The Billie Bulletin

Pleasant Hill High School
Issue 2, Volume 75,
December 18th, 2025



Steve Smith stands with his doppelganger, (Cooper Brown), in his control room for Wood shop classes.

Steve Smith is a legend

By Hattie Bruns

I know you have seen Steve Smith, either in the wood shop, the halls, or just around town. Mr Smith, known as "Steve" is the legendary wood shop teacher at PHHs. Boy are we lucky to have him. He can be intimidating at first but once you get to know him, he's one interesting guy.

Mr. Smith was a Billie of our own. In fact, he has been with Pleasant Hill for more than 34 years. If that doesn't show his dedication, I don't know what does.

Before he came to work for Pleasant Hill High School, he worked for a Murphy Logging Co. for 15 years. An industrial accident cost him the use of his right arm. Then he began teaching Algebra 1 and 2 and Geometry. In his career, Mr. Smith coached the high school baseball team. Mr. Smith has a Masters in math education and industrial arts from Oregon State University.

Mr. Smith is a proud Billie alumni Class of 1971. He grew up in Pleasant Hill, met his wife here and raised his five kids here. In Wood shop, he is running a program that builds houses for the homeless and plans on continuing those programs and possibly making new ones.

When Mr. Smith was asked about what he adds to the high school, he said, "I just try to better the school. We built the dugouts, and the athletic sheds where all of the equipment is stored... I also add age to the staff's average age."

He has been here time and time again for repairs for repairs and additions to the school and is a season veteran.



'6 7'

By Hadlie Saxon

Everyone has probably heard a "brain rot" word once or twice. From "sigma" to "rizz" I've heard it all.

But there's one word that I hear every day: '6 7' (six seven).

I love saying '6 7' in an everyday context but I know not everyone will agree with me. So today I'm interviewing five people with five questions. Do you know what '6 7' means? How many times have you used 6 7 this week? Do you like it when people say '67'? If you could ban '6 7' would you? Was there ever a word that you had growing up like '6 7'?

I interviewed three teachers to start Ms. Williams, Ms. Jada and Ms. Castle.

My first question was do you know what '6 7' means? Ms.Williams said "It is a part of a song." Ms. Jada said "It's a song referring to a basketball player's height" and Ms. Castle said the phrase comes "from a song."

The second question is how many times have you said '6 7'this week?

Ms. Williams said "about 67 times;" Ms. Jada with 4 to 5 times

(she changed her mind to 6 or 7 times after a bit). Ms. Castle said "not very often but will do it when it's page 67 so 1 or 2 times."

Question three: Do you like '6 7'?

Ms. Williams responded "no, well not really." Ms. Jada said"It's getting old and tiring"and Ms. Castle "she's not fazed by it anymore." Would you like to ban '6 7'? They all said "no" for the reason that "it was wrong to give a kid a referral for saying '6 7' and it would be a lot of work to keep track of who said '6 7'."

Was there any word growing up like '6-7' ?

Ms. Williams said "1738" which is a drinking song.Ms. Jada said "Nothing she could think of" while Ms. Castle said "Luda' which came from a teacher she had named Luda and they would say her name like the rapper."

Flipping Perspective: How teachers found their groove

By Jay Griffith

When you are sitting in class surrounded by your friends and your classmates, everything can seem chipper. You are chatting it up with your buddy, or maybe you just three crowned your opponent in Clash Royale or you found a funny video on your phone—which is definitely supposed to be put away, but that's besides the point—and you are not even thinking about some lesson you were meant to be learning during this time.

At times like these it may seem impossible to put yourself in the shoes of your teacher, but is it so outlandish to say teachers are not so different from you?

Every human has a way of staying motivated. If you think a teacher wakes up every morning and plans out the most methodical way of keeping us busy all class long, each and every day, I fear you would be incorrect.

I'm sure everyone has an idea, however big or small, of what they want to do for a job for either the rest of their lives or for any amount of time, after high school/ college, but not everything always works out, and sometimes your passions change, and sometimes they stay the way they were the whole time. I want to take a look into our teachers here at Pleasant Hill High School. Did they always want to be a teacher? What motivates them as a teacher? I want to shine the light on our staff and see what it reveals of their disposition.

First up, Senora Brandi Watne:

Mrs. Watne attended George Fox University and lived abroad in Sevilla, Spain to complete her Spanish major. Mrs. Watne decided on teaching for a variety of reasons, but one stood out to her, which was being a teacher's kid. Apparently, teaching runs in the family.

She decided to be a teacher in her junior year. She had beforehand entertained the idea of being an architect or an interior designer, which she says is ironic because of her under decorated household. She claims that two teachers in her high school had inspired her to become a teacher: Mr. Roemer and Mrs. Kinkel. Mr. Roemer, she says, reminds her of Mr. Meinzen: very kind, patient, knowledgeable and well-loved. She says though specifically if it was not for Mrs. Kinkel – Spanish teacher– she would not be doing what she's doing right now.

When asked what is something you wish students knew about teachers she said, "Teaching high school is a combination of fun and exhaustion. There is a lot that goes on behind the scenes that kids don't see. Professional development, staff meetings, paper grading, etc. The kids themselves are the reason the job is so great, but it can be challenging to juggle all the other responsibilities."

The motivation to teach comes from Watne's students.

"I love the kids who genuinely enjoy my class, as well as the ones who just put up with it. Honestly, if every kid were a clone of a perfect classroom student, life would be boring. Furthermore, when I hear kids say things like "I used Spanish in my job last night" or have graduates emailing me that they aced their college Spanish test, that makes the job rewarding."

Beginning January 6, 2026, or after winter break, the new cell phone and personal electronic device policy will go into effect in alignment with Oregon Executive Order 25-09, which requires all Oregon schools to limit student device use during instructional hours.

What This Means for Students at PHMS/HS:

From 8:19 a.m. to 3:10 p.m., all cell phones and electronic devices must be turned OFF and put AWAY.

Devices may not be kept in pockets, hands, or on desks.

Devices must be stored in a backpack or locker for the entire school day.

There is no device use during passing periods, lunch, or class time.

This policy is designed to support student engagement, reduce distractions, and strengthen the learning environment for all students.

What keeps tweens and teens up at night?

By Aurelia Lenhart

Do you ever look over at the clock seeing it's 2 AM but you can't fall asleep? Because of the lack of sleep your more stressed and struggling in school? Well you aren't the only one many others including me struggle with the same problem?

To start we all know school can be stressful and hard so to start we all know stress and anxiety are common factors to not having a good sleep schedule. But that doesn't mean every tween and teen is stressed out or has anxiety because they struggle with keeping a good sleep schedule. A tween or teen on average should get 8 to 10 hours of sleep a night and it doesn't take a math genius to know that means if you're getting up at 6Am and going to bed at 10Pm.

Other than just staying up late for fun, stress or anxiety and ADHD can also be a factor to sleeping problems. Did you know that also phones and other electronics with screens are one of the biggest factors to sleeping problems? They may make you feel sleepy. The blue light from the screens actually wakes you up. "So, teens have a harder time falling asleep. Sometimes this delay in the sleep–wake cycle is so severe that it affects a person's daily activities. In those cases it's called delayed sleep phase syndrome or "night owl" syndrome."

This isn't for everyone and this isn't all the problems but some of them and these solutions may not work for everyone. Here are some solutions to help get to sleep and have a better sleep schedule by creating a consistent sleep routine, limiting screen use before bed, avoiding caffeine, ensuring regular exercise, and establishing a relaxing wind-down period. This could help you sleep better. I hope some of you find this helpful.



What happened to The Billie Bean?

By Noelle Kindorf

Do you remember The Billie Bean?

The Billie Bean was a coffee cart where you could get drinks like hot chocolates or frappes at decent prices. It was located at the concession stand and high schoolers ran the kitchen and cash registers before school started.

8th grader Pippa Hammond said "I remember you could customize your own drinks, such as Italian sodas."

8th grader Bethany Carlton also noted "I liked it, but they got rid of it."

What led to the cart's cancellation is not because of other activities, neglect, or arguments.

Ms. Kathy Duvall, the manager of the school business, reported that she had a condition which prevented her from attending and managing the Billie Bean everyday. She eventually resigned when she could not find a situation that worked with her illness.

With her resignation the coffee cart/the Billie Bean was put into mothballs. She suggested that other members of staff might have been interested in working with her to keep the Billie Bean open. But that didn't happen.

The coffee machine has been placed in the canteen on the left side awaiting a resurrection-if it happens.

Honestly, I think The Billie Bean should return. Every winter it's open to raise money for the school and help organizations, as well as serve tasty drinks for students.

Explaining SNAP the program that feeds millions

By Aria Verma

With inflation pushing prices significantly higher and the Federal minimum wage staying low at $7.25 per hour (hasn't changed since 2009), people are struggling to afford basic necessities.

Food is one of the top things that has gotten exponentially more expensive because of inflation. SNAP helps to solve this problem.

What is SNAP?

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or more commonly known as SNAP or "food stamps," is a government funded program to help provide food for low income families. When you qualify you receive an EBT card.

What is an EBT?

An Electronic Benefits Transfers, or EBT or Oregon Trail card, is where the benefits are stored. It is similar to a debit card. EBT's replace traditional paper food stamps. They can only be used to buy food. Using EBTs you can buy food items at certain grocery stores, farmers markets, or online food stores.

How is someone eligible for SNAP?

Eligibility depends on your household monthly income plus a certain amount per person in your household. The larger the household the more money you have to make it qualify. On oregonfoodbank.org you can find a chart of how much your household has to make to qualify.

Cuts to SNAP benefits spark student action

By Jolie Heacock

Imagine yourself in a grocery store, with a cart full of groceries for your family. You go to pay, using your government-approved EBT card (food stamps) to help your struggling family. The card register then declines to accept the card. The cashier looks right at you, and says, "Sorry, you don't have funds for groceries anymore."

So what can you do?

Go hungry?

This is a challenge many families in Oregon are facing under the Big, Beautiful Bill passed by Congress this summer. According to the Oregon Department of Human Services, SNAP benefits have been reloaded effective November 7th, 2025. But, the amount in the EBT cards are cut. Some households will face cuts up to $250 a month or more. One in six Oregonians rely on food stamps, and Oregon may see a cut of $385 million per year for just SNAP Benefits. Unfortunately, this means many families will lose their benefits. Across the country, recipients are predicted to lose almost $10 billion in Medicaid (the program) alone.

The eligibility levels of SNAP benefits are set to change, and it looks like the future for many is bleak. It is estimated that 310,000 adults will have their eligibility reviewed in the next year. Another aspect of SNAP benefits is the Heating and Cooling Assistance. A 60-year-old person or older with a disability automatically qualifies to have their home heated and cooled throughout the year for free. Approximately 29,000 households will lose this benefit. And SNAP recipients will lose assistance for internet access.

Immigrants are also having their eligibility reviewed. About 1,000 refugees and asylees lost their SNAP benefits or had them dramatically reduced effective October 31st, 2025.

But students aren't staying quiet. The Pleasant Hill Medical Club is organizing a drive for families and individuals who have had their SNAP benefits either reduced or revoked. With the aid of a registered dietitian and nutritionist, the Medical Club plans to put together boxes full of hygiene and other non-perishable items.

"We hope to bless families in our community with a meal," said president Ashlyn Johnson (12).

Thankfully, not all these cuts will happen immediately. It is a reminder to stay grateful for what you have, and never take anything for granted. SNAP benefits have blessed families for years, and with luck and restored funding, they will continue to bless people for many more.

Teachers find their groove, cont.

For anyone who is interested in the teaching profession, Mrs. Watne recommends volunteering in a classroom before getting into a teaching program. "Teaching isn't for everyone … So, find out first. Ask a teacher if you can teach a lesson. Often, people think they know everything about teaching because they were a student."

Like Mrs. Watne, Mrs. Messersmith wanted to be a teacher like her parents. Her father's side of the family were teachers back five generations.

She has always wanted to be a teacher. When she was young she would make her brothers play school all the time. She attended Columbia College in Columbia, Missouri for a major in biology, minor in chemistry and a certificate in secondary education.

Messersmith wants her students to know that teaching is. "It is a stressful job and can be difficult on certain days to keep my patience. The best part of the job is working with students and getting to do fun things like making different colors of fire, growing glowing e.coli, or bungee jumping water bottles. It takes a lot of time and effort to be able to effectively do all these fun things. I just want students to be able to enjoy learning."

She says teaching can be rewarding, but it is a lot of hard work. The relationships with the students and getting to see them actually learn new things is what motivates her.

Growing up, Mr. Neill found many of his teachers inspiring who would shape his education growing up. He went to Linfield and majored in history and mass communication. After he got his bachelor's degree there, he went to graduate school at the University of Oregon.

He thought about doing something in sports journalism or in business, but none of those ideas really stuck with him. "I found a subject in history that I really enjoyed and wanted to work with young people."

Mr. Neill found himself working here at PHHS because he had spent his first 10 years of his career working in Rainier, OR, and he wanted to return back near home and an opening occurred here at Pleasant Hill High School.

His two cents on becoming a teacher is that, in the beginning it can be a grind, lots of hard work. He says you need to enjoy what you do.

"You always have to be open to learning new things and always try to do what's best for the students in your classroom."

Something that Mr. Neill says he wishes people knew about teaching is that everyday is different. You can plan out a whole day, but any small thing can throw a wrench in your plans. He says that no two periods are exactly the same, everything day and class is unique in its own way.

Doing a job where he could help others is the reason Mr. Wilson joined the education industry, but this wasn't always his plan. "My original plan was to play basketball in the NBA. When that didn't work out, I decided the next best thing was to prove my superior athleticism against middle schoolers."

Something that inspired him to become a teacher was his past teachers. He said that he had some wonderful teachers in his past where he could tell they genuinely enjoyed their jobs.

He would like his students to know that every single teacher was once in your shoes, as a student.

What motivates Mr. Wilson to continue to be a great teacher you may wonder?

"My students. Seeing growth and improvement. Seeing kids have fun being active. Seeing an unexpected student make a good play for their team during a PE game. Seeing students celebrating each other. Seeing a team huddle up and strategize for the PE game."

Mr. Wilson encourages his students to get outside of their comfort zone and to experience life to its fullest.

He believes living an adventurous life creates a more well-rounded person and someone who has loved a diverse life is someone who makes a great educator.

Mr. Wilson's "teaching motto" is: "Another day, another opportunity." I think this is a true show of character, especially that of an educator of the youth.

Mr. Gray has always enjoyed maths and physics, while in college at Montana state he considered engineering, but he found that the type of problem solving and it as a whole was not for him.

He had lived in Montana his whole life and he had friends who had moved to Eugene. Mr. Gray was ready for a change in his life, so he moved to Eugene and a teaching position here at PHHS opened up. "Oregon had a lot of appeal, and I had friends who had moved to Eugene. The job at Pleasant Hill opened up, and it was literally the first opportunity I applied for. Guess it was meant to be!"

Mr. Gray would like his students to know how much teachers think about their students. He truly wishes the best for all his students and wants them to succeed. He says it occupies a large part of teachers' minds even when they are not at school.

What brings him motivation to be a great teacher are the students! "You all bring me so much joy, and it is so exciting to see you be creative and grow!"

All these teachers have lived different lives. And all of these teachers have ended up here. They may have become teachers for different reasons, but why they teach, their answers were always the same; for the students.

When asked: what motivates you to be a great teacher everyday, they all said their students. They all seemed to genuinely enjoy seeing their students enjoy their subject, learn something new, and to try new things.

From what I have learned interviewing these teachers, is that they are not so different from us students. They have all been in our shoes, so why is it so crazy to see us in theirs?

So, next time you are at school, and you decide you hate all of your classes because you've been assigned one essay, think about all these people who are cheering you on for success, even if at times it may not always seem that way, they always are.

Boy, oh Boy: Braces–Are they worth it?

By Arianna Bowmen

Braces are these metal contraptions that take over your mouth to make your teeth look better. But honestly it feels like an alien invasion in your mouth. Braces hurt, but you have to trust the process.

I have heard many differing opinions on this topic. Most everyone thinks they are worth it and happy they got it. I agree with this.

We asked a series of questions to people who have or had braces. Eden Noe states that braces are worth it and she's had them for one year. They are worth it to her because it is making her smile so beautiful!

Aria Verma said she's had braces and she's happy because she has better teeth after getting them.

Every single person we asked said that braces are EXTREMELY painful. I totally get it, although the pain does lessen eventually. In all, I think braces, especially depending on your doctor are great! It really depends on how you feel with your doctor because that can change how you feel about your experience.

Braces do cost quite a bit. $5000 is the average cost of braces. For some families this is just not possible. So it makes sense not everyone gets them, it also depends on how bad your teeth are so some people are well off without it.

This article may not be the most convincing to get braces, but I think if you have the money and don't mind looking like a "dweeb" for a while, they are great! It can take your frumpy old smile and turn it upside down.

Winter can be an emotional challenge

By Audrey Driessnack

With the arrival of winter, the world transforms—trees lose their leaves, the sky turns pale and heavy, and long nights settle over the days. The cold creeps in, making warm blankets and hot drinks both a comfort and a necessity. For many, this season is not just about snow and holidays; it's an emotional challenge, a time when the weight of darkness seems to seep into the soul.

Many people, when faced with the long, cold months, experience a restless sadness and a deep longing for brighter days. The endless gray outside can mirror the heaviness inside, making it difficult to shake off the gloom. Yet, even in the darkest part of winter, we search for ways to lift our spirits. As winter drags on and the gray settles in, it's these small acts—curling up with a book, sketching bright colors, or baking with friends—that become our quiet rebellions against the cold. "I like to read because it helps take me out of reality," one student shares. Another adds, "Art is super chill and lets me create what I want, not what is required."

Even painting or baking can make someone feel better. Together, these comforts remind us that while winter's darkness can be heavy, our creativity and connection to one another are lanterns that help us find warmth and hope until the sun returns.

Ski or Snowboard: Which Side Are You On?

By Pippa Hammond

The rivalry between skiing and snowboarding runs strong on every mountain. Everyone wants to know which sport's harder? Which sport's more popular?

And what truly sets skiing and snowboarding apart?

Katin Black claims that "Snowboarding takes more skill not to fall on your face." Harper Quinones insists that, "Skiing is easier." In reality, snowboarding is harder to learn but easier to master, while skiing is easier to learn yet harder to master.

Both sports have differences. Skis are superior for steeper runs, long runs, and maintaining control on higher speeds.

Snowboarders tend to struggle on flat terrains and lifts. But they thrive on freestyle runs and terrain parks.

Why is snowboarding better than skiing? "Snowboarding is just a vibe" insisted Riley Jordan. "It looks so much cooler," added Camryn Carey.

Skiers love to go fast. You might see skiers bounce back and forth down the mountain. Why is skiing faster? That's because skiing has more balance based on skiing poles.

"Skiing poles are so helpful," explained Junie Epperson. "You have so much more control." Why is skiing better than snowboarding? "Skiing is just better" replied Harper Quinones.

As you can see, each sport has differences. But each sport brings excitement and creativity. In the end people choose what style speaks to them.

Which side are you on?

Is it healthy to exercise when you're sick?

By Bulletin staff

You're well enough to go to school, but are you well enough to go to practice?

If you are unwilling to admit to your coach that you are too ill to exercise because you feel like you've already missed out on too much this season… Don't be!

Even though you may be committed to your sport or healthy habits, you need to take care of your body. Otherwise it could make you even worse.

It's important to go at your own pace and take breaks when needed.

If you don't, you're at risk of your body not being able to regain full health. Which prevents you from being able to work as hard as you would normally.

Symptoms such as a nasal congestion, runny nose or a sore throat are considered "above the neck" and it is acceptable to exercise with them. However, it is recommended that you may want to take it a little easier so that these symptoms do not worsen.

If you have symptoms, "below the neck," such as a chest congestion, fever, or upset stomach, your body absolutely needs to rest and should not be pushed too far.

Another thing that isn't healthy is exercising when you are unprepared. Even if you aren't sick, this can be just as bad.

For example, If you plan to run a long distance and this isn't an exercise you normally pursue, it is advised that you stretch beforehand to warm up your muscles to prevent an injury. This can apply to any workout.

Keep water on you at all times, but don't take huge sips of it. Taking small sips periodically is recommended. Drinking water at least 30 minutes beforehand will help too.

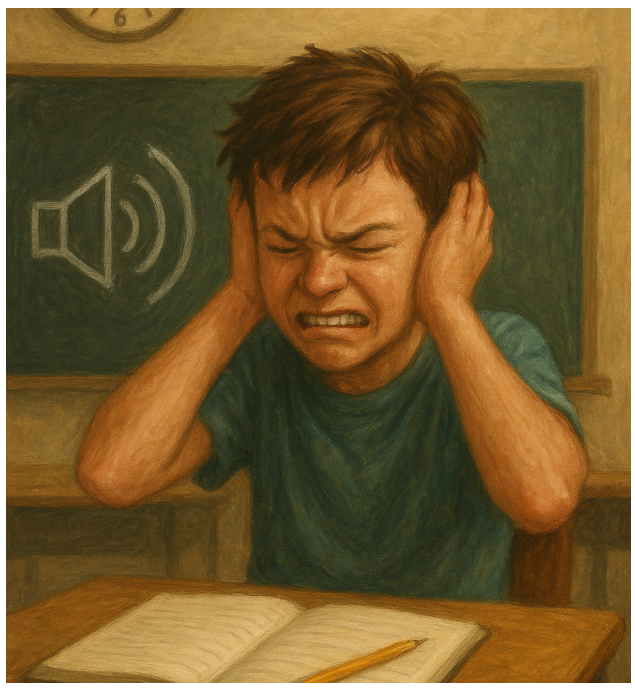
Even though it may feel selfish, it's not. You're actually helping your team by taking time to rest if you need to so you can be back to normal when the time comes.

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Loud classrooms harm learning

By Peyton Horton

Ever notice how the volume of others in class affects your focus, mindset and emotional state? Classroom volume has a greater impact than you might expect.

My friend, Ashlynn has noted that one of her classes sounds like a "rave." While working on classwork or homework she gets easily distracted from the noise around her and gets frustrated trying to work. She's also said that she can't hear or identify what her teacher is saying with others talking.

Another friend Sadie has said that she doesn't see the problem with the loudness level of her classes. She said she seems to tune them out on purpose. But there have been times that she could not focus and the loud noise has even caused her stress.

The reaction of these two students, and my own experience, suggests that loud sounds can have a strong effect in disrupting concentration, making it harder to understand speech, and creating stress and or anxiety.

Why we believe

By Ava Umbarger

Religion is a foundation for many people's lives. There are 10,000 religions practiced in the world while many people do not follow any religion.

I will be talking about the differences among students regarding religion

I first talked to Eden Noe who is a Christian. I asked "what is the essence of your religion?"

[I am} 'just walking in the light of Jesus everyday," said Eden. "I practice my religion because I found Jesus for myself during covid and discovered his goodness."

She said she feels free sharing her faith in school.

Next I talked to Aria Verma, who is an agnostic, that is a person who does not practice any type of faith..

"Do you have a religion?"

"No, but, my dad does," Aria responded.

"Why don't you practice a religion?" I asked.

"Personally I don't believe that there is a higher power."

"Do you enjoy not identifying with a particular religion?""

"Yes and no, because I am very interested in conversations with people that do follow religions."

"Would you feel safe expressing your views or religion in school?" "

Aria responded "kinda."

People in this school might answer either of these ways. And may have different religions or none. But everyone has something in their life that gives it foundation just in different ways.

Why some young men turn to religion

By Spencer Smith

What does religion mean to you?

Gen Z is showing an increase in religiosity and spirituality. Compared to the previous generation, the Millenials, members of Generation Z actually have higher church attendance overall.

One of the theories to explain this increase is that young people sought out new communities and connections following the COVID pandemic. I asked a few students how, or if, religious participation helped them recover from the pandemic. One student said: "My connection to God helped me to stay happy while I was stuck at home."

This rise in religion in our generation is noticed even by those who identify as non-religious. Someone who admitted to not being religious said: "I'm still open to the possibility… I could see myself being religious someday. It seems like [there are] lots of benefits".

Despite varying styles and beliefs amongst teens, the drive to be a part of something bigger is within all of us. Everyone can attest that the struggle is real. No matter your beliefs, we all could use a little more connection in our lives.

Pleasant Hill Baptist church feeds students. So we asked the students "Why?" Here are their answers:

Greta: "They are trying to encourage kids to go to church, by being nice and welcoming...and obviously the food."

Laynie Reed: "They're good people and maybe they are trying to get more people to come to this church."

Rhianna : "They want to be kind to the kids."

Alley: "the Church is feeding us to incentivize us to come, sit down and listen to the word of God."

Joe: "I think the church is feeding us because they want to bring us together to talk and become more of a family."

Cole:"They want us to join the church. It is as simple as that. And you know what? It worked on me? I'm a food motivated guy."

Blake: "They are trying to help unite us.

Cortez: "They are doing this for the grace. You might not have stuff to eat at home. They are gifting us.

Tristan: "They are doing this for the community and because the school can't teach us about religion. This is a really great place to learn about it."

Andrew Portillo: "It is really important that the church is doing this to keep religion important because it is not taught in school anymore. It is not really allowed. So, I think its really important to keep."

Allison Rife: "I think the church is feeding the kids, not only to give food to people who maybe don't that kind of opportunity to get a good meal. But I also think the church does this to kind of give us that voice of God. For a lot of kids they're not going to hear that, and they may be in a situation where they kind of feel lost and left out. This kind of gives them the comfort that God is there for them and has a voice in people."

Tina Cloyd: "I think that the church is feeding the kids because it is a way for them to give back to the the community and be able to spread their faith in the Gospel and just a way... to connect with the community more."

Life in the Middle

6th Graders Dish on Middle School

By Kenzie Jensen

I was curious about what different 6th graders thought about all of the changes that middle school brought. I decided to interview Wren Brown, Wyatt Wayne and Harper Nice. Sixth graders feel differently about these questions but, hopefully, if you're a sixth grader you will realize that you are never alone.

First I interviewed Wren.

What do you like about sixth grade that's better than elementary school?

"You have lockers and more freedom. You can also decorate the lockers and slip notes through them."

What do you like about middle school lunch?

"I like it because you can hang out with friends and get a break from exhausting schoolwork"

What subject is the hardest for you?

"Math, because it's really confusing for me, and it takes a while for me to learn."

Do you like changing classrooms and teachers?

"It's a re-fresh from other teachers."

What is the best thing about the freedom of middle school?

"You can learn more from having freedom."

For assignments, including homework, do you think it's hard to fall behind?

"If you don't try hard then yes, but if you want good grades then you don't fall behind very much."

I agree with Wren's answers, especially the last one.

Next, I interviewed Wyatt.

What do you like about sixth grade that's better than elementary school?

"We don't have the same teacher constantly."

What do you like about middle school lunch?

"Hanging out with friends, and jamming in the band room."

What subject is the hardest for you?

"Elective, since it involves art and I'm not very good at it."

Do you like changing classrooms and teachers?

"Yeah, it means we don't always have the same teachers, so we can get a break from the teachers we don't like."

What is the best thing about freedom in middle school?

"We don't just sit in classrooms constantly."

For assignments, including homework, do you think it's easy to fall behind?

"Not really, I like to get my work done as soon as possible."

Finally, I interviewed Harper.

What do you like about 6th grade, that's better than elementary school?

"We have more freedom."

What do you like about middle school lunch?

"Probably hanging out with friends."

What subject is the hardest for you?

"Science, since it can be hard to get the labs correct sometimes."

Do you like changing classrooms and teachers?

"Yeah. you don't have to be in the same classroom all day. Also it's not as boring."

What is the best thing about freedom in middle school?

"Probably switching classrooms, and hanging out with friends more often."

For assignments, including homework, do you think it's easy to fall behind?

"Most of the time, it's pretty easy to keep up with the class."

We got some great answers from both Wren, Wyatt and Harper. You can tell from these perspectives that middle school is not that hard, and that work should not be piling up. In sixth grade you don't get a ton of things put on your plate. If you do let work pile up then it will just get harder and harder to get it done. Use your time at school wisely!

The Spiciness of the Chicken Sandwiches

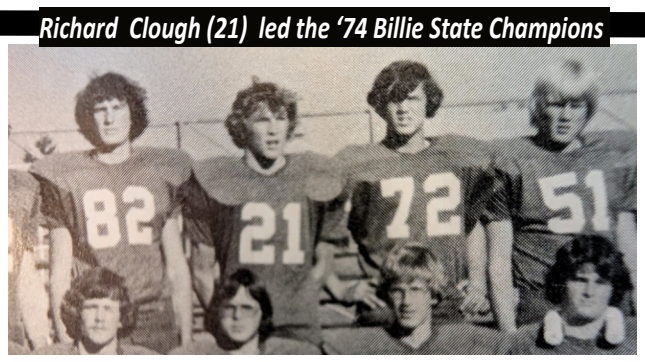
By Chesney Andress (Chesney is a special correspondent from the Elementary School. MS. Andress is in the 5th grade)

You may remember the spicy chicken sandwiches at lunch. It was a little bit crazy, meaning it was really chaotic, at least for the fifth grade.

Ms. Fairchild even tried one and agreed it was way too spicy. My cousin Macey Steigleder, a third grader, absolutely loves spicy stuff and said it was also way too spicy for her. But Believe it or not, it was an honest mistake.

"They gave us the wrong sandwiches", said an anonymous lunch lady I asked while I was in line. The reason for all of the chaos was a full-on mix up. So they got the wrong spicy sandwiches, we ate them, and that's the story.

Richard Clough (21) led the '74 Billie State Champions



1974: The year the Billies won state

By Josiah Houck

"Only one time in the history of the Pleasant hill high school our football team has won the state championship, and those players are some of the finest we have ever had."

In the fall of 1974 in Autzen stadium, both the Billies and the Vikings of Siuslaw gathered for the last play of the game in the fog.

By the last quarter of a tight game Pleasant Hill was down by five points. The Vikings had the ball and were about to score. The teams lined up on the ten yard line, ready for the play that would determine if Pleasant Hill would be walking out of the game champions or not.

Pleasant Hill had devised a risky plan, to try and intercept the ball before the other team could get it into the end zone. The play was the definition of high risk, high reward.

"It was an idea that the coach had been talking about all season." said Richard Clough (running back for Pleasant Hill at the game) "But he had just decided to pull that card out then I guess," he later noted.

The teams readied themselves, the whistle blew and the teams lunged into action. Hastily the quarterback threw the ball.

"It seemed to hang there for a while," said Richard Clough. But almost as fast as the play had started it ended as Richard Clough lunged toward the spiraling ball intercepting it. The Billie audience erupted in cheering as Clough began weaving his way through the manyVikings in his way until he broke through the defensive line and started the race to the end zone.

He hugged the sideline with every step until he crossed into the end zone. This was the play that crowned Pleasant Hill State Champions, putting Pleasant Hill up by more than a touchdown and winning the game.

The last Pleasant Hill team that made it to the championship was in 2001.

Richard Clough would later play a four season career at U of O for football alongside Rich Brooks who would coach the Atlanta Falcons and Los Angeles Rams. And Pleasant Hill's State championship victory would be remembered as one of our schools proudest moments.



Storm the Castle!

By Katelynn MacKlin & Michelle Hammond-Mendez

How well do you know Ms.Castle? One common classroom rule that Mrs. Castle has is "no food." In the beginning of the year she was very clear that there is no food allowed. She has been more lenient lately with this rule because she knows that her students are hungry in the afternoon but still doesn't like the food in her classroom because it causes distractions and makes a mess.

Outside of school Mrs.Castle has a whole different life. Some of her hobbies are crocheting while watching tv listening to a podcast or audiobook she also really enjoys baking and cooking especially for people. One thing she doesn't do as much is play video games because of her twins.

She tries to bring her sense of humor to her classroom as much as possible but with the rowdy kids sometimes it's hard. She also said that sharing her sense of humor helps bring her and her students together, with building relationships.

Most of her students say her classroom is pretty chill, and that they love it. Often she gets questions from her students on why she does not just yell at them to be quiet. Her response is that yelling just causes more chaos to the craziness already happening.

Why we need to ditch the "back pack rule"

By Addy Scott and Lauren Darling

The backpack rule is a rule that prevents middle schoolers from having backpacks in the classroom.

Ms. Jada says it is a rule because "if we have 30+ backpacks in a small room when we are carrying chemicals and supplies around, we are destined to trip or fall."

Here is our problem with this blanket ban on backpacks. No backpacks is reasonable for science class, but for classes like art or language arts and math when we need supplies like markers, colored pencils, or homework we should have our backpacks with us.

We all understand we have lockers for a reason, but it is more convenient to have our bags with us. Some kids in middle school arrive at school towards the start of class and still might need to drop off a band instrument or talk to a teacher as well as going to their locker to put their belongings away.

Let's talk about sports bags. Athletes have sports bags which means on top of their backpack they also have a sports bag. Addy Scott argued that kids would use their locker more if the lockers were bigger so they could put all their stuff in the lockers including sports bags.

The thing that most staff are worried about with getting bigger lockers is that kids leave food and other junk that molds and stinks. Running back to being late for classes some people forget that they need a certain supply for that class and get marked tardy for not "being prepared."

All these problems could be fixed by ending the backpack rule!

We want snacks!

By Camryn Carey

In middle school, we're always hungry. Lunch for us is at 11:00 am, so it's pretty early. That leaves us with four more periods left in the day. That is a lot of learning, concentration, and effort we have to put in before we get to have a snack.

A few years ago, there was a time each day that the kids had a longer break in between classes to eat. The school administration decided that having that extra time wasn't the best, and we weren't allowed to eat in class. The only problem is that by sixth period, we're hungry again.

I believe that snack time between 6th and 7th would keep kids happy and keep kids following the rules. Some kids sneak food into class and hope they won't get in trouble.

"I do eat in class sometimes," Addison Woodland admitted, and I would love to have a snack time."

Some teachers think a snack time would be good too.

"I think there should be a longer break, or a 10 minute break in between 6th and 7th. It would be a good thing for kids to chill and eat. And then they wouldn't bring lunch boxes into class," Mrs. Olson said.

A modest proposal: Time to spend on school work

By Harper Quinones & Riley Jordan

Do you have trouble keeping up with your school work?

Some people think that it would be helpful to have one free period a week to do school work.

So I asked an 8th grade student Junie Epperson what she thinks and what she would do with that period. First I asked her if she would even use the time to do work? She said that she would most likely use the time for math or language arts.

Then I asked her if one period a week would be enough. She replied with "Yes I think that it would be enough." Lastly, I asked her why she would want it and she said that "I usually have to do my homework at my house after school and [with]my extracurriculars … I have to stay up late sometimes as late as 10 pm."

Next I asked Pippa Hammond if she would enjoy having a free class period just to work on homework or assignments in general. She replied back, "I would really enjoy it because I can get work done that I didn't get done in other classes and so I won't have to have any work at home."

Lastly we interviewed Eddie Bazinet on what he thinks. I asked him if he has trouble keeping up with his school work. He said "Well sometimes I do."Then I asked if having a period to work would be helpful? He followed up with, "Yes because just because some people are able to keep up on their work doesn't mean that all people are able to, and a majority of people have C's or lower. So I think it would be beneficial." The last thing I asked him is what type of things he would work on in the period? He said "The work sheet we are doing right now in math."



Aria Verma and Yvonne Fashold dress as Rosies at our Tribute to Veterans .

Why do some teachers allow snacking in class and some don't?

By Tessa Sprague

We looked up on AI that "schools don't allow snacking [in order] to promote healthier eating habits by reducing access to junk food, preventing distractions in the classroom and managing health concerns."

We interviewed teachers and asked them if they allow food in classrooms and why or why not.

Miss. Huff said "if students have medical needs, for example diabetes, they are allowed to have snacks in class."

Miss Moch said "yes [she allows snacking] because students are always hungry and lack of food leads to lack of participation."

Ms. Williams said "no I do not allow food in my classroom because I don't like to clean up after the kids and there are too many people doing too many things."

Miss Jada said "no [I don't allow snacking] because it's a safety hazard and if someone opens a pack of Goldfish then everybody wants one."

Kids also prefer junk food for snacks because they are often higher in sugar, fat, and salt, which activates the brain rewards systems and releases dopamine making people feel good. But this can lead to overeating and most snacks are nutrition deprived, meaning they don't provide healthy calories.

That's why some teachers don't allow snacking, among other reasons.



Riley Jordan on Reese Dockery cling to Junie Epperson's shoulders while Paisley McBride looks on.



Beloved former school secretary ,Polly Chaffin, accompanies her husband through the applause line at the Veterans Tribute.

Williams runs the field



Mrs. Lea Williams gets a little goofy in PE for the Billies.

by Tyson Humphrey

She is a first year teacher at Pleasant Hill Middle School. She is still in college but is already working. I think Mrs.Williams is kind, thoughtful, respectful, safe and experienced

What led Mrs. Williams into Pleasant Hill Middle school was the chance to "get paid." Mrs. Williams is in her fourth year at Bushnell University. Mrs. Williams does track and field, throws the hammer, the discus, shot put and sometimes javelin.

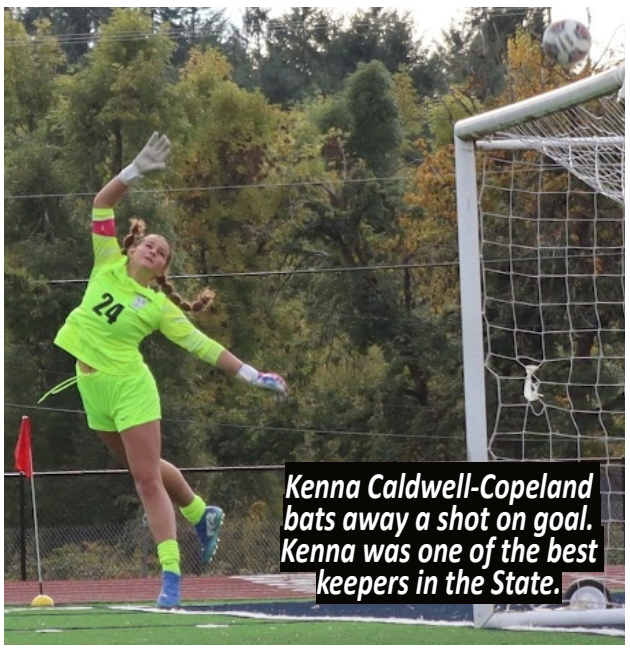
She wanted to teach PE because she gets to play games and has a summer break off. She went to two high schools, one by Seaside, Oregon called Warrenton and the next was Cottage Grove.

She met her husband in Cottage Grove, Oregon in her junior year. She moved out of her parents house to stay at a friend's house for a year and then moved to college.

She hopes to come back from college and teach. Her favorite sport to play is volleyball and her favorite sport to watch is basketball.



Chris White pushes fellow veteran Larry Painter. Both were deeply appreciative of the warm applause the students gave them.



Kenna Caldwell-Copeland bats away a shot on goal. Kenna was one of the best keepers in the State.

Girl talk vs Boy talk

Opinion by Merrick Garrett

There are a lot of ways girls talk differently from boys. Generally girls can talk and express their feelings in many more complex and different ways than boys. Boys tend to talk about dirt bikes, football, and other sports. Boys often talk about gaming as well. But not so much about relationships.

Now mind you, these are generalizations. Some girls love talking about bikes, sports, etc. And some boys do talk about relationships and aesthetics and other topics common to many girls. But I am thinking of the majority I know.

The differences between the two common ways kids talk are a little confusing. Girls I know think boy talk is annoying. Some girls have higher pitched voices and most boys have lower pitched voices, but there are exceptions.

It seems that girls talk about drama, gossip, boys, and school. Boys, on the other hand, talk about sports, dirt bikes, cars.

Girls and boys are similar in a few ways. They talk about things their friends like, and they talk about school life.

Girls can talk a lot at once, same with boys but girls can be more snarky and boys can be more simple .

I personally haven't talked to any girls, (I know, it's embarrassing) And I wish that middle school girls weren't as mean. Sometimes boys are a little the same.

Some aren't as friendly.

Girls can be more verbally mean. But boys can be violent. Both show emotions in different ways

Girls with their friends can be distracted, just the same with boys.

Girls seem to be more addicted to their phones. So I am happy about the phone ban. Personally, I don't use my phone in school.

Girls can be loud and boys can be quiet. Teachers seem to like girls more because most girls are cooperative and hard working.

Boys talk more confidently about sports. Girls tend to have better grades than boys.

I wish girls would talk to boys normally. I wish that the meanness of girls would stop. Boys don't get called out by teachers as often. Girls like apps like TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat. Boys like games like Clash Royale, Fortnite, and Call of Duty.

Childhood memories mark our changes

By Bethany Carlton, Marley Meyers & Reese Bagwell

Can you think back to your earliest childhood memory? Was it "about" family, playing with your cousins till the street lights came on?

Or was it going on a vacation you never forget.

Most remember big emotional moments that stick with you, whether you like it or not.

Do you remember graduating kindergarten and telling your teacher what you want to be when you grow up?

Can you think back to your earliest childhood memory?

Was it "about" family, playing with your cousins till the street lights came on?

Or was it going on a vacation you never forget.

Most remember big emotional moments that stick with you, whether you like it or not. Do you remember graduating kindergarten and telling your teacher what you want to be when you grow up?

Most answers were astronaut, veterinarian, actor, and "to be famous." Our expectations were very high, but what changed? We interviewed high school students to get a further understanding on this topic. Knox Myers talked about "growing up in Hawaii" and how much it affected his early years of life. Knox wanted to be a paleontologist when he was in kindergarten. Knox now has different dreams and goals of what he wants to do when he is older. He now wants to get an offer for football, by the end of high school. His take on high school was "its pretty light."

We also interviewed Junie Epperson about her childhood. Junie lived in Louisiana for her first four years of life then moved to pleasant hill Oregon. Her first child memory was when she was 3 years old and she got bitten by ants. And her favorite childhood memory was staying up late with her cousins. Junie is now an 8th grader and she wants to be a nurse when she is older.

The last person we interviewed was Katin Black. One of his first memories was getting stung by a bee. And one of his favorite memories is going fishing in Mexico. He also hopes to be a construction worker when he grows up.

While interviewing people we realized that most people only remember the traumatic experiences and that expectations were very high when we were younger.

Allison Rife receives the first place award in the Creswell VFW Patriot's Pen essay contest.



page designed by Josie Heacock

Fall Sports Round Up

By Colton Carey

Fall sports teams have had excellent seasons. Football, girl's soccer, and volleyball all made it to the state playoffs. All our teams have made exceptional statements during their seasons and have shown that all of them have rosters full of hard-working players with a lot of talent.

This season was our most successful season for football in a few years. Our first game was a tough loss and then shortly after that we had win after win and ended our season 7-3. The Billies tied with Sisters for league champs which is the first time on top of the pile since 2001. Since summer our football team had been putting in the work with our new coaching staff, we all doubted them because we never thought a new coaching staff, injuries, and missing players could make a playoff team.

They proved us all wrong.

Pleasant Hill football tied for co-league champs to finish the season 7-3 overall, and 4-1 in league. "It felt pretty accomplished when we put the work into it," said OL/DL Max Keepers. "We put our heads to what we wanted to accomplish, and it felt pretty surreal."

The Billies' most notable wins were against Douglas, Sisters, and their rival Creswell. Pleasant Hill made the cut to be in the state playoffs as the #16 seeded team. We made the playoffs then got the short end of the stick by being assigned to play number one in the State: Cascade Christian in Medford. They traveled to play at top-seeded Cascade Christian in the first round where their season came to an end.

"I was really proud of it," said OL/DL Hunter Crabtree. "Even though it was a first-round exit, I was really happy we got that far because we haven't had a winning season in years."

This season, Pleasant Hill won their first football league title since 2001, and made their first playoff appearance since 2016.

Girl's soccer had a great season where they finished with the best defense in the state, and with a record of 9-4-3 overall, and 8-3-3 in league.

The Billies played excellent as their offense outscored a lot of their opponents The Billies ferocious defense posted 10 shutouts during the season. Kenna Caldwell had an impressive season as keeper. The team finished 3rd in their league and played as the #13 seeded team in the state playoffs. The girls' soccer team hosted Salem Academy in the first round where their late game-winning goal got them the 1-0 win. "It felt great," said senior right wing captain Trinity Smead. "The win felt very exciting to play another game and that was the best game of my life!"

The Billies' season ended in the second round of the playoffs at Central Linn, 2-0.

This year, the Pleasant Hill volleyball team had a lot of new players since the majority of the roster last year were seniors. After going nearly undefeated last year and placing 3rd in state, the Billies' volleyball team spent this season rebuilding their team and finished with a record of 14-13 overall, and 5-5 in league.

"I feel like this team did really well with keeping a good connection," said OH Sari Strinz. "Because of that we were able to stay so successful in games."

The Billies were hoping to make it to the state playoffs, but they had to get at least an at-large bid. Luckily, they beat La Pine and then upset Creswell in their conference playoffs to place second in their league and earn the #18 seed in the playoffs. In the first round they traveled to Banks and got the 3-0 sweep. Their season ended when they lost to Westside Christian in the second round.

Boy's soccer had a season full of challenging opponents as they finished the season 2-8-1 overall, and 2-6 in league. Despite the canceled games that started the season, the Billies were able to get started with a 1-1 draw against Rogue River. "It felt good to play a game," said senior captain Spencer Smith. "But I did wish that we got the win."

Throughout the rest of the season, the Billies got wins over Elmira and La Pine. Then in their final game of the season, Pleasant Hill hosted Sisters in a hard-fought game where the Billies' attempt to tie the game late came up just short against Sisters, 2-1.

"The record shows something else, but I had a lot of fun this season," said Juan Contreras. "Our team came together as one and the vibe was great."

Cross Country this year had a lot of runners out sick and injured, and their girl's team were short-handed the whole season. But the Billies' cross country team found a way to stay solid this season, as their girl's team and the entire team overall both finished 1st at the Country Fair Classic. The Billies continued to perform well as the boys and girls teams both finished on the podium in their meets at Woahink and Harrisburg. All the runners have had at least two PR's throughout their season of eight meets, and everyone of them shined at Districts down in Rogue River. At their Districts meet, the Pleasant Hill boy's team finished 3rd with Gage Roper coming in 9th for the team.The girl's team finished the race in 7th, and the JV boy's team finished 1st with a lot of top ten finishes. Even though the team's season ended after that, everyone was proud of doing well individually.

"I think it actually went pretty good," said freshman runner Kaden Seaton. "Even though there were a lot of hardships with people being sick, injuries, and low numbers I still think it went well and we were able to do some good work at our meets and Districts."



Left: Landon Melvin goes up for a layup against Salem Academy. The Billies went on to defeat the Crusaders 65-57.



Jacob Neely powers through the defenders on the way to a great season.



The Cross Country team gathers before a meet at Lane Community College on a hot day.



The volleyball team celebrates a win.



Isabel Hammond-Mendez races downfield.



Spencer Smith focusses on passing to a teammate



The Planning of a Quinceanera

By Juan Contreras

For some families in our community, a “quinceanera” is more than just a simple celebration, there's a lot more to it! For many Mexican Americans, a quinceanera is a deeply rooted cultural milestone/tradition that marks when a young girl comes from her childhood into her 15 years. Take, for example, my sister Gabriella. It's only a few months until her grand celebration, but in those months a lot of planning goes into it!

The planning progress varies from family to family, but a general consensus is to begin planning a year prior to the celebration. And the first step to that is to choose a theme and a venue for the celebration. For my sister that was pretty simple, since our family had decided that our venue would be right in our home! Although she hasn't yet picked her theme!

The next step into the planning process would be arguably the hardest part but the most fun, and that would be choosing the dress. For many it could take a while to find the perfect dress, having to go into many shops around the area, trying on many dresses, and finding the perfect fit! A quinceanera dress becomes unique when you look at it for the first time! It's colorful, has a crinoline underneath, and shows culture!

Another step is finding her godparents, her court, and choosing dances for the celebration. Choosing a godparents and a court can range from being easy to being pretty difficult. Choosing a godparent could be difficult for many reasons. This includes the financial commitment, being committed to be a mentor, and time availability of a godparent. The same thing applies to finding members of your court, they can be friends and family of yours, but for them to be committed 100% going to every dance rehearsal can be pretty difficult.

And the final-ish part of planning the quinceanera would be who would be there serving the essentials for a quinceanara like, food, drinks, alcohol, stuff like that. It all depends if you want to hire local vendors to cook for you or if you just make your family do it!

And the final step is to plan on how many people to invite! Finally to explain what a quinceanera unfolds at its ceremony. A typical quinceañera begins with the birthday girl getting ready in her formal gown before attending a special mass where she receives blessings and symbolic gifts. Afterward, she arrives at the reception for a grand entrance with her court, followed by dinner and traditional rituals like the changing of the shoes, the crowning, and sometimes the presentation of the last doll. The celebration continues with the emotional father-daughter dance, the formal waltz with her court, and a lively surprise dance. The night ends with cake, speeches, and plenty of dancing as family and friends celebrate her transition from childhood to young womanhood.



Aria Verma and Yvonne Fashold represent for the Rosies, the women who powered the war effort at home during World Ward II.



Leaving or Staying: The Rural Dilemma

ByCaroline Carlson

Growing up in a town like Pleasant Hill, we can often ask the teachers if they taught our parents. Or at least that's the case for the students whose parents decided to stay or come back. But what are you going to do? Will you stay in your home town? Or will you set roots somewhere else. Lets see what the current plan is for some of the students of the class of 2026.

“I want to stay close to my family and friends. I love this Cooper is well-known as the wood shop assistant. Five of her seven periods are wood shop with the famous Steve Smith.

Allison Rife had the opposite response. She said, “I’ve spent most of my life in Pleasant Hill, but all of my life in Oregon. I’ve only been out of state once before. I want to learn new things and go new places [although] I am unsure where yet. But even if I end up back in Oregon I wouldn't be mad, I just wouldn't end up back here.” Allison is an accomplished Cheerleader and I can’t wait to see what she brings to this world.

Another seniorwho wants to set new roots is Hunter Crabtree-Musgrove. He said, “I want to go to trade school and it isn't in Pleasant Hill. I want to go to Apec LLC for Reynolds Electric.” Seeing that Hunter is a fun person to be around I bet that he will be an amazing addition to the world of trade work.

Leaving or staying is a big decision. Staying or leaving, I know that the class of 2026 is making plans.

2025 is a Wrap

By Seth Lebow

As 2026 approaches, Spotify Wrapped has once again taken over social media feeds, giving everyone a glimpse into their most played songs, artists, and genres of the year. At school, students have been comparing playlists, sharing their top artist, debating whose Wrapped is the most impressive–or the most embarrassing.

If you enjoy any and all music, Spencer Smith’s Wrapped might be up your alley. His top artist was Taylor Swift while his top song was Strasbourg/St Denis by Roy Hargrove. Despite Taylor Swift being Spencer’s top artist, none of her songs were in his top 10... not even his top 20.

Aria Verma’s Wrapped was headed by alternative rock/ indie pop. Her top artist was Imagine Dragons and her top song was 1980 by Rehab.

Jolie Heacock shares a top artist with Spencer, but she has a more uniform music taste. Jolie actually had a tie for her most streamed song. Her top two songs were Nobody gets me by SZA, and Champagne Problems by Taylor Swift.

You might be missing out.

By Mark Buchan

It’s not a secret that I love to read. I think it is a truly wonderful thing to just dissolve into a piece of fiction; to allow yourself to have a perspective other than your own. With that, I can see the tragedy it is that many people choose not to read.

I know; we’ve all heard the “you should read, books are good,” but I haven't heard anyone go into depth about why.

What is so good about reading?

Reading fiction is not only entertaining, but it has numerous benefits. When reading, you are immersed via your imagination. It gives you an active form of relaxation, releasing your brain of bustling thoughts. Stories can help you mentally by addressing everyday issues without the stress associated with actually going through them. You are an observer, but the immersion allows you to feel some of the emotion and see the reactions, so that you can apply the lessons to your own life.

Reading fiction where a protagonist is in a different situation than you allows you to “put yourself in their shoes.” This can help you empathize with people in the real world that you might otherwise not be able to. Reading fiction has also been known to cause changes in the ways people perceive themselves. In other words, fiction gives you an all around broader perspective, both internally and externally.

I think more people should read, because the world could use a bit of perspective. If you aren't reading, you are missing out on that benefit.



Ethan Ogan was winner of the Design a Shoe contest promoted by Athletic Director Alan Stearns With his winning design, Ethan got a pair of the Billie One’s (worth $145).



The Billie Bulletin is

Tim Meinzen-Advisor
Jocelyn Heacock
Jolie Heacock
Laynie Reed
Greta Gramzow
Aria Verma
Caroline Carlson
Darren Soper
Arianna Bowman
Colton Carey
Zane Koszegi
Jaxson Potts
Mark Buchan
Emerie Martin
Juan Contreras
Jay Griffith
Sofia Dennis
Ava Umbarger
Mattie Peacock
Hattie Bruns
Aubrey Driessnack
Peyton Horton
Nora Yath
Eden Noe
Annaliegh Epperson
Seth Lebow
Daphne Phillips
Spencer Smith



The inside scoop with Angela White

By Lawson Halstead

How did you become a Future Farmers of America teacher?

"I taught at Oregon State University for 17 years. Then, transitioned to Linn-Benton Community College, as an instructor of animal sciences," said White.

White continued, "After college I took a little time off and then came back to teach preschool. I taught elementary school, and then I was offered a job at Pleasant Hill High School as an agricultural life science teacher and FFA advisor."

It wasn't until the FFA position opened that White even considered being an FFA advisor.

"I'd been a 4-H leader for 11 years. I knew I wanted to do as much as I could with animals and youth education."

White said that "Once I was informed that PHHS would embrace an FFA chapter, I got on it. I took training. I found a wealth of professional development available on various types of career development events, how to coach teams, and the importance of these events in helping students secure jobs after high school."

How many hours do you spend a week creating all your material for FFA?

White said she works 60 to 80 hours a week. Some weeks, she spends more time preparing lessons and getting materials ready. Other weeks, she spends more time at community services or working on grant writing.

White added that "In addition to my full-time job as a teacher, have an 80-acre farm where I grow grass seed, raise sheep, cattle, horses, chickens, and rabbits" and maintain an orchard.

Do you prefer middle school or high school in the teaching aspect?

"I don't have a specific preference for the age of students, as long as they're engaged in learning."

Is there anything else that you can use as a teacher?

White answered "I always need more kids. Money would be nice. Things would be nice. Time would be nice. But in general, I would say that I'm willing to do what kids are eager to do. So many people underestimate the desire of youth."

The Art of Literature: Why reading matters

By Zane Koszegi



Most people might view literature and that of books to be boring, or not worth their time. One interview with junior Mark Buchan however changed my outlook on literature as a whole. You might know Mark as the student who sits in the breezeway during lunch or break reading a book.

When I first sat down to ask Mark about his love for literature he said "I read a lot, I find it interesting and it placates some curiosity I have." This for me paints books as entertaining not as a requirement.

More wisdom from Mark. "I think when you read someones else's works you get a glimpse into someone's else's mind and it broadens your perspective," said Mark.

When Mark showed me this perspective I stopped and thought, because it's nothing but the truth, books are not judy an educational gateway but a personal entrance into the mind of another person, and it's beautiful to think of it as such.

"When did you come to really love literature?"

"The last couple of years in elementary school awakened my love for literature. I used to absolutely love Rick Riordan. Any book he wrote I read, in fact I still do, I feel indebted to his works."

The perspective that literature gives you is the glimpse you get into another person's mind, and we must treasure it.

When asking Mark for his takeaway on people who considered picking up literature, he said "Listen, I would recommend people pick up literature to broaden your horizons, I myself would be a terrible writer but that doesn't mean I don't love it[reading]."

Mark believes literature was important beyond the glimpse into the author's mind. He said "I think a lot of people don't realize that literature goes beyond books, you use it



Officer Codey Crawford, AKA "Dad"

By Paisley Crawford

I interviewed Officer Cody Crawford, a current law enforcement officer at the Lane County sheriff's office. He is also my dad. I had told him I was going to start with questions and listen. But to start, I asked what he was like in high school.

This is what he responded with: "A country cowboy, I did rodeo, bucking bulls and horses, [I was] funny and outgoing."

My next question was were you rebellious?

"Not always rebellious because I was in the fire department and I didn't want to risk it."

Who were your friends then?

He said, "well mainly my friend to this day Thomas Langan and Cameron [Saxon.]"

I asked if he was still in contact with his high school friend, Cameron. He said "no, I haven't talked to him since high school."

How have you changed over the years?

"Well I don't do rodeo anymore. "I struggle to stay up past 8:30 at night, and I enjoy spending time at home with my family. I'm trying harder in school now than when I was in high school."

"Were you a good student?"

"NO, I was not a good student,—which is why I wasn't able to achieve my dream of becoming a paramedic. I tried to go to college after high school but I didn't know how to be a good student."

How did you like it at Pleasant Hill?

"I loved Pleasant Hill. I've been a homesteader since pre-school I graduated."

What about Pleasant Hill did you like?

"The grassroots community is small. Lots of space for kids. to be kids. There was a lot of influence in town, like what the other school had."

Was any specific subject that you liked the most?

"Woodshop, metal shop and forestry!"

Fungi are amazing



By Nora Yath

Fungi, mushrooms, toadstools, whatever name you know them by, you have definitely had some sort of interaction with them.

Mycology, the study of fungi, is a vastly under explored field of study and that is truly a shame because the things we have learned about fungi are rather beneficial to our understanding of nature.

Within mycology there is the subject of mycorestoration; this subject splits into four major categories, mycofiltration, mycopesticides, mycoforestry, & mycoremediation. For the purposes of this piece we will be focusing on the former two.

Mycofiltration is when fungi filter out various materials ranging from bad bacteria to chemical toxins.

Mycofiltration is especially helpful with pollutant runoff as the fungi can absorb and digest most of the pollutants and leave the environment healthier than it would otherwise be.

Mycopesticides are when fungi is used as a pesticide. There are many species of fungi that have evolved to target bugs specifically

Generally they are used for agriculture however it can be used for an ant or termite infestation too.

This is a great alternative to chemical pesticides as they do not cause major harm to the environment.

As Paul Stamens, a dedicated mycologist, puts it, "Biopesticides, especially the select fungi, do not pose a persistent threat to the environment."

Renowned Billie Jazz drummer steps up his game

By Daphne Phillips

Pleasant Hill High School is known for its sports, but it is also known for its wonderful jazz program. The Jazz program has hosted our annual Jazz Festivals every year since the early 1990's. Pleasant Hill's Jazz program has grown over the years and so has its alumni. One of the most accomplished graduates from Pleasant Hill's Jazz program is Noah Bernacki.

Noah is most known for his ability to play the drums with passion and talent. Pleasant Hill has a few ensembles–but the two main jazz ones are: "Solar Jazz" and "Second Generation."

Beginner jazz players usually start out in Second Generation but Noah had his first performance with Solar Jazz in the sixth grade! Noah realized how important Jazz really was to him at a young age so he spent the entirety of his middle/high school years perfecting his abilities to play jazz so that eventually, he could be a successful music student at the University of Oregon.

Noah said"The performance opportunities that Pleasant Hill offered me, helped me forge connections and make friends with fellow jazz musicians. Having so much time to work on my jazz craft has allowed me to get a full scholarship to UO, which in turn has allowed me to take more time to focus on practicing and getting better at my instrument than other things."

For Noah, university life since high school has been a huge step up in terms of responsibility and now he's been focusing on making a career out of his passion. Though at times it can be hard to make a career out of music, Noah says that he's gotten many calls to play as a sideman for other musicians, such as playing with Joey Ingman at the Jazz Station on December 3rd of this year!

While Noah is getting experience with others, he is also working on producing his own music! Though for Noah, performing isn't the only thing he's got going on. He's decided to start teaching drum lessons in Pleasant Hill.

Noah said, "Jazz is an important art that needs to be shared with the world and I'm excited to continue into this journey of both performing and teaching others how to love and play this music."

What is it like going to Marist?

By Emerie Martin

Sienna Malekzadeh, a former Pleasant Hill student, is currently enrolled at Marist High School. Some might consider her a"Backstabber" but I am just kidding when I use that term form my best friend.

We all love Sienna! She's definitely thriving at Marist and has told me all about her experience.

"Marist is very different from Pleasant Hill," Sienna noted. "School work is more difficult because it's a college preparatory school. There's more students from different backgrounds and I don't know everyone like I did at Pleasant Hill."

Going from Pleasant Hill to Marist is a big change. Although Marist and Pleasant Hill have around the same grade sizes, many different students from middle schools all over Oregon pour into Marist. Here at Pleasant Hill we basically have grown up with the same group of students since elementary school. Sienna said that "Marist's campus is cool," but very different from ours. Marist has around 6 hallways in the school for all of high school.

"It was pretty complicated for me to get around on the first day. I was used to only having one hallway in Middle school." It's huge! They also have a fountain in the center of their school. The fountain is used for Catholic traditions like Mass, but nonetheless a super cool centerpiece of the school.

Overall Sienna enjoys the new school! She's made many friends and enjoys playing basketball with Marist. She misses many people at Pleasant Hill, but is very glad she made the switch to Marist.

Students on schedule

By Reese Dockery & Junie Epperson

We interviewed Harper Quinones in 8th grade about preparing for the day. Our first question was "what do you do to get ready for school in the morning."

She replied "I get up, I get dressed, then I make my lunch, eat breakfast, gather all my stuff for practice in my bag, then do my hair and brush my teeth."

As we all may know, Harper's mom is a teacher at the elementary school, so she arrives at school around 7:20 every morning. We asked Harper what her schedule is.

"1st period is Ms.Castle, then science and then wood shop, and Ms. Castle again. After that I go to math, then leadership, lastly P.E." Harper said that after school is over she has basketball practice at 5:00pm and she has two games every week.

After interviewing Harper we interviewed Tucker Anthony.

What time do you arrive at school?

"Like 6:45, maybe even earlier." Schedule?

"So I start with Miss Huff for math, then go to Miss Huff again for math, then extra PE, lunch, and then Miss Raade for science, and then explore elective and then Mr. Pritikin for language arts and then social studies."

The next question was what do you do when you get home from school?

" I typically eat something, maybe play some video games and then go to wrestling."

Well you might have learned something from your fellow peers and you can see the contrast of the two students.