



Steven,
Caedence and
Easton Bounds



Ryan Thomas

Our hearts are broken

By Laynie Reed

Easton Bounds life was taken on December 7, 2024 in a fatal car accident. In the crash his brother Steven, his sister Ashton and friend Ryan Thomas were badly injured. This event ripped through the heart of the Pleasant Hill Community.

Easton was known as the kindest person. He always knew how to make the room light up. Easton always had the biggest smile. People saw something luminous in him. Easton's love for God shone through.

Easton was always making people laugh. He loved to put others before himself. He always had others' best interest in mind. Easton loved church and loved God.

Easton enjoyed anything football—either playing or helping run the scoreboard at youth games.

Easton loved his family and messing around with his older brother and “picking” on his little sister. He adored his dad and savored spending time with him. Easton's memory will live on in the hearts of family and friends.

Steven, Ryan and Ashton are recovering from their multiple injuries. Friends and community have embraced the Bounds through prayers and donations.



Here are notes written about Easton and placed on his locker door.

Easton knew how to make everyone smile. If you got mad he knew how to calm you down. He loved football. He was the nicest kid I ever met. He used to come in every morning and say “good morning” to me. He played defensive end and halfback. He came out with everything padded. He loved doing PE and loved being out in the field with his friends. They were everything to him. He stood up for everyone. He liked the school chicken nuggets. In the middle of classes he would start singing and dancing. Teachers loved him.

--Dakota Mertz

Easton always had a smile no matter what. He could make a whole room laugh in seconds, he will be missed.

--Lauren D.

Dear Easton, one of my favorite memories with you was when he would eat his salami and cosmic brownies and when we did a skit for Mrs McCool's class, and when he would sing “ding dong eat it up.”

--Bethany Carleton

Thank you for everything you've done to me and with me. Just know God is on you and your families side and he will take good care of you and your family. You are in a good place now.

--Tyson Humphrey

“You are so funny and always had a smile on your face. Every time you walked into Mrs.McCool's you lit up the whole room with your contagious laugh, we all miss you and love you. Fly high buddy.

—Annaclaire Anderson

I remember when we went to the corn maze and Easton kept getting scared, and we couldn't split up unless we were in groups of 3-4. He kept freaking out. When we split up he instantly called us running then hung up. We could still hear him running and yelling after he hung up.

--Charley Shantz

Dear Easton, we love and miss you so, so, so much. We wish you were here right now. There's so much more I love about you, but the paper is too short. Love you buddy, fly high.

--Reese Bagwell

Easton is the sweetest person I've ever met, he had the most contagious laugh and was always joking around. He always thought we were cousins because he had a family member who was a Dockery, love you Easton.

-- With love, Reese Dockery.

This card is not big enough to document Easton's big heart and kind spirit! His smile, our talks~ he always asked how I was, we talked about the Ducks and how busy he was, (but he would take time to talk, sweep my room, put things away, etc) He wanted to do well and be the best person he could be.

--B McCool

Easton you are so awesome and kind. You made everyone feel welcome. We are going to miss you.

--Junie Epperson

Easton was my lab partner in science. He was always very outgoing and would always make jokes and laugh. He would always call me a “drama queen” then I didn't know realize how much of a blessing it was to know him

--Corrine Neal



Issue 2 Volume 74 December 20th, 2024

The Luke Jackson Era Begins

By Josie Heacock

What comes to mind when you think “Pleasant Hill Boys Basketball?” For Luke Jackson, it is “having defense become our identity. When I think of Pleasant Hill basketball, I think of guys that play unselfish and play hard, hard defense and making that our identity is probably the biggest preseason challenge. I know we can score against teams but we have to be able to stop them too. We have a deep team and a versatile team and it's going to be about finding a new identity in that defense.”

To create a new identity in defense, the program needs to be founded upon an unselfish team. “It starts with having a joy for basketball and having fun while you're playing. Getting up and down and trying to score and transition and being a defensive minded team. We want to spread it out, play unselfish, play for one another.”

This mindset isn't just for the team, but also for Jackson. He believes that “as a player [you have to] find joy in the trivial everyday fundamentals and the work that it takes to become good. Just preparing for the game, but having fun while doing it. Nothing in life worth doing is easy. If it's going to be hard, you might as well make it fun. As a coach, I would say just taking things that I'm not going to budge on and holding us accountable to that standard. Having a commitment to excellence is not budging on those things.”

Taking this commitment to excellence, combined with a belief of brotherhood, helps shape the environment of the boys' program at Pleasant Hill. Jackson said he wants to build “A culture of having a brotherhood, where no one on the team is more valuable than anybody else, it doesn't matter how much you are playing or not playing. Everyone has their own value and we are going on a journey of the season together. Having a culture that works hard and has a will to prepare.”

This season, the boys are going on a tough journey together. “We are playing the hardest preseason schedule of anyone in the season, we are going to get tested early. Hopefully, that galvanizes us as a group. A trial by fire and that we can grow through that.”

When the trail becomes rough, that is when your talent gets tested. Part of the challenge is, “To learn what your best effort is for the guys. Obviously we want to win, but giving your best and finding out what that is every single day it's our goal to win a state championship, but if you give your best and you come up short, then you are still a champion but it's about having that will to prepare and learning to work hard. A lot of times the reward is in the journey. it's our goal to win state and work as hard as we can to play for one another.”

Coming back from a successful season last year, some the outstanding players on the team are, “Obviously Gavin was the player of the year and Landen is returning first team all league guy, we have some experience coming back with guys like Jacob and Chase and we have great senior leadership with Gavin Foglio and Kaden Fisher. It's really exciting we have a huge group of sophomores and juniors that are going to get an opportunity to be really meaningful and impactful players. Doug Green and Noah Johnson stand out as some sophomores that have an impact. But I think everyone is going to get a chance and have a role in winning games at different parts of the season.”

Above photograph taken by the Creswell Chronicle.



"Is America Today Our Forefathers' Vision?" Voice of Democracy Essay

In a recent VFW essay contest, Emily Krauss won regional recognition and is heading to the state competition for her winning essay. Emily has been a past winner of this essay competition.



By Emily Krauss

If our forefathers somehow appeared in our country today- powdered wigs and all, what would they think?

Well- first they might have a heart attack seeing someone make a phone call or drive a car- but if they saw the towering cities, or took a walk through Congress would they be proud of what they saw- the diversity in our government, and the way we have upheld the democratic systems they worked so hard to build?

Or rather, if they stopped to listen to the political conversation- would the response be one of resounding disappointment? After all, our forefathers warned us explicitly against what they called factions- or what we would today call political parties. John Adams even said at the founding of the republic “There is nothing which I dread so much as a division of the republic into two great parties, each arranged under its leader, and concerting measures in opposition to each other. This, in my humble apprehension, is to be dreaded as the greatest political evil under our Constitution.”

It's no secret that in the past few decades America has been experiencing political polarization at a rapid rate as our two party system moves further and further apart.

People have begun to drift away from each other ideologically, decreasing their ability to compromise on issues. From just 2023 to 2024 alone, a study found that in the public's opinion, the amount of common ground on policies- or ability for either side to reach an understanding, had gone down by over 16 percent.

And while American history may be rich with tales of different political parties- from the federalists and antifederalists to today's democrats and republicans- it doesn't mean this separation is normal. However, while polarization may be easiest to see in our central bodies of government where opinions can be the loudest- and the most influential, the majority of Americans sit somewhere in the middle. These people are more often than not politically unengaged, therefore allowing those with the strongest opinions to run our country.

To be fair, America has never been a perfect union- in fact some may say it's always been deeply and fundamentally flawed. They wouldn't be entirely wrong, from the time of our founding it has been a constant uphill battle to further extend rights to citizens and adjust with the changing times.

Our forefathers knew our country was going to expand, and that technologies would grow with it. So, they left a set of foundational documents to both outline our governmental systems and more importantly- the ways to change it.

The Bill of Rights is one of these documents, containing the first amendments to our constitution in 1791, ensuring that the government couldn't take over the rights of individual citizens. But the truth of the matter is at the founding of our country, I wouldn't have been able to vote- or even own property. In fact a very small percentage of today's citizens would have been allowed to exercise the rights supposedly allocated to them in the Constitution.

That's why people have had to spend the last 200 years working to change our laws- so the government can protect all the people of this country. This isn't to say we have somehow found perfect equality- there is always more work to be done. However, the progress that's been made has allowed us to grow- which is important, change doesn't happen overnight. As said by former first Lady Michelle Obama “We were planting seeds of change, the fruit of which we might never see. We had to be patient.”

While America may not be perfect- I choose to believe our forefathers would have been proud of where we are today. While our politics may be more divisive- we haven't passed the point of no return. I think they would have chosen to focus on the good parts- how basic rights have been extended to people all over the country, increasing freedom and quality of life.

But most of all, I think they would be proud of the resilience of America. That through all these years we have continued forward with the same passion and desire to better ourselves.

That is the true American vision.

No job is too big for a wildlife biologist

By Lawson Halstead

Marion Brooks is a local wildlife biologist at Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. She has been a wildlife biologist for 15 years. Her job involves maintaining Oregon's big game and wildlife populations.

She likes her job because she gets to be in the woods and look for wildlife. Her favorite part of her job is helping wildlife and people.

The scariest part of her job is darting cougars and hoping they are sedated. She sedates cougars as part of her research on populations and diet.

Brooks especially enjoys doing helicopter elk surveys which involves taking pictures, counting the cows in the herd and counting the points on the Bulls antlers.

She has live-trapped cougar kittens and bear cubs to relocate or help revive the health of the animal .

To become a wildlife biologist, a student needs to have a four-year degree and natural resource experience. Brooks got her bachelor's degree in wildlife management at OSU. She got her job by doing a lot of temporary jobs which lasted 2 to 3 years.

Her least favorite part of being a wildlife biologist is putting down animals from people illegally picking them up and taking them home. Brooks also does not like having to remove crossbow Bolts from illegal shootings of game. Crossbows are illegal to hunt with in Oregon because of their high chances of injuring an animal rather than killing it.

Her favorite animal is a bear because they are hardy and resistant to weather and climate change. Bears have a cool reproductive system. To make sure the cub or cubs survive, upon mating, the fertilized egg can be held for a period of time. This is called delayed implantation.

The factor that determines if the fertilized egg is taken by uterus or gets sloughed off is the survival or death of the last year's cub. Sows keep their cubs for 2 years. Bear sows can have 1-3 cubs.



Mary Anne Brooks treats a fawn as part of her work as a Wildlife Biologist.



A promising career: Cyber Security

By Angel Calva

Much of life nowadays relies on technology so it makes sense to have reliable security to protect your information. That's the basic concept of cybersecurity.

Cybersecurity is also a big career field for students interested in computer technology.

Before you even begin learning about cybersecurity, you will need to learn the language of how computers communicate.

Computers "speak" in 0's and 1's called binary code. We made languages to help us understand how to input problems into a system to get outputs.

There are many languages of code but the ones you will most likely learn for cybersecurity are Python, C, and C+.

There are distinct differences between languages, for example, if you want to say "hello!" in python you would input print('Hello!'). But in C you would have to input:

```
int main() {  
    // printf() displays the string inside quotation  
    printf("Hello!");  
    return 0;  
}
```

There is a clear difference between languages and each network will work with different ones. The most popular coding language is Python because the design of the code enhances its readability.

Working in cyber security means protecting network information from unwanted outside sources like hackers, attacks, and even malicious code. Most of what is done in cyber security is to make the network security stronger by "ethically" hacking into it, to find any weaknesses.

When you are studying cybersecurity, an important activity to look into is "capture the flag." It's an exercise in which you, individually or as part of a team, are challenged to find and exploit vulnerabilities in a system, or to capture a "flag" or piece of information. "Capture the flag is extremely useful and never too early to do," said Christian Meinzen, an employee in a cyber security firm.

Schooling for cyber security might look like taking math courses like discrete algebra and differential equations.

When you're working in cybersecurity the solution won't always be apparent and it's a lot of puzzle solving. Most of the time if you can't figure out a solution you can look up your problem online and sometimes there will be others who've had the same problem.

In a world where technology is taking over, cybersecurity is all about protecting information. In the field of cyber security figuring out how to secure systems can be as rewarding as it is critical. Anyone can help make the digital world a safer place.



Charlie Shantz holds up her papier maché creation of a Wendigo, an Algonquin spirit.

Dixon loves to see kids excited by singing

By Evander Ruiz

Pleasant Hill has had its fair share of music teachers, but starting this year we have a new choir teacher: Mr Dixon. With a new teacher it's hard to get to know them, so here are all some interesting things about Mr Dixon. I asked him "Why do you want to be a music teacher?"

"I have always loved to sing. I had a very influential choir director when I was in school. I also love seeing students excited about singing." Now to know why he wanted to teach, I asked him."Why did you pick a Pleasant Hill choir to teach?"

"I was drawn to this job because of the rich history of how great the PHHS choir has been." And finally I asked."How do you think it's going now?"

"It's going pretty well, we're building a solid foundation and sounding good."



New intern learns the the ropes of athletic directing

By Ellie Epperson

You might've seen our new athletic director intern, Aaron von Bruck, in Mr. McClain's office. Von Bruck is currently attending Bushnell University. At Bushnell University, all senior students are required to complete an internship class.

"The most interesting one [to me] was Pleasant Hill," said Aaron.

"I would have the opportunity to work at an actual high school with the athletic director and assistant principal. That was really the main thing that did it for me. I'll be able to work at a physical high school and be involved in the community and be surrounded by students and faculty. My experience has been very positive and I enjoy it here."

This is Aaron's third year attending Bushnell. "[I'm in] the kinesiology program but I'm majoring in coaching and athletic administration. It's a mix of kinesiology and [incorporates] a business/coaching aspect also."

Aaron is originally from the Seattle area and attended high school at Bellevue and Nathan Hale. After he graduates, he hopes to own a business. "I want to own my own gym. [But I am majoring in athletic administration because] I get the coaching aspect of things and that'll help me out with running a business, learning how to lead people. And then also, I get the kinesiology aspect of things, learning about the human body and learning how to train people." Aaron gets his work goal from his dad who is a business owner too.

As for his responsibilities as an intern, Aaron has worked on several social media posts for the Pleasant Hill athletics page, and is designing a pamphlet for winter sports. The pamphlet will be available early in the basketball season.

"If you're interested in going to Bushnell, come talk to me!"



Middle School lunch is CHAOS

By Alexis Moch

Middle school lunch is chaos!
So I was wondering, how can we make it better?
Middle school lunch has typically five adults who are supervising. There are three adults in the cafeteria and two out monitoring the track.
“Sometimes there are two of us on the track, but most of the time I am the only one out here,” said Mrs. Chelsi. With about 230 middle school students, that is a lot of students to monitor. Students said they saw “Mrs. Chelsi, Mr. Salmond, Ms. Allison and Mrs. Hill” most often at lunch duty.
When asked “What are students allowed to do during lunch?” Ms. Allison replied, “Their options for lunch are usually just [being in] the Student Center or the track or the auxiliary gym if it is raining.”
Mrs. Chelsi said that “our ball bag used to be filled at the beginning of the year, but over time they have been lost or destroyed. The equipment we have only keeps them busy for so long.”
“What are the rules on the track at lunch?” Mrs. Chelsi responded “[Students] have to stay inside the black fence. Only the track and turf are allowed.”

Ms. Allison shared that Mr. Salmond “instilled the rule of no physical contact last year.”
One 6th grade student expressed, “I don’t really know the rules at lunch. It might be helpful to go over them again.” Five other 6th graders agreed with this comment.

Many students like to play football or tag on the track. However, most times this becomes more physical and students end up tackling each other or wrestling each other into the ground.
“Kids are constantly being rough with each other by wrestling/tackling/shoving. Even when there were two of us out here, we couldn’t put out every little fire that popped up,” replied Ms. Allison.
Ryland Liday said, “I don’t really go out to the track. It’s kind of chaotic.”
Students were asked, “What could make lunch better?”
A 7th grade student said, “Lunch is fine the way it is, but maybe more gym time.” Another 6th grade student said, “more activities or things we can do.”
I reached out to Mr. Salmond and his response was “During lunch middle school students can be in the student center, courtyard, library, track or gym depending on weather, or in a classroom when pre-arranged with a teacher. Beyond staff regular work space there is additional supervision assigned to the student center/courtyard & track/gym. The rules for the track are the rules for our school: be safe, be respectful, and be responsible.”

He also said “In terms of how we can make lunch better for students, I welcome student feedback on what they would like to see. I think working with the student council on a structure to propose changes to lunch would be a great place to start.”

The effects of over parenting

By Emily Wardle

Many of us have had some sort of experience with an unhappy or toxic relationship whether it be romantic or platonic. In such a toxic relationship the other person can be outwardly uncaring or unloving, but what we may not realize is that this can appear in what has always seemed like a loving or healthy relationship. A mother’s overbearingness can be more controlling and damaging to one’s life than we may notice.



A study done by the University of Virginia found that kids who grew up with parents that had over-controlling behavior had a harder time with displaying assertiveness and independence throughout childhood. By the time they had reached adulthood, they struggled with romantic relationships where support wasn’t given frequently, or even getting into a romantic relationship at all.

A study was done on the association between over-parenting and child’s mental health, more specifically their general self-efficacy and environmental mastery. For context, self-efficacy is about an individual’s confidence in their personal ability to successfully achieve goals and their performance in various situations. Environmental mastery is about the extent to which someone believes themselves capable when navigating situations and managing events. Someone having both of these is a strong indicator of psychological well-being.

Both anxiety and depression have heavy associations with children who had experienced a childhood of over-parenting. When explaining the negative associations in this the theory of self-determination was created. This theory says that a controlling context (in this case parents) tends to make the child frustrated due to a lack of autonomy. In addition, other psychological needs such as competence and relatedness are also dampened.

This pushes the child down a road of ineffective coping, little to no self-control/regulation, and attachment insecurity in close relationships.

- Tim Meinzen-Advisor
- Jocelyn Heacock
- Ellie Epperson
- Ellie Thebo
- Laynie Reed
- Taliegh Jackson
- Angel Calva
- Carson Bernardo
- Evander Ruiz
- Greta Gramzow
- Zoe Harr
- Ava Loose
- Izabella
- Patterson- Giles
- Aria Verma
- Caroline Carlson
- Sienna Malekzadeh
- Alexis Moch
- Darren Soper
- Arianna Bowman
- Brooklyn Breslaw
- Camryn Carey
- Colton Carey
- Emerson Hill
- Sofia Ameen
- Ella Blake
- Hunter Musgrove-
- Crabtree
- Zane Koszegi
- Kylie Lan
- AJ Taylor
- Jaxson Potts
- Mark Buchan
- Andrew King
- Dani Boyd
- Emerie Martin
- Emily Wardle
- Fatima Garcia
- Juan Contreras
- Jay Griffiths
- Maddie Rife
- Oscar Jimenez
- Lawson Halstead
- Autumn Epley
- Sofia Dennis
- Ava Umbarger
- Alexis Moch

The Billie Bulletin

opinion



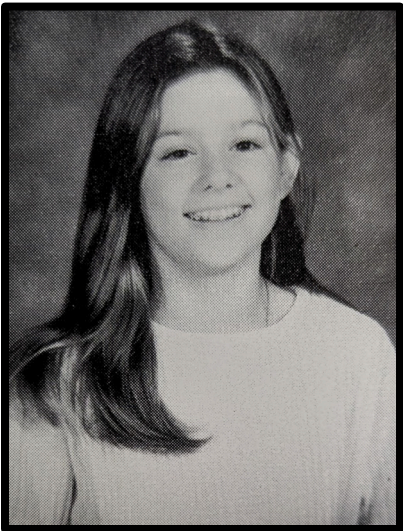
How to destroy relationships

By Laynie Reed

Teenagers AND married couples can have issues with their partner being on social media.
This isn't just the concerned partner overthinking or “being crazy,” it's a real thing to be worried about. On most social media, most things delete after a period of time. This is a way of being able to hide things from their partner and cheat.
In this generation cheating almost feels normal. Having a relationship in middle school or high school will provide perspective on how having strong feelings for someone makes you feel.
Getting cheated on could change the person's way of seeing love and feeling like they never want to trust anyone again.
Being on social media makes cheating so easy and very easy to hide. From my experience on social media and having a broken relationship has taught me to keep my guard up. And it has taught me to be clear about my opposition to not having access to unlock a partner's phone.
I interviewed one of our classmates and she said “Cheating is one click away on Social media.”
This realization is something I'm sure a lot of people can relate to.
Social media is a HUGE reason relationships end up torn apart. And it is hard because the high school generation is just as bad without social media.

Jennifer and Darlene Baker: A mother’s story

By Taliegh Jackson



I interviewed Darlene Baker whose daughter, Jennifer took her life in 1997. I was asked to learn about her daughter, Jennifer. Honestly I felt kind of bad interviewing her, I wasn’t sure the types of emotions it could bring up. And It was my first time ever interviewing someone, especially about their daughter. Jennifer was an only child and she was petite, outgoing, well liked and athletic.
Darlene talked about how Jennifer excelled in sports, especially volleyball, and even doing basketball and pole vaulting. She was very “mighty,” playful and also a tomboy. Darlene mentioned she could never get Jennifer into a dress. There were NO signs of her suicidal ideations, no warning signs, nothing. Everyone was stunned and shocked when she killed herself.

Darlene asked Jennifer’s Psychology teacher if there was anything in her notes, but there were no warnings. She was masking her pain. She actually did write a suicide note and gave it to her friend. Jennifer made it clear she was serious but, tragically, she wasn't taken seriously. Students who found the note before thought it was a joke, passed it around and then discarded it the day before Jennifer took her life.
The staff found the note under the bleachers after Jennifer took her life. Darlene said she didn’t blame anyone for this, as it was 1997 and no one was really educated on how to even begin dealing with suicide. I asked Darlene why Jennifer might've killed herself and she said she believed it was from stress over sports. Jennifer was too afraid to reach out to her mother because she didn’t want to be a disappointment.
Before Jennifer died, everyone in her family was close and happy. Then after her suicide it was very hard since Jennifer was their only child. They felt so lost, then eventually they reached out to educate themselves with a non-profit organization called Looking Glass.
The key lesson here is that all of us need to take seriously any consideration of suicide. Report any talk of suicide to an adult, and always, always be sensitive to signs of hopelessness.
I genuinely hope readers take a lesson away from her story, suicide devastates all the survivors. For direct help dial 988 for a suicide hotline.

4 features

Festival of Lights: *Holi and Diwali*

By Aria Verma

Many people celebrate holidays like Christmas, Halloween, Saint Patrick's Day, etc, but maybe you haven't heard about the popular Indian holidays celebrated around the same time as these other holidays.

Diwali and Holi are the most popular holidays in India, the most populous country on earth with over a billion people. A growing number of Americans claim Indian heritage. Many work in computer science, medicine, and hospitality fields. You can expect to see more and more public celebrations of these holidays in which anyone is welcome to participate in coming years.

So what is Diwali?

Diwali, also called Deepavali, is the Indian festival of lights. The festival celebrates the triumph of light over darkness. This is one of the most symbolic festivals of Indian culture.

To celebrate Diwali, people put small clay lights called Diyas in their houses. It is believed that having a light and bright home welcomes Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity. Many also make Rangoli. Rangoli is a large, colorful mandala that people make out of sand and colorful rice. Celebrants create rangoli the ground outside an entrance to their homes.

Diwali takes place on a different day every year, but usually falls from October to November. In 2024 Diwali fell on Halloween. The celebration lasts five days with something different happening each day.

Diwali's origin comes from Hindu mythology. Diwali celebrates the return of Lord Rama after defeating the demon king Ravana. After Rama rescued his wife, Sita, from Ravana, Rama was able to go home to his kingdom after 14 years. The people welcomed him with light and fireworks.

A couple of months after Diwali is Holi, another popular Indian holiday.

What is Holi?

Hoil is the festival of color and is celebrated at the end of winter, on the last full moon day of the Hindu lunar-solar calendar month. This festival marks the beginning of spring. Like Diwali the dates change every year.

The day before Holi, devotees light bonfires in Honor of Holika, who was burned at the stake. On the day of Holi, people throw colorful powder into the air and at each other. Celebrants wear all white and by the end of the color "bombing," celebrants clothes, hair, face, are covered in colorful powder.

Like Diwali, Holi also has roots in Hindu mythology. Holi's origin comes from the story of a powerful demon king Hiranyakashipu and his son Prahlad.

Prahlad goes against his father's wishes and worships Lord Vishnu. Hiranyakashipu tries to kill Prahlad by sending his sister, Holika kill him. With some divine intervention, Prahlad was unharmed while Holika then died. Today the festival is universal celebrated with a sense of fun for all people. *Below is a sample of a Rangoli.*



POP'S newest artists rule the charts

By Kylie Lan

Every person has their own taste in music. Finding those who like similar music is all part of the fun of exchanging songs, discussing the artist, and listening to music together. What makes it even more exciting is discovering that they like the same artist who you didn't think would be that popular.

New artists like Chappell Roan, Noah Kahan, Laufey, Renee Rapp, and a ton more have recently increased in popularity.

Chappell Roan gained her popularity by performing for the first time at Coachella singing her song "Good luck Babe."

Renee Rapp covered Chris Grey's song "LET THE WORLD BURN" which spiked the interest of listeners, gaining her almost 4 million listeners on Spotify and even more on other platforms. She starred in the show "Mean Girls," playing the role of Regina George.

Noah Kahan wrote his famous songs "Stick season" and "Dial drunk" which carried him to number 10 on Hot 100. He began his career performing open mics and eventually uploading to YouTube and Soundcloud before producing and releasing albums.

All these artists started out as local musicians before making their way up the ladder and becoming some of the biggest music stars this year.

Young writers find demands on time limit their craft

By Sienna Malekzadeh

The majority of us have dreamt of becoming famous. And a small slice of us want to be famous because of our writing, whether our writing is for a newspaper, magazine, or getting a whole book published, it is "The Dream" for writers. As we grow older, the dreams seem to become more out of reach, more ephemeral.

Some people seem to have the natural ability to write. Sentences flow from their mind to the page But often their ability goes to waste, subsumed by the need to make a living against the rare success of making a living from just writing.

Trying to find people to interview for this article on young writers was a task, since most students only had written for school, and are incredibly vocal about their disliking for it.

So does this mean that the field for writing is getting smaller for our future generations?

Emerie Martin, an eighth grader who writes for the Billie Bulletin, said that she used to really enjoy writing stories but as she grew older her time was more limited. Still, she loves writing fictional pieces because, "they're more interesting."

When asked if she ever thought about pursuing a career in writing, Emerie said, "I haven't really thought about a writing career, but some careers I'm thinking about include writing."

It is common knowledge that becoming famous in any way isn't an easy task, but Emerie says that it wouldn't be that hard considering that, "each person has different writing styles."

Ava Loose is another eighth grader who likes to write both for school and in her free time. One of the many short stories she's written includes suspense, as does some of her other work. She would love to write a book of her own when she grows up, although she admits, "It's a hard business to get into."

Rare is the person who can become an author, more exactly, a popular one. Considering that publishing is a tricky business (not including self-publishing of course) are people taking the ideas of that job out of their heads?

Surely we all hope not, because some writers can spin poetry and prose in ways that leave us in a thrall.

Holiday movies you must watch

By Camryn Carey

There are so many Christmas movies that it's almost impossible to watch them all during the Christmas season. There's Home Alone, Frosty the Snowman, The Grinch, Elf, and so many more. It's not always easy to know which one to watch, so here's a list of the Christmas movies that are a must watch during the winter season.

The first film on my must watch Christmas movie list is Elf. This is an iconic, funny Christmas movie that needs to be watched every year. "Elf is a great movie! So much fun to watch," said Harper Quinones.

The next movies on my list are definitely classics.

White Christmas, Miracle on 34th Street, and It's a Wonderful Life are on the older side but still need to be watched during the Christmas

season. It's a Wonderful Life is a story of a man who goes through some hard trials and the movie has a happy, heart-warming ending that is very fun to watch.

The Grinch, Frosty the Snowman, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, and Charlie Brown Christmas are all very fun animated Christmas movies that need to be seen. "The Grinch is one of my favorite Christmas movies. I have to watch it every year!" said Pippa Hammond.

The final movies I need to mention were made in the 1990s, but are still so fun to watch. Home Alone and The Santa Clause are both comedies that can't be missed when the holidays come around.

There are many more movies you could watch during the holidays. I hope this list will help you narrow down your top ten movies to watch during the season.



Addison Hyland

By Ava Loose

Addison Hyland is a superb gymnast, an outstanding student and is passionate about flying. Addison is a junior and has been doing gymnastics since the age of 8.

She competes at level 10 (which is the highest level you can be in) with her gymnastics team, The National Academy of Artistic Gymnastics. Addison competes in the vault, the bars, the beam, and floor exercises.

You may be wondering how they score in gymnastics. Judges score performances out of 10 points and they deduct points if you mess up. If you are a level 10 like Addison you can also get bonus points.

She is hoping to get a scholarship to a college with her gymnastics skills, but she does not have a dream school. She has won a State title twice. She is in a league of her own. So you might wonder, is Addison going to work toward the Olympics?

The answer is no.

Make no mistake, she loves gymnastics, but she wants to do other things and gymnastics training gobbles up time. She practices 25 hours a week.

She started gymnastics because her older sister wanted to teach her, then she fell in love with it.

Addison eventually hopes to be a pilot. She has already "flown" a plane with her father, also a pilot.

Given her discipline and focus, that dream seems only a matter of a wing and some time.

Gifts for Gals

By Sofia Ameen

So you wanna know what to get a girl—your bestie, your sister, or maybe just an idea to add to your Christmas list?

Well get ready because here are the top ten Christmas gifts for teen girls!

1. At number one we have clothes. It doesn't matter who you are, cute clothes are on every girl's Christmas list, whether it's leggings and a crop top or jeans and a sweater. You can't go wrong with clothes.

2. Sticking to the theme of fashion, number two is a pair of shoes that are the all around best. After you're done at the clothes store head over to UGGs and get the comfiest, cutest shoes of the season.

3. Now number three will for sure complete the look. Grab the modification of a fanny pack and wow the crowd, a crossbody bag with plenty of storage and cute colors, the cross body bag is a great option for school, a fancy restaurant, or even just a quick errand. The belt bag will not disappoint you wherever you are.

4. If you're an iPhone lover then number four is for you an Apple Watch is a great source of fun and exercise. The Apple Watch can help with medical issues or just deliver a quick call. An Apple Watch is like a mini phone on your wrist and is on many girls' Christmas lists.

5. Another piece of tech that many teens love are AirPods. No doubt music is possibly one of the best things created on this earth but why not listen to it in comfort. Apple AirPods are comfy and sound great. The newest edition “AirPods 4” even offers noise cancellation. If you love music as much as most girls, AirPods are just for you.

6. Natural beauty is the only thing that anyone would ever need but makeup is still a great way to express yourself. If so, at number six we have makeup. Makeup is used to cover up acne, bring a little color to the face, or sometimes just for fun. Either way makeup is a great reward for girls that most ask for.

7. Number seven is another gift that lots of girls ask for every year: skincare. Skincare keeps the skin smooth, silky, and in great condition. Skincare can also help destroy acne that girls may be self conscious of.

8. After you're all set with your skincare and makeup, complete the look with number eight, some pretty jewelry. Jewelry comes in many shapes and sizes, bracelets, necklaces, rings, and earrings. But no matter what it is, jewelry has been a teen girl favorite for many years.

9-10. Sometimes simple is best, so numbers nine and ten are gift cards and a hand-crafted gift. Sometimes all you need to get a girl to make her happy is something like a gift card to her favorite store or even a hand-made card.

Gifts for Guys

By Jay Griffith and Juan Contreras

As the holiday season rapidly approaches bringing the pandemonium of gift giving, you might be wondering what makes it all worth it? Well the gift of “giving” is one of the greatest gifts of all!

So how can you optimize your gift buying experience by making it as stress-free as possible? As guys, Juan and I are here to help you figure out gifts that the guys in your life actually want.

Gift ideas varied extremely from the “experts” we asked. The gift suggestions were as simple as “chapstick and socks” as Aiden Navarro said or a “pull up bar, water bottle, and creatine” from Gonzalo Hernandez. Dhenesh Naidu said a good gift would be “candy” and multiple other people said that “money itself would be sufficient.”

So now that you've seen how simple a gift can be for a guy, allow me to indulge you in the holidays best guide for gift giving for guys.

To begin, choosing gifts can be hard! So try considering these things the next time you are in the process of finding a gift for a guy! First of all try considering what they're into, like their interests or hobbies. For example, are they interested in sports like soccer? Then maybe buy him a ticket to his favorite team's next game, or you could buy him a soccer ball for him to play around with!

Or maybe their hobby is being a gamer, then in that case you can buy them a video game they've been wanting to get.

Another idea to look into are practical and useful gifts. I believe the guys would appreciate gifts that can help their lives be a little easier or more efficient, whether that be in school, work, or even at home. Like Gonzalo mentioned before, receiving a water bottle as a gift would be a nice thing. But to add on to that I believe gifting a guy a portable charger would be a cool gift, because that way he wouldn't need to find somewhere to charge his phone. He could just do it himself! Essentially a portable charger makes his life easier.

On all of these gift ideas you could also implement your own personalized touch on the gift. You could do that by doing something that is special to you and him, or buying him a cool monogrammed wallet or belt, or even a custom sport jersey with his name on it.

But sometimes the best gift isn't actually a physical gift. If you are in a “relationship” maybe try to have a well thought plan for a date that means something special for both of you. And if you aren't in some sort of relationship and just good friends or family, you might want to go out and have a fun adventure like going to a theme park or doing something he enjoys!

The final tip is just to ask him directly if you're not sure or stuck on what to get him. Sometimes depending on the person, some guys would prefer to choose exactly what they want. There is no harm in asking for some hints or suggestions, but something you could do is ask his friends for help and see if they know something that he would like.

In the end you must remember your budget. The price of a gift doesn't have to be high to get a great gift. The thought is what matters and triumphs against any price tag, so focus on finding something meaningful to him and not necessarily something expensive.

features



Christmas traditions with unusual roots

By Mark Buchan

Have you ever wondered where Christmas came from?

I mean, it is a really weird tradition when you stop to think about it. Celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ by imagining a chunky man with a funny red hat jumping down your chimney, giving you gifts, and eating your cookies.

These traditions may seem like they come out of nowhere, but they actually have a very long history.

Some of these odd Christmas-time traditions come from ancient Rome, more specifically, the celebration of Saturnalia. The Romans started celebrating Saturnalia around 300 BC as the Roman version of the Greek holiday Kronia. Saturnalia was a week-long celebration that started on December 17 and ended on December 23. Saturnalia was very important to the Romans because it commemorated the Golden Age of Man, where the gods and humans lived in harmony.

One thing the Romans would do to celebrate Saturnalia was give gifts, mostly *sigillaria* (clay or wax figures), but sometimes things like candles, dice, and toys. They would also gift verses, similarly to how we gift Christmas cards.

Something that really characterized Saturnalia was the reversal of roles and the removal of some social prohibitions. On Saturnalia, slaves were treated as equals, allowed to wear their masters clothes and were served food out of the same feast. People would wear *pileus* caps, a kind of hat that a freed slave would normally wear, to represent the freedom of the holiday. Slaves did not have to work for the week. Gambling was encouraged when it would normally be prohibited.

Another practice was for households to name a “*Saturnalicus princeps*” or “Ruler of Saturnalia”. They were seen as the master of the feast and their orders had to be obeyed by all of the guests. Most of these “orders” were silly things like singing a song, saying embarrassing things, or chasing someone around.

The similarities between Christmas and Saturnalia are undeniable. They are both celebrated around the same time, they both involve large feasts, and they are both marked by gift giving.

While Christmas is distinctly different from Saturnalia, it's easy to see Saturnalia's influence on the beloved holiday. I think it is safe to say that some secular Christmas traditions might not have evolved without Roman influence.

Christmas Traditions to lighten up the Holidays

By Greta Gramzow

If you’re looking for something new this season for the whole family, allow me to give you some inspiration! Holiday traditions are often important to everyone in the family. However, sometimes they can feel a little bit repetitive.

If you’re creative, and your family enjoys playing games, you could come up with activities such as a *Christmas Scavenger Hunt* or a *Christmas Trivia*. All the supplies you’ll need for either of those activities are a pen and paper. You could also have everyone guess how many ornaments are on the tree, whoever is closest to the correct amount gets a Christmas treat.

Christmas movies to watch with the family can be fun too! We all know some that may be obvious, and as good as they are, perhaps you and your family might enjoy something new!

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever, originally released in 1983, is one for the whole family. But don’t forget to read the book first! The novel was published by Barbara Robinson, it’s about a teacher who decides to put a band of mischievous children in charge of a Christmas Pageant. It will have you laughing at the start and crying in the end.

Another one to look into may be titled, *Holiday Inn*. This movie is an oldie but a beloved classic, released in 1942, is a musical about performers who want to quit their job and run away when one of them claims she has fallen in love with another performer. Making it to a hotel, broken hearted, Jim (Bing Crosby) turns the place into a live entertainment venue when he falls in love with a girl named Linda (Marjorie Reynolds). A fun fact about this movie is that the well-known song “White Christmas” by Bing Crosby was often mistaken to be first shown in the 1954 film, *White Christmas*. When really, the song was first shown in this movie!

Movies are fun, but we all know most of the good movies we see now were originally books. For instance, “A Christmas Carol” by Charles Dickens. There’s many versions of this book, and either film or story you enjoy is great! However, reading the original really lifts the hairs on the back of your neck! This slightly creepy Christmas story should definitely go onto your “reading list” if it isn't already. The writing in it is much more exciting than how I’m doing it here!

These are fun ideas that I’ve researched, but I wondered if anyone in this school had any fun things they liked to do with their family that were considered ‘unique’. So I asked Mrs. Casarez about it. She said, “For Christmas, we have this one tradition, it’s German, but it’s called the German Pickle and we hang it on the tree!”

The ‘German Pickle’ is indeed a German tradition consisting of a Christmas tree ornament, shaped as a literal pickle! The trick is to hide the ornament in the tree and on Christmas morning, whoever is able to find it first, receives an ‘extra’ gift.

Interestingly enough, a tradition I learned is that Jewish people often visit Chinese restaurants on Christmas! There’s a bit of a dispute of the reason why some Jewish families do this, but the tradition has been around since at least the 1930’s. It’s actually a fantastic way to socialize with friends and family and have a lovely meal, even if you aren’t Jewish!

However you celebrate this holiday season, it’s important that you spend time with your family either way. The Billie Bulletin wishes you a Merry Christmas!



Becoming an unselfish team

By Josie Heacock

What does it take to build a program? It takes commitment, coachable players, and a coach who is willing to push his kids to the next level. This is what Luke Jackson has been doing in his short tenure at Pleasant Hill. Coach Jackson has taken the role as head coach of the boys basketball team this 2024-2025 season and the kids are all on board.

“With all the basketball experience Luke knows and being able to learn from him on what to do on the whole entire game of basketball, he is a wealth of knowledge. Everyone is excited and ready for the season with a goal of a state championship.” Landen Melvin, a junior said.

Melvin, who played varsity since freshman year added, “Everyone is buying in to what the coach is having to say, to what we have to focus on—defense. Everyone is focused up on our sets on offense and locked in on getting them right. He’s (Luke Jackson) super respectful towards everyone, gives everyone a fair shot, and with the respect that he gives us, I feel like everyone else gives that respect back to him. We respect him a ton.”

Logan Melvin, a sophomore on varsity added, “He (Luke Jackson) brings intensity, but in the right way so we can be the best team we can possibly be and gives everyone chances on the team.”

This respect, coupled with the team’s already present chemistry is setting the boys up for success. Noah Johnson, a sophomore, said their strongest suit is “Us as a team. We have all been playing with each other since 6, 7th grade. We have been playing with each other for so long, there is a connection there that is different than other years...the intensity is a lot better than previous years. The people we have around us and the relationships are a lot better than previously.”

Riley Smith, a senior, noted, “Our team is really close together, we all get along, we all push each other, push each other to be the best we can be. It’s competitive, we get at it all the time 24/7 and support one another.”

This connection runs deep and allows the team to be a community that both supports each other and pushes each other to be the best. “He (Jackson) makes us play hard for him because he knows what we can do for him as a team. He wants us to bring that out in practice because he knows what we can do and bringing out our defense. [We are] becoming an unselfish team,” Riley Smith.

Landen Melvin and Jacob Neely, with Gavin English in the back, demonstrate the defensive mindset the team has been focussing on for this season.



Middle School Girl Ballers!

By Arianna Bowman and Brooklyn Breslaw

The Middle School girls basketball teams are getting better and better every game. They have had their ups and downs but no matter how the game ends they do it as a team. “Each game we are getting better as a team, we are improving together” said Sienna Malekzadeh. Many of the team members said they are a pretty tight knit group because they have played with each other for a while.

Coach Dustin said “their biggest strength is team unity.”

All of the girls said they were good friends and are happy to be playing with each other. Harper Quinones said has been their toughest opponent yet, but they still keep pushing and trying their hardest. Coach .Holmes said “their biggest weakness is their poise, they tend to panic in pressure situations”

He thinks the most improved since elementary is Kristen Gardener since she's never played basketball before. In all, Holmes thinks the team is overall doing well this year.



Claire Crawford is a force in the Billies offense this year. She leads the team as captain along with Cheyenne Green and Katie Dutton.



Up and coming runner: Gage Roper

By Ellie Epperson

The air was crisp but not cold. The off again on again rain, was off again to the delight of many of the runners that day.

Spectators held their breath as nearly 90 high school boys toed the line for the 2024 boys state cross country race. Among them, running as an individual competitor, was Pleasant Hill’s sophomore Gage Roper.

Looking at the statistics from Roper’s finish, you’d think he was a seasoned cross country runner.

He jetted to 19th place, along with an excellent time to finish out his season.

“It was so nice that districts was at Lane and State was [also] at Lane. I wasn’t too nervous. I just wanted to have fun,” recalled Gage.

Gage started running when he joined the track team in 7th grade at Emerald Christian Academy, and he specialized in long distance.

Originally, he joined track to be with his friend Devon Jones, who also attended Emerald Christian Academy at the time.

“My aunt, she was pretty fast. She ran in college. Other than that, my family has always liked track but not really long distance.”

Gage’s motivation to keep running revolved largely around the same reasons. “Just to be with friends, to get in shape. Originally, I started running for friends and conditioning for basketball. I really fell in love with basketball 7th grade year...and I just wanted to get conditioned for that,” said Roper.

Gage is almost involved in sports, whether it’s cross country, basketball or track.

“After school, it’s just sports everyday. Whether it’s going to Eugene and working out with my trainer Devonte for basketball, going on runs, or just doing schoolwork,” said Gage.

“I need to find some more hobbies.”

His favorite distance to race is the 1500 meter, which he went to Track and Field state for last spring. He tried the 3,000 meter but dropped it when he started to focus more on the 1500.

“I might try it again this year, just because my 3k split at state was a 9:59 so I feel like I could be faster in that because I did cross country. I could get 9:30 I think.”

He felt his first cross country season was a success and he enjoyed it.

“It’s a lot different than track. I don’t know if I liked it better or worse, it’s just different. I adjusted pretty well. I didn’t think I would do as good as I did this season just because it was my first year. I really liked it.”

Gage would like to run in college if he can. He hopes to follow his father’s footsteps and become an electrician.

When asked how he felt when he was actually running, Gage said with a laugh, “A lot of times, I contemplate why I’m doing it. But, when I’m done I’m glad I did it and I feel accomplished.”

Fall sports roundup

By Colton Carey

Through the fall of this school year, our school’s sports teams have had many golden moments!

The Billies football team ended the season at 3-6 overall, and 3-4 in league play. “It was surely a little disappointing, but I thought it was nice how we did at the end of it [season],” said senior off/def lineman Jamon Heacock. “I loved playing football, and I liked getting first team all league.” They won at rival Harrisburg, won at home against La Pine, and destroyed Creswell at homecoming.

The Billies boy’s soccer team ended the season at 4-9-2 overall, and 2-7 in league play. They won three games at home against Douglas, Taft, and an upset win over Sisters in their senior game. “It was amazing that we beat them [Sisters],” said senior captain Ethan Bahen. “It was a great way to finish a tough season, since that was our first time beating Sisters.” They also won at La Pine. The Billies tied at home against De La Salle North Catholic and

at Yamhill-Carlton.

The Billies girl’s soccer team ended the season tying the state tournament in 5th place, by scoring a late goal to beat Cascade Christian 1-0. “It was the most exciting play of the game,” said senior captain, Ellie Epperson. “It was probably the most exciting game I’ve been a part of.” They later fell in the next round to St. Mary’s Catholic in penalty kicks, 5-3. They finished the season at 10-4-3 overall, and 7-3-2 in league play.

The Billies volleyball team were this year’s Mountain Valley Conference champions after knocking off Sisters in their conference title game, 3-0. “It felt really rewarding to win that since it was my senior year,” said captain, Cheyenne Green. They dropped a heartbreaker in the state tournament semifinal game against Burns, 2-3. They later bounced back by defeating Corbett, 3-0, to take 3rd in the state. “That felt nice after losing to [Burns], it felt accomplished to take third.” They finished the season at 29-2 overall, and 10-0 in league play.

The Billies cross country team had a phenomenal season by winning or placing in almost every meet the boys and girls ran in. The girl’s team finished 7th in the state tournament, “I was really proud that we made it to state,” said junior Soleis Jones. “I loved how athletic we were and it was fun to race together.” And Gage Roper, who ran as an individual in the boy’s race, finished 19th.

The Billies cheer team currently has a sunburst of spirit performing to the Billies football and volleyball games.

“I really loved doing cheer because it was fun and I wanted to do it because my sisters inspired me into doing it,” said June Johnson, freshman.

They sparked the crowd with their positive energy and acrobatic stunts. The cheer team also performs several exciting dance routines. “We are the leaders of the student section,” said cheer captain, Laynie Reed. No matter how the game is going and what the weather is like, they show up to cheer on our team’s.

COMBO BAND

makes music without a drummer

By Zoe Harr

When you think of a band, you might think of a massive, complex orchestra. However, the diversity among different kinds of bands is great, and none prove this more than our Combo Band, which is tiny, but certainly mighty!

Pleasant Hill Combo consists of four members: Ethan Bahen (Trombone), Levi Ross (Alto Saxophone), Wesleigh Harr (Bass), and Spencer Smith (Piano). You might notice their lack of a drummer.

“Playing without a drummer is difficult because our full capabilities are limited, but it has opened up a few opportunities to try new things,” said Spencer Smith.

The other Combo members share this opinion, with Ethan Bahen stating that, “It’s honestly kind of nice going without a drummer this year, and I feel like, while it is a little more difficult…it’s a good feeling for this year. Also, no drums means less conflicting opinions.”

While the drummer is a core part of the band, Combo proves that having one is not essential, as there are more ways to hold a beat. Not having a drummer also allows them more creative freedom and to grow and experiment as musicians.

Another outcome of having a smaller band is the fellowship between its members. And for most of them, this is their senior year.

“Combo has been a way for me to really express my ideas and skill as a player and a band member. It has taught me how to use my ears better and just really play as a part of a group,” Wesleigh Harr said. “I’ll definitely miss playing with these guys, it was an absolutely wicked experience.”

And for all of them, Combo has been a place for them to have fun playing music for one another. “Combo is a sense of expression, I’ve really enjoyed combo this year and I’ve been able to express my emotions in a way you just can’t with words.” Said Levi Ross.

All in all, the Pleasant Hill Combo Band is an example of pushing forward despite roadblocks. They’ve shown that despite being tiny, they are mighty!

Training Tricky Dogs

By Zane Koszegi

The goal of training “tricky dogs” is to create functioning canine members of your life. I am going to get help from a local dog expert, Rachel Dorr, owner of Opportunity Barks, a local dog boarding and training facility to explain how this is done.

The first tip offered was to take the dog through Bootcamp, i.e. the basics of training sit, wait, and more. This helps to control impulses and bad habits in tricky dogs. This is best done by introducing the new behavior to the dog and over time continuing to build on that behavior, showing them the right thing to do.

The second tip is to consistently train the dog as it helps instill boundaries and stop bad habits from sticking in everyday behavior with the dog. It also can help a dog realize what the right thing to do is and when to do said behavior. One trains consistently by constantly setting aside time to train the dog. For me it is about 20 minutes, 3 times a week. This is enough time for a dog to know what to do and when to do it.

The 3rd and final tip offered by the owner was to be patient with the dog. This is important because dogs are like children in a way because the first time something is shown isn’t enough to instill the behavior. Rachel also said training in small steps helps immensely because habits aren’t instilled in one time of doing something; it is many times over the course of a period that allow that knowledge to permanently exist.

I train my dogs first of all by assessing them, seeing what I want them to learn or what they need to learn. After, I start in small increments teaching them said tricks. I then expand the time I spend with them from 5 to 10 minutes, then to 20 and end on maybe about 30 minutes a few times a week, depending on the difficulty of the trick it can take about 1-2 months. The type of dog doesn’t matter too much for training in my experience, just note it may be more difficult to control larger dogs.

The owner says “I have been successful in many ways but most notably it’s just the way a client smiles when they see how happy they are with their newly trained pupper.”

the pasture

Great Books you should read right now

By Sofia Dennis

I know there aren’t too many people who like to read books. Sometimes good books are hard to find, but I found some that readers might enjoy.

Girl In The Blue Coat, by Monica Hesse, The story follows Hanneke, a young woman who works for a funeral director and secretly helps her clients find black-market goods. One day, Hanneke is approached by a woman named Mrs. Janssen, who asks her to find a missing Jewish girl, Mirjam, who had been hiding in her house. Hanneke is initially hesitant, but her conscience and sense of justice compel her to accept the task while under the Nazi’s rule. She has to go through killings, Nazi kidnappings, and find clues as little as dust on a jar and notes passed through class. The Girl in the Blue Coat earned a 90% in Have Good Reads, The bestselling, "gripping" (Entertainment Weekly), "powerful" (Hypable), "utterly thrilling" (Paste.com) winner of the Edgar Award for Best Young Adult Mystery.

Amari and the Night Brothers by B.B Alston. Amari Peters knows three things.

1. Her big brother Quinton has gone missing. 2. No one will talk about it. 3. His mysterious job holds the secret. So when Amari gets an invitation to the Bureau of Supernatural Affairs, she’s certain this is her chance to find Quinton. But first she has to get her head around the new world of the Bureau, where mermaids, aliens and magicians are real , and her roommate is a “weredragon.” Amari must compete against kids who’ve known about the supernatural world their whole lives, and when each trainee is awarded a special supernatural talent, Amari is given an illegal talent – one that the Bureau views as dangerous. With an evil magician threatening the whole supernatural world, and her own classmates thinking she is the enemy, but she has to find her brother, right? Amari and the Night Brothers earned 4.8/5 stars from audience reviews. This thrilling tale of a teen fighting for family and herself with all of her might is inspiring. “The twists and turns made every chapter a blast to read. Everytime you turn a page you will dive deeper and deeper into the story. The Adventures of Amari and her quest for self discovery and acceptance is a sight to read.” - Redrabbitt321.

The Barren Grounds by David A. Robertson. Morgan, a 13 year old girl who has been through too many foster homes, is now in her newest one with a new 12 year old brother named Eli. Morgan goes to the off limits attic and opens a closet door with Eli, she puts up a drawing Eli has made and staples it to the wall opening a portal. When they enter they have to face a series of events such as hunger, cold, and near death misses. With just a hint of magic, they can do this with their human-bear and sassy squirrel friends, right? With 4 out of 5 stars, the reviews are great. “This book is amazing. Not for its story but how it helped me live my life. Before, I used to have trouble falling asleep. I’d twist and turn but fall asleep at 3 a.m., but when I read this book I instantly fall asleep. I threw out my sleeping pills because of this book.” - SparkWave.

Barefoot Dreams of Petra Luna, by Alda P. Dobbs. It is 1913, and twelve-year-old Petra Luna’s mama has died while the Revolution rages in Mexico. Before her papa is dragged away by soldiers, Petra vows to him that she will care for the family she has left—her *abuelita*, little sister Amelia, and baby brother Luisito, until they can be reunited. They flee north through the unforgiving desert as their town burns, searching for safe harbor in a world that offers none. Each night when Petra closes her eyes, she holds her dreams close, especially her long-held desire to learn to read. Abuelita calls these barefoot dreams: “They’re like us barefoot peasants and indios, they’re not meant to go far.” But Petra refuses to listen. Through battlefields and deserts, hunger and fear, Petra will stop at nothing to keep her family safe and lead them to a better life across the U.S. border, a life where her barefoot dreams could finally become reality. With 4.3/5 stars, reviews are terrific! People have described the book as thoughtful and exciting historical fiction. “Readers also appreciate the strong but vulnerable female character.” - New York Times. To find more information look up the book title in Google and it should have several sections.



Traveling librarian takes over the library

By Jaxson Potts

With the resignation of Ms. Brothers Pleasant Hill High School needed a new library/media coordinator. Daphnie Metcalf has been hired to fill the position that Ms. Brothers previously held.

I spoke with Metcalf about her new job and her past: “I started at Southern Oregon University but then in my first year of college, Covid happened. I was on track to graduate in three years so I took a gap year moving to Springfield and did Uber Eats. I ended up loving the University Of Oregon, so I looked at their degrees and chose a humanities degree.” (Humanities is the study of the human condition, culture, and society from a philosophical or artistic perspective.)

Metcalf said “I have a major in Humanities, and a minor in Folklore. I love anything Folklore.”

“Folklore” has kept culture alive for hundreds of years after events have happened.

I asked Metcalf what her plan for the future was. “I think I would love to work in higher education, like college, but I like this age right now because I have a big history of working with kids at a summer camp that I’ve been at for many years. But eventually I’d like to work with a higher age range in the future.”

She also said “ My plans for Pleasant Hill are to make the library as awesome as it can be! I will be seeing the transition of the library through its renovations this summer. My goal is for the library to be a safe place where everyone feels welcome to be. In life, I would love to get my masters and doctorate degrees. Probably something related to folklore, cultural history, museum studies, or library sciences.”

Ms. Metcalf has a happy and friendly personality, she is a great multitasker, loves to travel, and shares the stories from her adventures.

“I have a rather wonderful memory from my travels abroad. It was September, 2022. I was in Paris for a week before heading to Angiers, where I did my study abroad program. As a birthday present to my mom, my family decided to pay for my mom to join me in Paris.

We decided to explore the mosque that was down the road from our Airbnb. It had a section where people could visit and view the beautiful architecture, fountains and gardens. The area where people prayed was separate and we made sure to respect and not disrupt that area.

The designs on the ceilings and walls were beautiful mosaics and the tiles had these fabulous ornate patterns.

We later returned to the mosque for dinner because there was a part of it that was a restaurant. The dining area was decorated beautifully with warm colored curtains, pillows and art. It had a very comforting atmosphere and the food was amazing! We even had a cat come visit us and let us pet it! This was delightful since my mom and I are both cat people. Visiting that mosque was a wonderful experience; it was the first one my mother or I had ever visited. We learned a lot about it and how it served as a place of worship, a restaurant, museum, art gallery, and overall welcoming community center. It was a great experience because I got to share it with my mom who had helped me go on my previous international travels and this was her first time outside the country.”

Culture in Europe is special, because of unique people, unique food, beautiful nature like the Alps, and cities. She said her favorite food from Europe is “escargot.”

“My dream place to live is Scotland or Ireland. I’ve always been drawn to Celtic culture and would love to live somewhere with castles and ancient ruins. The rolling green hills and fog looks beautiful there.”





the billie backside

Who is Rene Lopez? “Peace and love is all it is man.”

By Hunter Crabtree

Rene is a junior at PHHS and quite a popular one.

He is music oriented and his favorite genre of music is Indie Rock. His favorite band is The Smiths. They were a British Indie rock band of the '80s.

He also is a big fan of Mac Demarco who is a current Slacker rock music artist.

One of his favorite things to do while listening to music is drawing and meandering in nature.

Straying away from music, Rene's favorite subjects in school are history, science and art. His favorite thing about school is socializing with people.

Rene's favorite teachers are Mrs. Devish, Mrs White and Mr. Neill. His best friends are Hunter Crabtree Musgrove and Zane Koszegi. Some of his favorite things to do are hanging out with the people he loves, meeting new people and learning how to cook new food.

He has a very interesting character. He is calm, funny, humble and adventurous. He is very sociable and well spoken. He cares a lot about people and animals.

He has a tabby cat named Alice. When he gets out of high school he wants to be a fashion designer or join a culinary school. He thinks the reason people like him so much is that he is well spoken, relatable, funny, and not shy to talk to other people. In addition to his interesting character, Rene has a projecting voice.

He was born in Oakwood, California and he moved here when he was four and a half years old. Life growing up was pretty hard for him because he grew up with a single mother and three sisters. Oakwood was a gang afflicted place that was hard to live in. He joined Pleasant Hill elementary school when he was six years old in kindergarten.

Despite being a refugee from a tough early childhood, Rene wants to say “peace and love is all it is man.”



Introducing Patrick LeBruska

By Fatima Garcia

Few know Patrick LeBruska as he keeps a low profile. But this senior is a smart, thoughtful lad who likes to do a lot of artwork. He has not decided what to do after high school, perhaps go to a community college or get a job.

The best childhood memories he has is celebrating holidays with my family. He also said that he listens to different kinds of music like metal, rock, Indie.

“My favorite band is Nirvana. I also really like Mac DeMarco.”

One of the places he would like to visit one day is Japan because the cars are interesting as is the food.

“I see myself in 10 years with a career and hopefully owning my own house.”

Outside school he likes to play video games, going to concerts, playing electric guitar and also vinyl collecting.

Patrick's favorite class is The Western because “I like to watch the western movies”

His favorite teacher ever was Mr Brown and favorite class was Science Fiction with Mr Gardner because “I liked the stories. “

Mrs. Wolpe has started the video Billie News with a grant from the Pleasant Hill Foundation. Reporters will share the microphone on a rotating basis. Here are Wren Brown, EB Wilberger, Kenzie Jensen and Bella Melvin.



Big time photographer in small school paper

By Ella Blake

Local photographer, Sharie Thompson of Stories Photography loves to take portrait and action photos of high school seniors, athletes and families..Her favorite time to take portraits one hour before sunset which is called “the golden hour.” Thompson was recently hired to do a surprise photo shoot/birthday party for a client's coworker's surprise birthday party. Sharie took many photos but then she went home to put in at least eight hours of work editing all of the best photos.

Sharie has a different job than photography. She only does photography for a side hustle. She loves photography but it does not provide the income to live on. The clients that Thompson typically takes on are those looking for photo shoots worth less than 700 dollars. She will always give you photos worth more than the money you pay.

You can find and contact Sharie at: STories Photography (Facebook)



Olivia Melvin, Lucy Smith, Bella Melvin, Zia Jones, and Harper Brothers make up the Billie Bugle, an Elementary School paper. Mrs. Wolpe has her students hosting a news program reading announcements and more.



The Newest Newsies

By Caroline Carlson

The title of this story is a little deceiving but if you are familiar with The Newsies this story is just inspired by that story. (The Newsies is A Walt Disney film directed by Kenny Ortega and is based on the newsboy strike of 1899. I highly recommend it.)

This story is not about children and teens selling papers. This story is about our newest newspaper created by a group of fifth graders at the elementary school!

Last year a group of fifth graders had the same idea but had to fly with their own wings. This year another set of 5th graders again and have made a club. As a journalist, I was very interested to learn that they are giving another opportunity to build writers. I got the chance to interview them on November 21 with Mr. Meinzen. I had a set of questions and curiosities.

After finally finding the classroom where the members were, we all went out into the common area and they began their meeting. Mr. Meinzen introduced everyone.

The first big decision that they made that day was their title. Everyone agreed on calling the paper “The Billie Bugle.” The five girls creating the Billie Bugle are Lucy Smith, Bella Melvin, Harper Brothers and Zia Jones (their fifth Olivia Melvin was on vacation.)

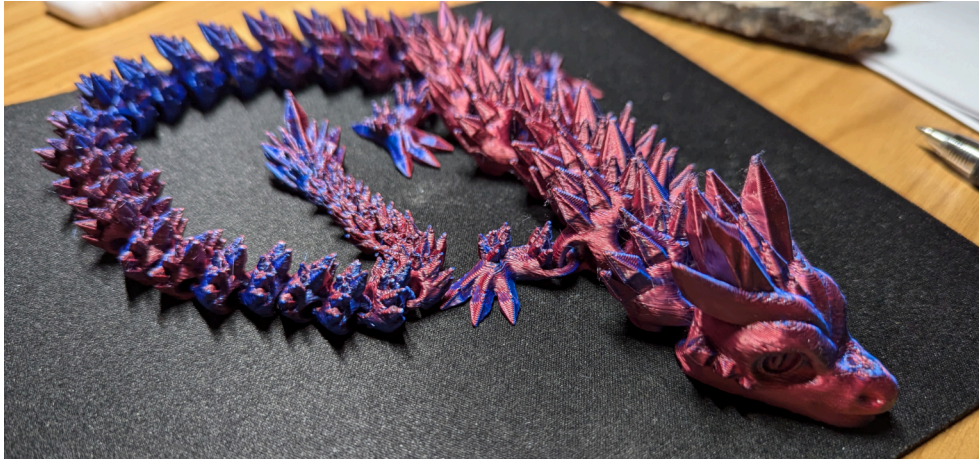
All budding journalists are Billie Ambassadors, and all very involved with what was happening during their meeting. I took them aside one at a time to see what was going on behind the scenes.

I asked Bella Melvin “what started this?

“I read a book and it gave me the idea to do this and I asked my friends about it and we all thought it was a fun thing to do.” Bella and her friends now do two stories for each issue. Bella did a story about being a billie role model and the Student of the Month (The second grader Addie Anderson). Lucy Smith asked one student from every grade what their favorite thing about being a Billie was. Zia Jones worked on an opinion essay about why people should recycle. And last but certainly not least Harper Brothers finished the story about the reflex math competition and she does the comics for the Billie Bugle.

All of these girls are looking forward to being a part of the publications squad and I can't wait to work with them. They are all amazing people and are passionate about this. They literally give up their recess! How many people would do that to produce something for the student body?! I can't wait to see what these girls do next.

The Billie Extra



How to 3d print an articulated dragon

By Andrew King

A 3D printer creates objects by building them up layer by layer from a digital design.

First, a 3D model is made using special software, and then it’s turned into a file that the printer can read. The printer uses materials like plastic or metal, which are melted and carefully laid down in configurable layer distances. Each new layer sticks to the one before it, slowly forming the object.

You can also configure the strip width by changing the extruder(also known as the nozzle or tip).

The default size of the typical extruder for any printer is 0.4 the range you can buy is 0.1 to 1.0 mm. When deciding what size you want to use what you have to think about time a larger nozzle means less time but you sacrifice detail and vise versa with the smaller nozzle means more detail but way more time. As an example, if you swap from a .2 to .4 and print the same item the print time is halved compared the .2.

Now for filaments, they're many different types of filaments ranging from glow in the dark to just solid to transparent. They are also different incompatible types such as PLA and PETG. PETG, which stands for polyethylene terephthalate glycol-modified, and PLA, meaning polylactic acid, are both thermoplastics, used a lot in 3D printing.

“PLA is generally easier to post-process due to its lower melting point. Applications vary; PLA suits prototypes and artistic creations, while PETG is preferred for durable, functional parts exposed to demanding conditions. PLA is more cost-effective, but PETG's enhanced properties contribute to a slightly higher price.”

There are some printers that can identify what it is and certain attributes about it such as whether it is PLA or PETG, color, and the melting point. S

Bambu Labs A1 printer other printers such as the Ender 3 pros need constant adjustments and configuration changes so I suggest the A1 for beginners.”Resin printing is the median speed because it does it one layer at a time. Printers have an LCD screen to do the whole layer at once but as it is resin you don't want to breathe in the fumes because they are toxic. That is why resin printers have covers to keep fumes inside.ut use a mask when pulling the print out. The build plate it to the resin the ultraviolet light at the bottom solidifies it in the pattern you want. Then the printed object is pulled out of the resin to let the excess drip off. Rapid liquid printing or RLP t is gravity-free creation of the print. The length is 1000% longer than your typical 3d printer.

This is according to their site.It is also 100x faster than a printer, not a resin printer.The average price of a layer by layer for theA1 is @ \$500. The resin printer is still about \$400 but the RLP is \$99,000. The 3D printing process can be used for many things, such as making prototypes, tools, or even medical parts. It allows for the creation of complex shapes that are hard to make with traditional methods. This technology is becoming more popular because it makes designing and producing custom objects much easier

Allison Rife: Star Student

By Maddie Rife

Allison Rife is a star student here at Pleasant Hill High School and she is my big sister. Allison is almost a straight A student and a two year 2nd place finisher in the Creswell VFW voice of Democracy essay contest..

Allison has also been nominated for the PHHS Honor society for being a hard-working and involved student who never gives up.

Her honors project is called the shade tree quilting project. It is based on her grandfather who passed away this year.

Allison is an extremely busy person. If she isn't teaching kids how to swim at Willamalane she's cheering at football games and supporting the team as a captain.

As a swim instructor, Allison was originally a teacher at both Splash and Willamalane. Also plays softball during the spring and does competitive cheerleading in the winter. Last year the cheer team placed 3rd in the state championship. Allison is thinking about attending Southern Oregon University to get a teaching degree and an early education degree.

If you ever meet Allison you will find that she is very kind, funny and a great friend and sister.



Artificial Intelligence is a tech “frenemy”

WHAT IS ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

Machine Learning

Using sample data to train computer programs to recognize patterns based on algorithms.



Neural Networks

Computer systems designed to imitate the neurons in a brain.



Natural Language Processing

The ability to understand speech, as well as understand and analyze documents.



Robotics

Machines that can assist people without actual human involvement.



The Motley Fool

By Izabella Patterson-Giles

We all know about ChatGPT, and students using AI. But did you know that some teachers use AI as well? It’s used to (in some occasions) help teachers learn, and sometimes it’s used to just automate grading or lesson plans, but it depends on the teacher.

Grading papers or assignments with AI can automate routine tasks and make them get done quicker. Most learning websites use AI as well, for example; Duolingo, Google Classroom, Canva, and Grammarly. But there are many other things as well.

Using AI as a teacher boosts consistency and efficiency, but there are also some flaws. If AI is used for long periods of time, then teachers might slack a little bit on grading things themselves. Or, if the AI is trained with bias answers, then it might produce biased responses, and it may not understand what the student typed and create a random response. leaving the statement looking weird.

AI grades by analyzing the coherence, relevance, and quality of the students work, which if none of those are clear, then it may not come out as expected.

In conclusion, teachers should not solely rely on AI grading and still exercise their professional judgement.

Meet our new librarian Ms. Daphnie!



By Autumn Epley

As surprising as it might sound, Ms. Daphnie is not a big reader. She often spends her time listening to Audiobooks instead of physical book copies. Although Miss Daphnie isn't new to the school district, she's new to the building.

Her dad was once a football coach in Laine, where she grew up. She would often come to see games at PHill often seeing the football field and parking lot.

She said being at the PHHS isn't overwhelming and that she likes the size because it's manageable. She also described the school as being calm. Miss Daphne also said she sees herself staying at the school for a while.

During the summers Miss Daphnie has a job at a summer camp that she's been working at for 13 years. She said it's a fun job to have, working with all the kids, She even went there herself as a kid. Miss Daphne described the job as her “bread and butter.”

Phone addicts

By Andrew King

9th graders are on their phones a lot, and it’s really affecting their behavior and daily lives. Starting high school comes with a ton of changes, and phones are a big part of how they deal with them. They’re always texting, on social media, or using apps to stay connected, which can be both good and bad.

A lot of teens just want to fit in, so they use their phones to keep up with friends. But it can also lead to problems like cyberbullying, comparing themselves to others, or getting totally distracted in class. Sometimes, they’re more focused on their phones than what’s happening around them.

Phone addiction isn’t just a teen problem—it affects adults too. Parents and teachers may also struggle with phone overuse, which can limit how present they are with their kids or students. Adults might find themselves distracted during conversations, work, or even family time, making it harder to set a good example.

For teens, phone addiction often means feeling anxious, constantly checking notifications, and losing focus. This can mess up sleep, grades, and social skills. Social media is designed to keep everyone hooked—teens and adults alike—making it tough to put the phone down.

The best way to help is by teaching everyone—teens and adults—to set limits on phone use and find a healthier balance. Parents and teachers can encourage responsible habits by modeling good behavior themselves, like spending more time on real-life connections and priorities instead of always being on their devices.