
PICCOWAXEN STUDENT NEWSLETTER



Picco Media Center during the renovation.



Picco Media Center after the renovation.

The new renovation consists of new walls, lockers, a newly enclosed library, new ventilation, new nurses' office, new windows, and new clocks. Scheibel construction was the company who did the renovation. They are very professional and did everything right and up to code. Almost every person said they really like it, and nobody really had anything to add that would be better except for the bathrooms which are outdated. A few of the sixth graders did not approve of the stacked lockers. Overall people had nothing bad to say about the renovation.



Editorial: Reno

NEW YEAR
New Building



Written By: Samuel Swann

The renovation of the building has left many students with mixed opinions about the changes. Over the summer, Piccowaxen Middle School was renovated inside the building, adding walls, windows, and doors to the classrooms. Hallways are now designated to the specific subjects. The lockers that were in the library are now put on the walls of the Social Studies hallway, the Language Arts hallway, and the STEM hallway. The building renovation is nice to look at, but it is harder to move around, making it more of a negative than a positive, according to the students and staff that I polled. For many students, it is difficult for them to get to class due to the lockers in the halls. Tara Raley says, "I don't like the lockers because people are shoving through, short people can't use their locker if it's on top, and people with bottom lockers have to go on their hands and knees just to open their locker." Donovan Chesley says, "The hallways are too long, and I don't like the lockers in the hallway." Personally, I have been late a few times this year because I cannot go through the library anymore because it is closed off. Mark Attucks says, "The bathrooms are not done, and I wish we got new chairs and stuff." Keaton Senn told me, "I don't like the clocks because it shows the dates, and I don't like the lockers." Also, for some new sixth graders it is hard for them to know where to go. Mrs. Jones says, "For many new sixth graders it is confusing due to not having signs to help determine where to go." She told me she often helps them navigate to classes due to the confusion. Fiona Joyce, a sixth grader this year says, "For me it wasn't hard to get to classes but for some of my friends it was." For many staff, they have a problem with how the building is unfinished and minor details about the building. Mr. Hoefert says, "I don't like that it is unfinished like the paint on the walls, the molding, and the cracks in the dry wall." Sra. Moss and Mrs. Fairman say they wish that the construction would be finished quicker than having to do it over the next summer as well. Ms. Clark, has no complaints. She said, "I am just so happy to have a classroom with walls and a door." For many kids like me, the building renovation was overall a negative change then a positive one.

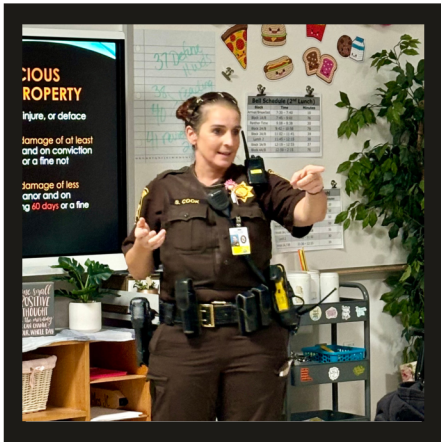
Written By: Olivia Hawkins

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LET HER COOK



Officer Cook giving a presentation

This year, Piccowaxen middle school has a new student resource officer, Ms. Cook. Ms. Cook has been an officer here in Charles County for about 19 years, but her dream when she retires is to create an animal rescue for dogs, cats, horses (her favorite animal) goats, and more. Until then, she helps by fostering animals from the local shelters. So, unsurprisingly, her favorite movie is The Lion King. Her favorite character from the original version of the movie is Timon the meerkat. Ms. Cook can make apple pie from scratch, play soccer, ride motorcycles, and has two daughters, ages 13 and 4 months. "I would say the most memorable experiences I have had is when my two daughters were born. I have always wanted to be a mom and absolutely love it," she said. When asked about the people and atmosphere here at Picco she said, "Everyone here has been very friendly and helpful so far this year and has made me feel welcomed." Lets continue to welcome her and fingers crossed, she will bring us some homemade apple pie.

Written By: Addison Kilpatrick

Lamb-ent Spirit



Mr. Lamb

Mr. Lamb has made it to a corner office! I asked Mr. Lamb how he feels about his new office, and he said, "I love it, I love having a home base and I love the windows, and I also know I have a spot where I can now meet students." Compared to his previous office, things are really looking up, "well my old office was the cafeteria so it sure is better, I like this one better because it helps me get things done." Mr. Lamb loves the new block schedule because he says he can "get more work done" and he has "more time to do things." On a more personal note, have you ever wondered why Mr. Lamb wears skater shoes? No, he doesn't skate in his free time, he wears them "because they are comfortable, and I don't have time to tie my shoes." When asked about his style outside of school he replied, "hobo/boho chic." Mr. Lamb's favorite band is Phish because he "loves their concerts." His favorite food is pizza "from pizza hotline" and he gets "plain cheese." Some things he enjoys when he isn't at school are playing the guitar and spending time with his kids. Some other fun facts about Mr. Lamb are "I like concerts, I have 2 kids that are 9 years apart, I love documenters, I'm from Ohio and I'm not skibidi, and I love Ohio state." Mr. Lamb came to Picco a year ago but has already become one of our many favorite administrators with his unique personality and great attitude.

Written By: Yahaira Fuentes

TOP 5 Common Fears

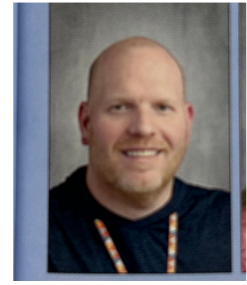




Mr. Narehood's last day was on Friday, 10/11. He has decided to resign from his Language Arts teaching position at Picco for personal reasons. He said, "A new opportunity to teach at my son's elementary school in Virginia came up. I'll be teaching 5th grade Reading. The move will really help our family to handle Ollie's schedule as he grows." This change for Mr. Narehood has come after a successful 20-year-long career as an educator in Charles County. He spent 13 years at Somers and 7 here at Piccowaxen. Mr. Narehood said, "My students have been fantastic this year and I'll miss going off-task during our lessons to share personal stories with each other to better connect to our readings." Before he left for Sealston Elementary he gave this advice: "You are the only you. The choices you make are yours alone. Don't hold grudges but hold yourself accountable. Learn from your mistakes. Be proud of your successes."

Written By: Amari Mclean

GOODBYE



Mr. Narehood



A man goes outside in the rain without an umbrella or hat but doesn't get a single hair on his head wet. How?



Cool Career

Average Salary: \$89,000-\$126,000 Video game designers create the games you love and enjoy today. In order to ever think of pursuing in this field you must have skills in computer science, computer programming, graphic design, user experience, creative writing, and brainstorming. You can create about anything, to make it perfect for your own liking. Fortunately, video game designing does not always require a bachelors degree if you have good enough experience. This is a very hands-on job that never gets boring. The best video game designing company to work for is Sony Interactive Entertainment (SIE), which is located in San Mateo, California! Would you try out this career?

Written By: Payton Acevedo

Video Game Designer



ART SHOW



CONGRATULATIONS

Delanney Nguyen, Jay Wolfe, Amiya Douglas, Dasan Tasker, and Olivia Simon as their artwork is on display at the BOE representing Piccowaxen for the Fall Student Exhibit.

In Charles County, art shows are held for K-12 students. Ms. Kraus says, "For the Fall Art show, the artwork displayed in the Charles County Fair is chosen to be on display since it is so early in the school year for the current school year artworks to be ready." I asked how many art shows occurred in a school year and Ms. Kraus said, "At the Starkey Administration Building there is a Fall Art show, Winter Art show, Youth Art Month Art show, and Summer Art show. Other Art shows that are scheduled for art students is the Charles County Fair Art show and for middle school there is a Mattawoman Creek Art Center Art show. All of these art shows are local throughout Charles County, MD."

Written By: Olivia Hawkins



REVIEWS

RAISING CANES

Raising Cane's is a popular fast-food chain most known for their sauce and chicken tenders. It has been super popular all over TikTok and Instagram with either very good reviews or very bad reviews. So, I tried it and reviewed it, here's my review. I got a box combo with lemonade and the cost was \$12.19. The wait wasn't bad for a Friday and for a Cane's restaurant. The customer service was normal, like nothing special. My first impression was the chicken had a very strong, appetizing smell. The lemonade was very good, it wasn't too sour or too sweet and overall, it was refreshing. My first impression of the coleslaw was it had a very pungent, sweet smell. However, I was not a fan. The toast was buttery and sweet. 10/10 for the toast, especially when it was dipped in Cane's sauce. I would most likely order that again. Next, I tried the chicken fingers. There's nothing super unique about it except the pickle taste. Dipped in the Cane's sauce, it tastes way better. The sauce elevates the taste and makes it taste less basic and smokier and more seasoned. The fries are soggy and taste like store bought fries but again when dipped in Cane's sauce they taste more seasoned, and the flavor is better. The sauce on its own is good and peppery, but a little overrated. Overall, I really liked their Texas toast and lemonade, and I recommend it. I don't recommend their coleslaw at all. Since they "specialize" in chicken fingers it was a little underwhelming because I expected a little more, but people said they were basic flavor wise, so my expectations were not too high. If you like basic and simple food, you would like Cane's because it is so simple and lightly seasoned. The biggest thing Cane's has going for it is the lemonade, toast, and the sauce.



Written By: Emma Hawkins



JORDAN 4'S



Jordan 4s are popular shoes, especially at Picco. Jordan 4s come from the long line of Air Jordans. All types of Jordans have different names, typically referred to with numbers. The Jordan 4's come in many different colors. These Jordan's specifically have been around since 1989 and were released in 4 different color ways. Jordan 4's was designed by a man named Tinker Hatfield. They were his second air Jordan design after taking over the brand. Now in 2024 they are still one of the most popular Tinker designs among customers. Although Air Jordans are referred to in numbers, they do all in fact have their own name. Some of the most popular Jordan are Black Cat's, Yellow Thunders, University Blues, White Oreos etc. These are only a few out of the hundreds of them. Air Jordan 4's have had famous collaborations. Some of the most popular have been with brands like KLAWS and Off-White. Some artists they have collaborated with are Eminem, Travis Scott and many more. Kolton Simmons said "Jordan 4s are ridiculously overpriced. They are wonderfully comfortable, but all the color schemes are fire, but still too overpriced." Olivia Hawkins said "I think that Jordan 4s are cute, but the prices are insane. They get dirty too quick, and having to be careful to not crease them is so annoying." Emma Hawkins said "Jordan 4s are worth the hype. The price is ridiculous, and they are not worth the price, they should lower the price, but they are really cute." Many people have mixed opinions on the price but overall, many find satisfaction in the looks and comfortability of the shoe.

Written By: Yahaira Fuentes

RANKED Shows

Poll by: Payton Acevedo

- 1st. Outerbanks
- 2nd. Gilmore Girls
- 3rd. Bluey
- 4th. Grey's Anatomy
- 5th. Young Sheldon
- 6th. SpongeBob SquarePants
- 7th. The Summer I Turned Pretty
- 8th. Stranger Things
- 9th. Gravity Falls
- 10th. Supernatural

Break TIME

November 27-29 Thanksgiving Holiday
December 23-31 Winter Break
January 1 New Year's Day



FROM SOMERS TO PICCO

Last year, Landen Williams came to Piccowaxen midyear in 6th grade. He said, “I didn’t really like it because I didn’t know anybody or the teachers, so it was kind of new to me.” Landen was at Milton Somers before he came to our school. He described what it was like at Somers, “The school was bigger than Picco, it had two floors. We had more space to walk around when the hallways weren’t crowded.” He also told me other little differences from Somers to last year’s Picco building such as, “The classrooms were the same size even though the school was bigger”, and “The bathrooms were dirtier”. Landen is also on the Picco Baseball Team. I asked him how he felt about the team, and he said, “I like it, I like this year’s, but it wasn’t as good as last year’s since all the eighth graders left.” I asked him what he plays, and he said, “I am playing center field, catcher, and pitcher.” Milton Somers had a block schedule before Picco, so I asked if he liked that there was blocks here too and he said, “I hate the blocks, we got more work time but you’re sitting in a chair for an hour and thirty minutes.” Along with the blocks, the new construction has mixed opinions with people, so I asked him how if he liked the new building and he said, “I do but I don’t, you can walk around easier but it’s more crowded.” It was very interesting to hear from Landen and get a new idea of Picco from someone who went to a different middle school in the county.



Landen Williams

Written By: Emma Hawkins

small but FIERCE



Eleanor Groth

Ellie Groth may not seem like a competitive person, but when you hear her talk about soccer, you can tell she will knock you down to score a goal. Ellie has a passion for soccer and is a great soccer player. She appreciates all her friends on her team which makes her love it even more. Ellie also participates in one school activity, robotics. Ellie really likes robotics. In her free time, she likes to watch shows or documentaries on Netflix. She loves the show called “Fuller House.” Ellie also has two pets, a dog, and a cat. Her dog is a black labrador named Grizzly and her cat is named Luke or Lukie. Her cat is part Siamese and is VERY chatty. She adores both of her pets. But Ellie does not have any siblings- she is an only child. Ellie’s birthday is August 2nd, 2012, which makes her a Taurus. Her favorite food is Parmesan chicken, and her favorite drink is Pepsi!

She has always lived in Maryland but has a dream of living in California! The main reason she wants to move to California is because her grandparents live in California! When Ellie was in elementary school, she went to Higdon, and she loved all her teachers. When she had first came to Piccowaxen in 6th grade she liked having a bunch of classes with her friends! Some advice she would give to new 6th graders is to always practice stuff at home, like your instrument. Also, her favorite school subject is math because she loves having Ms. Timko as her teacher. When she gets older, she wants to have a career that works with animals. That seems like a great fit because Ellie is such a sweet and thoughtful person.

Written By: Lillian Merkle



Did you know?



Have you ever looked at your vanilla-bean ice cream and seen black flecks in it? Well, based on Jacob Schroeder, these black flecks are seeds from a vanilla bean. When people make vanilla extract, they slice it open and soak it in a type of liquid to infuse it with the light aroma of vanilla flavor. When it is rightfully “marinated,” they can remove the seed and pod as the flavor has been extracted. There is no difference to your ice cream with or without the seeds/flecks. People add the seeds back into the vanilla ice-cream as it gives it a visual appeal. When you eat something, your taste will change based on your visual perspective of the food. As Jeni Britton says, “For instance, a paler pink strawberry ice-cream will taste weaker than a darker pink one with the same amount of berries. Perception is wild and is an essential part of the experience. Pleasure is derived from what you believe.” You can always trust Jeni Britton as she is an ice cream scientist and founder of “Jeni’s Splendid Ice Cream.”

Written By: Delanney Nguyen



New puppy, Please?

Mrs. Keener has given us permission to ask Mr. Keener to get them a new puppy. She said, "I miss having a dog and can't wait to get a puppy (most likely a lab). You can ask Mr. Keener, I keep asking him." Mr. and Mrs. Keener have two children: Michael is in 5th grade and Matthew is in 3rd. This is her 18th year of teaching. She plans to teach for about 12-15 more years. Her favorite thing to do outside of school is spending time with her family and going on adventures. Her favorite season is Fall. She loves seeing the leaves change colors, and likes the cooler weather because she can wear sweatshirts and sit by the campfire.



Sara Keener, with the rest of the "Spice Girls"
photo credit: Graham Miller

Her hobbies are reading, writing, crocheting, watching movies, and spending time outside with her family. She said, "My favorite movie is Top Gun: Maverick. Series: Indiana Jones, Lord of the Rings, ANYTHING DISNEY PRINCESS!" She wanted to become a teacher because, "I love reading and writing, I wanted to bring that joy to others. I also love the 'a-ha' moments in teaching, when students grasp an idea and take off with it." She said, "One thing I remember about middle school is my favorite English teacher. She would humor my best friend and me by reading our stories that we would co-write." If she had to pick a different job it would be to be a professional writer or own a bookstore/coffee shop.

Written By: Grace McKown

Ms. Meiser has been at Piccowaxen for 2 years now. She chose to teach Orchestra because she is passionate about it and loves the impact it has on students. She likes how students express their feelings through music in a creative way. If she could ask an alien one question, it would be, "What kind of music do you listen to on your planet?" This is because she wants to discover how their culture expresses creativity and emotions. There are many desserts but one dessert that Ms. Meiser would have forever is chocolate cake. She says that it is rich, and many things could go with it like berries, nuts, and ice cream! The concert that Ms. Meiser is looking forward to is the winter concert, because she is excited to see how her students have progressed, and the holiday spirit adds a festive touch to the show. Her favorite instrument is the cello because it has a deep, rich sound and it is an expressive instrument with emotions on every note. One thing that Ms. Meiser likes about teaching orchestra is that her students work as a team and push past their comfort zones. Exciting news: the winter concert is scheduled for December 5th at 6:00pm. Mark your calendars because Ms. Meiser can't wait for you guys to come and see her student's hard work!

CELLO, MS. MEISER

Written By: Delanney Nguyen

THANK YOU
MS. RUSSELL



The cafeteria is important for the school, as it provides meals for students. I asked the Food and nutrition manager, Mrs. Russell, about the cafeteria, the food, and what goes on in the Kitchen. Mrs. Russell has been working at Piccowaxen for 5 years and in food service for 21 years. Mrs. Russell loves her job, and she says, "Feeding kids daily is something very much needed and special to me." Picco's food supply comes from a company called US Foods which serves the whole country. We also have other deliveries such as fruit, vegetables, milk, and bread. On the menu for the best foods, we have taco nachos and the chicken wings coming in a close second. The breakfast and lunch that is served in the cafeteria is important for our nutrition and our education. I asked Mrs. Russell about the behavior of students in the lunch lines. She said a lot of you are nice, however there are several loud and disrespectful students. If you're reading this make sure to thank Mrs. Russell, we are so lucky to have her.

Written By: Ziva Emhoff



Drama Club

The Drama Club is a very exhilarating and active club that almost everyone has at least heard of before. They meet on Thursdays after school and are preparing to put on a show this winter called, "The case of the Careless Client."

Why did you choose to act in the drama club?

Lucy .R - "My sister acted in drama club, so I decided to do the same."

Raelyn .W - "I wanted to experience something new, to do something that made me feel like I belonged"

Payton .A - I've been wanting to join the drama club for a while!

What made you pick the drama club this year?

Lucy .R - "I joined because my sister was in it and I went to her play, and it looked fun."

Raelyn .W - "I picked the drama club to put myself out there, as a confidence booster."

Payton .A - I wanted to join since I've been waiting to join for a long time.

How many onstage jobs do you have or want to have?

Lucy .R - I would like to have two acting roles.

Raelyn .W - "If I had to choose at least one or two acting roles."

Do you think it's easier to work backstage? Why or why not?

Riley .T - Both onstage and backstage jobs seem equally hard to do!

Kendall - I would think they're equally as challenging.

What made you want to work backstage?

Riley .T - I don't like acting on stage, so I chose to do something backstage instead.

Kendall - I don't like working onstage, it's just not for me.

What's your job backstage?

Riley .T - I do lighting and sound (mainly sound)

Kendall - Stage manager! (Promo, management, posters, etc.)

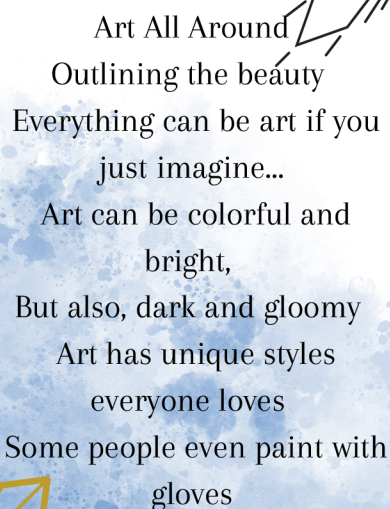
Question for the drama teacher, is it easy keeping track of everything with a deadline for the play? Why or why not?

Ms. Smirolodo: "Making sure that everyone is doing their part as well as making sure the set is done, and props are where they need to can be very stressful."

Why did you choose to be the drama teacher for Piccowaxen?

Ms. Smirolodo: "Back in 2015 several students wanted to start a drama club, and they asked me to sponsor the club, and I said yes."

Written By: Aubree Bynum



Art All Around
Outlining the beauty
Everything can be art if you
just imagine...
Art can be colorful and
bright,
But also, dark and gloomy
Art has unique styles
everyone loves
Some people even paint with
gloves

Written By: Rachel Hammett
and Payton Acevedo

Picco BASEBALL

The Picco Baseball team after winning the
Championship.



The Picco Baseball team has had a great start to their season so far. One of the head coaches, Austin Schrauder, said, "We play 10 regular season games, then the playoffs. We are currently 5 wins 0 losses and 2 ties and have the #1 seed in the playoffs." The team has 14 players, 11 of them are in 8th grade and 3 are in 7th grade. They are optimistic for this season because of their past records. "We won the last 2 years prior to this, only losing 1 game total. Four current 8th graders have a chance to win 3 championships. It's been a great run," said Schrauder. They play 10 regular season games then the playoffs. Before the season started, they practiced twice a week at Elks on 257. The coaches said the strongest thing they have is their pitching. "All of the boys have done really well this season and have handled themselves really well with the high expectations and keeping up with the past success," said Schrauder. Expectations for the team are: Listen, Give Max Effort, Execute. Win the Championship.

Written By: Caden Coombs



Did you Know?

Did you know Mr. Hoefert's favorite hobby is "cycling" ...? He also won 2 races...! Mr. Hoefert's biggest pet peeve is when people start "packing up" while he is still teaching. So, if I were you, I would wait till he says you can pack up. The craziest thing Mr. Hoefert has done is he "went down a water slide standing up." I would never do that, personally. Would you...? Did you know his favorite foods are "pizza and ice cream" and when he was in 7th grade, he "flew under radar." Cool right...? But I wonder what he meant...? You should ask him what he meant.

Written By: Emabella Garrett

Ingredients:

- 2 cups of flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ cup of unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup of light brown sugar
- ½ cup of granulated sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract
- 2 cup of chocolate chips

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 325 and line 2 pans with parchment paper.
- In one bowl sift together flour, salt, and baking soda, set aside.
- Beat brown sugar, melted butter, and granulated sugar with an electric mixer till smooth. Add in the egg, egg yolk, and vanilla extract.
- Pour the dry ingredients into the mixer and stir until the dough is just combined. Add in chocolate chips.
- Drop spoonful's of dough 3 inches apart onto the baking sheets. Bake in the preheated oven for 15-17 minutes. Cool on wire rack.



Answer to the Riddle

The man was Mr. Hoefert.

Staff Writers

Editor-in-Chief: Kash Calvert
 Assistant Editor: Lillian Merkle
 Assistant Editor: Emabella Garrett
 Copy Editor: Jade Burch
 Copy Editor: Grace McKown
 Copy Editor: Aubree Bynum
 Payton Acevedo
 Caden Coombs
 Ziva Emhoff
 Yahaira Fuentes Canales
 Kayden Grant
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 Emma Hawkins
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Fall Football Word Search

1. 49ers
2. Bears
3. Bengals
4. Bills
5. Broncos
6. Browns
7. Buccaneers
8. Cardinals
9. Chargers
10. Chiefs
11. Colts
12. Commanders
13. Cowboys
14. Dolphins
15. Eagles
16. Falcons
17. Giants
18. Jaguars
19. Jets
20. Lions
21. Packers
22. Panthers
23. Patriots
24. Raiders
25. Rams
26. Ravens
27. Saints
28. Seahawks
29. Steelers
30. Texans
31. Titans
32. Vikings