

HBT HIGHLIGHTS

7th Graders Head to the Bronx Zoo!

By Gabrielle Ho

On Monday, May 19th, the 7th graders embarked on a wild adventure to the Bronx Zoo, full of biodiversity and knowledge. Following their ecology unit in science class, 7th graders took this trip as an opportunity to expand their understanding of ecosystem dynamics and organism relationships. The trip was both educational and fun! Highlights included the Wild Asia Monorail and the Congo Gorilla Forest!

The Bronx Zoo had certain areas devoted to specific parts of the world, particularly their wildlife. This made it easy for visitors to navigate the park and learn about the animals based on their natural geography. Along the grass lands of the savanna to the forests of East Asia, this day trip to the city gave students an enjoyable yet educational experience.



6th Graders Take on Adventureland!

By Laurel Kim

June was a very exciting month for our sixth graders at HBT. Although the end of the year was nearing, the sixth graders were excited for something else... They were going on their first middle school trip-to Adventureland! This trip was fun for everyone, even if you weren't a fan of rides.

The rides were definitely a fun part of the field trip, although South Woods middle school was also there and made this trip amazing! Being a very fun place, and meeting new friends from other schools, this field trip is definitely one to put down in your memory book!

Some of Adventureland's most thrilling rides are:

Turbulence-a fast whirly roller coaster.

Frisbee-fly high like you're soaring on a frisbee.

Fireball-a ride focused on small drops.

Moon Chaser-A new addition to the park, fly up and touch the moon before returning to earth

Mystery Mansion -a little bit of a spooky thrill to add to your fun adventure!



By Gabrielle Ho

THE OUTSIDERS
A NEW MUSICAL

THE CAST

DAN DE VITO	KEVIN WILLIAM FOLEY
CLARK HENNING	ADAM PUGH
VERONICA CHEN	ALMA PITROPA
JOHN FERRERA (P.O. #1)	JOE-TONY ROSE
BOB M. COOPER	ANDREW SCHWARTZ
THE FEVERISH (P.O. #2)	YOSHIO STONE
HENRY (P.O. #3)	LARRY TROTT
BECKY GRANT	KEVIN CURRILEY (P.O. #4)
ALICE COOPER (P.O. #5)	ALAN BAKER (P.O. #6)
HARLEY ROSE	ANDREW J. COOPER
JOE LAMARCA (P.O. #7)	ROGER MARTIN
ANDREW BAK (P.O. #8)	THEODORE WATSON
SCANDALOUS (P.O. #9)	CHRIS PERLIN

STAGE MANAGER:
STEPHEN J. MARTEL

BOOKING AGENTS:
STARDUST THEATERS

CONDUCTOR:
DAVE HANDEL

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HBT HIGHLIGHTS

Cupcake Wars!

By Gabrielle Ho

Hosted after school on February 4th, 2025, the annual Cupcake Wars competition made a striking comeback with eager participants seated at tables. Each group was given a set of 12 cupcakes and a full can of vanilla frosting, but the rest of the confectionery appearance was based solely on their artistic and imaginative decision. Each solo participant/ or team was given 30 minutes to decorate and arrange their cupcakes. This year's theme was "February Fun," with creations ranging from adorable cupcake snowmen adorned with a candy scarf to fresh strawberry-topped cupcakes. Although each team's cupcakes were all fairly appealing, certain teams were awarded with either a pretzel ticket or a bag of candy. As each minute passed, anticipation grew among the crowd as the judging time seemed to get closer and closer.

Finally, the time of voting came and each team was forced to drop their icing bags and present their cupcakes. After a few minutes of event staff inspecting each team, the winners were finally announced.

Though not every team returned home with a prize, this event was undoubtedly a reward in itself, an occasion for all to enjoy and participate in.



Image courtesy of Ms. Mammolito; these are pictures of teams who beautifully decorated their cupcakes!

HBT HIGHLIGHTS



School Spelling Bee

By Valerie Kong



In exciting news, many students participated in the first round of the spelling bee, which was held in late October. However, only sixteen of them had been chosen to advance towards the next round. The second round was held on January 22nd, 2025, in room Music B during 8th and 9th period.

The students sat in an orderly 4 x 4 manner while Ms. Pich, a senior typist clerk, took attendance. Mr. Naraine, one of the assistant principals, settled down the fidgeting students by buying a minute to do a relaxing meditation with them.

During the bee, the students would be called up to the front of the room in alphabetical order to spell the word that was read aloud. The information available for the students was the pronunciation of the word, the part of speech, the definition, and a sentence with the word in it. If a student misspelled one word, he/she would be out of the spelling bee. They could either leave or watch the other spellers.

Little by little, the number of students still in the bee dwindled down until there were only two spellers left. During the championship round, if one finalist misspelled a word, the other finalist had to spell two words correctly to win the spelling bee. If they got one of the words wrong, the other finalist was let back in.

Both spellers, 8th grader Elif Durgun and 6th grader Valerie Kong, were ready and eager to prove to their peers that they were worthy of the title as the best speller at HBT. Onlookers were on the edge of their seats as they watched the two spellers go back and forth --- so far, so good! Would anyone succeed? Would they go over the allotted time? Would the teachers run out of words, and they would both claim the title? As the clock was ticking towards the end of 9th period, everyone had their attention on the spellers, and five minutes before the bell rang --- someone scored victory!

After a tough championship round, with the winning word being "mourners," 8th grader Elif Durgun won first place, with 6th grader Valerie Kong as the runner-up. Elif would take a computer test to qualify for the regional spelling bee. If anything happens to her, Valerie would step up to the plate to take her place.

Though this spelling bee was certainly a tedious one, the event also left the spellers with memories of their perseverance and determination throughout the competition. No matter what, the spelling bee was a way to interact with others and make the best of a moment that will never happen again in the same way.

HBT HIGHLIGHTS

Frozen JR

By Laurel Kim & Evie Koo

HBT's Musical theater club put on a fantastic show: Frozen Jr! This production took place on Friday, November 15 and Saturday, November 16. This was just as good as the Frozen movie, but live!

Starring Anaya Shah & Isabella Liu as Anna and Alyssa Dasilva & Aavya Tayal as Elsa. the leads gave spectacular performances! But the show was truly an ensemble effort! Olaf was played by Norah Zhang, Kristoff was Fernando Dasilva and Hans was played by Bradley Zelniker. All were superb!

Many students in the show gave us an inside look into the experience. Valerie Kong, a 6th grader who played an ensemble part, said, "It was really fun how we can bond and form friendships with other members of the cast that we might not get to talk to all the time. I met so many new people, from different grades. It was great!"

Madison Lund, a 6th grader who played Oaken: "I really liked how I made so many friends from different grades through the show and I enjoyed going there every day. It was one of my favorite shows I've been in."

These students didn't participate in the show, but they watched the show and are sharing the experience with us. Shayla Singh, a 6th grader who watched the show commented, "I thought it was great! I thought all of the actors were amazing and all of them put so much hard work, time, and effort into it!"

The show was amazing and so many talented students used their singing and acting skills. A special thanks to Mrs. Garnar for organizing all of this for our HBT students and their families! Hope you enjoyed the show!

7th Grade *Wicked* Field Trip

By Gabrielle Ho

On Tuesday, November 16, 2024, the 7th graders went to Showcase Cinemas de Lux in Hicksville, New York for an amusing time watching a new arrival, *Wicked*. Among the rows of movie seats and popcorn buckets, the 7th graders were able to enjoy a captivating film, set in the land of Oz. *Wicked* is a courageous story about the backstory of Elphaba and her friend Glinda on their journey to becoming the Wicked Witch of the West and the Good Witch of the South, respectively. It is a sort of prequel to the renowned film, *The Wizard of Oz*.

According to Marieke van Berkel, from Team 7-1, "The movie was really good; both actors were very, very talented. The movie, talent-wise, was very, very good. The storyline is sad, but I think the thing that upset most people is that they split it into two parts." Marieke is of course referring to the ending, a cliffhanger, that rendered audience members annoyed but in eager anticipation. "It was really good. I loved the vocals for both of the songs, and the overall performances were honestly mind-blowing. I didn't like that people decided to start singing during the song "Popular" in my theater," said Aavya Tayal. It seems that some audience members loved the movie so much they began to sing along. So far, there seem to be positive opinions from the movie's viewers, but what about those who offer skeptical perspectives? "They played the songs at such weird times," said Surata Lee. "The plot could be better, but I really liked the characters," added Roselene Tan.

Though many may have a negative judgement of the movie, this field trip was undeniably a remarkable experience for most seventh graders. From Glinda's iconic hair flip to Elphaba's enchanted broom soar, this 2024 film was definitely a hit!

HBT HIGHLIGHTS

Compétition Crêpe!

By Gabrielle Ho

On November 25th, 2024, the 7th grade French class had a crêpe competition following their food unit. Each student first made their crêpes at home and then brought their samples to class. Each sample was judged by taste and creativity in presentation. The students arranged their crepes in a line and revolved around the row, tasting and judging each crêpe sample without knowing whose crêpe belonged to whom. As the students bustled around the set-up, toothpicks were passed around as each contestant took a bite of one of their peer's samples.

The first round was based off of presentation, a score marked out of 3, 0 being the worst. After everyone had thoroughly inspected each individual dish, the 2nd phase had then started. As the first had been about creativity in presentation, the 2nd phase was about the taste, consistency, and texture of each crêpe. This round had breezed through quickly, as everyone was eager to taste-test the miniature crêpe bites. Though some students had made crêpes of simple chocolate filling or just plain crêpes, some crêpe samples used dried fruit bits, bananas, or even whipped cream! After everyone submitted their voting evaluation papers, Madame Laisney collected the scores as the students sat at their desks in anticipation. Finally, all scores had been counted up as the students prepared themselves for the top three crêpe champions...

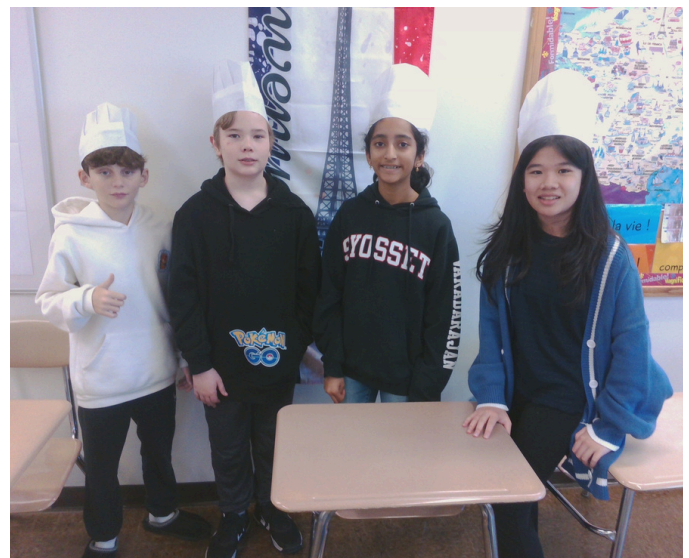


**Madame Laisney's 7th
Grade French
Period 5**



Now, to announce the winners! Drumroll please... Starting off strong with Max Poliacof in third, who created remarkable nutella-stuffed crêpes. Coming up next in second place, we have Smrithi Varadarajan, who made delectable banana crêpes with dried fruit on top. Finally, in first place, we have Gabby Ho, who made matcha crêpes with a banana filling!

The winners lined up for a photo to commemorate this exciting event, along with Quintin Mitchell who earned special regards. Congratulations to all those who participated, and a special thanks to Madame Laisney for organizing this remarkable event for our 7th grade French students!



HBT HIGHLIGHTS



Our Library of Luxury

By Emily Chen



Our HBT library has finally re-opened and has been bustling with activity! Special thanks to Ms. Bento and Ms. Lann for making our library so comfortable for studying, reading and more! The library is located on the second floor near the middle hallway (6-3). Students are welcomed to go to the library during the day and during lunch. Now, here is an interview with Mrs. Lann:

Staff Writer: How difficult was it to decide on the layout and the furniture for the new library?

Ms. Bento: It was certainly not an easy process. We started out with a big vision of what we wanted and went through many different versions of the layout and the furniture. We wanted to make sure that it was perfect and accommodating to our students and our staff. We even visited other school libraries to get ideas.

How long did the library renovation take?

Ms. Lann: The library was closed for renovations for about seven months.

Staff Writer: Who was involved in the process?

Ms. Bento: Initially, it was me, Ms. Lann, and the administrators. We all had input about what we would like to see in the library.

Staff Writer: What is your favorite part of the new library?

Ms. Bento: That is a hard question! I think I would say the new bookshelves. My favorite area is the makerspace because it is an area of creativity.

Ms. Lann: I think that the open space, various seating areas, and the library layout overall which makes finding and checking out a book easy efficient.

Staff Writer: Is there a feature that the library offers that students may not already know that much about and should utilize?

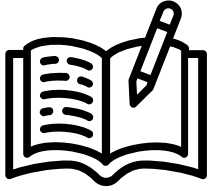
Ms. Bento: I would definitely say the makerspace. Students should visit during their lunch period to see all the crafts we have, including button makers, puzzles, Legos, Keva planks, Rigamajig blocks, snap circuits, K'nex, Strawbees, board games, origami, decks of cards and so much more!

Ms. Lann: It offers the students a great place to come to do hw, meet friends, pick a book, and just hang out for a little but

Staff Writer: When can students come to the library?

Ms. Bento & Ms. Lann: Students can visit the library during their lunch periods. Passes are provided in the cafeteria.

OPINION



Why there should be NO homework on Fridays



By Eileen Liu

Homework on Fridays is quite a controversial topic. Many people, including me, believe that there should be no homework on Fridays because it's the weekend. Daily homework assignments are hard, but weekend assignments are even harder. Teachers tend to make weekend assignments harder and longer because you have more time to do it. Although there is more time, we are more active when they're more prepared and ready on a Monday morning. Students work really hard in classes, so by Friday, which is usually a testing day, students are exhausted. On weekends, some people go out to play, take classes outside of school, and more. Adding homework assignments can also lead to less sleep. This means that on Monday mornings, kids will not have a really good attitude. No homework on Fridays also means more time with family and friends. So in light with all this information, do you still think we should have homework on Fridays?



POLLS

School Lunch

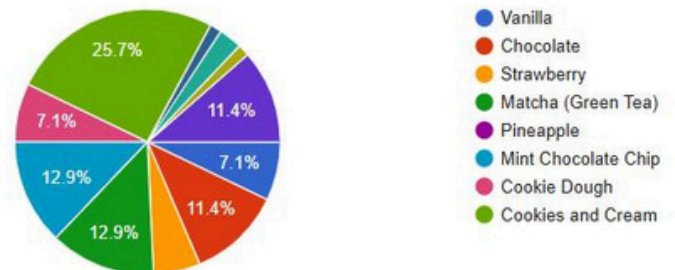
By Eileen Liu

In our most recent poll on school lunches, roughly 180 students responded. Students were asked to rate ten different cafeteria offerings, including pizza, tater tots, tacos, cinnamon french toast sticks, pizza crunchers, chicken tenders, mini-calzones, mac-n-cheese, ramen, and the nachos. Overall, responses were very positive. The clear, overall fan-favorite goes to the tater tots, with over 50% of respondents giving these delectable potato creations an 8/10 or above! Surprisingly, the mini-calzones, aka "pizza rolls," received the lowest percentage of high ratings. This might be attributed to the fact that the cafeteria does offer similar dishes including actual pizza and "pizza crunchers" which resemble smashed mozzarella sticks, both of which received high scores. Overall, we are lucky to have such inventive and varied items on our HBT menu! Bon Appetit!

Ice Cream Flavors

By Valerie Kong

In another of our polls, we asked students to identify their favorite ice cream flavor from an extensive list. The results are not necessarily what you would expect!



Cookies and cream took the lead! But, quite surprisingly, mint chocolate chip and matcha tied in second place, beating out common favorites like vanilla, chocolate, and even cookie dough! Who would have expected that?!

ARTS & CULTURE

From NewJeans to NJZ

By Eileen Liu

ONJZ is a kpop band. You might know them as New Jeans. They were formerly known as New Jeans for a while but then debuted with a new name, NJZ. They consist of 5 members: Hanni, Haerin, Minji, Danielle, Hyein. New Jeans left Hybe on November 29, 2024 due to alleged “mistreatment”, “manipulation”, and workplace harassment. So, when they left, they had to change their name.

On February 7th, in a new photoshoot with Complex magazine, all of the members debuted a new style and a new name, NJZ. On going with the battle against ADOR, a South Korean record label under HYPE Corporation, and HYBE, they lost a lot of trust because of the mistreatment and mismanagement. Also, Danielle, a band member, was very confident and said to CNN, “We believe we will win this battle against HYBE and ADOR.” However, the court chose ADOR’s favor and said that Minji, Hanni, Haerin and Hyein could not be called NJZ anymore and they are currently still New Jeans. They are allowed to do promotions only if ADOR says they could. Hanni did a live and she got them all in trouble. And so, she had to write an apology letter and netizens say that they are in a downfall right now.

For now, they are in a hiatus after the court ruled against them.



NATIONAL NEWS

Wildfires in California

By Gabrielle Ho

Approaching the end of 2024, an outbreak of wildfires suddenly ignited all over the state of California. Blazing a great deal of acreage all throughout California, millions of homes and buildings were devastated by a raging wildfire. Though the exact cause of this unexpected inferno is not clear, California is certainly a place of fitting conditions for fires to start as a result of its low humidity and dry climates.

Palisades Fire

Only a week after the new year, the Palisades Fire began scorching areas of Topanga, the Pacific Palisades, and Malibu along the Santa Monica Mountains of Los Angeles County on January 7th, 2025. In less than a week, thousands of structures were burned along the ash-ridden streets. The fire was believed to have started along western Los Angeles, an area populated by energetic tourists and hikers. However, on New Year's Day, the area of the Palisades Fire had a fire ignited by a firework, a typical hazard connected to New Year's celebrations. Though this fire was extinguished, there still is a possibility that the Palisades Fire is connected to this one, but causes still remain unknown.

Eaton Fire

Starting at about the same time as the Palisades Fire, the Eaton Fire flared tens of thousands of acres in the area of the Altadena neighborhood and Pasadena. This wildfire is allegedly supposed to have been ignited by a nearby utility transmission tower. Though not proven guilty yet, the power supply company Southern California Edison is currently hounded by angry lawsuits.

As of now, the cause of many of these wildfires remains undetermined, but police and fire departments worked to resolve this issue and even more volunteers stepped in to support the victims of these fires. Even though the Palisades and Eaton Fires are undoubtedly some of the most destructive fires in California's history, there are still many different wildfires that ravage throughout populated areas all over the state.

SPORTS

REMEMBERING SUPER BOWL LIX

By: Evelyn Koo

On February 9th, the annual Super Bowl occurred. The Super Bowl is the biggest football event in the US. The Super Bowl is held every year where the two best NFL (National Football League) teams face each other. This year, Super Bowl LIX was held in New Orleans, Louisiana, where the Kansas City Chiefs played against the Philadelphia Eagles, a rematch from 2023, where the Chiefs won 38-35.

In the first quarter, the Eagles took the lead with a touchdown from quarterback Jalen Hurts, 7-0. The Chiefs were really struggling to catch up because in the second quarter, they were still at 0, but the Eagles pushed ahead and the second quarter ended 24-0 Eagles. The Chiefs finally scored in the third quarter with a touchdown, but the Eagles were too good. By the third quarter, the Eagles were up 34-6. In the fourth quarter, the Chiefs scored two late touchdowns with two point conversions. That put them up to 22 points. But the Eagles also scored a touchdown, leaving the result at 40-22, Eagles.

Jalen Hurts' amazing rushing and passing touchdowns were one thing that contributed to the Eagles' victory. He made a great pass to DeVonta Smith, with a 46 yard touchdown catch. Another great thing that the Eagles did to claim their title as winner of Super Bowl LIX was having a good defense. Their defense not only held back the NFL star, Saquon Barkley, from reaching his full potential, but sacked Patrick Mahomes six times, preventing him from scoring.

Both teams were amazing enough to even get into the playoffs and it was extraordinary for them to make it to the Super Bowl, but in the end, the Philadelphia Eagles came out on top.



SPORTS

THE PHYSICS BEHIND ICE SKATING

By: Gabrielle Ho

Through years and years, many have viewed figure skating as a competitive yet beautiful sport. However, not nearly as many people realize that the singular act of a spring over ice is a phenomenon of physics. The precision required to the very last millisecond of the action, the vigorous inertial movement required (which refers to the natural tendency where a force continues moving if not met with another force), and the endurance a skater must have to perform successfully.

Firstly, think about the properties of ice. If you've ever gone ice skating before, you'd know how hard skating across the rink for the first time really is (without falling on your behind). This is because of how slippery the surface of the ice is. However, the only reason you, or any other skater, can glide across the ice smoothly, is because of the friction formed between your feet and the ice. The blades on ice skates are absolutely essential for an ice skater, because the moment you set foot on the ice, your blades melt a thin layer of ice that allows you to slide across the ice smoothly.

Moving back to the art of figure skating, you may have seen popular ice skaters like Kaori Sakamoto or Ilia Malinin perform jaw-dropping stunts where they spin so quickly on the ice that all you can see is a blur. To achieve their speed when doing such spins, the skater

crosses and tucks their arms over their chest to increase their centripetal force (a force that makes one follow a circular motion) and angular momentum (the measurement of any being rotating around the center of themselves in a circular path).

Now, onto the leaps. The most renowned jump in figure skating is called an axel, which a skater achieves through three phases. The starting phase, which includes the skater gaining enough speed and then launching off by bending their knees. This is done to create enough momentum in the skater's movements so that they can launch off the ice. The formula for momentum is $\text{momentum} = \text{mass} \times \text{velocity}$. Simply put, the skater must put enough weight on the ice, and they do this by bending their knees. This is the "mass" of the equation. The velocity is the speed something or someone moves at, so the skater builds a higher velocity by increasing their speed on the ice. After all of this, the skater forcefully swings their arms backward. When these elements are combined, the momentum in the skater's jump brings us up to the flight phase. When they thrust into the air with their knees, they must cross

SPORTS

The Physics Behind Ice Skating - continued...

By: Gabrielle Ho

and tuck their arms in at the same time. The combination of these two body movements, when executed properly, will carry the skater into a spin. Now, the amount of spins you do in the air depends how much force you put on your body. You can do a singular axel with a decent amount of strength from your legs, but highly advanced moves like the quadruple axel, which consists of 4 spins in the air, have only ever been achieved by figure skater Ilia Malinin. This is because there must be an insane amount of accuracy in each movement leading up to the flight phase to conserve enough acceleration for the actual spin. Finally, we reach the landing phase of the axel. Upon landing, the skater lands on the opposite foot that they started with and extends their arms out. With this, the skater increases their radius, and they distribute their mass/weight over a larger area. This increases their moment of inertia. With a larger moment of inertia, the skater slows down and has officially completed an axel.

To conclude, ice skating is not just a bunch of dancers prancing over a slab of ice, but a miracle of physics. So, the next time you go out ice skating, remember that the only thing stopping you from gliding gracefully over that rink could be you.

Interview With Girls' Volleyball Coach Lertora

By Valerie Kong

Girls' volleyball is a popular sport at HBT. Every year, many girls try out, while less than half of them make it on the team. I spoke to the coach of the 8th grade volleyball team, Coach Lertora, to get the inside scoop!

Q: When did you start coaching volleyball?

A: I have been coaching since I was a freshman in college, and since then, I knew I always wanted to become a teacher & coach.

Q: Did you play volleyball when you were younger?

A: Yes, I started playing volleyball when I was in 8th grade and still play volleyball to this day. I play beach volleyball every summer.

Q: What is your favorite part of coaching?

A: Getting to work with the young players and teach them the sport I love is a gift every day.

Q: What is the most rewarding part of coaching?

A: Seeing my players improve their skills throughout the season, being successful, but most importantly, seeing them have fun and play together as a team!

I spoke with a few players who told me that the best part of volleyball was making friends. They also said that they really feel the pressure during matches against their rivals, South Woods. However, their favorite match was also against South Woods, too. I guess when the pressure's on, the fun and exhilaration really kick in!

SPORTS

PROS AND CONS OF ICE SKATING

By Leah Kralstein

With the colder winter coming, outdoor sports become less and less common. All except 1, ice skating. Ice skating is by far the one of the most popular wintertime sport, and is an amazing one too!

There are many benefits. For example, it is very good physical activity and is very impressive when done well. The first benefit is that surprisingly ice skating actually boosts your mental health and stress levels. "Physical activity has proved to boost mental health. Because ice skating is a physical activity" Second, ice skating is a great source of physical activity. It is known to burn calories very fast. Ice skating burns 550-600 calories an hour while football only burns 544 calories, which means ice skating is more efficient in burning calories. Lastly, ice skating is very calming to those who do it well. When you ice skate, you balance out the oxygen in your body which gives you more balance, even off the ice. This will give you that calm you feel on the ice and when you get of that peace of mind stays with you for another 4 hours.

Although ice skating is such a fun sport to do, it does have its drawbacks. For instance, when you are first on the ice, you are most likely going to fall due to your inexperience. Like every other activity, you can get back up, but it is very hard to stand back up on slippery ice.

Lastly, when you ice skate for a while you can get a sore foot, when the blood circulation stops going to your foot. When this happens, immediately get off the ice. This is a warning after 15 minutes or longer of this happening your foot will go numb and it is highly dangerous to do this if you are not a professional or high level skater.

Every person is different, but when you start ice skating, here are a few tips:

- When you feel like you are about to fall, bend your knees. It is a way to balance out your weight.
- Start slow. Do the step, step, glide motion to get used to moving around.
- Hold on to the wall if needed. Don't worry, sometimes even professionals need this!
- Everyone starts somewhere. Practice makes perfect! Keep trying, and you will eventually get there!
- No one is perfect. It is okay to fall! Just make sure to get back up again.

Ice skating is such a fantastic sport with amazing benefits and some drawbacks, but as winter comes along, make sure you are safe and enjoy this active winter sport.

