

December 2024

Robotics Competition

By: Fabian Barajas and Alejandro Navarro

The MIT Robotics team participated in a competition at Chatsworth High School on Friday, November 22. There were four groups with four students in each group. Mr. Kodel, the 7th grade Robotics teacher, said the teams enjoyed getting to work with the robots and build them by hand.



Mr. Kodel and Ms. Rodriguez with their Robotics team.
Photo Credit: Ms. Lucy Rodriguez

Here is what the 7th graders had to say. "The funnest part was making the robot," said Ricardo Barragan. "It's a lot of work!" said Yareli Pacheco Reyes.

Here is what the 6th grade Robotics students had to say. Kimberly Pia said she joined Robotics because "I want to be an engineer when I grow up." She says that Robotics is "super fun." Erick Avalos said he joined Robotics because "I like building stuff." Building the robots is his favorite part of the class. Stephanie Holle did Robotics last year and was excited to do it again. She and Sophie Herrera agree that building the robots is their favorite part. Kimberly Pia said that the 6th grade Robotics teacher, Ms. Rodriguez, is "super nice," and that also makes the class fun.

Ms. Rodriguez said her favorite part about teaching the students is, "They will really show how capable and committed they are to their teams." She is teaching Robotics because "Ms. Cruz convinced me to co-teach with her, but now that she's gone I feel comfortable teaching by myself." Her favorite part of Robotics is "doing cool projects, and the competitions."

Mrs. Plotke's Winter Stars

By: Mia Lopez

Mrs. Plotke's orchestra and band classes had a winter concert on December 10th at 5 pm. All music students participated, and the cost of food, drinks, and shirts went towards buying new music equipment. The concert started off with 2nd period's amazing beginning orchestra. The other periods 1st and 3rd are beginning band, and they did a wonderful job as well. Beginning orchestra played soon after band. The concert ended with the spectacular flex period symphonic orchestra.

Fabian Barajas, a 7th grade student in beginning orchestra 2nd period, said he liked being in the concert. He plays the viola and he doesn't think he did the best, but he can hopefully improve in the next concert. Andrea Plascencia, 7th grade, plays the trumpet and she performed in the flex orchestra. Andrea said she liked playing and she thinks she did a good job. Mrs. Plotke said she thinks everyone did a fabulous job and she said they did better during the concert than they did during practice. Mrs. Plotke also said she's proud of the classes because everyone helped each other out and worked as a team. I believe everyone did a splendiferous job. They definitely deserved every round of applause they got.

House Challenges

By: Jeimy Carmona

Vaughn MIT has created house systems for every grade level. 8th grade houses are named "House of the Phoenix" and "House of Abundance." The 7th grade houses are named "House of Lions" and "House of Courage." The 6th grade houses are named "House of Dragons," "Tenacious Jagz," "Guardians of the Jaguars," "Black Mambas," and "Titans." Each house gets to pick their own theme song and motto.



One of the 7th grade houses is called "House of Lions."

On October 24, 2024 our first house challenges were held in the MPR. The game was called "Pyramid of Giza." Students had to stack red plastic cups on top of each other with chopsticks, and the first team to finish stacking wins. Students were excited for the challenge and cheered loudly for their teams.

7th grade student Emily Hernandez thinks the houses were a great idea. She thinks the challenges are fun, kind of easy, and somewhat competitive. Emily is a part of the 7th grade House of Lions. Her theme song is "The Gummy Bear."

"In my opinion, I think there could have been a better option, but the Gummy Bear song is fine," says Emily.

7th grade English and Journalism teacher Ms. Marroquin believes the house system is a good way for students to build community. She says, "It's been fun watching the students sing their house theme songs!"



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Opinion: Pros and Cons of Yondr Pouches

Yondr pouches are small bags that have a magnetic locking device on them. They are used for storing students' devices to prevent them from using their devices, such as phones and earbuds, during school hours. In this month's issue, students debate the pros and cons of Yondr pouches.

Yondr pouch and magnet
Photo Credit: New York Times



PRO

By: Rosa Zamora-Godoy

Should Yondr pouches be banned? Everyone has different opinions, but many students hate using Yondr pouches. I think this because nowadays everyone is addicted to their phones, that's the problem. I get it, it's hard to get off your phone. But are you really addicted to the point you need to use your phone in school?

In my opinion, students should use the Yondr pouches because school is time for education. According to the London School of Economics, students without access to cell phones perform 13-20% better on exams. Having your phone out while doing assignments/exams in class can tempt you to search up questions on Google, which doesn't actually help you learn. Yondr pouches also keep students from having distractions. If you are zoning out on your phone and the teacher calls on you to answer, you won't know what to do because you were distracted.

Using phones at school without Yondr pouches can also lead to cyberbullying. We all know your friends have an embarrassing photo of you. Imagine they just post it or show everyone in class. That puts you in an awkward situation. Why do you need to use your phone in school anyway? You have time when you go home to use it. Using your phone can lead to addiction to social media. Students having their phones out at school can lead to them taking pictures of you or others and posting them on social media. It leads to you getting bullied or reposted. In conclusion, phones should be away during school, and using Yondr pouches can help us to be responsible.

CON

By: Deonna Bautista

The Yondr pouches may have many pros to them but there are also plenty of cons. First of all, schools spend lots of money just to invest in Yondr pouches for everyone when they could use the money to improve classes, school, or host more programs for us. Also Yondr pouches are pretty expensive and some people might not be able to afford them. If the schools want us to use these pouches then they should hand them to us for free instead of forcing us to buy them.

Some teachers believe that phones are a big distraction for their students, which is sometimes true, but they are still very important devices. Instead of having us put our phone in locked pouches for the whole day, teachers should just collect our phones during class time and give them back at the end of class. Schools should only make us put our phones in pouches during important tests/exams to prevent students from cheating.

I asked three different 7th grade students what they thought about using the Yondr pouches. Diego Partida thinks that having a Yondr pouch is a very big con, because what if students need their phones to contact their parents for an emergency? Eduardo Jimenez states that we shouldn't have Yondr pouches because if something happens at home while we are in school we can call a relative to come pick us up and take us home. Lastly, David Rivera says that we shouldn't have Yondr pouches because we should at least be able to use our phones during our break time.

The Jaguar Journal—December 2024

Vaughn Profiles

Interviewing a Winner of the Turkey Bowl

By: Andre Martinez

“I’ve known Vaughn my whole life. I’ve been here from preschool to high school, and now I work here,” Mr. JJ stated after I asked him how he found out about Vaughn.

Mr. JJ is a Vaughn staff member who is also a P.E. teacher’s aide. I asked Mr. JJ what he would like to be if he wasn’t a teacher and he said, “I would become a police officer or a firefighter, because I like helping people and making sure they’re safe.” I also asked why he became a teacher and he said, “I used to come here and a lot of my teachers influenced me, so I decided to influence other students.”

Mr. JJ’s favorite sport is soccer. He says, “I like watching and playing all sports but soccer is #1.” He also just recently played on the winning team during the 2024 Turkey Bowl, and I asked him how he felt after winning. He said, “It’s always a good feeling to beat the students, especially after they always talk trash to us.”

Miguel Padilla, 7th grade, said, “I like Mr. JJ because he’s chill like that and he let me play games with his students last year.” Jonathan B, 7th grade, said, “I like Mr. JJ because he’s chill and cool.”

I interviewed Mr. JJ because he’s a pretty cool teacher and when we run he pushes students to run more. What I like about Mr. JJ is that he challenges students to do their best and he jokes about stuff.



Mr. JJ was at the Dignity Health Sports Park in Carson for the 2024 MLS Cup Final.

Photo provided by Mr. JJ

How an MIT Student Feels About Vaughn

By: Andrea Plascencia

“I had some ups and downs, but overall I like Vaughn,” says Bella Spindler. Bella Spindler is a 7th grade Vaughn M.I.T. student. Bella has been at Vaughn since she was in kindergarten, and she says it was because her parents decided to put her at this school.

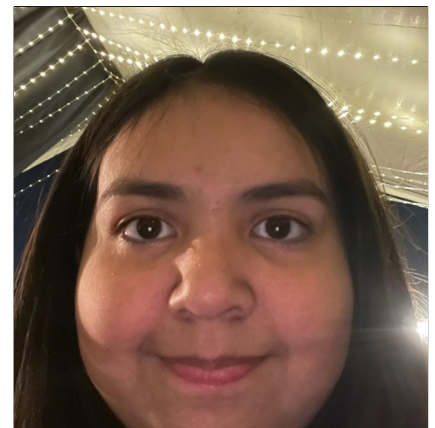
Bella says that she likes her teachers. Some are strict, but they have to be. “My favorite teacher is Ms. Marroquin because she’s really nice and funny,” Bella says.

However, Bella hates the no phone policy at Vaughn. Math is her least favorite class because it’s too hard for her and she does not enjoy it.

Bella’s favorite thing to do at Vaughn is doing art projects for her art class. Her favorite art project so far is the Unit Project which is drawing a message that addresses a conflict in the world. “I’ve been drawing since I was little so I always enjoyed art,” Bella says.

Bella’s first semester as a 7th grader was rough at first, but she is proud of her grades. Next semester she wants to improve her math skills.

Bella Spindler is a very funny, nice student and always does her best. She always makes very funny jokes and makes me laugh. Overall, Bella is a cheerful, energetic student.



Bella Spindler, 7th grade

Photo shared by Bella Spindler

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Jaguar Athletics and Sports News

Turkey Bowl 2024

By: Jonathan Barba

The Turkey Bowl is an MIT football event where the 8th grade students play against the staff and teachers. The event occurred on November 26, 2024. This year, the staff won against the 8th graders, with a score of 42 to 7. Mr. Kodel has played in the Turkey Bowl for six years, and will most likely be playing in the Turkey Bowl for several years to come. He said, “I had fun in the Turkey Bowl and I believed that we were going to win, which we did.”

*Turkey Bowl Final Score: 42-7
Photo provided by Ms. Villanueva*



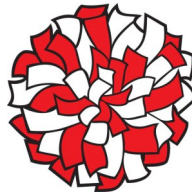
Cheerleading at Vaughn MIT

By: Camila De Los Santos

Cheer tryouts were held on the blacktop for all grade levels (6-8) from December 4 - 6. This year’s cheerleading coaches are Ms.

Lisbeth Gutierrez (Ms. Lis, Ms. Messer’s P.E. teacher assistant in Rm 13) and Coach Kimberly. Ms. Lis said that cheerleading tryouts went really well and “it was a really hard decision” to choose the top cheerleaders. “30 girls tried out, 25 were chosen, but originally only 20 were going to be chosen.” She said they chose 25 instead of 20 because of how good they were.

Ms. Lis said that she saw a lot of “commitment and dedication” from the cheerleaders trying out. She is looking forward to “the team building, having fun with the girls, and seeing them compete.” Let’s show our support to the cheerleaders by cheering for them when they do compete.



LeBron James: Career Highlights and His First Three Championships

By: William Diaz

LeBron James was drafted as the first overall pick to his hometown team, the Cleveland Cavaliers, in the 2003 NBA Draft at 18 years of age. He started in his first season game with 25 points against the Sacramento Kings. At the conclusion of the season, James became the first Cavalier to receive the NBA Rookie of the Year Award. After seven years with the Cavaliers, he moved to the Miami Heat, where he won his first NBA Championship and Finals MVP. The next season LeBron and the Miami Heat team went 66-16 in the regular season. They went on to face San Antonio in the 2013 NBA Finals, and beat the Spurs 95-88, winning LeBron his second championship and second Finals MVP. In 2014, LeBron returned to Cleveland, where he won yet another championship and Finals MVP. I am writing about LeBron because he has spoken about retiring from professional basketball soon. His longevity is amazing, he went to the finals eight times in a row, and he will be remembered as a basketball legend.



LeBron James dunking in the 2024 Olympics.

Photo Credit: Sports Illustrated

Baseball, Handball, or Kickball at MIT?

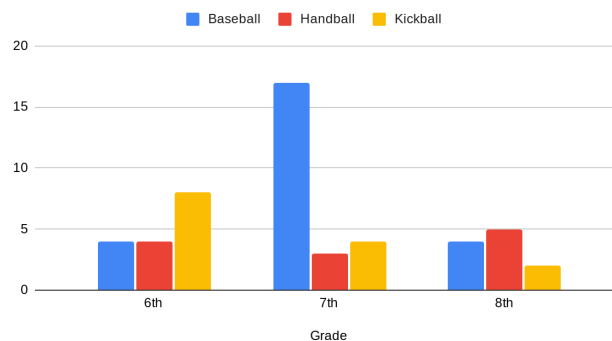
By: Danny Castro, Roselyn Cruz, Valentina Serrano

We interviewed MIT students about their opinions on what competitive sport to bring to our school. The options were baseball, handball, and kickball.

The most picked for 6th grade was kickball. 6th grader Melissa said, “I chose kickball because it is more fun to play and I feel like kickball is easier to play.” The majority of 7th grade students picked baseball, with 17 people choosing baseball. 7th grader

Yessulik Gamez said, “Baseball is one of the most played sports in America.” Last, the majority of 8th graders chose handball. 8th grader Mia said, “I chose handball because it seemed to be the easiest to play.”

Baseball, Handball and Kickball



Local and National News

Vaughn's Annual Toy Giveaway

By: Samantha Jauregui

Did you know that Vaughn has hosted a toy distribution giveaway every year since 2018? Alma Nava, the Family and Community Center Coordinator, says, "We do it to spread holiday cheer, and make a difference in the lives of those in need." This toy distribution giveaway will be hosted at the Vaughn Family and Community Center on December 19, from 4:30pm - 6:00pm. We are excited to see you this Dec 19th.



Vaughn kids after receiving their toys.

Photo Credit: Alma Nava, Family and Community Center Coordinator

2024 US Presidential Election

By: David Rivera

The 2024 US Elections have been completed, and Donald J Trump has been elected president for the 2nd time. The election was held on November 5, 2024. Kamala Harris won almost 75 million votes and 226 electoral votes, and Donald Trump won over 77 million votes and 312 electoral votes.

As president, Donald Trump wants to change the policies of the current president, Joe Biden. According to AP News, "Trump's tax policies broadly tilt toward corporations and wealthier Americans." He wants to change the tax code and lower the corporate income tax rate. He also wants to get rid of the Inflation Reduction Act, which supports clean energy and is meant to fight climate change.

Another big policy is deportation. According to CBS News, "Trump has promised to launch the largest deportation operation in American history." Government officials are unsure whether this promise is possible, because it would be difficult to deport millions of unauthorized immigrants. In addition, some undocumented immigrants have children who are already considered U.S. citizens.



Donald Trump and Kamala Harris face off in the 2024 Election

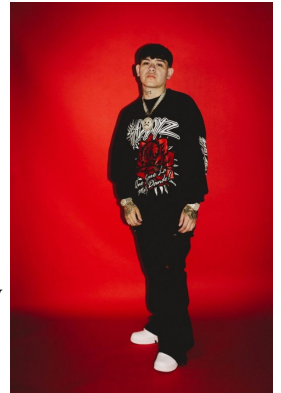
Photo Credit: nbcnews.com

Feature News

Introduction to Junior H's Music

By: Ayleen Mendez

Ever heard of Junior H's music? If you haven't let me put you on some beautiful music. In my opinion, he's one of my top artists that I listen to every day. Junior H is pretty famous and well known. Some popular songs that you might know from him are "Y Lloro," "Lady Gaga," "La Durango," and "El Hijo Mayor." My personal favorites are "Piensalo," "Intro," and "Lokeron x Amor."



Mexican singer Junior H.

Photo Credit: concertful.com

I'm writing about Junior because I absolutely think his music is amazing and I want to share it with others to encourage other people to listen to him. Junior H makes relatable music and I feel like his music is also very comforting. Junior H is also known for being the most important of the corridos tumbados. If you don't know what corridos tumbados means, it's basically a Mexican style of music that takes the style of traditional songs (corridos) and blends them with trap, hip-hop, and reggaeton.

To get to know Junior H a little better, his real name is Antonio Herrera Perez. He was born on April 23, 2001 and is currently 23 years old. Junior H is an amazing songwriter, singer, and guitarist. If you pay attention to his lyrics he mostly writes about relationships. Junior H has written over 100 songs, including collabs with artists like Peso Pluma and Herrera. Some of the songs you may know that Junior has collabed on are "El Tsurito," "Lady Gaga," "Luna," and "Bipolar." The song "Lady Gaga" peaked at number 1 on Mexican Songs. While I was writing this I was in fact listening to Junior H and his collaboration with Peso Pluma. I hope you will listen to Junior H and hopefully come to love him as much as I do.

Arts & Entertainment



Photo Credit: imdb.com

Moana 2

By: Miguel Padilla

Moana is one of the best Disney movies, mostly known for its great music, including “You’re Welcome,” “Where You Are,” and “We Know The Way.” With all this, when *Moana 2* was announced, people were jumping off their seats waiting to see the movie, hoping it would be as good as the first. When the Nov 27 release date came, fans were not happy, and started making videos about it being nowhere close to as good as the first one.

But I have a different opinion. I like the movie. People don’t like it because of the songs, and one specific one: “Can I Get a Chee Hoo?” People say this song is a big downgrade from “You’re Welcome,” one of the most memorable songs in *Moana*. I think this is a dumb reason to dislike the movie. It’s not going to be as good as the first because some people are blinded by nostalgia, and when something new comes out they hate it. I find it weird that people hold something with so many expectations. Personally, I think it is a good song, and the movie is not as bad as people say it is. If you go to watch it with your friends or family you will see that it’s a great watch for many reasons. It has great animation and a nice story, plus it adds new characters which are actually pretty good, including an evil coconut. Around the ending of the movie when they fight the villain, something crazy happens which I won’t say for spoilers, but it is an enjoyable watch. If you watch it with high expectations then you’re never going to like it, so go watch it as a family movie, not the Need To Be The Best Movie. This is why I think *Moana 2* is not a flop, but a good family movie.

Pierce the Veil: I Can’t Hear You Tour Upcoming in 2025

By: Kayla Guevarra.

Post-Hardcore Emo band, “Pierce the Veil” has officially announced their “I Can’t Hear You Tour” on December 3, 2024. The I Can’t Hear You Tour will be performed across North America, Europe, and Latin America. Openers will include bands like, Sleeping With Sirens, Beach Weather, Daisy Grenade, Cavetown, Hot Mulligan, and Crawlers. Pierce the Veil’s tour is

one of their biggest tours since 2007. The Pierce the Veil’s Eras Tour will include all of their albums such as, “A Flare For the Dramatic” released in 2007, “Selfish Machines” released in 2010, “Collide With the Sky” released in 2012, “Misadventures” released in 2017, and lastly, “The Jaws Of Life” released in 2024. The tour will also include songs that they have not played since 2017, which is a big deal for all us emo music listeners. There will be 46 shows played throughout the whole tour and many of them have already sold out. Pierce the Veil will be playing in famous stadiums such as the Kia Forum in Inglewood, Madison Square Garden in New York, and Las Vegas Festival Grounds.



Photo Credit: livenation.com

A Tim Burton Christmas Classic

By: Sophia Hernandez

Ever since Christmas is coming, you feel like you need to have something that gives the holiday spirit, right? Christmas is a holiday that brings kids and parents together to spend quality time with each other, and something families like to do during this time of year is watch Christmas movies with some sort of beverage or snack. A popular movie that lots of people like to watch is *The Nightmare Before Christmas*. This film, released in 1993, is the story of a skeleton (Jack Skellington) A.K.A the King of Halloweentown, who is tired of celebrating the same holiday every year...until he stumbles upon something new (Christmas). He gets so interested in it that he tries to take over the holiday. This movie is so appealing to viewers it makes them want to watch it more than once. But what makes this movie even better is that it’s combined with Halloween and Christmas. What also makes this film great is the fact that the characters look amazing. The colors and the music are great too! They give spooky and fun vibes at the same time. I enjoy watching this movie because it is very entertaining and I like that it is stop motion animation. It looks cool. In my opinion, I think this movie is perfect to watch on Christmas Eve.



Photo Credit: wikipedia.com

Have suggestions for our next issue?

Email Ms. Marroquin at bmarroquin@myvaughncharter.com, or fill out the [Journalism Suggestion Form](#) online: rb.gy/uo3r76