

Spring 2022

Chalfont, PA

Unami Middle School



The Unami Times

Newspaper

"The liberty of the press is essential to the security of the state."

Willy Wonka Musical & Interviews

Megha Rao

For the 2021-2022 school year the musical selected was Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory. The musical is directed and organized by Mr. Beal and many other teachers and parents. The rehearsals for the musical as well as props and costumes began toward the beginning of the year while the stage crew began closer to the show. The musical was performed on March 11th, 12th, and 13th at various times. Thanks to the work and dedication of the cast and crew, the musical was made possible.



On Wednesday, February 14th the cast was busy rehearsing, but they were able to spare a few minutes for an interview. The interviews held were with Olivia Giampolo (Willy Wonka), Cameron Crawford (Mike Teevee), Leanne Matthew (Candy Man) and Emmi Roffman (Violet Beauregard). Most of these actresses all had much prior experience in musical theater as well as the schools chorus programs here at Unami. They all had many positive things to say about their experience of the musical this year.



When it comes to the environment of the rehearsals, it was unanimously said that the rehearsals were an amazing place to be. A fun-loving family that the cast members extremely enjoyed being in. Going to rehearsals so many days a week for a few months created a wonderful setting to hang out with friends while singing and dancing.

The final question is what they would have to say to their future self after the show was performed. The answers were a mix between telling their future self to not cry and wallow in the fact that the show is over and encouraging themselves to do this again next year.

While the 9th graders are moving on to high school to hopefully continue doing musicals and theater the cast highly encourages everyone coming to Unami and that are already here to involve themselves in the musical for the people and the fun time you'll have. Congratulations to the Willy Wonka cast and crew for an amazing show this year!



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The Return of Field Trips

Diya Mahesh

The past two years have definitely not been the same as many would have expected them to be. An abundant of new struggles knocked on people's doors, and things that were never imagined occurred, but slowly, things are returning to normal. We can come to school and meet our peers, talk to them, and learn in a very similar environment as we have before Covid 19. I'm not sure about you, but one of the biggest things that I missed these years was field trips. Days when we could travel as a grade have time to unplug and treat ourselves after weeks of working. After all this time of waiting, the day has finally come when we can pay for our field trips once again and prepare to travel with our friends. Boy, I thought I would never say those words. (continued on page 2)

Unami Times

2020-2021

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Unami and Community News

The Return of Field Trips (continued)

Diya Mahesh

9th grade, as its their last year here at Unami, is taking a fun-filled trip to Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty. The students are travelling in a ferry, yes you read that right, and eating lunch at the Nation Park. This happening on May 26th and the freshmen could not be more excited.

7th grade is going to the Franklin Institute on April 13th They are staying there for the whole day, seeing the Harry Potter exhibit, and eating lunch there as well

All in all, this year's field trips, and all the other fun activities planned for the rest of the semester are going to reward Unami's students for their hard work amidst all the uncertainties occurring in the world around.

Sources: The Franklin Institute, Wikimedia Commons



World News

The History of Black History Month & Black Health and Wellness

Cassidy Fisher

Black History Month is a time of the year when we can educate ourselves on the triumphs that have led Black Americans closer to equality despite the atrocities that Black people have faced in America. However, Black culture has not always been celebrated for an entire month.

Carter G. Woodson started the journey to having Black History month with his idea for a Negro History Week in 1926. Woodson felt that this weeklong celebration could encourage the teaching of Black History in public schools. He wanted to focus and broaden the nation's perception on Black history. This idea was not accepted for decades to come, but finally, in the late 1960s, thanks to the Civil Rights Movement, the week had gained traction and was transformed into Black History Month. Black History Month was not officially recognized for about another decade until President Gerald R. Ford recognized it and encouraged Americans to "seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history".



Carter G. Woodson

Source: *biography.com*

This year's theme for Black History Month is Black Health and Wellness. One of the many facets of inequality that Black people face are their experiences with the care they get for their health both mentally and physically. In regards to mental health Black people can face an assessment bias during diagnostic processes and therefore may not be diagnosed for the right issue. This discourages many Black Americans from wanting to get help for mental health issues. One of the most notable healthcare misconducts towards Black Americans is the Tuskegee Experiment, in which 600 men in Macon County participated in a study for syphilis. Fifteen years into the study, even when penicillin was the recommended treatment for the disease, those running the experiment did not give the participants the treatment, resulting in the death of over 100 participants. Cruel treatment like this has prompted many Black Americans not to trust the healthcare system. (continued on page 3)

World News

The History of Black History Month & Black Health and Wellness (continued)

Cassidy Fisher

Black Americans have also made incredible contributions to medicine. In 1917, Louis T. Wright developed a technique for vaccinating soldiers against smallpox and later became the first clinician to investigate the treatment of humans with aureomycin. In 1936, William Augustus Hinton published the first clinical medical textbook written by a Black physician. In 1990, Marilyn Hughes Gaston published a groundbreaking study on the treatment of sickle cell disease.

During this month we should not only recognize the commonly spoke of heroes but take the initiative to learn about the heavy influence that Black Americans have had on our American culture, whether it be clothing, music, education, or politics. It is so important that we take the time to learn and to listen not only in the month of February, but every day.

More info on Black health and Wellness: <https://www.cnn.com/2022/02/11/us/iyw-black-history-month-health-wellness/index.html>

Sources:

<https://www.npr.org/2022/02/01/1075623826/why-is-february-black-history-month>

<https://www.aafp.org/news/inside-aafp/20210205bhmtimeline.html>

Tensions with Russia

Chris Holster

Bombs are dropping left and right throughout the country of Ukraine by the doing of Russia. Many have called this invasion the start of WWII; this has scared a lot of people into believing they might be in danger. In Ukraine an estimate of 352 citizens have been killed with hundreds injured. Vladimir Putin (president of Russia) has done a lot of harm with an estimated ten billion USD in damages but has been unsuccessful in capturing the capitol city of Kyiv. Putin has been lashing out at his presidential meetings in anger because of the will power of the citizens to protect their country. President Zelensky (president of Ukraine) has been called a hero to the people because he chose to stay and fight instead of leaving for safety. Zelensky's courageous words have become a symbol for the people. "I need ammunition, not a ride", he said. In all of the back and forth, the citizens of Ukraine have been going to neighboring countries as refugees, hundreds have lined up at train stations offering food, water, and shelter for families. Back in Russia millions don't support this invasion and have publicly announced that what Putin is doing is wrong. From Yekaterinburg to St. Petersburg, to the capital, Moscow, thousands of Russians across the country share one chant, one voice, spilling into streets and city squares, outraged since President Vladimir Putin ordered a full-scale invasion of neighboring Ukraine, according to Ryan Chilcote with PBS News Hour, an anonymous citizen of Russia said, "War must be stopped. It must be. It's crazy what's going on right now. We should all shout no to war." And "I don't want this war. Almost no one here wants it. I want the whole world to see that we don't want it. We don't want it to weigh on our conscience for decades. I don't want to feel guilty for living here through my whole life." The details on this story are still unfolding so to keep up withal this global conflict, make sure to watch the news.

Sources: republicworld.com/world-news

A Promising Future

Ramsey Polis and Atharva Bhargude

We are finally starting to see some kind of light at the end of the tunnel. Everyone in the world has been affected by COVID-19 one way or another and have all struggled from its impact. The numbers are starting to trend in the right direction: confirmed cases hospitalizations, and deaths have drastically declined, and a good amount of the population is vaccinated against the virus. With all of this being said, hopefully we will start to see the pandemic come to an end.

COVID cases have exponentially decreased in Pennsylvania since a few months ago. On January 8, there were 33,650 cases reported in Pennsylvania. Later this year, on March 8, there were only 1,300 cases reported in Pennsylvania.

Hospitalizations have also declined greatly from what they used to be. In Pennsylvania, on January 13, 8,198 people were hospitalized. On March 8, a significantly smaller amount of 1,212 people were hospitalized in Pennsylvania.

Deaths have been descending from what they were months ago. 326 deaths were reported on January 20 in Pennsylvania while on March 8, only 92 deaths were reported in Pennsylvania. (continued on page 4)

World News

A Promising Future

Ramsey Polis and Atharva Bhargude

Total vaccinations in the U.S. are at a steadily high number which is very helpful in combatting the pandemic. 216,273,632 people in the United States are currently vaccinated (as of March 9) this means that 65.89% of the total U.S. population is vaccinated against COVID. It is extremely important that many people are vaccinated and continue to get vaccinated in order to protect themselves and others from the virus. Research has shown that the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is more than 90% effective at preventing serious illness for ages 12 to 18. Furthermore, one study found that 93% of the people who became infected with the virus was unvaccinated.

We are finally starting to see a decrease in cases, deaths, and hospitalizations. Why is this happening? Because most of the country has some immunity from the virus, whether being vaccinated or having protection from contracting the virus. We are not out of the woods yet, but we are definitely getting closer and closer to the finish line. In order to cross the finish line, we need to continue to work together and respect one another. We also need to prevent covid from getting to us, so we need to follow the CDC's guidelines. A link to it can be found in this pdf: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention-H.pdf>



Sources:

[Pennsylvania - COVID-19 Overview - Johns Hopkins \(jhu.edu\)](#)

[Understanding Vaccination Progress by Country - Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center \(jhu.edu\)](#)

[Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine more than 90% effective in teens, study finds - UPI.com](#)

Our Planet Deserves A Holiday Too!

Maddie Coleman

Every year on April 22nd we celebrate the Earth, we devote ourselves to cleaning up the planet for a day, we go to bed. Then the next day it's back to throwing recycling in the garbage, releasing fossil fuels, and forgetting that good planets are hard to find.

The first Earth Day, America experienced, was celebrated in 1970 and was put into action by Senator Gaylord Nelson. Since then, Earth Day has led to numerous accounts of success for environmentalists and our planet. In the years following the 1st Earth Day, America created a few new acts such as the Endangered Species Act of 1973 and the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Acts of 1977. Earth Day has also focused on global matters like raising awareness about recycling and concentrating on clean energy.

This spring, Earth Day, falls on a Friday (April 22nd) and will be observed as the U.S.'s 52nd celebration. As a teenager you might be thinking, *it's a big world out there what can I do?* For starters, cleaning up the Earth can start in your own home. Instead of throwing everything in the trash can recycle your plastic and paper, reuse your food scraps to create compost or help a local garden. You can also walk or bike to places near you and stop using your car so much. If you go to the store with your parents, be aware that not every brand is environmentally friendly; watch what you buy and later use. Lastly, understand what is going on in your community and help. Moreover, tell others what they can do to benefit the land and atmosphere. Now is the time to make changes to our lifestyle before it is too late. We only have one planet and it's not headed in the right direction, but you can change that. So, stop using harmful items and start recycling, every little step becomes a big step if it means saving our Earth.

Technology & Entertainment

The Oscars Will *Not* Be Talking About Bruno

Ashlee Ranes

As of this March, Disney's *Encanto* has been on top of the music charts since its release on Disney Plus. The movie's fan favorite song, "We Don't Talk About Bruno", has even exceeded past classics like "Let It Go", making it Disney's most popular song ever. Clearly, this is owed to the musical genius of Lin Manuel Miranda, who was also behind the music of *Hamilton*, *In the Heights*, and *Moana*. *Encanto* has been nominated for its share of Oscars, but the majorly popular "We Don't Talk About Bruno" is not in the running for Best Original Song. This contradiction of nominations is due to the movie's creators' view of the music. (continued on page 5)

The Oscars Will *Not* Be Talking About Bruno (continued)

Ashlee Ranes

Miranda has stated in an interview with the *New York Times* that he understands the appeal of the song but feels that it is somewhat random that it's the one to become so successful. *Encanto* co-director Byron Howard has revealed that the highly different and more simplistic ballad, "Dos Oruguitas", has much more significance to the film's story. The film follows a magical family in 1950's Colombia where each member has been bestowed a magical power, or gift, except the protagonist, Mirabel. "Dos Oruguitas" plays over the climax of the movie where Abuela Alma admits her mistakes and apologizes to Mirabel for the harm she has caused the family, while her backstory is also depicted with no lines but the song. Howard believed this song held the core emotion of the film. "Dos Oruguitas" holds important significance because if it wins an Oscar, it will be the first Disney song completely in a language other than English to do so.



As previously announced, "Dos Oruguitas" will be the song from *Encanto* competing for Best Original Song at this year's Oscars. Despite "We Don't Talk About Bruno"'s rise to becoming a musical phenomenon, the emotional themes of *Encanto* have been weighed against the popularity of its music. These variables raise the question if the storytelling matters more than the song in the category. Either way, both songs have been influential in their own ways and will continue to be discussed, with or without an Oscar win.

Source: *Remezcla.com*

Russian Crackdown on News Coverage: The Active Effects Within Global Media

Madelyn Engstrom & Grace Piro

For the majority of the past couple of weeks, the world's nations have been monitoring and reacting to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Many western news outlets have been changing their operations in Russia in order to maintain their journalistic integrity after Russian President Vladimir Putin further constricted the country's free speech and media laws. This law basically incriminates media coverage that depicts the "situation" in Ukraine as a technical "invasion". Specifically, the authorization refers to news coverage about the Russian Army launching this attack, and Putin has outlined that calling it an "invasion" is "fake news", and those that violate this law are subject for up to 15 years in prison. Since Putin signed this act into law in early March, the suspensions from well-known Western news outlets have been quite notable. The main established providers that are temporarily suspending their news coverage within Russia are BBC, CNN, ABC, and Bloomberg News. Many of these groups have put out statements talking about their return to reporting in Russia, but most of these announcements simply note the unpredictability and needed monitoring of the situation. Of course, all of these groups are being very delicate and cautious with this situation as they are dealing with Putin, a notoriously discordant and dictatorial leader. Along with this situation surrounding Western news outlets, Putin's news coverage law is also affecting how the Russian media is orchestrating their journalistic operations.



Source: *The Moscow Times*

As the war in Ukraine intensifies, Russian president, Vladimir V. Putin, continues to clamp down harder on news and free speech than at any other time during his twenty-two years in power. He has blocked access to Facebook and other major foreign news outlets and has also enacted a law to punish anyone spreading "false information" on the matter, with up to fifteen years in prison. This law could even make it a crime to simply call this conflict a war, as the Kremlin refers to it as a "special military operation". Vyacheslav Volodin, the Duma speaker, has stated that under this new law, "those who lied and made declarations discrediting our armed forces will be forced to suffer very harsh punishment". Russia's internet regulator has also claimed that Facebook had engaged in "discrimination against Russian news media" by limiting access to pro-Kremlin accounts. Furthermore, more independent Russian news outlets have shut down in fear of prosecution, and the BBC has also stated that it has suspended all of its operations in Russia. As of now, other Russian social networks along with Instagram, Twitter, etc. remain accessible, but it is expected that further limitations will be put in place. Even in other countries associated with Russia, this censorship has been prominent in similar ways Russia is experiencing. On February 22, a Chinese outlet, Horizon News, posted what appeared to be internal instructions on how to spin the conflict on its official Weibo account. Amidst these rules, "Do not post anything unfavorable to Russia or pro-Western", and to monitor comments and only use hashtags started by state outlets.

Reviews

The Top Songs Around the World (Spotify)

Suryanshu Khadka and Jaime Acevedo

U.S.A/Global #1 Songs— “Heat Waves” by Glass Animals. This song blew up on social media platforms and has a pop-like sound.

Argentina— “Desesperados” by Rauw Alejandro and Chencho Corleone. This song has a party/club beat. It’s fun and cheerful.

Japan— “Ichizu” by King Gnu. This song is a soft, pop, rock song and is something that would be played at a big rock concert in Japan.

Indonesia— “Hati-Hati di Jalan” by Tulus. This song is very slow and relaxing. It is a song that could be used for slow dances.

India— “Excuses” by AP Dhillon, Gurinder Gill, and Intense. This song sounds like a party song with a fast pace and a bouncy beat.

Italy— “Brividi” by Mahmood and BLANCO. This song is very slow, played with a piano in the background. It sounds emotional.

Chile— “Una Noche en Medellín” by Cris Mj. This song has a chill vibe to it and sounds like something you could dance to at a party.

Colombia— “Monastery” by Ryan Castro and Feid. This song has an emphasized beat drop which sounds great for something to play in the car.

Brazil— “DANÇARINA” by PEDRO SAMPAIO and Mc Pedrinho. This song has a very fast and fun pace. Both the lyrics and vocals are fast.

Spain— “C”ayó La Noche” by La Pantera, Quevedo, Juseph, Abhir Hathi, Bejo, Cruz Cafuné, and EL IMA. This song features a ton of artists, giving it a variety of vocals.

Philippines— “Pano” by Zack Tabudlo. This song is slow and sounds like another song to slow dance to. It is something that would be played at prom.

France— “Filtré” by Timal and Gazo. This song is rap/hip hop and has lots of bass. It sounds like a good song to play in the car.

United Kingdom— “Starlight” by Dave. This song is U.K. drill, a form of rap. It has a mellow and relaxed vibe.

Puerto Rico— “MAMIII” by Becky G and KAROL G. This song sounds like another party song. It has a classic, fun beat.

Mexico— “Ya No Somos Ni Seremos” by Christian Nodal. This song seems very slow, heartfelt and is fun to sing along with.



Source: Shutterstock

Andrew Garfield and Tick..Tick..BOOM!

Lena Karcher

One of the newest projects that Andrew Garfield has embarked on has been his protagonist role in the Netflix adaptation of the musical *Tick.. Tick.. Boom!* The musical-movie adaptation brings life to the story of Jonathon Larson (played by Andrew Garfield), the creator of the 12-year Broadway running musical, *Rent*. Garfield brings a life to this biography of the writer, bring true emotion to his story. Being released in 2021 and having a successful release, the film added onto the phenomena of the “Andrew Garfield renaissance”, a.k.a. a resurgence of interest and enthusiasm about the actor and his earlier films, such as *The Amazing Spider-Man*. *Tick Tick Boom* is set in 1990, the year of Jonathon Larson’s 30th birthday, and the year of his first showcase of his first full musical. The movie was created and produced by Lin Manuel Miranda, creator of *Hamilton* and *In the Heights*. (continued on page 7)



Source: Official Netflix Website

Reviews

Andrew Garfield and Tick..Tick..BOOM! (continued)

Lena Karcher

The reason why this movie is so compelling is the way that Andrew Garfield tells the story of Jonathon Larson, this burnt out-creative in the city of New York, struggling to find space of everything and everyone in his life without combusting. Hence the title, *Tick...Tick.. Boom!*, Jonathon feels as if the stress and panic in his life keeps ticking, just like a clock, or stopwatch, waiting for its time to ring. This film also highlights Garfield's singing abilities, especially in my personal favorites, "30/90" and "Therapy", from the soundtrack of the movie. Walking away from this film, we can justify anew that Andrew Garfield is a phenomenal performer.

I fully recommend this film if you are a fan of Andrew Garfield, a fan of musicals, or somewhere in between.

Creative Writing

Peeps and the Great Debate

Maddie Coleman

Everyone has at least heard of the spring holiday known as Easter. When you hear the word Easter what is the first that comes to mind? For some it might be the religious part of the holiday and going to church, for others it may be the Easter bunny and egg scavenger hunts, but one item comes to the mind of every child in the country... the candy!

Easter is the 2nd best candy selling holiday in America, the 1st being Halloween. Each year huge amounts of candy are sold from chocolate bunnies to jelly beans. Although some may think they know which candy is the best, evidence proves otherwise. Around Easter each year the greatest non-chocolate Easter candy is the marshmallow peep.



Traveling back a couple years to 1923, to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, the candy company called Just Born was founded by a Russian immigrant known as Sam Born. Peeps were originally hand made and began selling across the country in the 1950's. On occasion the common peep took about 27 hours to make now machines have taken over and can create 1 Peep in just 6 minutes. This speed is key due to the fact that, the manufacturer Just Born Inc., makes 1.5 million Peeps every year with more than half of them selling at Easter. That quantity is enough to circle the Earth twice! Primarily Peeps were the common yellow, marshmallow chick. Now peeps can be made in different shapes such as animals like bunnies and flavors like chocolate mousse, cotton candy, lime delight, and mystery.

Each Peep is made from common and simple components. Taking a wide view peeps are merely a marshmallow, sugary, pastel-colored confection. Meanwhile if you take the zoomed in view-point you will find ingredients such as sugar, corn syrup, gelatin, a pinch of salt, and varied food dyes like never blue. Even though Peeps are not the healthiest snack people have still found ways to include them in meals, desserts, and recipes. For example, in 2017 the dish dubbed Peepza entered the scene. Peepza, as seen on the side, is your average cheese pizza with mozzarella and marinara sauce but instead of the standard toppings like pepperoni or ham and cheese the peep is placed on top. Another example of Peep use is Peep fondue which bread, or pretty much anything can be dipped in.



Lastly, people and Peeps are often put into two categories. The Lovers and the Haters. According to a poll taken by Unami students and teachers 49% love Peeps and could eat them any day, 11% hate Peeps and never want to be near them. On the other hand, they're the inbetweeners with 29% saying they're ok but could live without them, and 11% have never even tried the sweet treat. So, who are you a hater, a lover, or someone who has never tasted this festive marshmallow? Easter is coming up soon and decisions must be made... which side are you on?

Sources:

[Easter Symbols and Traditions - Easter Bunny, Easter Eggs & Christianity - HISTORY](#)

[A sweet history of marshmallow Peeps candy | Explore | Awesome Activities & Fun Facts | CBC Kids](#)

[Peeps Facts for Kids \(kiddle.co\)](#)