0.54 errors per game in the first half, they finished the season with an errors per game of 0.59, going from tenth in the league to twenty-fourth. You can mainly blame a poor season by the product a team puts on a field, but if the Mets had more of their regulars for more of the season, the team's record could have looked a little different.

Injuries

The Mets have always been injury prone. Season after season, no matter the medical staff, or how much depth they have, it always seems that a noticeable amount of people go on the injured list. They also tend to go on the IL for a prolonged period of time.

Before the start of the season, the Mets had four players go down. Entering the 2020 season, the Mets had lost Noah Syndergaard to Tommy John. Syndergaard had blown out his arm working out. Fast forward to 2021, relief pitcher Seth Lugo, who is one of our best relievers, went down with a loose body in his elbow, requiring surgery. Obviously, it wasn't an actual body, but the name sounded weird and sounded like a Met injury. Entering Spring Training, starting pitcher Carlos Carrasco, who I brought up already in this article, tore his hamstring during a workout. During a Spring Training game, utility player Jose Martinez collided with the first base umpire, resulting in a torn meniscus. Martinez didn't play a game for the Mets this season. Entering the 2021 season, those were the only players on our IL, and we didn't get injured the first few weeks of the season, so the health standpoint of our team was looking up, until late April to early May.

The Mets had an absurd amount of players get injured. By May 26th, seven of our nine starters from Opening Day were injured. Here is the list; J.D. Davis (Hand), Pete Alonso (Wrist), Jacob deGrom (Lat), Dominic Smith (Knee), Kevin Pillar (Face), Michael Conforto (Hamstring), and Jeff McNeil (Hamstring). The only players who started Opening Day that were not on the IL were Francisco Lindor and James McCann, two players who were underperforming.

Beyond the Opening Day starters, Brandon Nimmo went on the IL with a bruised finger, utility man Luis Guillorme went down with an oblique injury, P David Peterson broke his foot, which ended his season, and Taijuan Walker left one of his starts early with pain in his stomach.

In response, the Mets brought up two of their better prospects, outfielders Khalil Lee and oneshwy Fargas. The Mets also traded for OF Billy McKinney, who was previously with the Brewers and is now with the Dodgers. Things got so out of hand that our bench players became our starters, and our team went from being the New York Mets to the Syracuse Mets (The Mets triple A affiliate). Here is their starting lineup from May 26th for an idea of how bad things were:

1. 3B Jonathan Villar
2. SS Francisco Lindor
3. 1B James McCann
4. RF Billy McKinney
5. C Tomas Nido
6. LF Brandon Drury
7. 2B Jose Peraza
8. CF Cameron Maybin
9. P Marcus Stroman

Villar (Who also dealt with a few minor injuries), Drury, and Peraza (Who would eventually break his finger and also go on the IL) were all signed last offseason for depth. Now, all three of them were starting in one game. McKinney and Maybin were both traded for as more Mets went down. James McCann, a catcher, was playing first base (He did end up making two great diving plays), but it just goes to show you how bad the injuries got. The funny thing is, the AAA Mets played better than the actual Mets.

In the end, every aspect of the Mets was bad, in injuries, and performance. The Mets had one of the most disappointing seasons, even for Mets standards.



Edwin Diaz gives up a walk-off grand slam to Pittsburgh Pirates' catcher Jacob Stallings. He points to the sky thinking it would be a fly out, Diaz did this two more times.

Ratted Out; What Actually Happened in the Rat-coon Incident and What it Means

By Liana Kase

The Mets had a disappointing, and weird season. However, they seemed to have good chemistry, until New York Post reporter Mike Puma came out with a piece of somewhat predictable news that wasn't touched upon for a few months.

Back on May seventh, the Mets had a come-from-behind win against the Arizona Diamondbacks, winning 5-4 in ten innings.

Southpaw David Peterson did not have his best start by any means, but the defense behind him did not help. Early on in the game, the Mets had some defensive woes, particularly between second baseman Jeff McNeil and shortstop Francisco Lindor. The Mets shift often, and in this particular situation, told their infielders to shift. Lindor, who is against the shift, will obey his coaches if he is told to shift. However, McNeil either did not get the sign, or decided not to shift, leaving a big hole in the middle of the infield, of course, that is where the D-Backs hit the ball.

The ball was playable, but it was in between the two fielders. There are two main reasons why Lindor should have taken the ball, the main reason being that he has won the gold glove award multiple times, and is a much better defensive player than McNeil. The other reason was that the ball was hit to McNeil's right, or Lindor's left. Lindor's momentum was taking him toward the first base bag, making the play easier. On the other hand, in order for McNeil to make the play, he would have to go to his right, turn around, and throw the ball to Pete Alonso, who was playing first base, that is what McNeil did, but the runner was safe. This happened twice, and if Lindor fielded the ball, he probably would've gotten the runners out.

Lindor, who was angry about McNeil's defensive mishaps, took McNeil into the tunnel that led to the clubhouse. The next thing you know, outfielder Michael Conforto and infielder Jonathan Villar, who were slowly walking toward the dugout, started to sprint down the steps into the dugout. The two Mets joined the rest of the staff at the tunnel, and when the crowd at the entrance to the tunnel cleared out, everything went back to normal, like nothing ever happened. I happened to be at this game, sitting behind the first base dugout, watching Conforto and Villar go down the steps of the dugout. Since I wasn't on my phone, and was focused on the game, I didn't think anything of it until I saw it all over social media.

Lindor ended up hitting a home run that brought us within one run, making it a 4-3 ballgame. This night also started the legend of Patrick Mazeika, who walked it off for the Mets, in two different games, by just hitting a check swing tapper up the third base line.

The Mets knew that they needed to cover what actually happened, so they came up with the weirdest story ever, the "Rat-coon" story.

After the Mets walked it off, Lindor, McNeil, and manager Luis Rojas all got interviewed, in this order. Obviously, Lindor was asked about the happenings in the clubhouse tunnel. He said that McNeil and himself were walking back to the dugout, when Lindor thought he saw a rat. Lindor said he was excited, that he had never seen a New York rat. However, McNeil disagreed with him, he thought it was a raccoon. They were in the tunnel arguing when the rest of the team showed up.

McNeil followed suit in his interview when asked about the mysterious story, this is when Lindor got into the press room and hugged McNeil.

"It was a rat-coon, a rat-coon," was what Lindor happily said.

Lastly, Luis Rojas had his usual post-game interview, and obviously, he was asked about the rat-coon. When Rojas heard the story, his eyes squinted, like he was reading small text. Rojas said that he did not know anything about the situation, and by the time he got there, the chaos had died down.

Even though we knew the story the Mets came up with was not true, no one said anything about it for the rest of the season. In fact, the Mets swept the D-Backs after winning this game, which would lead them to a seven game win streak. However, Mike Puma announced what actually happened, which has nothing to do with rats or raccoons.

We all know that Francisco and Jeff argued, or had some sort of fight. What we didn't expect was that they had a physical fight. Apparently, Lindor "Pinned McNeil to a wall and grabbed him by the throat". Fortunately, teammates and staff showed up before the fight could escalate.

This means one main thing, that being that McNeil's time as a Met is most likely done. After having a down year, where he batted .251 with an 88 OPS+, well below the league average of 100. Let's compare this to his 2019 stats, where Jeff batted .318 with a 143 OPS+. This is probably because of his desire to be a power hitter, even though he is much more effective as a contact hitter. Even in 2019, where McNeil hit for a high average, he still managed to have 23 home runs. Since McNeil is set on becoming a power hitter, it seems like his 2021 season could be a prelude to the rest of his career. The Mets, who are going to be active on both the free agent and trade market, will probably trade McNeil along with third baseman J.D. Davis.

Since Lindor is a better player than McNeil, along with the fact that no one would want to pick up Lindor's contract of \$341 million dollars, and with the Mets most likely resigning Javy Baez, who will play McNeil's position of second base, it seems that McNeil's fate as a Met is clear, at least as a starter.