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THE COURIER

THE LONGEST RUNNING MIDDLE SCHOOLS NEWSPAPER IN THE UNITED STATES

HIGHLANDS ENTREPRENUERSHIP FAIR REVIEW

By Lizzie Orzuna Santiago

Hello everyone! This article is about the Entrepreneurship Fair and how it all began. The event is where (as a final test) kids create posters and other business stuff (such as business cards, brochures, etc.) about items that they themselves must make. It is a product that is either 1) a brand-new item or 2) an adaptation of something already made. For example, a project could be a new and improved iPad. Before students could even begin to start on their product, they first must understand copyright, rights, business planning, innovation and much more.





The Beginning

After they understand the basics, they would be able to group with up to 3 other people and start brainstorming an idea. They would need to create a logo, team roles, brochures, and a survey to be answered by peers, teachers and other people. The team roles could vary, from CEO (Chief Executive Officer), CFO (Chief Financial Officer), Rainmaker (someone who helps bring in business, often a person who is comfortable with talking in front of others) timekeeper, manager, and a few others.

The survey is made in forms and would have a product description and normally has 7-10 questions. Once the group had enough people who did their survey, they would sometimes print good feedback and put it on boards or brochures.

As some groupmates would work on the posterboard, while others would work on the brochures on Canva. First, you'd design and organize your brochure to your liking. Secondly, you would go to the library and print them double sided. Your max amount of brochures allowed was five. Soon, you'd print and put your logo, QR code to your survey, stats from survey, team roles, and other touches onto your board.

Some issues kids faced were that the staples they used to staple things onto the board kept falling off, and lack of communication. For a good team to work, everyone needs to work together. No one can do it alone, and teamwork makes the dream work after all.

For anyone who wants tips, I had an interview with Entrepreneurship teacher, Mrs. Ina Pascal, where she gives futures entrepreneurs tips for a successful business.

Why is the Business Fair important? "The Business Fair is important because it is a platform for students to share ideas for products and services. "

What is a tip for future Entrepreneurs? "Don't give up on your idea. Do your research? Find out if the product or service meets the needs of a group of people"

Who helped to create the subject for Highlands? "Introduction to Entrepreneurship is a course offered through Uncharted Learning. Uncharted Learning's headquarters are in Barrington, Illinois. I go to training for this course in Chicago each summer. Administration decided that this course would be a great opportunity for middle school students to showcase their creativity skills."

What is Entrepreneurship? "Entrepreneurship is the process of identifying business needs and creating something to meet that need. Entrepreneurs take risk to develop a new product or service."

How can I be successful in a business? "Start by defining your goals for the business. Write a business plan which is a road map to keep you focused. Know who your customers are. Focus on customer satisfaction. Continue to learn and be flexible so you can change with the marketplace. Manage your finances for your business and personally. Network and be persistent."

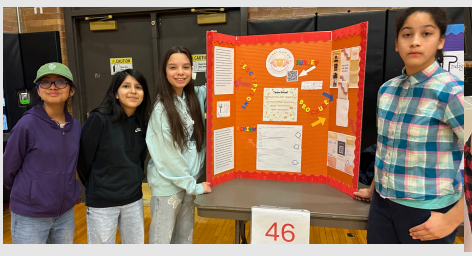
If you could give advice, what would it be? "Don't be afraid. . .. If you follow my advice, you will be successful. The Business Fair is important because it is a platform for students to share ideas for products and services."

During the Fair.

The Business Fair happened on the 14th of January. If you had attended, you would have been escorted to the auditorium while contestants went to the North Gym. There, you would've A) Picked a spot for your poster, or B) Found the spot your teammates picked beforehand. Some kids came earlier and so, were able to pick the spots first. Soon, we would get a pep talk from some of the staff supervising, then they would have around 30 minutes to prepare yourselves. After the time is up, the judges would be allowed 5 minutes earlier, then the parents came. Some students came to see the fair, but most were siblings with their parents.

After the Fair

The whole event was around 1 hour and 30 minutes and there were prizes for 3rd, 2nd, and 1st for M Day and S Day. The winners got medals however, they are currently being order and it is unknown when they will be here. Everyone from Highlands congratulated the winners, and everyone who took part in the Fair. Having to present repeatedly in front of judges is no simple task. The months taken to prepare was worth it for this amazing event! Everyone's ideas were creative and unique. Another great congratulations to everyone who was in the Fair, and we can't wait for the next semester of entrepreneurs.







LOCAL NEWS

ENCORE TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

By Julia Anselmo

1. Where did you go to school/grow up?
"I went to school at Christ The King in Queens, New York."
2. What made you want to go into Education?
"I wanted to go into education because I like working with children and I like the relationships that I then form with my students, as well as my players because I am also a coach!"
3. How many years have you been teaching?
"*I have been teaching for five years; I was a substitute teacher for three years...A physical education teacher for one year and I'm doing health education at Highlands."*
4. Who are your role models? Why?
"*For me that would be my father because he was always making sure we had everything we wanted."*
5. What are your hobbies/What do you do for fun on your free time?
"My hobbies are playing sports with my friends like softball, basketball and golf. I also like to play with my daughters and barbecue."
6. What is your favorite book that you have ever read?
"*My favorite book is called All of the Kings Men."*
7. What subject was your favorite when you were a student? Why?
"*My favorite subjects were either physical education because I like to be active...sport or math because I like numbers."*
8. What advice do you have for students today?
" To try their best and use their teachers because they are there to help!"
9. What are you most looking forward to this year at Highlands?
"*I am looking forward to getting to know my students and my other coworkers."*
10. What else would you like our readers to know about you?
"*Being that this is my first year, I would like students to know that I am excited to create new bonds and get to my students as well as the other teachers."*


Mr. Ciorciari

7TH GRADE TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

By Mina Auletta

What made you want to go into education?
"Growing up I really liked reading and studying literature, but I didn't necessarily have good language teachers. So, I decided that I wanted to go into education so I could inspire others to read and explore literature in a fun way."
How many years have you been teaching?
"I retired last year after 32 years of teaching, and I'll be adding this year to the years I've taught so that'll be 33 years."
Who are your role models? Why?
"*Definitely my father because he instilled a work ethic in me, and there were certain teachers I had throughout my life that I really enjoyed that made learning accessible and they could connect to their students. And particularly my 8th grade math teacher, Mr. Kale."*
What subject was your favorite when you were a student? Why?
"*My favorite subject ironically was math because it was difficult for me, so it was a challenge."*
What advice do you have for students today?
"*My advice is that education should be fun and while grades are important to achieve, it should be about the journey of learning and when you make a mistake not to think it's the end of the world, it is just a bump in the road, and something to overcome. But then our mistakes are where we have the greatest room for growth."*



Mr. Scullion Team 7B

What are you most looking forward to this year at Highlands?
"*I'm looking forward to the opportunity to teach again, to be in front of students, and to open up my student's minds to reading and opportunities they have never saw before. I am really happy that I have this opportunity to to come back after retiring and to have one more shot at it."*
What else would you like our readers to know about you? What are you most looking forward to this year at Highlands?
"I want them to know education wasn't my first choice. I wanted to be a lawyer, but life has ways of taking you down different paths and we should always enjoy the journey and not so much worry about the destinations."

Other Information:
Mr. Scullion came back from retirement to fill in for the writing teacher on team 7B, Mrs. Tschinkel. His students are very glad he accepted to come back. Mr. Scullion is an amazing teacher, and anyone would be ecstatic to do this spotlight interview on him.

LOCAL NEWS

8TH GRADE TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

By Andy Jimenez


Ms. Endres
Team 8D

In the winter editions 8th grade teacher spotlight, we have Ms. Endres! She is a science teacher on Team 8D, and I had a small interview with her for this article!

What made you want to go into teaching?

"I've wanted to be a teacher since I was in elementary school. My mom used to work at my elementary school when she was a T.A and she would work with all the special needs kids and I loved watching her do that. I would ask my teachers if I could spend my lunch time with her [her mom], working with her special needs kids in her room, and since then I've always wanted to be a teacher."

How many years have you been teaching for?

"This is year two [at Highlands] but I did a leave replacement on Long Island, so two and a half."

What are your hobbies or what do you like to do in your free time?

"Very simple, I love to go to the gym, I love working out. Every day after work I go straight to the gym and I work out. Right after here [after my interview with her], I'm going right to the gym. I got my bag of clothes (She indeed had a bag of extra clothes) with me."

What advice would you have for the students of today?

"Try hard now and try hard all the way up until high school and college, and then once you get that job it makes things a lot easier. I mean I'm still working really hard, but that's because I'm new at what I do. Right? So, once i have a couple years under my belt, things should get a little easier, but if you work hard now, it makes your future a lot easier. So, stay motivated, stay positive, and just work hard"

From my experiences, Ms Endres is a spectacular teacher at highlands middle school. She is really passionate about her teacher and an overall amazing role model in my eyes and possibly in the eyes of her other students. I am glad to be one of her students since she makes my learning experience a lot more enjoyable.



TEAM TOURNAMENT REVIEWS: VOLLEYBALL

By Julia Anselmo

On November 27,2024 and December 8,2024 Highlands had the 7th and 8th grade volleyball tournaments! At the 7th grade tournament 7C won with 7A close behind winning against every team! (except 7D.) Against the teachers… 7C had a loss so they did not get overall champions although they did get volleyball winners for the whole 7th grade bringing them to two paws. 7D is winning with three paws!! Tied with 8C! As for 8th grade 8C took the win with 8B close behind. This time when it came to them versus the teachers they won giving them the overall championtiger paw! Coming up we have the basket ball tournament 7th grade on February 14, 2025 and 8th Grade, sometime in May to be determined.

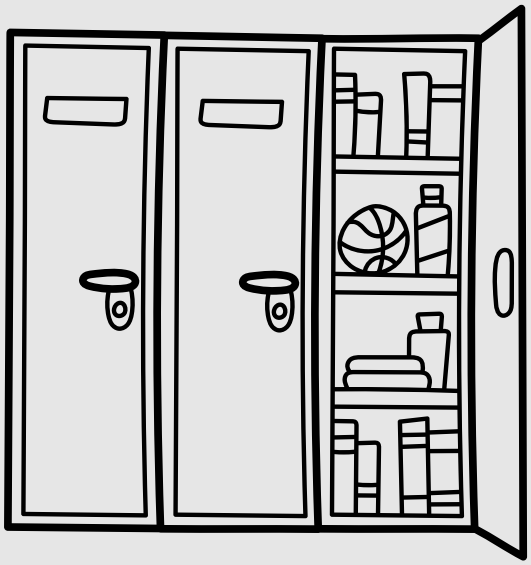
AN 8TH GRADERS GUIDE ON HOW TO SURVIVE MIDDLE SCHOOL

by Salvatore Bonaiuto

<u>Test Taking Study Strategies</u>

It is that time. Some of your classes may be having midterms or final exams. Here are some tips to prepare for your midterm, final exams, or any big test:

- Listen to Music While You Study
  - I know that if I study in complete silence, my mind will wander to fill the quiet, and I will constantly lose my focus
- Teach the Material to Someone Else
  - Another thing that helps me is explaining the topic to another person. You could explain it to a sibling, friend who needs help, or a parent that is always asking what you learn on school.
- Other Habits Outside of Studying
  - The night before a test, you should be reviewing material one final time, and make sure to get a good night's sleep. You should eat a good breakfast and do calming activities.



TECHNOLOGY

APPLE INTELLIGENCE REVIEW

By Wyatt Gonzalez

In June of each year, the tech company Apple hosts an event titled WWDC, or the Worldwide Developers Conference. At this event, Apple announces its newest software updates for their major platforms, like iOS and MacOS. For example, this year they launched iOS 18 and MacOS 15, also known as MacOS Sequoia. Most years, they just put out a couple of bigger new features with a bunch of smaller ones to make their devices more useful and fun. This year they released a new bigger set of features, known as Apple Intelligence, which is Apple's version of AI for their devices. They are a bit late in the game as other tech companies like google and Microsoft have their own AIs, respectively named Gemini and Bing. Apple's artificial intelligence brings a host of features that make the iPhone, iPad and Mac much better devices. The features do require 4 GB of RAM, so older devices will not be able to run them. As of the writing of this article, only some of the features have been released to the public because Apple wants to test them with betas first. I believe the most prominent features are Writing Tools, improved Siri and Visual Intelligence. Writing Tools left you select a piece of text, and it will give you many options of what to do with it. Some options are rewrite, which lets you choose wether you want the device to rewrite it in a friendly or profesional way, or if you would like it to be more concise. Another thing you can do with Writing Tools is summarize the text, which if there is a long e-mail or document, might prove useful. The next important new AI feature is an improved Siri. To be honest, Siri before this was kind of trash and nothing compared to other assistants like Alexa, it would routinely mess up requests and couldn't process them if you made a small mistake. Now, it uses some AI to better understand what you are asking and is more versatile in what it can do. For example, if you ask Siri how to add a new Bluetooth device to your phone, it will now use its detailed knowledge of Apple Devices support handbooks to give you instructions to complete your desired task. The new Siri also got a redesign, with the sides lighting up in an ethereal glow when you hold the side button to call it up.

What I would say the most important sub feature of the new Siri is its ability to interact with ChatGPT, OpenAI's chatbot. When it does not have the knowledge to answer or perform your request, it can send data to ChatGPT for it to analyze and send back. I find this particularly useful if I want to know some information about a topic in more detail than regular Siri can give me. Response times are also mildly faster which I find helpful. So overall, the new Siri has pretty nice improvements, but I think we all expect it to get better over the next couple of years, as more new processors are built with AI in mind and more research and testing is put into the subject. The last important feature of Apple Intelligence is Visual Intelligence. For now, I will just call it VI for easier use. VI is only avaible on the new iPhone 16 lineup because to access it, you need the Camera Control button, a button that lets you open the camera with a click and tap and swipe to do various things in the app. But to activate VI, you hold the button, and it will bring up a sort of camera style screen, but instead of all the controls, you only have 3. One is the shutter, used to capture the image, and the other two are Google Visual Search and ChatGPT. The really neat thing that these do is that if you take a picture of say a chair, you're thinking about buying, and click the search button, it will bring up items you can buy on the internet that look similar or the same as that chair you took a photo of! And vice-versa, if you take a picture of the chair and click the ChatGPT button, it will analyze the image and explain to you what this is. I think this is for sure a great tool and has a lot of potential to become super useful. So finally, I think that the new Apple Intelligence features are a great start for the company in that field but could use some improvements. They also need to make them more available for them to catch on with the general public. Currently, Apple Intelligence can only run on the iPhone 15 pro and above, which not everyone has. I hope you make use of these features if you can though. That's all! Thanks for reading!! I know no one is going to read this but ah well.



CURRENT EVENTS



WILDFIRES REACH L.A: AT LEAST 20 KILLED, OVER 170,000 TOLD TO EVACUATE

By Maya Amir

On January 7th, at 10: AM, the fire began. 17,234 acres of land in the neighborhood of Pacific Palisades, California has been burned. With at least 1,000 structures destroyed, and power not working for an estimated 300,000 across the state, Governor of California Newson applied and has been approved by former president Biden for a Major Disaster Declaration in the state of California.

California incident commanders have spoken on the issue, providing information on the winds and gusts, reaching up to 25 and 50 MPH. Fire department chief of L.A Cristen Crowley reports over 250 LAFD Firefighters on scene, as well as stating there to be "46 engines, 3 trucks, 5 helicopters," and countless other lawmakers, donators, medics, and others there to help.

"You don't really realize how serious it is until you're close to the flames," says survivor Aaron Samson on an interview with CBS news. He and his 83-year-old father, with Parkinson's disease, were forced to go on foot to escape the fires.

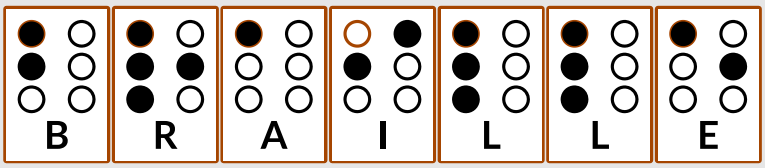
Causes for the Palisades Fire are still being investigated. For more information on all currently active incidents in California, you can check their website here:
https://www.fire.ca.gov/incidents

NATIONAL BRAILLE LITERACY MONTH

By Mina Auletta

This January is recognized as National Braille Literacy Month. Braille is a series of six raised dots that form letters. It has helped countless blind people learn to read. Before braille was created, many blind children had no way to read and limited ways of learning. Braille was created in the early 19th century by Louis Braille. In 1812, when Louis was 3 years old, he was playing in his father's shop when one of the tools slipped and damaged his left eye. His family had no way of accessing a doctor, so they went to a healer in their village. Even with that, his other eye got infected, and he became permanently blind. He was eventually sent to a school for the blind. When he was there, Louis was inspired by a French army secret dotted code. He added and simplified it until he got the braille we know today. "So, in his spare time and late at night, Louis worked hard to improve the captain's system. With a pointed instrument called a stylus and a wooden writing board with paper, Louis continued working on it. After two years of work, he finally created a new code. It was easier to learn and quicker to read." (The Story of Louis Braille). You may see little dots on all the signs in our school. Those dots are there so blind kids can find their way around. Braille literacy is important for many blind people to read, learn, and fully take part in society. "Braille is not a language. Most languages have their own Braille system." (National Braille Literacy Month-January). While audio technology is improving, braille is still important to many blind people. Even though it is important, that does not mean that everyone uses it. "Believe it or not, 34% of the more than 59 thousand legally blind American children are considered non-readers." (National Braille Literacy Month-January). Many people don't agree that braille literacy is important, but being literate promotes independence and freedom for all people, blind or not.

SOURCES: nationaldaycalendar.com: National Braille Literacy Month-January, brailleworks.com: January is Braille Literacy Month, pathstoliteracy.com: The Story of Louis Braille and Celebrate Braille Literacy Month!



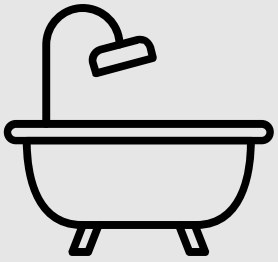
NATIONAL BATH SAFETY MONTH

By Anonymous

National Bath Safety Month is in January. Thousands of people end up in the emergency room due to bath related falls and injuries. But there are many precautions you can take. For example…

- Put a mat on the bottom of the bath or shower
- Use a nonslip rug to stop falls when getting out of the Bath/Shower
- Add a spout cover to the faucet to protect yourself in the case if a fall
- Do not leave small children alone in the bath
- Do not leave electronics near the bath

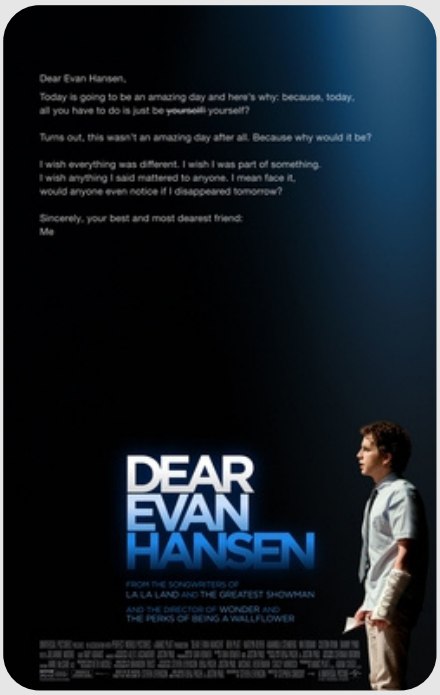
And make sure to always watch small children in the bath. There can be more than just falls. When I was little, I had a no-slip mat in the bathtub to prevent falls. One day a piece had come off. My mom left a three-year-old me alone with a piece of rubber bath math on the counter. I guess in my three-year-old mind it looked like candy because I ate it. My mom rushed me to the emergency room. I was fine and eventually the piece came out. Even though I was fine, I imagine what could have happened. This serves as an example to be very safe in the bath.
This January, make sure to think about what you can do to improve bathroom safety in your household.





EDITORIAL







MUSICAL MOVIE PRODUCTIONS

By Salvatore Boniauto

"Wonka". "Mean Girls" (2024). What do these films have on common? They're musical movies! But strangely, both movies' advertising lacked one crucial detail… the fact that they were musicals (kinda)! You may be thinking, "Wonka was obviously a musical. It is a prequel to a famous musical movie. And Mean Girls is a remake of a musical" I hear you, but if you were creating a musical movie, wouldn't you… y'know, advertise it as a musical movie? Wouldn't you show off snippets of your best songs? Be loud and proud and say "Hey! This is a musical!"? Especially if you create new musical numbers, like Wonka, or are also a remake of a regular movie, like "Mean Girls". The lack of Musical display in the trailers for these movies is no mistake. So… what is the motive?

Money. It's money. Money is the motive. Executives believe that movies that are openly musicals do not preform as well. Especially after films like, "West Side Story", "Dear Evan Hansen", and "In the Heights". All musical movies, all flops. I guess Hollywood is hoping to recreate the success of "The Greatest Showman" and "Mama Mia" but thinks if you know it's a musical you won't show up. And they feel fine with lying to you since once you buy a ticket, they already have your money. And deceiving audiences is so much easier than just… making better movies that people will enjoy. It's not about making something good. It's about making money.







PHILOSOPHY & ARTS

SYNOPSIS OF MORALITY AND NEW YORK FASHION

by Ariel Garcia

1.1a Possibility offers a curvature to reason. As thoughts entwine into truer intuition; the subconscious is formed. And all humanity feels through mosaics of eyes, and minds is subject to each person.

1.1b Morals form almost like a lick of sun. Just with a shift, whether in position or perspective.

1.2 How many deaths occur after each breath? And how can you love your mother after you have hurt her, will that love justify the hurt, making it sweeter or the pain more bitter? “Love, they think you are angelic and human. They think you are more potent than the seal of Solomon.” (Rumi) Love itself is controversial and so is death, but true belief forms a more potent morality.

1.3 Love to be any shape, or color, through what means would it be expressed or rather truly conveyed. The tangible or intangible. Where both were to be in question, but for love to be seen as a selfish point in the human anatomy; how then would love be further grasped? You can love one person and be envelopedin that silken fervor. Iust until both you and your unrequited love fade into the nullity. Silk over rags in New York. Only your love would cloak you in something, your unrequited being forever ashamed by your cloak. Persecuted by the heat of tongue. Simply imagine like a unrequited-love scene on the street of New York. A focus cast on two homeless people. One having modest rags, and the other modest rags and e wrapped in silk.Both are staring at eachother. But the one dressed without almost any dress has a more pitiful tale to the eye.

1.4 Love is on the street. You can imagine a sphere forming true trends within the population, and a box just containing that sphere. Mathematically, were you to model a genus of believers that love is all that, and people outside the sphere yet in the box contrary to that, how can you truly burgeon some great union between the two by mentioning the very encapsulation of both entropies. That itself can serve as an explanation of morality, as only an eye.

1.5 Each sense responsible for something as simple as the subjective arts of life. Mists of mind endear the very definition of self. Simply speaking, we are the same people we are in are mind, as the fears we convey. Fear is subject to a fear of self—a form of stimuli—yet conveyed through something foreign to us. Unlike morals, fear relates to principal elements like heritage and experience to form morals.

Fineness, sharpened sticks, and the River Styx. As if both were confined to eachother by a principle of sound. The power held by sentences; grammars is heldby the human advance. And a power we adhere. By observing the true human nature there is a specimen like our own we illustrate our self’s with, with our left eye and a truly indifferent principle with the right. Humanities base, is almost just a mirror of what we should want to see, as if lies were the most beautiful, conveyed letters written to our mind from our desiring throat without voice. In this humanity is like stem, budding into a tree. As all the arteries collect into a hollow orchard, growing life, they all separate.

Esperanza was only a minds influence. Mind before matter. Matter second to the mind. Death was at war with life, as if two planets in a fight collided into our universe to reveal the pain of the physical. Perhaps all that a human truly is, is the splatter of the amaranthine remnants of their vining fight, like a carcass. In the object is a pain unfelt like a love unloved.

Giving credit to the imagination, there is a such power so great the inumeras would be discouraged at the project. And I will adhere to that power like a yielding wind, that strays in my throat and against my body. Have you ever felt the correlation between wind and voice, and felt the wind almost echo without end— a time to yell with the song— beauty? Everything moral, given our judgment and very context gives a voice to our throat without knowledge. But for all we have seen in existence, —nothing can exist stimeltaneously. The good and the bad, may never stray within the same garden, only ever in their own contexts; the good florids may say, “all that isn’t good, is bad.” And the bad florids may say, “all that isn’t good is bad.” As if we could birth our own judgement to pass upon ourselves and take only the ever best of all thoughts to summarize ourselves. We are the sum of every rescission, decision, act and thought— the fruits of our labour— Lahore, Pakistan like a mind itself. The gang members summed into their own characters thought, while the rich ladies of the area recluse themselves into some manner which passes unto a way of living. “A lifestyle,” they should say and dignify their thoughts with saying its for independence. But its all to be gathered and piqued into individuality and dependance. This is like a web or system for every place like Lahore, or New York and London. This system only mimics our own thoughts and our justifications of them. James Allens base saying on thoughts and crystallization of action should righteously fit in the comparison, were it not the only one said. In fact, for centuries there has been many defenders on the matter, yet never any argument to augment them.

We fashion the very principles of ourselves, and in that terribly similar sense, there’s a recreational basis such as standard that serves as trend. To be kind, amounts in when among Romans and do as the Romans do. Something so human in death, is perilous emotion and mourning. Tradition binds the morals to a flint and steel like forming a soft kindled flame. Allowing brilliance to be a likeness or description rather than refinement.

SELF DEFINITION WITH A POMEGRANITE



By Ariel Garcia

SINFUL WISP IN A SEED, MAL

Pomegranates are spectated in the most antiquated way possible. With the pathos, of the ‘forbidden fruit’ speculation. With their infinitesimal seeds, unnumbered, they convey velvet reds and sensual pinks. Held to the light, world untouched by humanity they ooze a supple liquid between fingertips of curiosity. The fruit isn’t a fruit, it’s a tanged art that we consume. The seeds of mal.

Corpuscles of budding death, be my perilune and light. If not my poison.

Fleshy evanescence, caressed by time, I shall bath in your syrupy pool of dark rubies.

EQUILIBRIUM IN MUNDANE, PRAEESSE

Simplicity in the very thought of now. How our mental institution warps the very principles around us, with grasped sense, that itself cannot be grasped. Fluidity. Everything almost dreams to merge into one, or nothing. Once you place a pencil on a table, if you’ve left it there for long enough, you’d have seen it move, opulently. Scientifically this is insanity, but in the terms of pathological aspects, you can almost feel something pulsating. “It is shifted, if not moved. Moved if not shifted.” That aspect in your core, is like an infected piece of dreamlike state. Some eternal timepieces from a time lost. Everyday represents a repercussion for eternity. In such a placement of sense for us to communicate time as an understanding would be impossible. So, what is the placement of the pomegranate in the mundane? The supple seeds of mal conveyed to a playa in which the fires smoke and sands are that eternity and so natural. Terrible.

PHILOSOPHY & ARTS

NOT A PARTICLE, OR PARTY OF ATOMS **by Ariel Garcia**

Like a budding little garden. Pasture filled with rims of waxy viridience. Dear sun, so far like a drunkard in the florets and laying down. Below the sensual florals, you see the dirts dance in the wind leaping under the winds dress. Blessed little nature underfoot. Eurydice to my song filled boy charmed by an untouched essence. Or Isis forever looking for a lost particle, running from my being. You remind me of love. And I want to love, so shall your pores, and every molecule entrap the beauty of love and give me an understanding? Is love a lover?

A day's dear embrace, or a time to fear in death or a time apart— should your loving embrace teach me — because I should like to know. I want to be sick in bed, so that all may witness a traitor in my throat. Better me with ointments and ampoules, and salves. You would be willing to come and know what is truly caught between my teeth and in my throat. Lodged in my being. As an ancient Egyptian girl would know— I have been wanting something and waiting. Loving loves love. Like a drunkard on florets, like the sun. Im waiting not for a story, but for my love. But to my loving figment. So mindful. In peace.

Hands in preparation. The resin, I will pray for it not to melt.

Softening clay and twigs entwining. Fingers weaving amount themselves the figment of a love, that is mine. I will lol you in my arms, weave you an art to bondage. You'll be made. And we shall speak in a language only we shall know. Dance in our heart far embrace.





THE DANCE OF LIFE BY EDVARD MUNCH

by Ariel Garcia

EMOTION AS A SONATA

The approximate matter of an emotion doesn't exist. Rather if it did it would be empty. Just as you see a condensed object, such as a pen, every one of its contents are apart of that pen. Though emotions, are intangible, and convey the sense of a person, human nature, time's essence, and a transient experience. Whole and wholly while, it subjects the entirety of its principles to a sensation. Emotion.

LIFE AS A RHAPSODY

Edvard Munch depicted the immature femininity as a vigil to the verb of dance and masculinity. Oils made silks and stained the parching canvas with a fear of dying and a desire to do so. With love we are given some lack of ratio. Between realism and complete lies that are the mystified subjects to war and lust. Where a smile is given the velour of ordained roses. Cheeks are spring. Demeter's sweetest kiss to Persephone. The ballad of Orpheus. Life is a verb. Where whatever shall come before it can be considered complete immaturity. You'd imagine the bud to not yet be in bloom, in comparison to the rose because it hasn't sprung or opened. Waved its scent or flirted the luscious pinks. Consider this to be as easy decision to live well. Or die well. Anything unable to properly take that decision is immaturely. So that Madonna in her smiling prose and lucent dress, is beneath, a lambs innocence.

LOVE AS A SYMPHONY

Equilibria is only pressed between the dress and the grown. Where a crimson can entwine with other colors and not stain anything. Just a simple beauty as the ground-soaked moonlight. The hues are stained with each body apart. Just another theory that's in separation. Contrary. Seeing love immortalized within the human consciousness, is the simple red dress mid-dance. We see the tethered beings just within their own space as if love, could be with another being yet within oneself. The truest representation of the enigmatic idea of loving.

AND BIBLE-BLACK DRESSES

Depths of soul, shall be truly only omitted. By the weight of our minds, the gravity of living shall die and plummet. It isn't science. It isn't music, a hearts beat. It's dying and the death of complete memorial. Where life's are preserved fruits and given sugar in antique jars. Think of the women as a fruit preserve. Not sufficiently savored. Rather given the crystallization of lies and metamorphosed into a sweet epitaph. Dying shall be the freedom of a soul. As it shall not be stressed the love for another rather the plummet into itself.

LIFE & LEISURE

WINTER COURIER BOOK REVIEW
By Eleanor Ingram



If you like books like *A Good Girls Guide to Murder*, *One of Us Is Lying* or *We Were Liars*, then you will like *Truly Devious* by Maureen Johnson too. *Truly Devious* is a novel about a girl named Stevie Bell who is trying to solve the murders that happened almost 100 years earlier at the boarding school she currently attends. This murder later is called the Ellingham murder because of the Ellingham's, a wealthy family split apart by murder. As she tries to uncover the next events, it may not be as safe or easy as she thought. These murders do not get solved until the second book, *The Vanishing Stair,* which is just as good.

While Stevie is trying to solve the Ellingham murder, someone else at the boarding school is killed. While many others believe that it was an accidental mistake, Stevie sticks to her opinion of it being a murder and tries to figure out who did it. As more events unfold, Stevie finds more clues and hopes that the boarding school will not shut down from all these murders and trouble. While on her mystery solving journey, she has two friends that help her, Janelle and Nate. There is also David, but he flips around a lot from her perspective on whether he is good or not. When Stevie solves the cases, the murderer(s) are a huge shock!

This book is for sure one of the best mystery novels written. The plot is particularly good, and unlike some mysteries where readers know exactly who did the crime, you have no clue who did it in this book until Stevie does. The best part about this book is that there is no point that you are completely bored. There is always something new that has been found out in the case or some new event in her social life that affects her. The blend of drama and solving a case are so perfect that it makes the book more personal than older books like Sherlock Holmes.

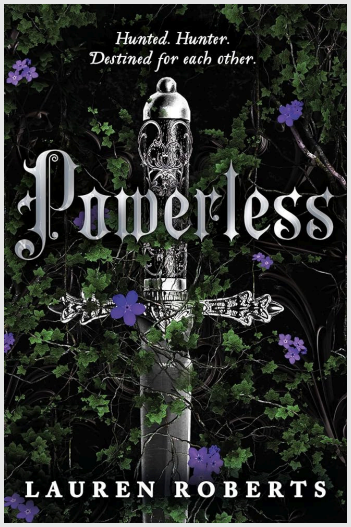
If you have read this book before and enjoyed it, then other books that you may like are *Friends Like These* by Jennifer Lynn Alvarez and *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart. *Friends Like These* is another murder mystery, but the main characters Jessica and Jake both are not investigating the murder officially. Jake does not remember what happened, and Jessica wants to know what really happened. We Were Liars, is not a murder mystery, but she suffered from severe trauma and is trying to figure out what happened one summer on her family's island. For all these reasons and more, Truly Devious is definitely a book worth reading!

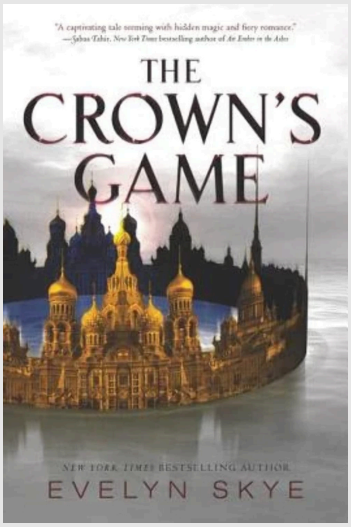
LIFE & LEISURE

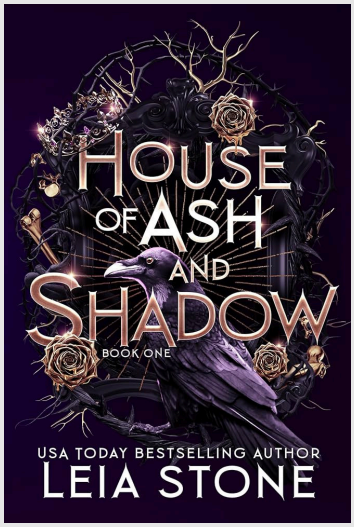
ARTFUL CRITIQUE *WONDERFUL GUEST APPEARANCE OF NOW PUBLISHED ARTIST!*

By Leila Rodgers

As a self proclaimed connoisseur and fan of the romantic fantasy genre, I have read many, *many* books that follow similar, predictable, cliché'd plotlines. Among these books, some have pleasantly surprised me with their unique writing style and heartwarming character development (see Six of Crows or the Red Queen, for example). Some have made me cry so much my mother asked if I was having an allergic reaction; and some have been so stereotypically bad that they have plunged me into a pit of despair and self-loathing at the time wasted reading this glorified stew of all the worst tropes in romance. So, without further adieu, here are three of the worst romantic fantasy books I have ever read.







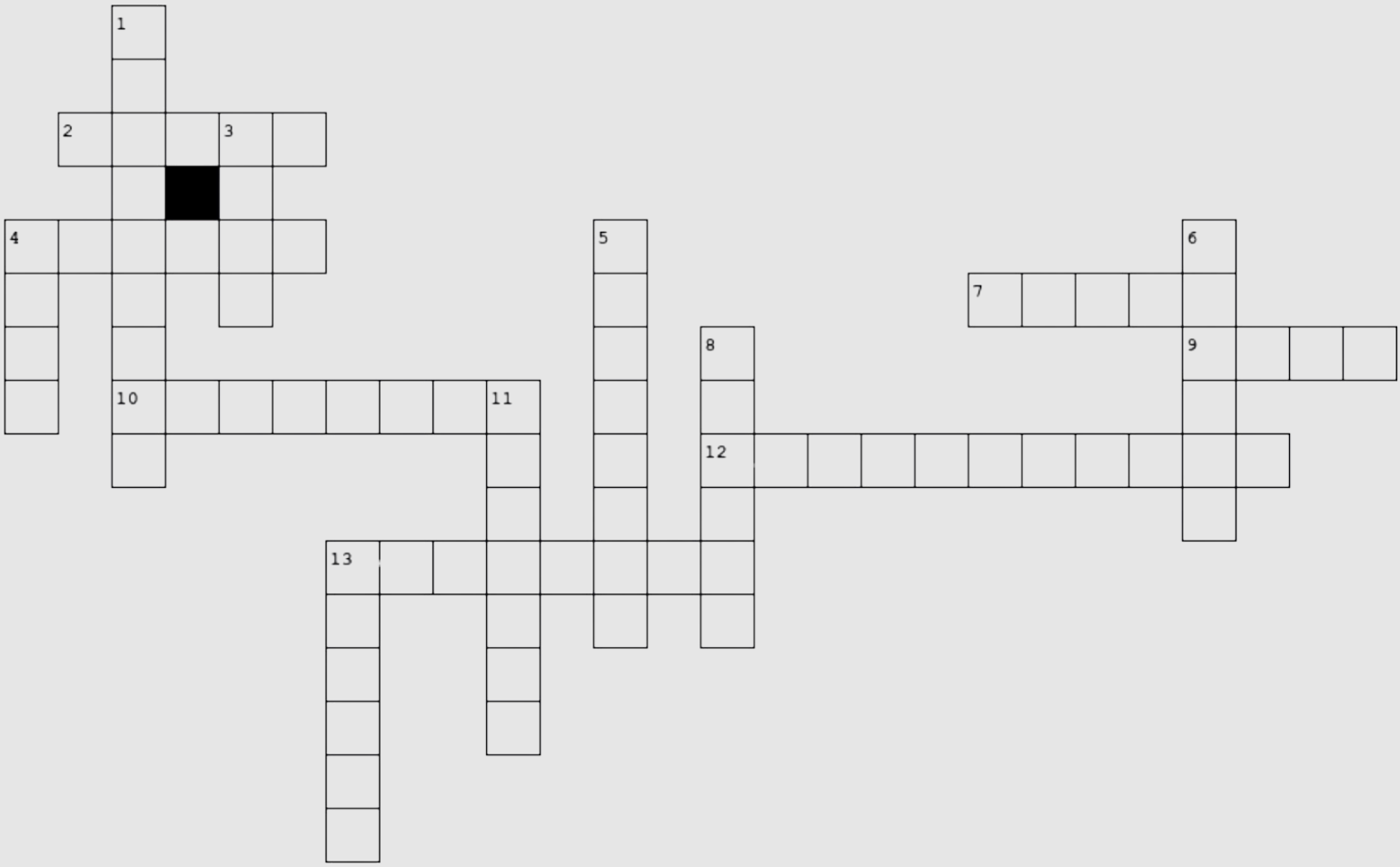
In third place, we have *Powerless* by Lauren Roberts, a story about a girl living in the slums, hiding her true identity as an Ordinary. See, in Ilya, the city where this story takes place, people are divided into three categories. Elite, Mundane, and Ordinary, though only Elites and Mundanes have the privelege of living in the city. Ordinaries were exiled several years ago, and our main character, a young woman named Paedyn Gray, has been pretending to be a Psychic in the slums of Ilya, until the day she runs into one of her city's princes. Not long after, she gets chosen for the Purging Trials, a competition to showcase the powers and prowess of her city's Elites. Oh, and throw in a revolt by the Ordinaries at the end. Sound familiar? This Hunger Games ripoff took everything good about the Hunger Games and chucked it out the window. It is the congealed remains of the carcass of a good story. Filled to the brim with one dimensional, stereotypical characters, this story had me constantly exasperated with its unrelatable, unrealistic development, and bland plotline. It's clear that this story's aim was to create a strong female heroine who was proactive and a constant driving force behind the plot. However, the heroine we got was someone with two modes: either passive or aggressive. Paedyn's agression often seemed to overcompensate for her lack of other character traits. When not beating up her future allies, holding a knife to her love interests neck, Paedyn doesn't really have much to offer the story. By the time she exhibits any sort of genuine emotion, the reader is too tired to care.

In second place, we have the *The Crown's Game* by Evelyn Skye. This has been my benchmark for truly awful books. Set in ancient Russia, in a world full of magic and mystery, the Ottoman Empire and the Kazakhs are threatening war. The tsar is desperate to have a powerful enchanter by his side. For Vika and Nikolai, the only two enchanters in Russia, this could be very good news or very bad news, for they will both be competing in the Crown's Game, to decide who will become the tsar's Imperial Enchanter and his most well regarded adviser, and who will be sentenced to death. Quite why the underperformer has to die is never made clear. I love a good cliché as much as the next person, but this book was so trope-y, it would make even the most perserverant of romantics cover their eyes, close the book, and hide underneath a chair. Take an excerpt from page 221. "Her lungs faltered. Even the mere memory of his magic was so strong. And touching Nikolai, even through her gloves and his sleeve, was like being pummeled by a stampede of wild horses. No, wild unicorns. Beautiful, wild unicorns." Really, need I say more?

Finally, coming in first place (drumroll, please)… we have *House of Ash and Shadow* by Leia Stone. Our main character is the powerless teenager Fallon Bane, cursed to feel agonizing pain any time someone touches her bare skin. However, when she accidentally touches Ariyon Madden and feels no pain, Fallon is shocked. Soon after, she is swept away to a magical academy where her true power is revealed (surprise!) and the future of fae everywhere comes to rest on Fallon's shoulders. There is so much wrong with this book, I don't know how to begin. However, if I had to choose a main grievance, it would be the inconsistent, implausible world building. Take the fact that this story is set in a pre-industrialization magic filled city, where people race through the streets on horses, and electronic devices like phones and cars haven't yet been invented. Now, with that in mind consider how, ever so conveniently, "energy fae" exist in this story, and charge crystals with electricity to light up the streets of The Gilded City, where this story takes place. Not only that, they also happen to have electric ovens and electric guitars. Oh, and if anything ever doesn't make sense, don't worry. Magic. To get a sense for the rubbish that is this story's setting, take an excerpt from page 113. "'Today is pizza day,' Ayden told me with joy. I frowned. 'What's peet-zah?' I tried to sound out the foreign word. Eden and Ayden burst into laughter and I frowned. 'You've never had pizza?' Eden gasped. I could feel Ariyon's eyes on me but I ignored them. 'Pizza was brought to The Gilded City by some fae from a northern realm like a decade ago. It's amazing,' Ayden informed me. 'You have to try it.'" This hogwash could be considered almost insulting, especially considering the fact that this book is marketed towards young adults and teens. How low do they think our standards for literature are? Not to mention the main character with the personality of soggy cereal, and the two identical twin love interests, who also happen to be the princes of the city and in a boy band. Disagree with me? You wouldn't be alone. All of these books are described as bestsellers. However, after having endured 1,190 pages of this nonsensical babble, I have concluded that sales do not always equate to quality.

LIFE & LEISURE

WINTER CROSSWORD 2025



Across

2. Things you need for your feet to be warm
4. Implements for moving on ice
7. Made in the North Pole
9. Synonym to frigid
10. Makes your ears warmer
12. Voice of Elsa in the movie "Frozen"
13. Ball of precipitation

Down

1. Thing you make by rolling in the snow
3. Christmas ____
4. Cold and Fun Precipitation
5. Deep-fried latkes are typically eaten on this holiday
6. Sport played on ice
8. Dripping piece of ice
11. 3 Parts needed to complete
13. Pair of things needed to complete

Answers posted on the last page

Created by Wyatt Gonzalez

LIFE & LEISURE

THE HISTORY OF NEW YEAR'S EVE

By Jahnavi Jahnavi and Charlotte Pizzirusso

New Year festival, any of the social, cultural, and religious observances worldwide that celebrate the beginning of the New Year. Such festivals are among the oldest and the most universally observed.

Many early civilizations adapted New Years at different times. For example, the earliest known record of a New Years festival dates back to about 2000 BCE in Mesopotamia, where in Babylonia the New Year known as Akitu was celebrated. The holiday began with the new moon in September, and in Assyria with the new moon nearest the autumn equinox. For the Egyptians and Phoenicians, the year began with September 21st, and many more civilization adapted New Years like this. But on the Roman republican calendar, the year began on March 1st, but after 153 BCE the official date was January 1st, which was continued in the Julian calendar of 46 BCE known as Kalendae lanuarie in which the Romans offered sacrifices to Janus, the God of Beginnings. That same calendar is one that we use today.

In early medieval times most of Christian Europe saw March 25th, the Feast of the Annunciation, as the beginning of the New Year. But in Anglo-Saxon England New Year's Day was on December 25th, the same day that we celebrate Christmas. William the Conqueror decreed that the year begin on January 1st, but England later adopted March 25th as NewnYears again. Until later when the Gregorian calendar was adopted in 1582 by the Roman Catholic Church restoring January 1st as New Year's Day .

(cited from New Year festival, Britannica.com)

Before 1752, New Year's was celebrated on the evening of March 24th, according to the Julian calendar. After 1752, with the exception of 1942 and 1943 during World War II, the New Year is celebrated on the evening of December 31st, which is the last day of the Gregorian calendar. George Washington hosted the first New Year's Day reception in Philadelphia in 1790 and Herbert Hoover hosted the last one in 1932 at the White House. The ball drop in New York City's Times Square has been a tradition since 1970. The fireworks and public festivities that symbolizes saying goodbye to the past and welcome to the coming year which drew Americans young and old, rich and poor, into the streets, squares and commercial entertainment venues like ballrooms and restaurants, for evenings filled with fun and a bit of mischief too.

(Cited form five thing you didn't know about American new year's celebration, smu.edu)

Traditions, there have been many through history, but where did they come from? One of the most popular traditions is making New Year's resolutions. The concept of coming up with future goals on New Year's started in Babylonia. People would make promises to the Gods. This motivated them to follow through with their goals because no one wants to break a promise to a God. Later, the Romans followed this by making their promises to Janus, the God of doorways and choices. The Christians would also make promises as they viewed New Year's as a time to better yourself. Another common tradition is making loud noises in any way from banging on pots and pans to setting of fireworks. This tradition comes from ancient China. They believed New Year's was a time when evil spirits would look for victims. Making loud noises was a way to ward off these spirits. Over time we kept the fireworks and noise makers but mostly scrapped the fear of ghosts, though the belief in spirits on New Year's is still very much alive and thriving in the Philippines.





WHAT IS THE TRUE BEST NFL TEAM OF ALL TIME?

By Charlie Kozan



Everyone always talks about whose favorite football team is better. But what team is the TRUE best team of all time? In this article, we will be going over the history of the NFL, and the stats that will determine the true best team of all time.

The NFL, or the National Football League, was founded in 1920 as the American Professional Football Association, or the APFA (which changed to the NFL in 1922). This league founded with 10 teams from 4 states. The teams in this league include: the Akron Pros, the Buffalo All-Americans, the Canton Bulldogs, the Chicago Cardinals, the Chicago Tigers (who happened to be the first NFL team to fold), the Cleveland Tigers, the Columbus Panhandles, the Dayton Triangles, the Decatur Stanleys, the Detroit Heralds, the Hammond Pros, the Muncie Flyers, the Rochester Jeffersons, and the Rock Island Independents. Only 2 of these teams still exist in the current

NFL, being the Decatur Stanleys (now the Chicago Bears), and the Chicago Cardinals (now the Arizona Cardinals, who became the only team from the APFA to keep their original name in the NFL). Things stabled out in this league over the course of roughly 30 years, and the league added teams from another football league, the All-American Football Conference, in 1950. The only teams that made todays NFL were the San Francisco 49ers and the Cleveland Browns. The NFL era hit a high point in 1958, in which that seasons NFL Championship between the Colts and the Giants had been coined the title of “the most exiting game ever played” (which could definitely be debated by todays standards). This good news for the NFL came with some bad news as well, as the rival American Football League was founded in 1960. This league was quite successful, which forced the old NFL to merge with the AFL to form the NFL as we know it today (which also made the NFL Championship the Super Bowl). The league continued to add teams as expansion franchises afterwards, and there are currently 32 NFL teams. These teams are split up into to conferences, the AFC and the NFC, and each conference has 4 divisions, the North, South, East, and West. There are 4 teams in each division, and 16 in each conference. But which of these teams are more successful?

It is quite hard to determine the best team ever. You must consider the fact that the league changes over the years. For example, the length of the regular season has changed over time (from 14 to 18 weeks), and the teams were not all founded at the same time, so just going by total wins and losses would not work. We can calculate the total Win/Loss percentages of each team though, with the top 3 being the Ravens (.570), the Packers (.571), and the Cowboys (.576). This does not mean the Cowboys are the best team yet, though. The Patriots and Steelers both have 6 Super Bowl wins, the 49ers and Cowboys both have 5 Super Bowl wins, and the Chiefs and Packers both have 4 Super Bowl wins. We can also take into account the amount of Hall of Famers on each team. The Bears have 35, the Packers have 34, and the Steelers have 32. Based on all these statistics, we can finally figure out what the best team of all time is. Using all this information combined, the teams are the Dallas Cowboys at 3, the Pittsburgh Steelers at 2, and the Green Bay Packers at 1.
There you have it. The best NFL team ever is the Green Bay Packers. You can never be sure though. The league is ever-changing, and no team can truly stay the best team. One team can be amazing one season and terrible the next. The answer to the best team in the NFL is truly relative. That is what makes the NFL great. The high and low points of the teams make each season unpredictable each year.

NEW YORK GIANTS AND JETS SEASON REVIEW

By Kellen Doherty

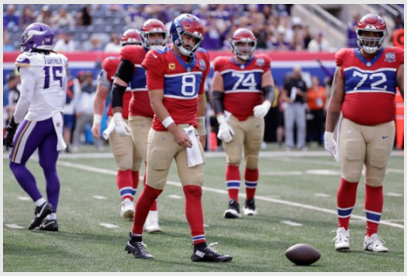
As the NFL season comes to a close, a multitude of words can be used to describe the season of the teams that share MetLife Stadium in the Meadowlands of New Jersey: Disappointing, underwhelming, embarrassing, a garbage fire, etc. Combined, the Jets and Giants 7 wins, as of 1/2/2025, wouldn't even be good enough for a playoff spot in the weak AFC. If it can only get worse before it gets better, than look forward to the future, because it's hard to get much worse than the way these two teams performed in 2024/25. In this column, I'll take you through the seasons from the Giants and the Jets, and what could happen in the future for both teams.

New York Giants Season Review

This was supposed to be a celebration of a storied franchise, one that was an original 4 NFL team, one that has 4 Super Bowl championships and 4 World Championships, one that has had legends dawn the jersey of the G-men, and one that turned 100 years old in 2024. And while there certainly was celebration, like at the Giants Town Hall hosted in June at the Madison Square Garden Theater, where Giants legends reappeared on a stage telling stories of past teams, and majority owner John Mara, head coach Brian Daboll and GM Joe Schoen made a promise to feed the hungry metro-New York market with some good football that we've been craving for years, the season will undoubtedly go down as one of the worst in franchise history.

HBO's production of the Hard Knocks series over the offseason that followed the Giants front office from the end of the 2023/24 season to the beginning of training camps revealed information the Giants now wish to have been made private. In what was known as a loaded quarterback draft class, for sure the best since 2020, the Giants passed on multiple quarterbacks that now have the potential to become generational talents, like Jayden Daniels, Bo Nix, JJ McCarthy and Michael Penix, and instead drafted star receiver Malik Nabers. Jayden Daniels and Bo Nix both led their teams to playoff contention, JJ McCarthy, if not for suffering a season-ending injury in the first preseason game, had the potential to become the fuel behind the Viking's surprising double digit win season. Michael Penix is looking like the future of the Falcons now that Kirk Cousins has been arranged to be released. One of the clips that was in Hard Knocks was Joe Schoen's son begging him to draft Jayden Daniels. Embarrassingly, his son was right. The Giants are sitting at 3-13, with a star receiver who eclipsed 1,000 yards. However, the Washington Commanders, who drafted Daniels, have a 11-5 record, and are getting their first playoff berth since 2020.

That hasn't been the only draft funk for the Giants while Schoen was in office. In 2024, other than Nabers, the rest of their picks are starters at best, besides Tyrone Tracy, Jr. who has shown potential in his rookie season. In 2023, the Giants first round pick, CB Deonte Banks from Maryland has played lackadaisically in the past two season and may be the worst starting cornerback in the NFL. 2nd round pick C John Michael Smitz, Jr. is an average center on a good day. In 2022, the first season for Schoen and Daboll as GM and HC, respectively, the Giants had the 5th and 7th overall pick. The 5th went to Kayvon Thibodeu a defensive end from Oregon, who was once widely regarded as the top overall prospect in the draft before getting hurt in the 2022 college season. Although he has shown signs of greatness, the Giants have failed to nurture him into the player he could become. The 7th pick was spent on OT Evan Neal from Alabama, who has spent much of his career on the injured list and has been one of the biggest busts in recent draft history.



Daniel Jones was released by the Giants in November, after a very underwhelming New York Career.

As for the on-field product, it was horrible. The team was routinely embarrassed and shut down by even the weakest teams in the NFL, like the Carolina Panthers, New Orleans Saints, and the Dallas Cowboys. The Giants ranked 2nd to last in the NFL in points per game, total points ranked bottom 10 in points allowed. They only eclipsed 30 points once in the season, which happened at the apex of the "garbage fire", week 17 when the Giants snapped their 10- game losing streak and won their first (and last) game at home all season against the Indianapolis Colts, who needed the win to make the playoffs. Up until the moment the Giants won, they were in control of the first overall pick in the 2025 NFL draft which would have been crucial to the future of the franchise. As the Giants beat writer for the Athletic, Dan Dugan put it, "Sunday's outcome should dismiss any notion that the Giants were tanking during their 10- game losing streak. They were just that bad." In other words, the Giants were so bad, that all the time they lost by 21, or 23, or 17, they weren't tanking. They were actually trying to win and couldn't.

The New England Patriots hold the first overall pick in the draft and control their own destiny, as they play the Buffalo Bills, who have nothing to play for during week 18.



Malik Nabers had a 1,000-yard receiving season for the Giants in his rookie 2024/25 season.

And although Drake Maye (another rookie QB who appears to be an amazing talent) and many healthy Patriots will be starting, it's hard to imagine a world in which the Patriots willingly beat the Bills to drop to a later pick in the draft. The Giants currently have the 4th overall pick, behind the Patriots at one, the Cleveland Browns at 2, and the Tennessee Titans and 3. Both the Titans and the Browns are expected to at least explore the possibility of a new quarterback, a position that is an absolute must to be addressed this offseason for the Giants. Although Drew Lock may have played like an average quarterback against the Colts, he isn't the answer, and neither is Tommy DeVito or Tim Boyle, both of whom have been even worse than non- week 17 Lock. The 2025 draft is likely a 2- quarterback draft, with Sheduer Sanders from Colorado and Cameron Ward from Miami (Florida) headlining a weak 2025 draft class. The Giants may have to trade a lot of their future to ensure they can draft one of these quarterbacks to either the Patriots, Browns or Titans, but they need to draft one of them.

It wasn't a good season. In fact, it's one of the worst in the sport's history, not just the team's history. The once proud franchise has work to do, and it can turn around. It starts with drafting a quarterback, and spending some of the money they have, and completely redoing their coaching staff and front office. It's an overhaul, but it's possible. It's time for a big change for the New York Football Giants.

NEW YORK GIANTS AND JETS SEASON REVIEW (CONTINUED)

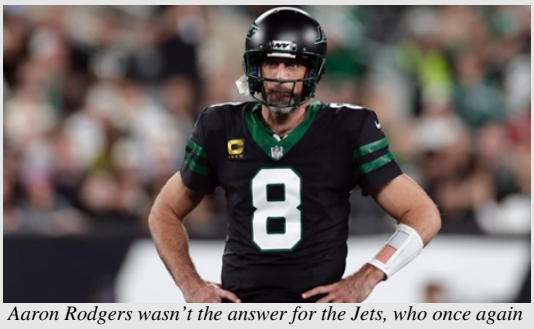
By Kellen Doherty

New York Jets Season Review

A few weeks ago, a story surfaced about how Jets owner Woody Johnson told his front office to trade for WR Mike Williams, not Jerry Jeudy because of the difference in their Madden ratings, advice he got from his teenage sons. Jeudy was selected to the Pro Bowl after being traded from the Denver Broncos to the Cleveland Browns, and Mike Williams is finishing the season in the playoffs, but with the Pittsburgh Steelers, who gave the Jets a 6th round pick for him at the NFL trade deadline. That's been the story of the Jets for the past two seasons. The wrong players at the wrong time. For a team that is commonly regarded as a poverty franchise, or a laughingstock of the NFL, the Jets lived up to their low expectations in 2024 and can only hope to get better for the future.

Flashing back to 2022, when the Jets were building what looked like the best young core in the NFL, when they had the offensive and defensive rookie of the year, WR Garrett Wilson and CB Sauce Gardener. Breece Hall emerged as a top- 10 half back in the NFL. The Williams brothers were holding down the defensive line. Zach Wilson wasn't officially a bust, but it seemed like the Jets were only a quarterback away from true contention. They finished 7-10, 4th in the AFC East. The Jets were on the rise. Flash forward to 2023, they found Aaron Rodgers, the 4x MVP was entering his age 40 season, and nearing the end of his career. His numbers had taken a dip in 2022, but he still was playing above average football at a premium position. Plus, he'd sell tickets. Week 1 of 2023, in a prime-time Monday night game on ESPN vs the Bills, Rodgers tears his Achilles heel on the fourth play of the game. Once again, the Jets finish 7-10, 4th in the AFC East with Zach Wilson at QB and no major moves to the roster besides the Rodgers trade. Now, enter 2024. Rodgers is supposedly fully healthy, and with Mike Williams at wide receiver, and a defense that once again was looking like one of the best in the league, the Jets had a projected win total of 10. Entering week 18, the Jets are 4-13, and once again are a laughingstock of the NFL. What went wrong?

The Jets relied on a relic to bring them to greatness. Similarly to the 2023 New York Mets of the MLB, the Jets built a roster of young talented players around the 41-year-old future Hall of Famer Aaron Rodgers, a player who has no motive to play besides looking for a Super Bowl or getting paid. The problem with signing an old, aging, slow quarterback, who's peak is well past is he breaks down easily, similarly to what the Mets and Steven Cohen learned about their pitching rotation with Justin Verlander, Max Scherzer and Carlos Carrasco in 2023. If you're driving a 2003 Porsche 9-11 GT3-RS that has not been serviced like it should be, and is falling apart, rusty, the leather is torn and is having a transmission failure, its not going to beat a new, shiny sports car. In the 2024 draft, the Jets held the 11th overall pick. They easily could have traded up with the Vikings for JJ McCarthy, or drafted Bo Nix. Sam Darnold broke out (finally) with the Vikings this season. Justin Fields and Russel Wilson are thriving in their new homes in Pittsburgh. There was no shortage of available quarterbacks the Jets could have gotten this offseason. The quarterback leads the team, is the heartbeat of the team, and lives and dies with the team. Robert Saleh wasn't a QB specialist. And Aaron Rodgers tore his Achilles at 40 and probably still can't run. If the Jets could have gotten a Kevin O'Connell type coach, a QB whisperer, and paired him with a mid-20s, still developing QB, like a Darnold or Fields, or even a Daniel Jones or Zach Wilson they could have been a much better team. They had the weapons.



Aaron Rodgers wasn't the answer for the Jets, who once again stumbled in 2024 to a 4-12 record as of 1/2/2025.



The Jets woes during 2024 were partially fueled by a disaster of a season from usually consistent kicker Greg Zurelien

The Jets have Garrett Wilson, who could be a top-5 receiver if he's on, Davonte Adams, who they acquired to keep Rodgers happy and still is an electric receiver, Alan Lazard, could have had Jerry Jeudy, they have Tyler Conklin at tight end, one of the more underrated tight ends in the league, and Breece Hall at running back. The Jets wasted an opportunity teams would kill to have. On defense, Sauce Gardener still roams the secondary. The Williams brothers and Hassan Reddick are on the defense too. To me, this feels like a poorly managed team with a lot of potential for the future, still. Joe Douglass made many mistakes as a general manager, but he had Woody Johnson in his ear, telling him what to do. The Jets need a confident GM, paired with a confident coach, who knows quarterbacks, and I think this team can compete in the not-so-distant-future. The AFC was bad this year, and it wouldn't take a whole lot to sneak into a wild card spot.

Part of the 4-12 record was just pure bad luck, too. The Jets were cursed with a relic at kicker too, with Greg "the leg" Zurelien having a 60% field goal percentage, and having his season long field goal be 40 yards. In 5 of the 8 games Zurelien played, he missed at least one field goal, and all but 1 were losses. On top of that Rodgers has attempted to lead 5 game winning drives and failed on all 5 of them. In theory, the Jets could have closer to 7-8 wins, but the best thing for the franchise would be either making the playoffs, or completely missing them, as they did this year.

The Jets defense played about average this year, which was expected, but a little dismal, since they were regarded to be one of the top defenses in the league this season. They finished 5th in yards per game allowed, and 5th in passing yards per game allowed, which also was expected due to a strong secondary led by Sauce Gardner. The Jets struggled with PPG and rushing yards allowed, finished in the bottom half of the league in both of those categories.

The Jets currently have the 6th pick in the draft, and this is a loaded draft class for defense. The Jets will have several chances to improve their defense monumentally in their year's draft. Although the 2025 season didn't go the way the Jets were hoping, or anywhere close to it for that matter, they have a somewhat bright future and still have a strong young core to build around, once they can secure a QB for the future.

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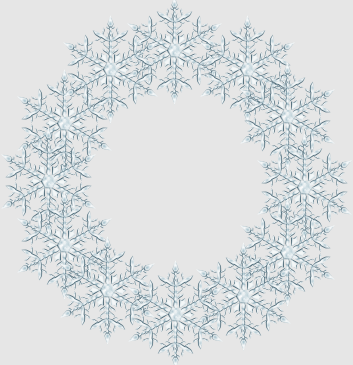
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Winter Crossword Puzzle Answers

Across

2. Boots
4. Skates
7. Igloo
9. Cold
10. Earmuffs
12. Idina Menzel
13. Snowball



Down

1. Snow Angels
3. Tree
4. Snow
5. Hanukkah
6. Hockey
8. Icicle
11. Snowman
13. Skiing