

# Issue 20 Delivering high school news...one page at a time! RAMPAGE

## PR ROYALTY



**Seniors Jake Pazin and  
Maura Sciullo Announced  
2025 Prom King and Queen!**

**"Prom is an event I've looked forward to  
since being a little kid. I'm so grateful  
my experience was such a great one."  
-Prom King, Senior Jake Pazin**

*Photo by John Madia Photography, PRHS Yearbook Photographer*

**THE LAST  
EDITION OF  
THE 24-25  
SCHOOL  
YEAR  
RAMPAGE!**



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# Student Life

## PR Art Student's Gifts

### *A Look into the Teddy Bears Made for Graduation of Preschoolers*

KATE IAMS STAFF WRITER

The sculpture class offered at PR started a new project that has never been done before this year. When the preschoolers within our high school were getting ready to graduate, a new component was added to the ceremony. The sculpture students originally received drawings of how each individual preschooler wanted their teddy bear to look. They were all also given names. My sister, sophomore Ella Iams, and I, worked together to build a bear based off of the description and drawing we were given.

The process took the class several weeks to complete for the graduation during periods four and five. The first step was to cut out the front and back of the bear template and then use a colorful wax paper to trace the bear/ create sewing lines. After the bear's outline was drawn onto the cloth, then the designing started. We tried to make it as close in accuracy to the preschooler's sketch as possible.

Both of us used fabric markers to draw the more detailed parts, then to add more color, we used a cotton candy color blue die on the background. After all of this was dried, it was time to prep the teddy bear clothes for sewing, by rinsing any excess dye off in the sink. Then the teacher Mrs. Andreassi used the sewing machine to close up a majority of the bear's sides. Once that is complete then it's stuffed, and the final open part is hand sewn. This teddy bear project is a very sweet way for the preschoolers to remember where they were at that moment in time.



Sophomore Ella Iams photo by Kate Iams

## Student Spotlight

### *Meet Blake Wilson*

TAYLOR SERVAGNO STAFF WRITER

Q: How old are you?

A: I am 15 years old.

Q: When is your birthday?

A: My birthday is March 17, 2010.

Q: What grade are you in?

A: I'm a freshman.

Q: Do you have siblings?

A: Yes I have an older brother named Brady.

Q: What's your favorite subject and least favorite subject?

A: My favorite is history because I like learning how America and other countries developed. Math is my least favorite.

Q: Who inspires you?

A: Bob Ross inspires me because of how he finds joy in life.



Left Izzy Richardson Right Blake Wilson provided by Taylor Servagno

Q: Where do you see yourself in five years?

A: I see myself in college studying law and psychology and traveling the world.

Q: Do you play any sports?

A: I play volleyball for a club called Pitt United. I have been playing for 2 years.

Q: What do you do in your free time?

A: I like going to get coffee with my friends or go shopping

# Student Life

## Spring Choir Concert

### *Last Performance of the Year*

SOPHIA KERNS AND HANNAHJAYNE SHANNON STAFF WRITERS

Pine-Richland High School's Choirs performed their Spring Concert on May 6th. Their performance started at 7:00 and lasted around 1 hour and 45 minutes. Freshman Choir was directed by Ms. Flora, while Women's Ensemble and Chamber Singers were directed by Mr. Rickard.

Freshman Choir opened the night with their song "Take This Gift". Next, they sang "What Was I Made For". Afterwards, this choir sang "Love Takes Work". The words to this song were found to be inspirational to many. The chorus to this song is, "Love takes work, love takes time. To love the skin that you're in, gotta let go of the thoughts in your mind. That you're not enough. I know that it's hard to be kind to yourself, but you are worthy of love." After this song, the Freshman choir sang one of their loudest and most powerful songs, "Lead Me Home" After this, they sang the two hardest songs this choir has attempted to sing. Both of which were in another language. "Justitiae Domine". This song required a very dark sound and lots of blending from each section. After this, the choir performed an Indian piece titled, "TaReKiTa". This was a very fast paced song filled with Indian onomatopoeia words. Their final song of the night was "This Little Light of Mine".

Next up was the Women's Ensemble and they opened with "Vuelie (from Frozen)". Next, they sang "Dance Into the Day". The ensemble sang "Cantate Domino" and after that they sang "Colorful". The next song they performed was called "Ikan Kekek" and it required the singers to brighten their vowels in the song which is not commonly done in a choir. Towards the end of the piece Rachel Cottrell, Mackenzie Mercuri, Marin Miller, and Kate Rickard each conducted a part of the choir and they all sang the melody at different times. The last song they performed was "Taylor, the Latte Boy" they had a wonderful soloist named Maddy Homer sing quite a lot of the song.

Finally, Chamber Singers performed their songs to close the show. The choir performed the songs "Kyrie Eleison (from *Missa Secunda*)", "The Sun Never Says", "sun, moon, stars, rain", "Lullaby", "'Go!' Said the Star", and finally "Seize the Day (from *Newsies*). The final song made people in the audience extremely happy because *Newsies* is a popular musical that many people enjoy. Many people know this song because it is one of the most popular songs in the musical.

At the very end of the show, all the choirs came together on stage to perform the Alma Mater. But, before that Mr. Rickard called all of the seniors to the front of the stage to give them a farewell speech, since this was their last performance at Pine-Richland High School. The Alma Mater was conducted by the Choir President, Claire Dosch. She did an astonishing job conducting and it was such a bittersweet goodbye to all of the seniors.



Photo by Sophia Kerns and Hannayayne Shannon

## Peer2Peer's 10th Annual Color Run

### *Vibrant Colors Unite Students and Minds*

VIENNA RESTELLI STAFF WRITER

Last weekend, Peer2Peer held their 10th annual color run — a lighthearted run (or walk!) where students got covered in color powder. Although, it's also important to know that it served for a great cause — all proceeds raised went to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, meaning that the vibrant colors were a symbol that united both students and a shared cause.

The run lasted from 2-4, and when everyone arrived, we met at the stadium to check in, meet up with friends, and eat snacks as the people who threw color got prepared.

The run was going around both the high school and middle school twice, which may not seem like a ton, but it was pretty tiring! I was surprised that whenever it began, people started running straight away. Although, after that, most people walked for the majority of it. So did I with my friends, but we ran through the colors which was super fun.

The colors were set up at random places throughout the run, and by the end, I basically looked



Freshmen Divy Mishra and Vienna Restelli  
photo by Vienna Restelli

# Student Life

like a whole rainbow! There was pink, purple, blue, red, yellow, and green — I probably got the most blue on me. There was a ton in my hair, and when I found the bags filled with the color at the end, I put even more in it. You don't get covered with color every day anyway! Gotta make the most of it!

My favorite part of the whole run was at the end, though. Everybody got different colors of color powder in their hands, got into a big circle, and threw all the powder up on the count of 3. I wasn't able to see all the colors get thrown up because I was closing my eyes, of course, but I'm sure it looked really pretty.

Therefore, the color run was amazing because it was fun, for a great cause, and I made memories and took a ton of pictures. I'm happy I went this year as a freshman, because that means I can just do it again for the rest of my years in high school. Hope to see you all there next year!

Color run photos provided by pr\_schools on Instagram



## Preparing For A New Chapter In Life

### *Celebrating Achievements As The School Year Ends*

ERIN ZHENG STAFF WRITER

As the school year ends, friends prepare to leave to go on vacation, and peers say goodbye until next year. This year I feel like as gone by so fast, that it feels like just yesterday, I was walking through the halls of the high school, nervously clutching my schedule. I made so many new friends and made thousands of memories this school year. I was talking with some of my friends, and they were saying how this year was like going so slow, and not fast at all. But I was like, what? I mean, I guess it's true when people say that time goes faster as you grow older.



Freshmen Vienna Restelli and Erin Zheng  
provided by Erin Zheng

I wish that I could go back to the start of my freshman year, and tell myself, "Hey, it's ok to stand out. Don't be scared to reach your social branches, and make new friends". But, I guess that it's too late now to go back. I'm excited for sophomore year, because some of my friends will be moving up into the high school, and I can't wait to show them around. I know firsthand how scary it can be to go into a new building surrounded by towering giants, but one day, they'll be the towering giants, and the freshman will look up to them.

I'm going to be honest: Journalism this year was not what I was expecting at all. It was really fun, and it was a really nice break from all my other classes. My articles this year were not my best work, but some of them were so good.

For the seniors, as they go to college and leave their beloved high school behind, their memories will stay in this high school forever, and soon, there's gonna be so many memories from everyone as they leave, that this place will hold a special place in everyone's hearts. "School may be over, but life's lessons are yet to be learned. Keep an open heart and mind."

# Student Life



Photo by @prhsmusical on Instagram

## PRHS MUSICAL BRINGS HOME SOME HARDWARE AFTER THE GENE KELLY AWARDS

The cast and crew of *42nd Street* won Gene Kelly awards for both Dance Ensemble and Student Orchestra! Congratulations!

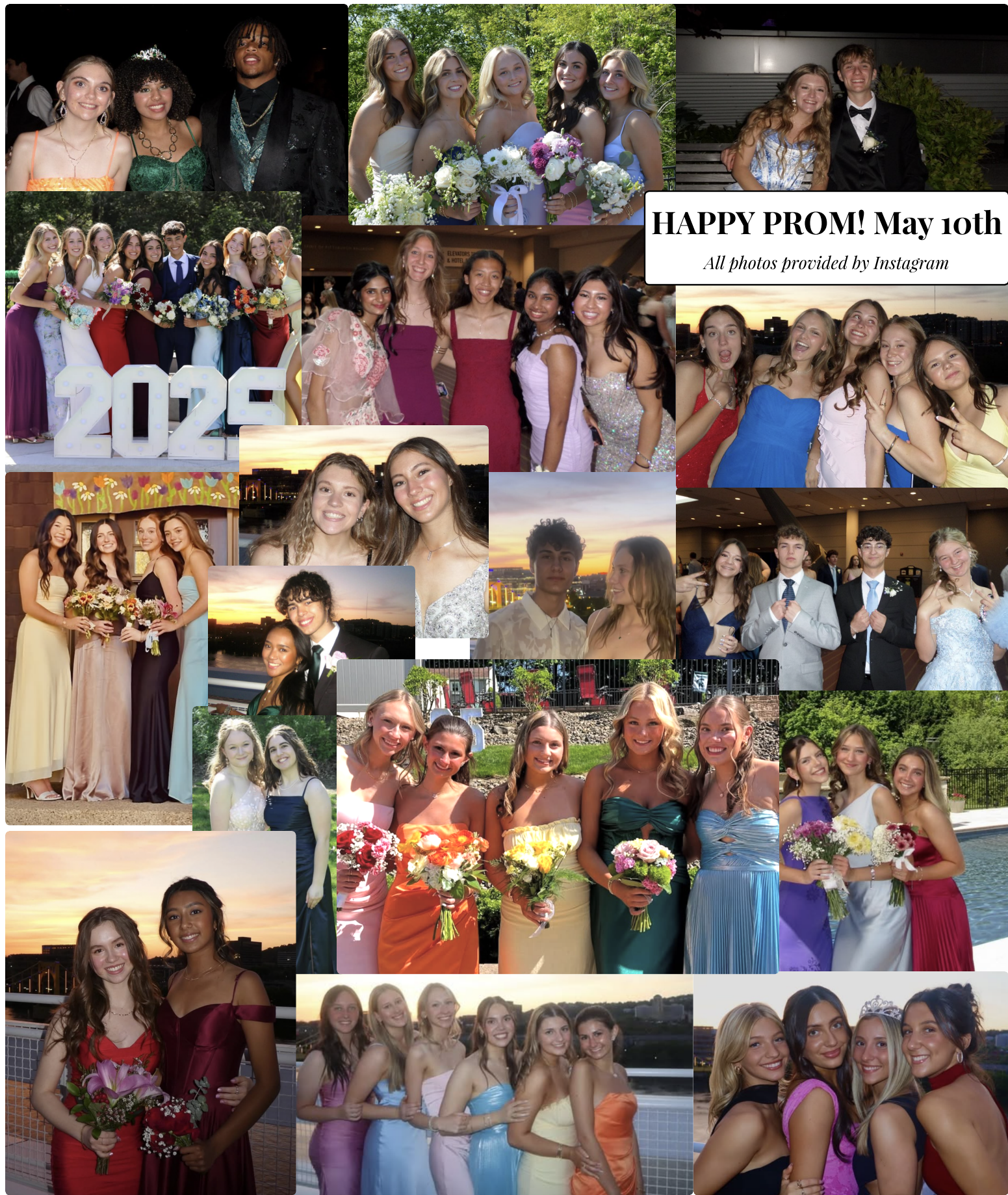
## NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS FOR THREE PR STARS

Vaughn Spencer, "Julian Marsh", was nominated Best Actor

Anna Karmanos, "Dorothy Brock", was nominated Best Actress

Sophia Priore, "Maggie Jones", was nominated Best Supporting Actress

# Prom 2025



**HAPPY PROM! May 10th**  
*All photos provided by Instagram*

# Prom 2025



**Students dance the night away!**

*All photos provided by John Madia Photography*



# Sports

## Pickens Traded

### *Steelers Send Top Receiver to Dallas*

DAVIS NATALI STAFF WRITER

#### Trade Details

In a surprising move, the Steelers have traded wide receiver George Pickens to the Dallas Cowboys. Dallas will receive Pickens and a 2027 sixth-round pick, while Pittsburgh will get a 2026 third-round selection and a 2027 fifth-rounder.

#### Pickens Gets a New Home

George Pickens, who was drafted in 2022 out of Georgia, had some big moments with the Steelers. He's known for making crucial catches and being the Steelers' top deep threat. In 2023, he had over 1,100 receiving yards and averaged more than 18 yards per catch, which was the best in the league. But he also had some issues off the field. People criticized him for his attitude and effort at times, making things tense in Pittsburgh, and having fans split on what the team should do with him.

Now with the Cowboys, Pickens will team up with CeeDee Lamb to form one of the most talented wide receiver duos in the NFL. Dallas is hoping this fresh start will help Pickens stay focused and show what he can do.

#### What the Steelers Are Thinking

The Steelers seem to be changing direction. Earlier this offseason, they brought in DK Metcalf from the Seahawks, a big-time receiver with experience. That made Pickens a bit more expendable. Pittsburgh's front office likely felt it better to trade him now while his value was still high, instead of risking more issues later.



Photo provided by Google



Recent Sports Highlights  
Photos provided by prschools

# Reflection

## Continued...

From a music side, I was in both the Musical and Freshman Choir this year. Performing in both of these groups was amazing and so different from Middle School. 42nd Street was an amazing production. I do not think I have ever worked so hard for a musical before. Learning the tap for tap for the show was so much fun, but also one of the most complicated things I have ever tried to do. I am looking forward to going to the

Gene Kelly award ceremony. Since it is my first time it will be really interesting to see what it is like.

That's just a quick summary of my Freshman year. There is so much that happened, it's crazy to think that it only lasted a few months. It feels like August was years ago. I can not wait to start Sophomore year, but for now I am so excited to start my summer break.

## Oh, How Time Flies *An Ode to High School*

AVA BARSON STAFF WRITER

Four years ago today I was just starting high school, but now I am just about to finish it. It's hard to believe that I am only days away from being done with my high school career. It feels like just yesterday I was a freshman getting lost in the big school. Although the time went by super

fast, there are many lessons I have learned here that I will never forget.

As a freshman I had been so terrified of the school and being in a new environment. After four years I was able to learn that there is truly nothing to be afraid of. Both academically and socially. Everyone is here learning just as I was. So if there is anything I learned from my four years it is that change is good. It may seem scary but it changes you as a person for the better. I learned better social skills and to come out of my comfort zone. I used to be terrified of speeches and public speaking but now it is becoming more natural all thanks to the years I have spent here.

I used to be highly dependent on my friends when I was an underclassman. I wanted to take the same classes as them and be around them all the time. The only thing that taught me was how much I was hurting myself and my growth. Sure it's great to have friends to see during the school day, but you can't devote your whole life and school schedule to them. So I learned to take the classes I liked regardless of

who I knew was taking it. I learned to not be dependent on others but to be independently strong. So now as I stand here as a senior, I am glad to say that I am very capable of doing things on my own and making my own decisions that are best for me.

High school has taught me many lessons but I think the best lesson I have learned is how ready I am for the real world. When I was a freshman, life seemed terrifying after highschool. It even did when I was a Junior. But now standing here as a senior I am proud to say that I am ready to take on the world. I am highly excited for what waits for me behind the building doors.

So when someone asks me what the best times of my life were, although I have had some rough patches, I would probably say high school. It's the year I have had the most personal growth so far. That is something I am highly proud of but can't take full credit for.

So I thank High School for that.



Photo by Ava Barson

## Goodbye junior year

GIANNA UNGOR STAFF WRITER

Going into junior year, I was scared. I've always been told that junior year was by far the hardest year of high school.

Depending on what classes you took and how involved you were in school. But junior year was easier than expected and flew by quickly. It feels like just yesterday. I was a freshman in high school. Scared and thinking that these are gonna be the longest four years of my life. But I was completely wrong. These have been the fastest.

I met some awesome teachers like Miss Castillo and Mr. Gaetano. I tried new classes like independent living and music production. During that period I discovered a new hobby of making music and the people in that class were really fun. I finished classes that I won't be able to take again like journalism and any of the cooking classes. Which is upsetting because those two classes I enjoyed. They were different and fun.

But one thing that really was upsetting is that all my friends who are seniors are graduating, which is heartbreaking because of all the memories and things that we've been through. But I am happy that they will begin a new chapter in their lives.

# Reflection

## Rampage Reflection

### *My time in Journalism 1*

BREE ARTHUR STAFF WRITER

My time in Journalism 1 has been very enjoyable. This is a class that I would recommend to all students if they are looking for a class to take. This class is an opportunity for you to learn many life skills. You work on presenting, writing skills, collaborating with your peers, time management and meeting deadlines, learn news history, get a look into the outside world, meet and interview professionals, how to write under pressure with timed writings, and you get to take field trips to get exposure to the field of journalism and news. Journalism teaches you so much and it is so beneficial even if you do not want to pursue a career in journalism or the news industry.

One of the highlights of the journalism class is the group interviews. This happens almost every week. We got to interview professional journalists, active military officers, college representatives, PR employees, PR coaches, PR club officers, and PR athletes. It is such a cool thing to get to know people and learn new things. I found it very interesting to talk with new people and get to write stories about it after. Meeting these people helped us learn more about possible careers and about new activities that we could take part of here at PR and in later education as well.

Another amazing part about Journalism is seeing the final product of the Rampage. The Rampage is the school newspaper created and distributed by the Journalism class. It is amazing to have put in the work to write articles each week and have it turn out very nice in the final product. If you don't want to write as much in the class you can also design the Rampage. The designers work each week to put all of the articles together in the Rampage and create a clean finished newspaper.

In addition, you learn very useful journalism and news history and terms. We learned the official names for many of the different parts of the newspaper. We also learned about important historical news events, like the Associated Press, and the Newsboys' strikes. This information was interesting to learn. We also watched many movies relating to the historical event. We watched *Shattered Glass*, a movie about Stephen Glass and his false article scandal. We additionally watch *The Post*, which was about the Pentagon Papers and the Washington Post. We also watched *Newsies*, which was about the Newsboys' strikes. These movies were very interesting and created a fun way to learn about important historical events that have shaped the news industry.

Journalism has been a great time, it was a chance to meet new people and progress my writing skills. I feel that I have really learned a lot from this class. As I write this final article for the final Rampage of the year, I look back on my good memories of the class. I am very glad that I took this class, and I hope that you will give it a try. It is extremely rewarding and you will not regret it, I promise.



Provided by Bree Arthur

## End of Year Reflection

### *My Freshman Year at Pine-Richland*

SOPHIA KERNS STAFF WRITER

It's crazy to think back to August when we first started the school year, knowing that we are now wrapping it up. So much has happened this year. By next year, we will have all new classes with a brand new mix of students. But, let's not get ahead of ourselves. This is my review of my freshman year.

I loved my classes and teachers this year. It was definitely different from 8th grade. It was a lot harder and required that you put in a lot more effort. It also felt like I had a lot more tests than 8th grade. I was always told that I would have a ton of homework every night, but I really did not get that this year. I only had homework each night in one or two classes and it only took an hour max unless I had a project. The independence this year was also great. No one has the same schedule as anyone else in the building, and you cover almost the entire building in one day.

I also had some great high school experiences for the first time this year. I went to Homecoming for the first time this year. That was an amazing experience, and my friends and I had so much fun. I will never forget my first Homecoming. I will say, a week before Homecoming I got a concussion and was so worried about not being able to go. I was able to go, but had a headache afterwards. That was really the only downside of the night.

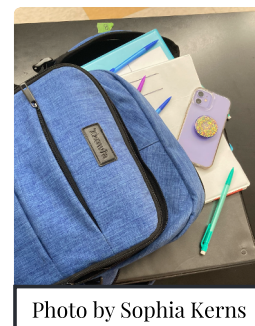


Photo by Sophia Kerns

# Reflection

SENIORS! SEND YOUR SENIOR DINNER DANCE PHOTOS TO A STAFF WRITER TO BE FEATURED ON THE PR WEBSITE! HAPPY GRADUATION!

## Journalism Reflection

*Take a look into a year in journalism*

HANNAHJAYNE SHANNON

Throughout the year I have been writing a deadline for every single Friday. I have written about many topics and gotten put in the Rampage many times. It is bittersweet to think that this is my last article for the Rampage in the 2024-2025 school year. My favorite moments in class were the moments I got to spend bouncing ideas for articles off of my peers. It was so fun to get to just talk and be myself every day during class. I love writing so this class was so much fun for me. I was able to write my thoughts and ideas down on a Google Doc and get printed in the school newspaper. I loved group interviews because it gave me the opportunity to learn about new things that I would not have thought to research before. One of the most exciting things that I did this year was going to the poetry jam. The poetry jam was so fun and so cool to experience. I love poetry and getting to hear people read poetry was interesting. It was awesome because afterwards Sophia Kerns and I wrote an article about it and ended up being on the Pine-Richland website. Overall, I think this year has made me a better writer. I think I have learned many things about how to write and how to collaborate with people in writing. I had a great year in journalism and I hope the others in this class had a great time as well.



Photo by Hannajayne Shannon

**MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH:** May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Peer 2 Peer is sponsoring wellness Wednesdays during all lunches in May. Please stop down in the activity room during lunch every Wednesday this month to participate in each week's activity or theme. Today's theme is nature calms the mind. Support mental health by wearing your PR colors. Visit during lunch to interact with calming activities.

**YEARBOOKS:** Yearbook Distribution happened Wednesday May 28. Yearbooks can STILL be picked up in room 217. You may also buy a book if you did not pre-order; bring \$80 cash only to Mrs. Harshman in room 217.

# Serialized Novel

## Chapter 9- The Decision to Defend

By: Hannahjayne Shannon, Maria Ribeiro.

*“In any moment of decision, the best thing you can do is the right thing, the next best thing is the wrong thing, and the worst thing you can do is nothing.” - Theodore Roosevelt*

Henry stood, the cold breeze coming through the cave's depths slowly caressing his skin, sending skin-curling shivers down his spine. The feelings of regret and confusion all mix within him, as he tries to comprehend all that had just happened. He began to make his way out of the cave. One step after another, his feet having to drag him out, for his mind was still moments behind. He knew he had a choice to make; He also knew which one was the reasonable choice and which one was the *right* choice.

His pace began to pick up as he knew exactly where he had to go. As he ran, his thoughts traced back to Julius' words, ones that have echoed in his mind ricocheting, aggressively, overcoming all of his other thoughts.

“Blood of the covenant is thicker than the water of the womb.”

His hands slowly grasp around the cold iron handle, not turning it, just letting the cold feeling travel through his body. Through a deep sigh, he turned the handle slowly entering the room. When the door opened just enough for him to get a full view of the room, his eyes were met with Julius sitting on the top bunk of the bunk bed. Julius's eyes began to shift around from being deep in thought to an almost alert look. The two men, never breaking eye contact, just stood there in silence, Henry's hand still grasping the door handle. He lifted his feet, slowly, like a deer trying to sneak its way around a pack of wolves.

“Have you made your choice?” Julius asked in a demanding tone, lifting himself higher in an intimidating way.

“Um, yes... Yes, I have,” Henry replied as he fidgeted with his fingers.

“So what is your decision,” Julius said in a skeptical tone.

“I want to go with you, Julius,” he said before taking a second to think.

“I'll go with you to protect the King,” Henry said straightforwardly, still standing up.

“Good... I knew you would come around,” Julius said, a slight smile appearing on his face.

Julius began to climb down the ladder of the bunk bed, but neither of the men said a word. Julius took his final step, his feet secure on the cold stone floor. Both men stood face to face, their eyes meeting like they had before. Henry felt almost alienated as Julius studied his face intently. He wasn't sure what Julius was looking for, maybe it was anything that would tell him that Henry was lying or just trying to understand why Henry was acting the way he did. As they stood Julius began to lift his hand slowly though as slow as he tried to lift his hand Henry cautiously took a step back.

“No... no it's oka-” He said as he took a step forward

He lifted his hand up to Henry's face, still with that intense look. The two men didn't dare to move or breathe. The air was still and Henry couldn't tell if he felt almost suffocated or in a strange way relieved. Julius took a step towards Henry, closing the almost non-existent space between them. Julius' hand began to trace Henry's cheek slowly and softly before he quickly snatched his hand back to himself.

“I'm glad, Henry... that you came to your senses.” Julius crossed his arms. Henry let out a small sad smile as Julius spoke.

“As um... I was sitting here. I didn't think you would show up.” Julius broke the eye contact between the two men.

Henry stayed silent, still trying to recollect himself after the intense moment the two men had.

“I couldn't leave you alone... I wouldn't be able to do anything that could remotely hurt you, Julius.” Henry reached for Julius' arm in a consoling way.

“Even if I don't think this is right, I'll help you, and not because I believe in your cause but because I believe in us,” Henry said tenderly and he caressed Julius' arm.

Julius let out a small relieved grin.

“I was thinking about going to the king and telling him about the small coup against him...” Julius stated.

“Alright then let's go!” Henry said through a small smile as he began to turn his back to Julius and walk out of the door.

“Wait...” Julius reached for Henry's hand to stop him from leaving.

“I've been thinking... A lot actually... especially since I thought I lost you for good.” Julius nervously scanned the room

# Serialized Novel

## Chapter 10 – Acception and Redemption

By: Ava Hensel and Kate Iams

*“The man with insight enough to admit his limitations comes nearest to perfection.” – Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*

Julius stared at Henry, who waited for him to continue talking. It felt like years were passing by as Julius thought of the right things to say. Henry's eyes moved around, scanning Julius's face, and his eyebrows furrowed. After much careful consideration, Julius came to his senses about what was right and this world, and what was all wrong. With so much violence and hate in the world, he started to understand the importance of friendship and loyal companionship. What came with those gifts, also came with the risk of losing those gifts.

“I.. I apologize. I have been so caught up in everything else, stuck to my loyalty to the king. I have done my duty as a soldier and as a companion to the king,” Julius began very slowly.

“I do not understand?” Henry questioned.

“I swore to protect the king, but while doing so, I forgot to protect what values most–us. I never intended for all of the troubles and hardships we've been through to tear us apart. I have been caught up fighting, on duty, and in means of survival. All of it. None of it..” Julius stared at his loyal friend.

After muttering such honest words about believing Henry had once died, out loud, Julius wanted to feel guilt free again.

“None of it.. All of it.. I've done. I've done for nothing if I lose your trust,” Julius finished.

Julius waited for a response. It felt like hours as Henry stared at him, dumbfounded. Henry smiled, then twisted his smile and contrasted his face into a confused look.

*Is he trying to.. Trick me? Why do all of that now to suddenly quit.*

Henry turned and started to shift his body forward, unsure of what to do. Waiting in suspense for a response.

As he watched Henry begin to walk away he paused and realized he had to say something before it was too late. “No wait!” he shouted.

Henry turns around and squints his eyes at him, contemplating. He begins to walk back to Julius, slowly with a controlled pace.

“For so long, you decided not to join me. You were loyal to the king. Why does your loyalty shift elsewhere, what are your true intentions? I cannot believe you,” Henry said.

Henry waited for a response. Julius was unsure of what to say, he already spoke his honest truth, there was nothing more to be said. Henry scoffed, believing he had disproven Julius's lies, and that's why he could speak no longer.

“I stand correct. You shall not correct me.” Henry spat, glaring at Julius.

“That's not true. Yes, the king murdered my sister in cold blood. There is no lie there, and what I speak is all truth. Nothing but the truth. I do not lie to you, dear Henry. I have allowed the King to go on in a peaceful life because he has provided me with a purpose. A job, the crown to be loyal to. Support, being supplied with armour and food when necessary. I allowed myself to undergo his strange and odd treatment, not because of true want, or true care for the king. But for myself, and my family, he has protected the rest of my family. Only when you wanted to revolt against the king, I realized I had to put across my differences.”

Henry stood silently, awkwardly waiting, unsure of what to say. Moments passed.

## The Fight, the Lesson, and the Fall

Chapter made by: CJ Feller and Chase Frye

*“Chess is like looking across an ocean. Checkers is like looking down a well.” –Dr. Marion F. Tinsley*

They had little time to plan, but the goal was clear. They would attempt to take the king's life to restore balance in the kingdom. Their march started with Julius opening, “Arthur is most likely in his courtroom on his throne at this time,” Henry nodded, “The more inconspicuous way of entering the castle, aside from the front gates is via one of the tunnels.”

“We should use the King's tunnel. It is the fastest route to the courtroom,” said Henry with a concise tone.

They had both checked their scabbards, swords shining pommels twinkling from the slight openings of light throughout the cave. While Henry's sword had a more basic look to it, Julius's sword pommel had the Pendragon family crest embroidered on it. He rubbed it with his thumb knowing exactly what this meant if he fell through with this plan. He would be betraying his family and his code for arms. Steadfast and headstrong, Julius pressed through the tunnel. They reached the door that would exit the tunnel and cracked open just enough to scan the area in front of them. The coast was clear.

As both of them stepped out of the tunnel onto the stone floor they felt a sudden sense of unease crawl throughout themselves. The air felt

# Serialized Novel

thick. The temperature of the room was cold despite the torches lining the walls constantly berating the area with heat. Finally, it was quiet. Much too quiet for Julius and Henry's liking. They could not hear the shuffling feet of servants, the march of soldiers patrolling the castle halls, nor the buzz the serfs had always caused outside the castle halls. Like a hot knife to butter, the King's voice cut the tension immediately making Henry and Julius snap their heads in the direction of the throne.

"Julius! How glad I am to see you!" as Julius and Henry's eyes darted from one another to the king they took notice of something. The king had his armor equipped. "And you brought Henry with you too! How perfect this is! I've been meaning to talk to you both for a while now..." The room was as cold as ice. The king stood up from where he was once sitting. It was not until now that Julius took notice of the blade sitting next to King Arthur.

*It could not be... could it?*

The question bounced around in Julius's head like an echo through a cave. He had heard rumors of the long-dead practice of magic. But his worst fear was coming true at that moment. The king had taken the sword that had sat so long above his mantle out of its place.

*Excalibur.*

The king wielded the instrument in his right hand as he moved with grace closer to the duo only to come to a stop some 15 feet away from them. He put the sword in front of him with his gloved hands resting upon the pommel, taking a prideful stance.

"You know, Julius, you were my favorite from our family. You always listened. You always gave it your all. You even forgave me for giving up your sister's life for a bit more influence over the people..." Arthur struck a nerve with that last comment but maintained his composure. "But when I noticed your sudden... escapades... were taking longer than expected and that Henry was not showing up at his posts, I figured something was awry." Henry and Julius were growing more worried with each word passing through the king's mouth because they even began understanding that they were not the only ones in the room. "Now as your king, I have made many different sacrifices. I also have many ears and eyes besides just the knights... Ahhh. That is that look on your faces, you realize! Well, it is no secret now. You, come on out!"

An old man stepped out from behind Arthur's throne. While Henry did not recognize him at a glance, Julius made the connection instantly. It had been his instructor from his days at the academy. He had been the head general of the last king, the first knight before Julius to Arthur, and served for well over 50 years. While the old man is just around his mid-60s, Julius knew that he was still just as good as when he was serving because, without him, Julius would have never gotten to where he is by effort alone. The man was in armor but it was lighter to suit his older frame. The only thing that truly separated him from the king and the two knights was the weapon he used. While Julius and Henry wielded longswords and the King a greatsword he used a saber. A weapon that requires discipline, precision, and strategy.

A sinister grin marked the King's face as he opened his mouth and began to speak one final time, "Now gentlemen it truly saddens me to do this to the both of you. But it is by my divine right ruler that I hereby mark you both as traitors for conspiring against the king. For this, your punishment is; death. Fortunately for you, I do wish to have a sparring match because it has been a while since I had to show why I became King... Draw. Your. Swords." It felt like an instant; the king cleared the distance and charged at Julius while the old man dashed at Henry. Quick to the draw, Julius snatched his blade from his waist stopping the king, mere inches away from the intended target: his neck. There was a flurry of blows that the king delivered. One from overhead, one that came diagonally up the left side of Julius' body, two that tried bisecting him, and two that would have formed an X on Julius's body. Julius thankfully was just able to deflect or evade all the blows but one. He felt a thud of a foot slam against the breastplate of his body. The king had kicked him to create distance.

*How is he able to move that sword so fast,* Julius had thought to himself. He glanced over at Henry to see him somewhat managing to keep up with the quick slashes and stabs his mentor was throwing at him. His gaze was then fixed back on the king who was charging him, this time Julius was ready. The king prepared to do a cross-body slash, but Julius met the sword in time to perform a parry. Julius turned his sword pommel in to do a quick strike to the king's chest, but his arm got caught before he could do it. Quick to the punch the king headbutted Julius straight on his nose. Julius stumbled back once more trying to see through his teary eyes only making out the shining figure of the king swinging Excalibur in his hand in a circle. *He is toying with you!* Frustration was beginning to cloud Julius's mind, but he attempted to flush it out to not get sloppy when fighting against the king.

"You know, Julius, I had such big plans for you! Why did you have to go and prove me wrong hmm?" The king again started to advance on Julius striking at him. "You were meant to be my right hand! We were going to take over the entirety of this land. What changed?" Julius, staying focused on denying the king from getting any serious cuts or gashes on him, stayed silent. The king broke away from Julius, did a heavy sigh and continued, "You know... I think I have a pretty good idea actually." The king stuck Excalibur in the ground and balled his fists, confusing Julius. Regardless, Julius readied his offensive stance.

The king took a few steps forward not having any sort of intention present. Julius cut down but the king sidestepped him and delivered a gloved jab right to Julius' cheek. Julius, still handling his sword, swung blindly in the direction where he thought the king was. He heard a metal pang but the target was unknown. Julius tried pulling back his sword but there was resistance. He looked at the mid-section of his blade and saw the hand of the king holding it. The king smirked, used both his hands and wrenched the blade from Julius's hand, throwing it

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away toward the mentor. It was a boxing match now. Both fighters took a stance. Julius made a quick breakdown in his head.

*The king has weight and power but I have speed.*

Arthur moved in with two jabs. Julius slipped to the outside of the king's body and delivered a sharp body shot to the king. While the armor does nullify some of the effects of blunt hits it does not cancel them. Julius threw a cross punch hoping to hit the King's temple, but it was blocked with the king sending a right hook at Julius. Julius backs off narrowly avoiding the hit. Both circled each other for a moment with Julius engaging. Two jabs are sent from Julius one high, one low. The king expected the two-jab entry but not the level change meaning the low caught him off guard for a moment. Continuing his combo Julius threw another cross punch, stepped to the left, body shot, and finished with a hook. The hits landed and for once the king staggered. Only instead of showing pain, the king showed pleasure. The king spoke with a hearty laugh, "Finally, Julius! You actually caused some damage... it is just a shame that I have to end this now." The king moves in on Julius. Julius sends a cross only for it to be deflected and a knee straight to his diaphragm to be delivered. Julius keels over with the king throwing him in the direction of his sword and his mentor. Julius looks up and sees Henry with cuts peppered all over him. While they weren't fatal, they caused bleeding. The mentor gives Henry one last slash on the chest before the king tackles Henry away from Julius and his mentor.

An old creaky voice speaks piercing Julius like a needle through the fabric, "Pick up your sword, boy. We are not finished dueling yet." Julius looks up to see the man that caused him so much pain during his academy years. Julius was frozen, but his mentor's voice said, "If you wish to die without honor, so be it, but I will not tell you again. Pick. Up. Your. Sword. Boy." Julius scrambled, grabbing his sword and standing. The old man's voice spoke, "At least you still comprehend basic orders..." Julius attempting to shake this feeling only stares at his mentor. The old man taps the tip of Julius' longsword. It does not budge a centimeter and the old man says, "You're too rigid loosen up! Have you gotten so sloppy..." Julius without hesitation loosened. His mentor taps Julius' sword again and it flops to the side. His mentor shouts at him, "Idiot! I said loosen up. Not flop like a dead fish." The mentor took a lap around Julius and sighed. "Sometimes I wondered why I passed you. How could you be so gutless to where you are crippled by an old man's criticism?" He raised his saber after coming to Julius' front and said, "Alright boy. It seems this will be quick." The old man taps Julius' sword once again and begins the engagement.

The old man steps forward taking a jab at Julius' shoulder. Julius moves back just out of reach of the mentor's saber. Julius sends a strike from overhead but the mentor blocks it as it falls away to the ground. Just as it fell to the ground Julius receives a cut on his cheek. Julius stands straight up and receives a precise slice on his knee. His knee crumples a little bit but did not fall to it. Now his weight was unevenly distributed with most of it resting on his back foot. The mentor stood there with a disapproving look on his face struck again except this time he wanted to get Julius' sword out of the way. Quickly swiped left then, right, snared Julius' sword circled to get it out of the way, and stabbed directly between the gap on Julius' shoulder. A shout of pain came from Julius as his left hand let go of his sword and went to his mentor's blade preventing it from driving further in. The mentor was stepping into Julius, Julius backpedaled for a few steps and then swung his blade at his mentor who jumped back. The pain was beginning to overwhelm Julius. He was breathing heavily, the muscles in his thighs burned, and the bruises the king had put on him were pulsing with pain. The mentor steps in once again Julius uses his sword to swing but just as he finishes the old man stamps yet another cut on Julius' face this time on the right side of his face. Now with only one leg, one arm, and one good eye left he had a handful of options left: run, keep fighting, or yield. One thing that bothered him though was: *Why Henry was not this beat up?*

Julius takes his final charge forward, leaping off his left foot preparing to bring down a coo de gra but his mentor sidesteps Julius, cuts him under his remaining arm and Julius falls to the ground with his sword a few feet in front of him. He tries to crawl to it but his mentor steps on his hand stopping him from going forward. Julius gnashes his teeth in pain as he feels a sharp blade touch the side of his cheek forcing his head to look elsewhere. Julius had reached his limit. He was beyond sore and on the brink of blacking out.

The one thing that brought him back to reality was his mentor's voice saying, "Oh no boy. Don't pass out just yet. Your little friend is about to get his." Julius' eyes opened wide looking for Henry and when he saw him a pit formed in his stomach. Somehow, Henry who was in full armor to begin with, had been missing his shoulder plates, his breastplate, his arm plates, and parts of his chainmail. He looked like he'd been put in a meat grinder. He was cut up, bruised, and barely standing. The remaining armor he wore had slash-shaped gashes in it. He looked at the king who was standing there in nearly the same condition Julius had put him in. Worst of all he was looking directly at Julius with a devilish smile.

The king spoke with an impatient tone, "Finally the best part can begin..." The king walked toward Henry and Henry backed up swinging wildly at him, completely missing. Henry stumbled a little bit but the king kept pressing forward. Henry swung one last time and Arthur backhanded him. Henry fell and tried to get back up. The king however had different plans and sent Excalibur straight through Henry's leg. Henry shouted in agony as he attempted to free himself. The king looked over at Julius once again to make sure he was paying attention. He let Henry's anguish continue for several minutes and tried as Julius could, but he could not get free from under his mentor. Finally, the king knelt next to Henry's ear for a moment and stood back up. Henry, after that very moment, stopped struggling. It almost seemed like he gave up. Arthur took Excalibur out of Henry's leg and Henry stood up, sword in hand. Everything to Julius slowed down. Henry took the best stance he could. Then Arthur took his stance for once. Henry began with a strike overhead. Arthur blocked. Arthur did an overhead strike. Henry blocked. They swung their swords and met each other. They did it again. They swung at each other and met in a bind. Henry showed signs of a struggle

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but Arthur showed no such exertion. Arthur shrugged Henry's Sword away and ran him through the torso.

"No!" Julius screamed as he got up and limped as fast as he could to Henry's falling body. As Henry's body hit the ground Julius slid right next to him. Panicked Julius said, "Henry stay with me. You will be okay I promise. Please just-" Julius saw his friend bleeding heavily and knew there was nothing he could do. Julius continued, "Just stay with me," tears forming in his eyes, "please I-"

Henry cut him off, "Julius. It's ok. Everything will be okay. Just promise me-" he took a labored breath, "Just promise me you'll run after this." Julius choked up and couldn't find the words to say that he would. Henry with his last breath said, "Blood of the covenant... is thicker... than the water of the womb. Always... remember," and with that Henry's heavy breaths became silent. Julius looked at his swollen eyes and the light was gone. Julius would have loved to scream at the loss of his companion but he felt a vile rage begin to build within his stomach. That hole that the monster left would be filled with his blood. He had let his actions slip once but that was when he held no power. Although he was battered and bruised he now found a second wind but could only do one thing... run... or fight with whatever he has left.

Dear Readers,

The final issue of the 2024-2025 *Rampage* is here and we would like to thank our staff for all the care and hard work they put into each story. To our readers we want to thank you for flipping through the pages, even if it was a casual skim. We are proud of all 20 issues we created this year. As seniors, we will not see you next year, but we are confident the future editors will make PR proud.

Sincerely,

June McCune and Anna Karmanos  
Editors-In-Chief

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