



Northern Light



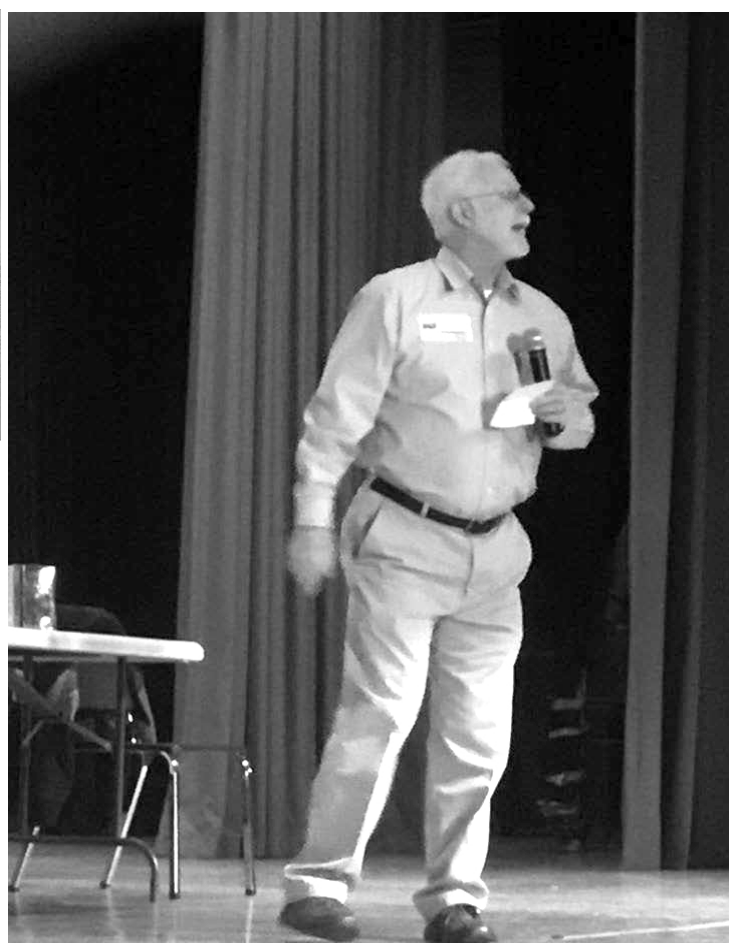
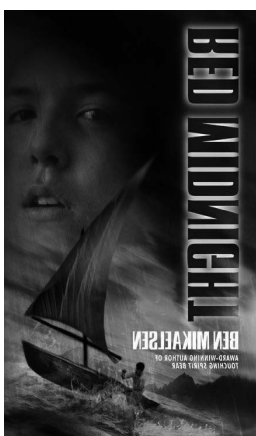
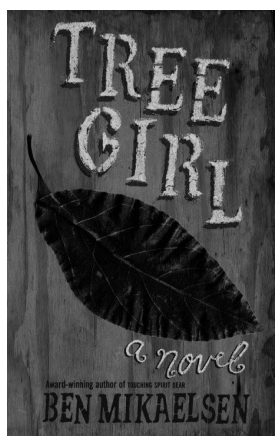
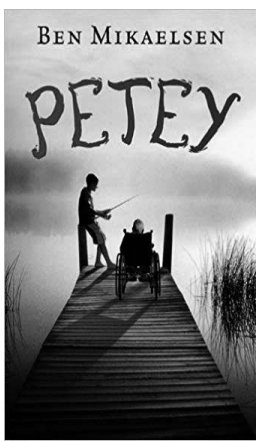
VOLUME 54, NO. 3

GREAT NECK NORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

SPRING 2019

AWARD WINNING AUTHOR, BEN MIKAELSEN, VISITS NORTH MIDDLE SCHOOL

By Kajal Ramphul



On Thursday, February 14th, acclaimed author Ben Mikaelson visited North Middle School. His works include *Petey*, *Touching Spirit Bear*, *Tree Girl*, and *Red Midnight*.

During his presentation, Mikaelson talked about his personal life. He recounted fun stories of himself, like the time when he rescued and adopted a bear named Buffy, or taught himself how to swim after jumping off of high rocks (over 50 feet high), as well as the more serious topic of getting bullied.

We also learned of his personal connection to his books- everything he writes comes from real life. Mikaelson is closest to *Petey*, because most of it was a true story, in which he was the one to befriend an older man with cerebral palsy and physical deformities.

Mikaelson was kind enough to answer questions from students and staff, from things about his writing process, to his personal life outside of it.

We are grateful to Ben Mikaelson for this amazing assembly. We are glad to learn about writing, his personal experiences, and the importance of kindness.

Read an in-depth interview with Mr. Ben Mikaelson on page 2!!

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**Read All About the
SUPERCALIFRAGILISTICEXPIALIDOCIOUS
Performance on page 4!**



Interview with Author, Ben Mikaelson

With Jonah Berkowitz and Willie Benjamin

What inspired you to become an author? At what age did you realize that you wanted to be an author?

Mr. Mikaelson stated, “*The first seed that was planted was when my college professor encouraged me to be the writer I am today. I never knew I could make it,*” Ben continued. “*Everything after that was just believing in myself and going after it.*” Without the professor emboldening Mikaelson’s spirit and strengthening his spelling ability, he would still be skydiving into football games and failing to punt a football.

What is your favorite book that you wrote? Why?

“*The one I am the closest to is Petey, because he was a real person that was involved in my life.*” He proceeded with saying that we can find pictures of the real life Petey and Calvin on his website. Mikaelson got really close to this book, and he felt like he was a part of the extraordinary story of Petey.

Would you encourage your readers to become authors?

Mikaelson said that he doesn’t want to push his readers to become writers if they don’t want to. “*It’s totally up to you guys. I sometimes think I became a writer because I couldn’t help it,*” he stated. “*You know, everyone of you guys have some way that you express yourselves whether it’s through artwork or through music. I would say, however you enjoy expressing yourself, EXPRESS YOURSELF!!! And if you want to make a living out of it, get good at it.*” Mikaelson wanted everyone to know that if you follow your dreams and take action, you can get very far in life like he did with writing.

What strategies do you use when writing your books? How do they help you?

Mr. Mikaelson explained that he uses fast writing to get all of his ideas down on paper and revise and edit it later. He also said that this is a great way to get rid of Writer’s Block. He stated “*I don’t get all hung up on what point of view I am going to use, or is this proper, or I want to write the best book so I need the best first sentence--I don’t do that. I just dump it all up like a jigsaw puzzle. I just write, write, write, write, write and go back afterwards and say to myself, “Is this what the chapter should be about, or this doesn’t fit there but it fits there.” You can’t do all of this stuff if you don’t just dump it all on the paper.*”

If you can explain your life in one word, what would that word be? Why?

Mikaelson answered with, “*My life has been a comedy and a tragedy, so eventful would be the perfect word.*” He continued with, “*I love life, I absolutely love life, and there wouldn’t be a morning where I am not waking up grinning and loving life. Yes, I have had some pretty rough times, but I don’t let things get the best of me. So eventful would be the exact word that explains my life.*” He wanted to teach people that life has its ups and downs but you should never be pessimistic and give up hope.



NMS Celebrates Read Across America Day

By Katie Park

Every year, schools across the nation celebrate “Read Across America Day” on March 2, the birthday of Dr. Seuss. Dr. Seuss wrote many famous children’s books such as, *Cat in the Hat*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, *Horton Hears a Who*, and many other books too. This year, Read Across America Day was celebrated at Great Neck North Middle School with each grade participating in different activities in their English and Reading classes.



In Reading class, sixth graders celebrated by bringing in their favorite book and sharing it with the class. Some students brought in a favorite book from their childhood including “The Book with No Pictures.” One student commented “I liked how we got to share all of our favorite books. It was fun to see my friend’s favorite childhood book.”

Seventh graders read their book club books and wrote a paragraph about their favorite book. A common favorite among them was the Harry Potter series. Eighth graders took a different approach and played games like crossword puzzles and made fortune tellers.

Read Across America was a fun and interactive event. Each grade at North Middle participated in different and creative ways. Teachers and students are both looking forward to continuing the tradition every year.



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College Awareness Day

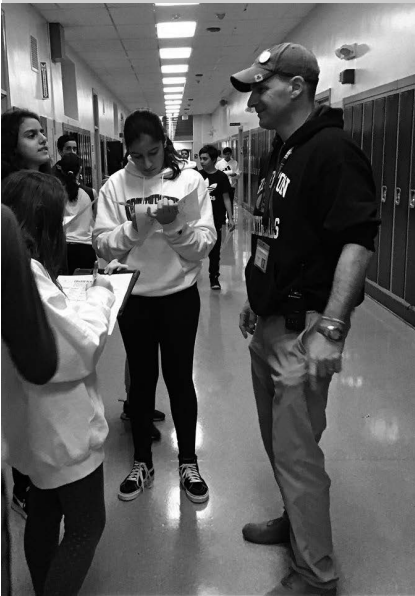
By Johnathan Ahdout

March 22 was College Awareness Day at NMS. It was essentially a day for students to become aware of the various colleges that may one day be part of their future college career. In North Middle School, Blazers Live was getting students ready for this event and college as a whole by reviewing college vocabulary such as “dean” and “matriculate.” Blazers Live was also shortened to 5 minutes that day to allow students from grades 6, 7, and 8 to participate in a scavenger hunt linked inextricably with college. Students, unlike ordinary days, ran loose from their homeroom class, which was unusually extended to half an hour. The students had to roam around the building, in which teachers were randomly inhabiting, asking questions about their own teachers’ college experiences.



The students were each given a sheet for the scavenger hunt, which had different sections on the page. Each section was a category that someone who went to college might fall into, such as “Lived in a dorm” or “Transferred schools.” Under each of these category names were three lines. The three lines were there for writing the name of the teacher that fell into the assigned category, which college they attended, and what state the college was located in. The students were not allowed to write a teacher’s name more than once on the list. The students had to fill out their sheets entirely, including the section on the other side of the page asking to locate three of their written colleges on a map. The map was divided into time zones, to help the students with one of, if not, the hardest to find category, which was to find a teacher who went to college in a different time zone.

After the entire page was filled out, the students returned to their homerooms to receive a donation from different colleges, which the guidance office collected. (Thanks!) The donations included pens and pencils, and even, rarely, tee shirts and water bottles. Many students enjoyed this experience thoroughly.



My personal experience during College Awareness Day was amazing. I left Blazers Live after the show that day for the 20 minute scavenger hunt. I ran around with my friends, and even finished the sheet! I finished most of it rather quickly, and had 3 categories left after only 10 minutes! The next 7 minutes or so, though, I was running around to find those last three categories, which were “Played in a band,” which Mr. Norberto had done, “Played a sport,” in which Mr. Reilly had wrestled, and “Went to college in a different time zone,” which Ms. Block had just barely done at Indiana University. After the sheet was completely done, I returned to Room 205 and Mr. Derych gave us a choice of a shirt or water bottle as our prizes, though the water bottles were all gone, so I got a tee shirt from Utica College! The rest of the periods were shortened by only 2 minutes. It was an amazing experience overall, especially when I got my Social Studies quiz postponed!!!



2019 NCAA Tournament: The Final Four

By Johnathan Ahdout

In the 2019 NCAA Tournament, the Final Four have conquered countless teams to get there, including the number 1 seeds, the Gonzaga Bulldogs and the Duke Blue Devils, surprisingly. These teams have fought to get to the Final Four, and they have surpassed the others. Here are the teams that have made it all the way to the Final Four in the 2019 NCAA tournament:

Michigan State Spartans

This year, this team battled the Duke Blue Devils, the number 1 seed, and won! Their coach, Tom Izzo, is an amazing coach, so no one was surprised, but they were surprised to see Duke lose! All in all, the Spartans are an amazing team. They had beaten the LSU Tigers and the Minnesota Golden Gophers to get to the prestigious Elite Eight before facing the Blue Devils.



Virginia Cavaliers

This team had won very strongly against the Gardner-Webb Runnin’ Bulldogs and the Oklahoma Sooners, but as they went on to the Sweet Sixteen and eventually the Elite Eight, games have been much more tense. Their games against the Oregon Ducks and the Purdue Boilermakers were only decided with a difference of 4 to 5 points! In the Final Four, they will face the number 1 pick for most others’ brackets, because most others just want them to win, the Auburn Tigers! Let’s see how that goes!



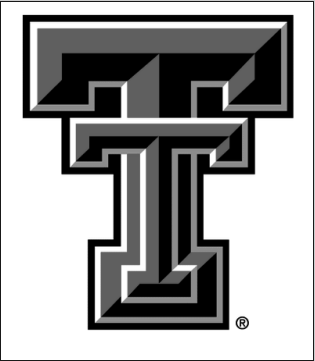
Texas Tech Red Raiders

The number 1 seed in the West, the Gonzaga Bulldogs, had the highest record in the 2019 Elite Eight. They were surprisingly crooked of their fame by the Texas Tech Red Raiders, who have never made it to the Final Four ever before, so this is a huge deal. The Red Raiders took over the Buffalo Bulls, who were expected to win after their win against Arizona State, only to be stopped in their tracks and to be completely raided by Texas Tech.



Auburn Tigers

Although their wins against Kentucky and New Mexico State were not all that big, their wins against the Kansas and North Carolina were a great feat to be conquered. They had beaten Kansas by 14 points and UNC by 17. In the Final Four, they will be competing against the Cavaliers, and it will be an interesting intersection of teams for sure, since the Auburn Tigers have never before been in the Final Four. It will be a match for the revival... of March Madness!



The Tigers, Spartans, Red Raiders, and Cavaliers are hyped up for the Final Four, especially because half of the competing teams have never been granted this honor before. The Cavaliers will attempt to invade the Tiger’s jungle, with the Tigers being the “undercats”, meanwhile, the rookie team, the Red Raiders, will try to infiltrate the incredible Spartan’s castle. But don’t underestimate them, they conquered the bloodthirsty Gonzaga Bulldogs, the team with the most consistent winning record, so it will definitely be interesting. According to the statistics, the Cavaliers will conquer the jungle, and the infiltration of the Raiders will be a failed mission. In the end, it is clear that the Spartans will steal the Raiders of their plan, and infiltrate the Cavaliers’ fortress, though everyone wants the Tigers to rip both teams apart!

Mary Poppins: The Musical

The Performance

By Joy Wei

Based on the stories of P.L. Travers and the Walt Disney film, the *Mary Poppins Musical* was featured at Great Neck North Middle School on March 27th and 28th. The stunning production was directed by Arielle Murdocco, vocal music teacher, and produced by Danielle Larson, special education teacher.

“The students eagerly watched the original Julie Andrews film with big smiles on their faces and would later enjoy the Emily Blunt version as a cast,” says Mrs. Murdocco according to the Mary Poppins Playbill. “It has truly been special seeing them tackle music we adults have been enjoying for years.”

For four months, the cast and crew has been rehearsing for the big performance. The students have spent hours and hours rehearsing separate acts, bringing in props, singing, dancing, and perfecting their authentic British accents.

Volunteer parents and local businesses sponsored the event. About forty students made up the cast of the *Mary Poppins Musical*, and a crew of about twelve. The performance included fantastic numbers like “Practically Perfect,” “Spoonful of Sugar,” the famous “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious” and even a tap dance! Audiences from both Wednesday and Thursdays’ musical were awed by the professionalism of the show as well as the actors’ performance, but months of planning and putting together was spent behind the show on stage.

“The set was entirely painted by students,” says crew member Sophia, who along with her friends painted the brick wall background in the musical. “Aside from a few of the backdrops, which was rented, the students did the work.” The set construction and design was created by the crew under the guidance of Mr. Cliff Broffman.

Below the stage, the performance also featured a live orchestra! Directed by Mrs. Murdocco, the orchestra consisted of Alex Swerdin (piano), Matthew Trinkwald (bass), Kyle Fitzpatrick (guitar), Patrick Kennedy (drums) and Frank Stainkamp (synthesizer.)

The money the Mary Poppins Musical has made goes into funding the next North Middle School production. We can expect another amazing musical next year, but for now let’s celebrate the work the cast, crew, teachers, and parents have put into making this year’s Mary Poppins Musical ‘practically perfect’ in every way!

Behind the Scenes

Journalist and Stage Crew Member Daniella Nissim reveals their important roles during the production

When people think of North Middle School’s production of Mary Poppins, they may first think of the people on stage acting, singing, dancing, and more, but what they don’t always think about is the people behind the scenes.

For example, the audience doesn’t always see the stage crew members that work just as hard. These jobs can include but are not limited to: lighting, sound, spotlight, curtains and set changes. Every Wednesday from 3 to 5 pm stage crew would paint set scenes. When tech week rolled around (rehearsal every single day after school until 6 P.M. and on Sunday) we would paint and build props and start doing our assigned jobs. Therefore, even though some people think that it’s just the actors and actresses that make the show, don’t forget about the stage crew. The members of the stage crew worked hard to make *Mary Poppins a wonderful show!*



6th Grade Winter Concert

By Josh Adhout

The 6th Grade Concert, on February 13, had the chorus, band, and orchestra working hard. There were two after-school rehearsals for the chorus, one on Thursday, February 7, and one on Monday, February 11. An all-day in-school rehearsal, on February 8, required students to skip an entire day of classes.



During Friday’s rehearsal, the students in band, orchestra and chorus went in order of the concert. Students memorized the songs they had to play and sing. Mr. Virgilio lead the 6th grade band and orchestra, and Mrs. Murdocco lead the 6th grade chorus. All rehearsals were held in the auditorium.

The concert began at 7:00 PM, and ended at 8:15 PM. The chorus sang four songs, and the band and orchestra each did three. The orchestra went first, then the chorus, and finally the band. Some of the chorus’ songs were “Don’t Stop Believin” and “The Lion King Broadway Medley.” Some of the orchestra’s songs were “Ode To Joy” and Beauty And The Beast.” The band’s songs included “The Sound And The Fury” and “Above And Beyond.” Overall, it was an excellent evening.

Seventh Grade Trip

By Katie Ng

On February 28, the 7th grade went on a field trip to watch a show about Jackie Robinson’s life at the Broadhollow Theater and right after that, went to Dave and Buster’s. The show that we watched was about the story of Jackie Robinson and how he was the first African American to play in Major League Baseball. As the actors and audience traveled back in time, we learned that life back then was not paradise, and that not everyone was equal. This performance gave the seventh grade a better understanding of empathy.

Before anyone knew it, the show was over and we were off to Dave & Buster’s. On the bus ride there, all the students ate their lunch, excited for the arrival at the arcade. At Dave & Buster’s, everyone was given a game card with a number of chips. Even after you used up all the chips you could still go on certain arcade games for free. On the bus ride back to the school, everyone was talking about their high scores, or what they won from the claw machines. This was one of the most unforgettable trips the seventh grade has had this year. It was an amazing, fun, and memorable experience for all the seventh graders.

NMS RECOGNIZES NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY

By Emelin Miranda

What is National Wear Red Day? National Wear Red Day took place on Friday, February 1 to show our support to the people with heart disease. Students and staff wore red to show their support to those people who are suffering. You can donate at www.2.heart.org.

**National Wear
Red Day®**

Friday, 02 01 19



Spirit Week

By Anna Huo

On March 18th through March 22th, 2019, NMS had its “Anything Is Possible” spirit week. The purpose of this spirit week is to get people excited to buy tickets for the school play *Mary Poppins*, to raise awareness for College Awareness Day, and for students to do some random acts of kindness. Ms. Larson worked with Ms. Segal to think of some fun themes that matched both *Mary Poppins* and College Awareness Day.

On Monday, “Dream of Kindness day”, the first day of the spirit week, students showed up at school in cozy pajamas.

Tuesday was “Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious” day, and the theme was to wear wacky clothes.

Wednesday was “March Madness” day. Students wore jerseys of their favorite sports teams to school.

On Thursday, “Step in Time” day, the goal was to wear clothes from any decade in the past.

Friday, “College Awareness day”, was the last day of the “Anything can Happen” spirit week. Students wore their favorite college gear to school. During homeroom, students went on a scavenger hunt to find teachers with special college experiences.

In conclusion, the “Anything can Happen” spirit week was a really fun week for NMS.

Photo Credit: Jordan Ahdout



JOIN RELAY FOR LIFE AT NMS

By Kajal Ramphul

The NMS Relay for Life program is a student led organization that helps the battle against cancer, which claims many lives each year. Their goal is to raise money to donate for research and cancer treatments.

This year, we came up with ideas for fundraisers to help us meet our goal. You may have seen them around the building, or even participated in one. We have sold socks for Breast Cancer Awareness, donated some profits from restaurants like Chipotle, and held raffles. Our most notable raffles are the Pi Teachers in the Face raffle, raffles for assorted gift cards, and the raffle for the INSTAX camera bundle.

Why Do Students Join Relay for Life?

There are a number of reasons people may want to join Relay for Life. It means something different to each person. Some reasons why people join it at our school are..

“I’m in Relay because I don’t want innocent people to lose the fight against cancer.”

“I joined Relay because I want to help people.”

“I’m in Relay for Life because finding a cure is important.”

“I joined Relay for Life because cancer affects everyone differently, no matter how little of an impact it has to you.”

The Relay for Life’s Mission Statement is, “The hope that those lost to cancer will never be forgotten, that those who face cancer will be supported, and that one day cancer will be eliminated. Raising donations for participation in Relay For Life is fun as well as challenging.” To date, Relay for Life fundraisers and events have raised nearly \$5,000,000,000. If you want to help make a difference in the lives of millions of people, participate in our fundraisers, and consider joining Relay for Life.

NMS Teachers Take a Pie in the Face and Raise Money for Charity

By: Emelin Miranda, Kiersten Ho, and Joshua Ahdout

On March 14, 2019, the students of North Middle pied some teachers in celebration of Pi Day. In a raffle done by the school store, over \$550 was raised and went to the American Cancer Society through Relay For Life. According to Ms. Sposito, a math teacher at NMS, Pi day is always celebrated on March 14th because the first three digits of pi is 3.14. It is a mathematical holiday.

Interview with Mr. Boyt, Math Chairperson

Q: How did you plan this?

A: Working with the other teachers in the Math Department, we collaborated and came up with three ideas that would make Pi day fun for everyone. The first way was to create a Pi festival for staff members, in which anyone could make a pie they chose. Ms. Feifer also helped with the planning. The second thing was the “pi a staff member event” during lunch. We worked together with the Relay for Life committee (Mrs. Murdocco and Mrs. Demodna) and raised over \$550 for the American Cancer Society. We had 18 staff members take a pie to the face for a good cause. We also held a pi reciting contest to see who could recite the most digits of pi from memory.

Q: What did you do to make this happen?

A: It required a lot of people helping out, from Ms. Brody getting everything approved to the custodial staff helping with the set-up and the clean-up, and students selling the raffles in the mornings!! It was a school-wide effort.

Q: What is the meaning of Pi?

A: Pi is the ratio of the circumference of a circle to the diameter of the circle. That means you take any circle circumference and divide it by the diameter of the circle. You will always get pi. If you don’t believe me you can try it for yourself.

Q: How many Pi days have there been so far?

A: This was the first one. We are hoping it becomes a fun, annual tradition.

Q: How did you get teachers to participate?

A: I sent lots of emails and asked a lot of people personally to help, including all members of the Math Department. We are lucky to work in a school where teachers and students are always willing to help, and this was no exception.



Spring Crafts

By Katie Park

Here are some fun crafts you can do at home with friends or family over the weekend or spring break!

Coffee Filter Flowers

Steps-marthastewart.com

These flowers can be used for anything, for party decorations or to give as a gift. These are beautiful but are very hard to make, the result is worth it. There are many types of flowers you can make with these in many different types of colors. Reading the instructions can be difficult so ask a adult for help.



What you need...

- Large white coffee filters(as much as you want.)
- 16-gauge Floral Wire
- Floral Tape
- Scissors
- Watercolor Paint
- Flat Brush
- Bamboo Skewer
- Gluestick

- 1.Trace and cut petal shapes through both layers of filters, as per templates.
 - 2.Form rose. With the first coffee filter, take four connected petals and poke an 18-inch length of 16-gauge floral wire down through the center of the bottom of one end petal so 1/2 inch of the wire remains sandwiched between two opposite petals.
 - 3.Wrap adjacent two petals tightly around first two petals; wrap with floral tape around base, then 1/2 inch down wire, to secure.
 - 4.When working with floral tape, pull it as you work to expose the sticky part of the tape.
 - 5.With the second coffee filter take four connected petals and sandwich "flower bud" between two opposite petals. On the adjacent petal pair, gently tear the perforation of the base so that you have a strip of 2 side-by-side petals. Wrap this petal strip around the other two petals and secure with tape.
 - 6.With the third coffee filter, take four connected petals and gently tear the perforation at the base to create a strip of four petals. Wrap this petal strip around flower bud and secure with tape.
 - 7.With the fourth one, gently tear the perforation at the base of petal shapes to create a strip of five petals. Wrap this petal strip around flower bud and secure with tape. (The folded petal gives rose stability and a more rounded form.)
 - 8.With coffee filter No. 5, place three petals, overlapping slightly on rose and wrap just once (to avoid bulk) with floral tape to secure.
 - 9.Wrap remaining three petals opposite the first three. Repeat for shapes cut from filters Nos. 6, 7, and 8. Use finger and thumb to separate petals, creating air pockets and making petals curve outward from the base. Use 3 or 4 extra single petals to fill in holes and give a rounded shape.
 - 10.To paint the roses, use watercolor paints, mixed with a bit of water. Paint the base color, first doing the bottom, then the top, working from the inside out. Accentuate with a darker color on the tips. Use a flat brush to apply a third color of undiluted watercolor to edges.
 - 11.Let dry overnight.
 - 12.Once painted roses are dry, curl left and right sides of outer petals around a bamboo skewer to create a point. Work your way from the outside to the inside of rose.
 - 13.Curl inner petals just slightly by wrapping top straight down around bamboo skewer.
 - 14.Add five paper sepals secured with floral tape to short stem.
 - 15.Wrap floral tape in a spiral down wire stem several times to create a thick roselike stem.
 - 16.Burnish stem with skewer to smooth tape.
 - 17.Cut 6 paper leaves and sandwich a 4-inch wire between. Use a glue stick to stick 6 leaves together with a 4-inch wire stem.
 - 18.Secure leaves to stem with floral tape.
- marthastewart.com

Candy Flowers

(marthastewart.com)

These are cute and fun lollipop flowers. You can alter the recipe and make it anything you want, like a emoji lollipop, or just try making regular lollipops for fun.

What you need:

- parchment paper.
- jolly ranchers(like blue raspberry or cherry.)
- lollipop sticks or wooden skewers.

Preheat the oven to 275°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. Choose some Jolly Rancher candies and cut them in half -- this is so you can change the sizes of your petals and leaves.
2. Start with the center of the flower and the petals. Arrange different colored candies on the parchment paper in a flower shape of your choosing.
3. Place in the oven for about 4 minutes. Remove and let cool for 1 minute.
4. You can reshape your flower by pressing the melted candy together with your hands.
5. Add the stick by putting it on the bottom of your flower and twisting to coat with candy.
6. To make the leaves, place 2 green candy halves (or any color of your choosing) on either side of the stick, slightly overlapping the stick.
7. Return to the oven for about 2 more minutes to melt and smooth. Remove from the oven and let cool.

Salt-Bottle Vase

This is a exciting and beautiful vase for you to keep the next craft in or give it to someone as a cool gift.



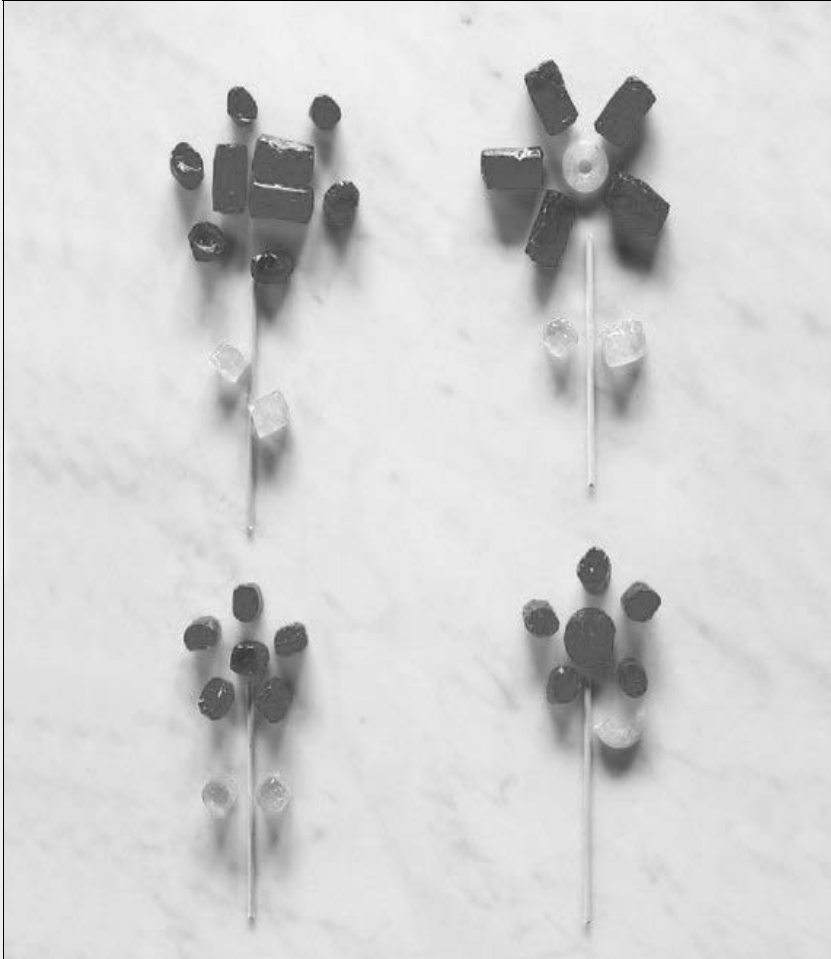
What you need...

- Epsom Salt.
- food dye.
- Any bottle, like a water bottle or soda bottle.
- Flowers.(From the next craft.)
- Glue.
- Ribbon (Optional)
- Baking sheet

- 1.Stir in a couple of drops of food dye with any amount of salt you think will be enough to cover the bottle.
2. When the salt is evenly colored pour it out into a baking sheet.
3. Cover the bottle with glue, you can use a paint brush, sponge, hands, etc.
4. Then, roll the bottle into the salt making sure to cover any places that are bare.
5. Finally, after the glue dries tie a ribbon around its neck.

Idea came from :handsonaswegrow.com

(If you want don't want to buy real flowers for your vase, read on and find out how to make coffee filter flowers, or candy ones.)



Spring Recipes

Submitted by Liya Hakimian

This recipe is called Spring Sugar Cookie Bars. This is an amazing recipe that I hope you enjoy!!!

Spring Sugar Cookie Bars

Credit 

Ingredients

for the bars:

- ½ cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1½ tablespoons sour cream
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2½ cups flour
- ½ teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt

for the frosting:

- ½ cup butter, softened
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 2-3 tablespoons half and half or milk
- ½ teaspoon vanilla
- pinch of salt
- food coloring
- sprinkles

1. Preheat oven to 375. Line a 9 x 13 pan with foil or parchment, and set aside.
2. In a large bowl or the bowl of a stand mixer, cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, sour cream, and vanilla, and mix until well combined.
3. Stir in the flour, baking powder, and salt to form a crumbly dough.
4. Press the dough into the prepared pan to form an even layer, and poke the dough every few inches with a fork so it will bake evenly.
5. Bake 17-20 minutes or until lightly browned around the edges. Cool completely.
6. To make the frosting, beat together the butter, powdered sugar, and 1 tablespoon half and half as needed to make a smooth frosting. Add the vanilla, salt, and food coloring, and beat on high speed until light and fluffy. Spread over the cooled cookies and add sprinkles. Cut into squares and enjoy!



PIC•COLLAGE



I am having so much trouble getting good grades. Every time I take a test I always end up failing. And my grades for each quarter are so bad. Maybe it's because I don't study. It is so hard for me. I really need your help.

From,
The Bad Grade Girl

Dear The Bad Grade Girl,

I know how you feel I also once had trouble getting good grades on everything. In order to get good grades is you should study for a test the moment the teacher tells you that you have a test. Also, do all your homework because if you miss your homework your homework average will go down. You should also participate in class. Also think of quizzes just like a test. And most important is DON'T STRESS OUT. When you stress yourself out you get nervous. Keep a positive attitude and let yourself know you will get a 100.

From,
Miss Know-It-All



Artwork by Andrew Cohen

Cuteness Overload: Baby Animals

By: Kiersten Ho



The African elephant calfs are gray in color with large ears and tusks that tend to get larger as they get older. The African elephant eats a variety of plants, trees and twigs. They also have a trunk that gives them the ability to take berries off of trees, to consume water, and to cover the sensitive skin into dirt. The ears of these species are twice as large as those of the Asian Elephant. They are often hunted for the ivory those tusks are made from.

The Red Kangaroo Joey males have a reddish coloring, but the females often have a bluish tint to them. They feature very powerful feet and a long thick tail. The Joeys go into their moms pouches to be safe.

Baby bunnies are the cutest and are fuzzy mascots of spring-whether they are gentle or wild. Bunnies are born in spring and have huge litters, while mama bunnies can give birth to up to nine bunnies each time, the little guys are actually called “kittens”.

Most deer will destroy your garden in the spring, but they will do it in an incredibly adorable and cute way. Baby deer, also known as fawns stay with their mothers for about a year before they finally grow up. White-tailed deer babies are born approximately seven

months later in the early spring or summer. Baby fawns weigh about 8 pounds at birth, and twins are very common, especially if the doe has been healthy and well-fed throughout her pregnancy. Since the blood and fluids at the birthing site may attract predators, the doe leads the fawn to a farm (a new sheltered spot). If she has twins, the doe may place each fawn in a separate spot up to 200 feet apart, so that if one is discovered by a predator, the other fawn will stay safe. At birth, the fawns reddish-brown coats are dappled with white spots. This makes them nearly invisible to predators while lying next to vegetation. The fawns will spend their first three or four years in the farm, of until their weak legs grow strong enough to keep up with their mothers. The fawns are usually born with the ability to remain still and quiet while their mothers are away. Even though the fawns mothers is most likely not seen, it is likely that she is somewhere nearby. After around three years of hiding from predators, the baby deer can run fast enough to keep up with their mothers and starts following them everywhere they go. Eventually, they will eat foods as adults such as acorns, corn, soybeans, mushrooms, grass, tree leaves, twigs and bark, wild grapes, and apples.



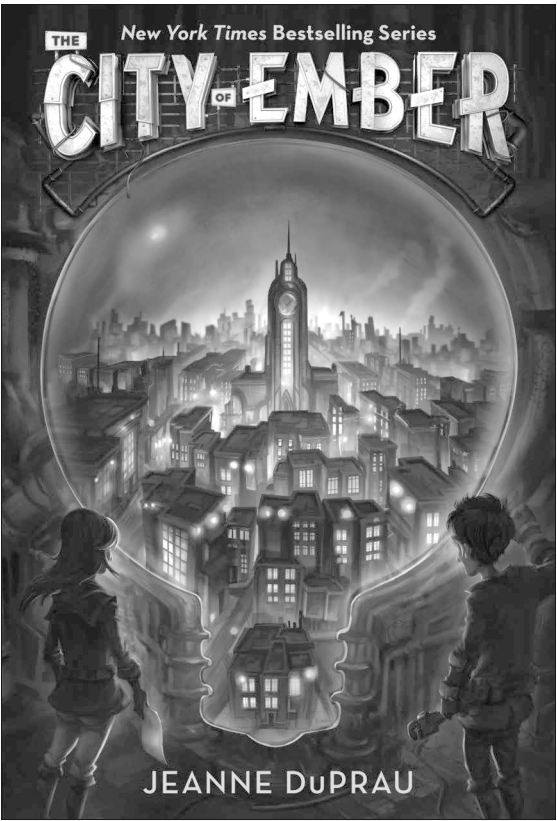
Since birds sing in the morning, they are the soundtracks of spring. Also, baby birds are super cute in a featherless, bug-eyed, alien sort of way. Some adult birds lay their eggs in the nests of other birds, rather than building their own, so some babies grow up with siblings of different species. All the birds live in a community together.



Book Review : *The City of Ember*

By Hannah Golsaz

The City of Ember by Jeanne DuPrau is a great book to read for 6th graders. The plot is very interesting and once I began to read it, I couldn’t stop. It is definitely a worthwhile book to read. *The City of Ember* was created to have everything that humans need to survive. Now everything is running out. The food and crops are running very low and there are problems everywhere. One of the biggest problems is that the lights are failing, which is terrible because then the city will be in the dark. This sparked my interest because everyone is living underground in a completely different world. It centers around two teens, Lina and Doon. They are two friends who found the instructions left by the city’s original builders for escaping to the outside world. They are eager to follow these instructions even though they run into a lot of obstacles. Meanwhile, they learned that the Mayor of Ember was hoarding all the supplies for himself in a special cave. He’s letting his own people suffer, which was so shocking to me. Even when Lina and Doon wanted to report the Mayor for what he did, Lina got captured and imprisoned, while Doon got away. I felt so bad for Lina and the author really knew how to make you emotional when reading her book. The fact that the main characters are teens made it easier for me to relate to the book since I am close to that age. The plot of the book is also truly very fascinating because the setting is so unusual and different from the typical books I read. I would definitely recommend this book since it has a lot of twists and turns and kept me on my toes the whole time!



Should You Get Classic Video Games?

By David Dallal

You read the title, you probably should know the answer, and you definitely should play something other than Fortnite or Apex Legends. Ok, the reason why I’m writing this is because I truly have a passion for video games, and a undying hate for Fortnite. Many people have thrown off the idea of older video game systems due to “bad graphics” but honestly though, older game systems are 10x cheaper, and have just as good graphical capabilities and are great games. A lot of people have an old Xbox 360 just laying around in their house somewhere, but a lot of people don't know how great of a system it is and all the good games you can play on it. I looked it up and apparently at least 10 families become homeless due to their child spending too much on microtransactions (AKA V-bucks), so the 360 is a great game system for middle school students. You can get games like Halo Reach, Bioshock Infinite, or Read Dead Redemption, for \$20 or less.



There is also the PS3 that can even play a different set of games, and you can even find them at the store, *5 Below*. These games still hold up today because even my friends who care way too much about “bad graphics” still want to play these games whenever they come over. These things are so common that I got mine for free because a guy at a game store couldn't make money off it. You could also go even further back in time and get the Sega Genesis, which only costs around \$25.



Those games still hold up because they are 16-bit, which games still use that same art style even though they falsely claim it’s 8-bit. You can even use emulators, which are free ways to play these older games on your modern PC. If you use a good emulator, you can access al-most all of the older consoles libraries. It’s really easy to set up a great retro game and play. In short, you should definitely try to play older games because it is cheaper, better, and you won’t go homeless because of Fortnite. Oh, and also if you really like gaming and want to play more games for cheap, this is definitely the way to go, but if you have to play a mod-ern game, games a few years old will hover around the \$20 mark, so play Dark Souls, I guess. The moral of the story is, don’t play Fortnite because it’ll make you homeless, and eat at Spongebobs Jamaican Restaurant, (look it up on Google Earth/Maps).

Video Game Review: Dark Souls 3

By Jack McCarthy

Dark Souls is a game that has an extreme level of difficulty and focuses on going to different areas, after losing over and over again. The main thing about the game is to learn from your mistakes, and find new solutions to progress in the area. . Dark Souls 3 takes place after Dark Souls 2, starting in the Cemetery of Ash. You begin by asking, “What do I do?” “How do I play?” and, then before you know it, you're already lost. For starters, this will take some time, and for pros who’ve beaten the game, this boss will easily take one try. You can fight as the following classes in the game: knight, cleric, deprived, herald, mercenary, sorcerer, thief, or warrior. As a challenge for anyone, *deprived* will drive you insane. With your weapon being a club, a plank shield, and no armor whatsoever, this class can easily drive players mad. ”Finally!” you say, after you have defeated Iudex Gundyr. You then proceed to the most important place in the game, Firelink Shrine. You arrive at Firelink Shrine and light the most important Bonfire location in the game with the coiled sword you received from Iudex Gundyr. The people in Firelink Shrine will be able to help you proceed on your quest to find the Lords Of Cinder. The Fire Keeper will help you level up your stats. These stats include Vigor (attributes to health, grants resistance to frost), Attunement (attributes to FP, also determines number of attunement slots), endurance (attributes to stamina, grants resistance to lightning), vitality (attributes physical defense, and also governs maximum equip load and poison resistance), strength (grants resistance to fire, improves attack strength), dexterity (improves attack strength, reduces spellcasting time, reduces damage while falling), intelligence (attributed to cast sorceries and increases spell potency, increases magic defense), faith (attributed to cast miracles and increases spell potency, increases dark defense), and luck (attributes to item discovery, increases grants, resistance to curses). This is personally in my opinion, a very good game, and worth the aggravation and struggles you encounter. Best of luck.

