The Billie Bulletin

Pleasant Hill High School
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Phone Ban inspires conversation and games. Blackjack, Dreidel, Jigsaw puzzles and chess have all helped fill time and distract minds. Spencer Smith, Seth LeBow, Gracelynn Wilson, and Trevor Shields enjoy the Dreidel game while Gabe VanOrdstrand and Reid Kinman play the chips. Whatever the game, Billies have found ways to survive and maybe thrive without



Artificial Intelligence is not real

by Mark Buchan

You're probably thinking that's pretty stupid. "Of course AI is real; it's almost everywhere these days."

What I mean is that what we call "AI, Artificial Intelligence," is not actually artificial intelligence. The term is misleading and doesn't properly convey what this technology is. The term piggybacks off years of science fiction.

What do you think of when you hear the terms "artificial intelligence"?

I am willing to bet you that your idea of it is influenced by popular media (like The Terminator or The Matrix). In most media, AI's possess sentience, and they can out think humans in nearly every scenario. This is far from what actual AI can achieve.

The artificial intelligence that exists now is typically only good at one specific task.

Have you ever seen ChatGPT play chess? It's terrible at it, often "hallucinating" pieces or playing illegal moves. This is because it is a language model, and it isn't specifically geared towards playing it. All AI does is predict a reasonable output based on patterns it's been programmed to recognize. It is incapable of doing the basic reasoning it takes to understand pieces on a board.

AI cannot learn or reason, and that is one of the main things it would need to do to be considered intelligent.

AI is also reliant on human creations. It can't create anything original. When you ask ChatGPT for a story, you will get a piece of generated text that is made out of cut up pieces of works by human authors. This kind of generative AI is pretty much a plagiarism generator.

"Artificial intelligence" no longer refers to the intelligent machine. The term AI is incredibly deceptive because it implies some form of basic or general intelligence. These models are not intelligent, because they cannot think. They can't create, learn, or feel.

Learn to handle the unpredictable to find a job in an AI future

By Zane Koszegi

In the future of AI, many job fields face risk from being replaced by a cheaper, more efficient robot that performs at maximum efficiency.

Some could argue that in reality it will take a long time for that to happen, but, as studies by Nexford Institute show, by 2030 up to a total of 300 million full time jobs will be done by AI.

The saving grace is that most of these jobs include repetitive white collar jobs, like data entry, and customer service.

The more prevalent concern comes from how quickly AI has evolved. 10 years ago AI could hardly make a video, now it has the capability to not only make a video but overtake millions of jobs for a fraction of the cost.

With all that being said, which careers remain safe? Most of the jobs being overtaken refer to repetitive tasks, so the jobs in career fields such as Medical, Entertainment, Sports and Education are the best choices. For junior Mark Buchan "On one end it's really interesting, because it's new and developing, on the other end it displaces a lot of existing things that are already cool."

These jobs prioritize handling the unpredictable at all times, whether it's doctor performing a life saving surgery, or a professional athlete making the game winning catch, these are jobs that at least for the foreseeable future remain untouched by the ever progressing march of AI.

Billie Alumni refresh High School sign

By Adellina Scott and Timothy Meinzen

What's this I hear? We're getting a new sign? The high school has been fronted by a sign that stands lonely in our drainage field since the Class of 1999 and 98 installed a new, modern-looking sign. But over the almost three decades out in the weather, the sign was showing its age. Mr. Meinzen thought he would like to see if he could get a replacement that might have a little more pizzazz. The picture to the right is a rendering of what it will sort of look like.

The new sign we are getting is going to have basalt columns around the sign. The sign will have a neatly landscaped skirt of bark, rocks and drought resistant plants in addition to the basalt columns. The Stonehenge look will actually represent the seven elementary schools that united in 1908 to form Union High School. Plus one stone to recognize the Kalapooia, the first people. That is the plan anyway.

Ray Davis (Class of 1999) and his two brothers TJ and Brad donated $8,000 which is the cost of our new sign. Another former student, Jackie Reed Dworak (also class of 1999) donated another $1,200 to match other donations totaling almost $2000.

Other former students and parents have also contributed money and expertise. Aggregate Resources are donating the basalt columns, Nate Stapleton, Jeremy Dockery, Travis Craig and Ryan Haaby will donate their time and equipment to haul the rock to the school. Rexius will finish the landscaping. Many others have offered to help like the small animal 4H club..

I asked Tessa Sprague, if she liked the idea of a new sign. "I don't really like the design but I do like the color scheme."

Hadley Saxon added that she "like[s] the new sign. I like the concept that we are getting a new sign." Mr. Meinzen hopes the sign will be interesting and attractive, but it has already shown how generous and committed Billies are.



Here is an imagined version of the new sign proposed for west face of school. Thanks to donations by Ray, TJ and Brad Davis and the support of dozens of other alumni, the new sign will be in place by the end of the school year. Last week Travis Craig delivered seven of the basalt columns for the landscaping.

School peers and medical careers

By Annaleigh Epperson

When we are young we are asked the redundant question: What do you want to be when you grow up? The repeated answers of veterinarians, nurses, and doctors are inevitable, but what percent of students actually become what they dream as kids? I am interested to know how many students here at Pleasant Hill want to pursue a medical related career.

Being fascinated by the medical field myself, I was curious to know which of my peers shared this goal.

Eden Noe, a sophomore, said "I want to be an ER nurse because of the high intensity situations and I get hands-on experience." Noe later explained that she is good with blood and it doesn't gross her out. She also has a lot of experience being in a big family.

Laynie Reed (11) is also nursing school bound.

"I really love helping other people and my specific career is labor and delivery," said Laynie. Reed believes she would be a great nurse because she works with children daily and really knows what they need and how to care for them. One of the keys to helping kids is voice. Laynie reported that "I'm soft spoken," which is soothing for kids.

On the other hand some of our fellow students are striving for less well known occupations.

" I want to be an orthopedic surgeon—a surgeon of the bones and body," said Jolie Heacock(10). Jolie explains that in playing so many sports she sees lots of injuries and admires those who dedicate their time to athletes' recovery. Heacock shared her plans for after high school.

By explaining that she is "going to stay in state for pre med studies for the first four years and then I'm going to go out of state for medical school...but I'm not too sure yet," admitted Jolie. "I have to live out my childhood dream."

It was so interesting to see students' perspective on jobs and what they dream of doing. It will be interesting to see what people end up pursuing.

All careers in the medical field are so difficult but, in turn, change so many peoples' lives for the better.

Why attendance matters

by Jaxson Potts

"A student's attendance has a significant impact on their academic performance." That is something every teacher has at least once said to their students, but they never truly explain why.

At a surface level, attendance could be seen as showing up to learn the material the teacher is teaching them, but that is only one of the problems. Poor attendance is one of the silent killers of academic success; a couple of missing days a semester may seem like nothing, but the more you add, the more it affects you. Every period you miss when you're not at school, it's another assignment added to your workload.

Chronic absenteeism is rising in America, along with rates of dropping out. According to attendance records, if a sixth-grade student has a significant issue with attendance, they are exponentially more likely to drop out of school in high school. When a young student builds these habits, attendance slowly becomes more optional, even if it makes their grades suffer.

Nolan Driessnack is one of the few students with perfect attendance, when asked if attendance affects his view on his academics he said. "I think that attendance matters because there are class assignments that take two days, and missing a day of work adds up slowly. So only a couple missing days can be a make or break at the end of a semester."

Most people say the reason for bad attendance may be from quarantine, and mental health issues. If not regulated, lateness can lead to laziness later in life. Another effect of the lack of punctuality is a habit that is hard to break that can stay into post high school life and into their career life.

Lack of attendance also makes teachers less willing to go out of their way to accommodate students. The more a student misses classes the more work the teacher has to do each time. The less a student attends, the farther away they get from the learning content; and the teacher; and the rhythm of learning. And it becomes harder and harder to improve a grade. So such students inevitably think of dropping out or not caring about school.



Caroline Carlson and Jolie Heacock celebrate spring-like weather and flexibility with dueling splits.



Chess is back. The library has become a haven for board games, card games and yes reading under Daphne Metcalf. Here Killian Edmondson and Michael O'Keefe begin a battle of wits.

Chess Club

By Darren Soper

Chess is a very old and challenging game to master.. Chess is popular and is fun to play. The Billies chess club plays tournaments every Wednesday. I interviewed Colby Hicks and Steel Hubbard, two members of the club.

I asked Colby Hicks why he joined the chess club, what's your favorite thing about chess club and how many chess games he had won.

"I joined because I needed something to do in the winter. My favorite thing about chess is just hanging out with my friends and I won two games in total."

Next I interviewed Steel Hubbard with the exact same questions.

"I joined for fun and because they needed one more player for a team. [My favorite thing about chess is talking about my games to my friends after the games. I have lost one game and won three.

Valentines Day around the globe

By Jay Griffith

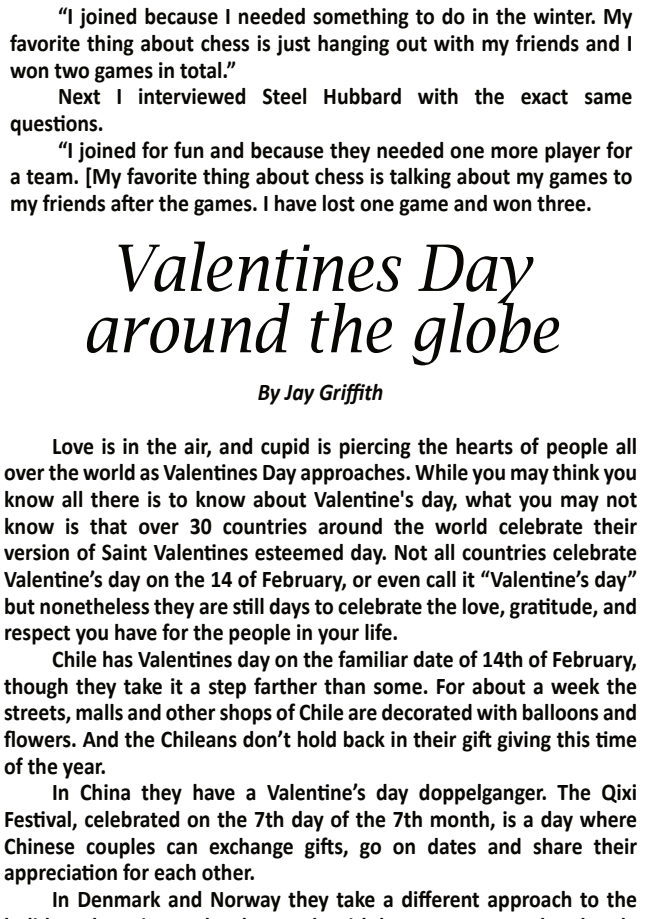
Love is in the air, and cupid is piercing the hearts of people all over the world as Valentines Day approaches. While you may think you know all there is to know about Valentine's day, what you may not know is that over 30 countries around the world celebrate their version of Saint Valentines esteemed day. Not all countries celebrate Valentine's day on the 14 of February, or even call it "Valentine's day" but nonetheless they are still days to celebrate the love, gratitude, and respect you have for the people in your life.

Chile has Valentines day on the familiar date of 14th of February, though they take it a step farther than some. For about a week the streets, malls and other shops of Chile are decorated with balloons and flowers. And the Chileans don't hold back in their gift giving this time of the year.

In China they have a Valentine's day doppelganger. The Qixi Festival, celebrated on the 7th day of the 7th month, is a day where Chinese couples can exchange gifts, go on dates and share their appreciation for each other.

In Denmark and Norway they take a different approach to the holiday. They give each other cards with letters, many are handmade with flowers. Some give letters with funny jokes or poems inside. The part that makes this even more of a special activity is that these joke letters are typically sent anonymously, and if you guess who sent them to you they will give you an Easter egg.

Valentine's day takes many forms around the world, but all days center around one thing, appreciation. Appreciation is one of the greatest gifts a person can receive and sometimes it's all you need to give.



Addy Scott fits inside a locker and dominates in wrestling.

How love changes your temperament

By Laynie Reed

Love is such a big part of life and it changes us more than we realize. When it comes to your temperament, your mood, being in love can mean constant changes. A lot of temperament changes are caused by school, age, friends, and family but few ever talk about how relationships change your temperament.

In high school you think your relationships are the most important thing in your life, which yes, I'll agree, being in a relationship definitely makes your life a lot better and gives you a lot of new experiences. But also, some people will go way too hard in relationships, they will only focus on their relationship and ignore everyone else in their life. That is unhealthy for friendships, family, and also mental health.

In most relationships you'll become very attached to that person, which is expected, but then you'll most likely start to act like them and also match their temperament.

Yes it's okay, but that changes you. It can be a very negative situation. A lot of people will become distant and some friends or family might drift off and not be someone you want to associate yourself with.



Aria Verma and Max Driver win the Halloween costume competition.

Being smart can mean social death in school

by Jolie Heacock

Close your eyes and think of a cool kid. Who comes to mind? Is it someone who shows up on time, is never absent, and has advanced classes and good grades?

I bet it's the exact opposite. Hardworking students are often criticized for being "nerdy" or "try-hards.". But why? Why is it bad to be a good student?

If you've ever watched a coming-of-age movie set in high school, you'll see your cool kid stereotype. Is it a smart kid? Nope. The smart kids are the humorous, lovable, nerdy sidekick. Because of this stereotype, the hardworking student is frowned upon in modern society. People who strive for high school merit and college will be told "I bet I can make more money by not going to college." What is the reasoning behind this?

It doesn't fully come from one stereotype. Cocky students who know they are smart will sometimes shame the less-intelligent students, making them feel inadequate. Another factor is group projects. The unfair dynamic between students who work hard and the students who are hardly working is clear. Someone will likely step up and take control of the project, just saying that "they'll do it all" and "they don't need help." There are eager students who want to work hard yet never receive the chance. Is this why hardworking students are ostracized?

It goes both ways. Many students will be defined by the fact that they are smart. It seems that the title student-athlete is slowly disappearing, and you're either a student or an athlete. You can't be both. However, there are many students at Pleasant Hill who are both. A student-athlete doesn't mean you have perfect grades and you're on varsity. It means you have balance, you have confidence in both things.

As long as you try, you are a hardworking student. Some people try hard in school, and only end up with B's and C's. To them, that's a 4.0 GPA. Others will barely try and get straight A's. Instead of seeking approval through your grades, just try your best, and your grades will be the result. Yet, don't shame other students because they work hard.

Why are smart, hard working kids ostracized is a good question, but is it merely a matter of aesthetic tastes or in born rebellious nature? My belief is that smart and hard working kids are not seen as important or powerful in any way because there is no way to cheer, to compete, to win or lose, so smart kids just don't get the

How to screw up love:

by Juan Contreras

With the love season coming up, things can get stressful! With many things coming up, maintaining a healthy relationship with your partner might even become a bit stressful. Nobody is perfect and we all know that, but if you want to keep from ruining what you already have, or if you want to screw it up. I'll be naming some ways how you can maintain healthy relationships—or how to wreck it!

One of the easiest ways to harm your relationship is by lying to your *inamorata*. They'll eventually realize it and not be happy. Nor will they trust you…ever again.

Another easy way to mess up love would be by testing instead of trusting. For example no way around how your mind thinks, but overthinking too much is a silent killer.

You might not realize that you're even doing it! A very easy way it can happen would be reading into texts too much, trying to think what their tone might be, creating problems where there weren't any to begin with!

Pride can also be deadly! If you don't want to admit you're wrong, that can surely end up with a big argument. Or if you don't want to apologize if it hurts you because of your pride, then there's no turning back after what you've done!

The final way I'll get into how to screw up love would be by letting love be one-sided. You stop engaging, stop asking her/him about their day, start taking love for granted, then that will surely lead to something bigger!

In the end, love usually doesn't come to an end just over one big mistake, it takes time and many actions/mistakes to eventually turn your love sour!

So if you start noticing some of these things are occurring better start working now! Or not!



Girls just want to have fun at the Winter Formal.

Boundaries:

How to love someone and still choose yourself

By Caroline Carlson

Imagine you are with this person who seems perfect. They are everything you ever wanted. But, there is this possibility that they could leave you.

Solution: you do everything in your power to make them stay. Lavish them with gifts, affirmations, and become the "perfect partner."

You are so filled with this desire to please them, that you stop caring for yourself. Soon your partner gets the wrong idea. They assume that you want certain things in your relationship. They take it past your comfort zone.

But the thing is, you let them. You then felt this icky feeling that you went too far. How could this seemingly perfect relationship fill you with so much regret? It's because you forgot an ingredient for a safe, happy, and successful relationship. You forgot boundaries.

The definition of boundaries is defining personal limits, acceptable behavior and space in relationships. Boundaries are crucial for self-respect, well-being, and preventing emotional/physical pain. Boundaries need to be set on emotional, physical, time, and financial limits. Setting them takes self-awareness and clear communication.

There are unhealthy boundaries. These appear as rigid, porous and overly involved. This leads to resentment or enmeshment. Healthy boundaries foster trust, safety, and respect.

Now this might seem like overdoing it. Making a fuss over something that hasn't happened…yet. We must remember Murphy's Law: "Anything that can go wrong, will go wrong." I am by no means saying something terrible will happen in a relationship.

What I am getting at is that there is great wisdom in protecting yourself. And if the person that you are setting boundaries with truly loves/cares about you, they will respect these limits. And if they don't, then they are not the ONE.

Please remember, "You can't give the love you do not have. You can't make anyone love you without loving yourself first." – Kemi Sogunle.



Another aspect of the phone ban are the return of puzzles and other games.

Dealing with Rejection: Healthy vs. Toxic Methods

by Nora Yath

During the month of love there is one unfortunate guarantee: rejection. Whether you or someone else is getting rejected, rejection is ripe in the air and ready to break someone's heart.

What matters the most is how you deal with that rejection.

When asked, "How well do you think most people handle rejection?" Eden Noe said, "Everyone is sad about it but everyone expresses it differently."

Dealing with rejection is something that an unfortunate amount of people don't learn and in my opinion that lack of rejection readiness is likely the cause of a lot of the world's problems, so here I am going to provide healthy & toxic methods for dealing with rejection.

I'm going to start with a healthy method: writing. Writing is a great way to get your bundled up emotions out, even if you're not directly writing about getting rejected it still helps to vent your frustrations.

Contrary to a healthy approach is the toxic method: dwelling on it. When you dwell on getting rejected by someone, you just stew in your misery and it turns recovering from the rejection into a near Sisyphean task.

Other healthy methods of dealing with rejection include: hanging out with your friends or family! Even if you've been rejected by someone there are still many people who appreciate you, even if they don't outwardly express it.

A toxic method is reacting with physical violence. This is one of the worst ways to deal with rejection not only because of the harm it causes to those around you but also because of the repercussions.

On the other side of the physical but healthy spectrum is working out. Exercise is a great way to take your mind away from your frustrations and as a nice bonus you'll be improving your body.

How music can be a powerful way to express love

By Daphne Phillips

Music is one of the most powerful ways to express emotion. Songwriters all around the world pour their emotions into the songs they create and that's why every song is unique. Oftentimes, music communicates emotion in ways that words alone can't.

Song melody, harmony, and rhythm can copy feelings one might experience such as tenderness, happiness, longing, and more. Most people associate music with certain times in their lives where their emotions were the strongest (eg; traveling somewhere new, making memories with friends, winning that game you've been practicing for, and most importantly, feeling love towards someone.)



Loving someone is a very complex feeling–whether it be loving your mother, father, brother, sister, your friends, your team-mate, a pet, or a partner. Music can be a very personal thing for people and sometimes, sharing your favorite music with loved ones can be even more personal and can even create more loving memories.

Music reaches everyone in at least some way. Music can express love across distance, generations, and even languages! Even when the lyrics can't be understood, the emotion still comes through the song and the love being expressed can be universally felt.

Music can turn love into an experience rather than just a statement, it allows people to connect and feel what words sometimes fail to convey. So, next time you're in the car with someone you love, sharing headphones, or even discussing music, share your favorite song with them and enjoy that special moment together.

(Some of my favorite songs that express love: "I fall in love too easily" by Chet Baker, "Tonight, Tonight" by The Smashing Pumpkins, and "Harvest Moon" By Neil Young!)

What are those metal things on my boots?

By Makenna Stump

Have you ever seen me walking down the hallway with a metal clicking sound? Or have you ever seen those "sharp" metal things on my heels? Well those are my spurs.

They seem like a useless and annoying accessory but that's far from the truth. The spurs are for riding horses!

Yes, I own a horse, I actually own five horses! You're also probably wondering what my spurs are used for. I use them for better communication with my horses by gently kicking or rolling them on my horses side.

Are they abusive?

No.

Like I've said, it's just better communication. Trust me, if my horse didn't want me using them I would get thrown.

I've also got a list of everything people have said to me like, "Nice spurs," or "Why do you wear those?" I love the compliments and questions until people start saying, "Take those off before they get banned."

"I can't take them off. When you use spurs for a long period of time, for example, I've had mine on since October 3rd, they leave black marks, almost like a golden necklace leaving a green mark around your neck–except the mark on my boots are more noticeable and they don't go away, and people like to play with my spurs."

Please do not touch my spurs without asking, they cost a lot of money and they can break. Also when you try playing with them sneakily I still feel it. It's a vibration that I can feel through my foot, and it's very annoying.



4 Tips To Deal With Rejection

by Emerie Martin

February is well known as the "month of love,", but no one ever talks about how it can also be the "month of heartbreak."

So many people are brave enough to step out of their comfort zone and choose to confess to their crush. Sadly, not many people walk away from that experience delighted. Here are 4 crucial steps to help you cope with rejection.

1. Acknowledge your feelings

Although you may feel extremely upset, annoyed, shamed, or embarrassed, it's healthy to acknowledge how you are feeling. Sometimes it takes you around 10 minutes, sometimes it takes you weeks. As long as you're able to see that your emotions are valid, then taking a while is okay.

2. Don't blame yourself

Many people after being rejected blame themselves. You didn't do anything wrong. People reject people for certain reasons. Everyone has a type, and you probably just weren't theirs. It's not about looks either, maybe your personalities just didn't work well together. In the end, either way, you have to respect their decision. You can't force anyone to be with you, so make sure to be respectful of them, even if you're upset.

3. Grow and move on

Everybody experiences some kind of rejection in their life, and if you stay hung up on it forever you won't be able to live life to the fullest. It may be hard, so take as long as you need. Remember that everything happens for a reason and this is an experience to grow from.

4. Get a new crush

Find a new crush and repeat the whole process all over again.

Hopefully this guide is able to help you in your times of need, remember to put yourself and your feelings first, and to always be respectful. Have a great Valentines day.

04 Love

What do brain chemicals really do to you?

By EB Wilberger

Are you "in love?"

Do you really like someone?

Do you feel different around them? When this happens to characters in the movie Bambi, it is described as "twitterpated."

But what does the person you "love" really do to you and your mind?

Professor Lucy Brown, neuroscientist and Clinical Professor in Neurology at Einstein College of Medicine in New York, researched this. She found that the people's "midbrain's ventral tegumental area" activated when they saw a picture of someone they love.

Brown said that, "It's the area of the brain that controls things like swallowing and other basic reflexes. While we often think about romantic love as this euphoric, amorphous thing and as a complex emotion, the activation we see in this very basic part of the brain is telling us that romantic love is actually a drive to fulfill a basic need."

Professor Brown and her team "found 12 areas of the brain work together to release chemicals such as the 'feel-good' hormone dopamine, the 'cuddle hormone' oxytocin, and adrenaline, which induces a euphoric sense of purpose," reported the American Psychological Association.

Mrs. Raade, the 6th grade science teacher, summarized it as, "There are chemicals in our brain that change. That makes us feel good. And we can't focus on anything else. And we want more. It's almost addicting when you're in love. You just want more and more."

Now, why does this matter?

Well for one, it feels fantastic to be "in love." But that can also cloud our judgment. We can be attracted to a person who really is not compatible or good for us.

Learning science can help us "get a grip" and be more thoughtful when our stomach faces a butterfly storm.

But if that were so simple, we would never have millions of breakup songs and stories!



Izabella Patterson Giles with Steel Hubbard

Do middle schoolers need boyfriends or girlfriends?

By Michelle Hammond-Mendez and Tessa Sprague

We looked up on AI, "Do middle schools need boyfriends or girlfriends?"

The answer was "No, but developing romantic interest is a normal part of growing up, offering chances to learn about relationships, and respect. Though it also brings potential downsides like social distraction, drama and heartbreak."

We interviewed Mrs. Huff's 6th grade class room next. Their responses included that"your grades could slip and it's a distraction;" "Middle school is already complicated enough so why would we add a relationship on top of that."

When we interviewed Mrs. Olson, she said "It's disgusting and gross. I don't think middle schoolers should date and sometimes I find love letters on the ground and it's just gross."

Mrs. P's class room had the same response: "No, because the only dates you go on are the dances. Besides that, all you do is laugh/hangout with each other and your friends make you stand next to them."

Marley Meyers said, "I don't think we need one[a girlfriend/boyfriend] but it's not bad to have one."

Mrs. McCool said, "No, you don't need one and I think you should have lots of friends, boys and girls."

Lane Saxon said, " No, because we are too young."

Ella Bennett said "It's not gonna last but the experience would be good for us."

Based on the information given, Middle schoolers don't think their classmates should have boyfriends/girlfriends, but it would be good for us to learn about respect and boundaries for romantic relationships in the future.

Being told "I love you," doesn't have to be weird

By Eden Noe

Do you get weirded out when your friends say they love you? Or do they get weirded out when you tell them the same?

Whether or not you tell your friends you love them indicates the type of friendship you have. Or it tells you what you have heard growing up.

When Annaleigh Epperson was asked if tells her friends she loves them, she replied: "Yes, I do!"

When asked how she feels when her friends say the same, she said: "It makes me feel really good! It makes me feel important to people, like they think about me."

Spencer Smith was asked the same questions and replied: "Yes I do," and "It makes me feel good, like it's a mutual commitment that we are pals." Telling your friends you love them symbolizes a deep connection. Some, however, disagree. Jolie Heacock offered a different response. "No, I don't tell people I love them, because I'm not an emotional person. I find it a bit weird, I should be a good enough friend to where they don't need validation."

Seth Lebow, had a similar opinion. "No, because I have never thought about saying it." He said. " It would depend on the person if someone told me that, but it would still be weird."

Even if you don't tell your friends you love them verbally, that doesn't mean that you don't love them. Arianna Bowman said, "I think it depends on how you grew up whether you say it or not. Everyone has different cultural beliefs on what is appropriate to say," Everyone has different ways to symbolize their friendship. A person's response has a lot to do with personality, preference, and culture.

Being told "I love you," is a key way to express a bond. It doesn't necessarily mean that you don't love your friends if you don't say it, but it doesn't have to be weird when you d*o.*

Why your first breakup hurt

By Merrick Garrett

When you break up with your first girlfriend or boyfriend it can hurt. Why?

You're not used to that feeling of being alone. In middle school, it is way worse because your mind is still developing and that can especially hurt. As for high school, it is different when you're almost an adult and people learn to keep their composure and hold their feelings.

I have gone through one breakup and it is bad but sometimes it's for the better. If it's not working, then you might have to change something and break up. With your 2nd or 3rd breakup, your emotions have run through these times and it doesn't sting as bad. It's normal if you still are sad and still care but it's not always a bad thing.

I know middle schoolers that have a relationship and it will last about one month, so save it for high school.

There's two things about break ups. 1: You're too young and you don't know what you're doing. 2: You're scared and single for too long. Eventually you're dating again and you get heartbroken again, but you don't know better.

When you are alone, you can tend to fall behind on daily habits like brushing your teeth and making your bed. Couples in middle school tend to have fights more because they are young and new to it. Some people are scared to date because they might get heartbroken and that sucks to go through.

Middle school reacts to Stranger Things show

By Reese Bagwell and Riley Jordan

Have you heard of the trending show *Stranger Things*?

We know that it is very popular but how many people really watch it?

So we took data from one class room in each grade to find out. We startedwith 8th grade. In Mrs Castle's classroom of twenty six, ten students have watched the series.

Then we interviewed people on their take of it. First was Ryland Liday, when asked what his favorite episode and season were he said "Season two episode eight," he said that it was his favorite one because, "It gets you emotional in a happy and sad way."

Next seventh grade. Out of Mrs McCool's twenty seven student class fourteen kids have watched Stranger Things. When asked the same questions Merrick Garrett said that his favorite episode and season is season four episode nine.

He said because "It is a cool episode and is the final." We asked him why he likes Stranger Things so much he said, "It keeps you on edge and you never know what comes next."

Last from Mr. Pritikin's class of twenty nine, six kids watched the show. We interviewed Leroy Jubber whose favorite season was 3 episode 5, he said it brought him joy and it was very interesting!

How to Attract a Partner

By Sylvia Dune (nom de plumes used)

So you want to attract a partner.

Start with personal hygiene. Make sure you shower and put on deodorant. Another thing is for you to watch how much perfume/cologne you wear if you put any on. Less is more.

Cassius implored people to, "Please wash your hands; and smell nice. It's really bad when you're greasy and put on too much perfume/cologne."

A popular quality in others is humor. People love it when you make them laugh. When someone laughs, their brain releases serotonin, endorphins and dopamine, boosting one's happiness. So learn to be funny, or at least comfortable laughing.

I asked friends, "What are the most attractive qualities in a person?"

Aria Verma says, "A brain and kindness."

Monica says, "Honest, boldness, caring, patient."

Rachel says, "I'd say the first thing people notice about you is your hair and then your eyes and smile. And that's what gets people interested in you first. But overall, personality is everything."

Another question asked is, "What can someone do/ improve on to be more attractive?"

Sabrina says, "If they're fine, they're fine."

Aria Verma says, "Nothing, if they like you then you don't need to change."

Eve says, "I think it depends which person you're talking about. But as long as they take care of themselves, I know they are capable of taking care of another person."

Approach the person you like. Make them laugh, be friendly. Maybe ask them if they want to hang out sometime. Courage is a valued quality and it shows your interest in someone. It's attractive to others when you have the guts to talk to them and/or ask them out. It's not an effective strategy for you to just stare at them from across the room and not do anything.

The last question asked was, "If someone wants to ask you out or take you to a school dance, do you think they should talk to you/get to know you first."

Eve says, "YES! YES!! I can't stress this enough, if I don't REALLY know you, it's so awkward."



Ella Wilson and Ronan Schack attend the winter dance.

What we think about Valentines Day

By Pippa Hammond and Camryn Carey

Valentine's Day is a weird holiday.

It is a day to show people you love them or to do something nice for someone you appreciate. But some people don't like it very much. Some celebrate, while others don't.

Some people enjoy Valentine's day for it being Oregon's Birthday, just having a reason to celebrate, or it being their dog's birthday.

"I think it is a fun reason to celebrate," Jase Alber said. Whereas, Peyton Dennis said, "I just don't like it."

In elementary school, it was all about exchanging candy and chocolates, but in middle school, all of those traditions go out the window.

"I only liked Valentine's Day for the candy we would give each other, at least we used to do that," Bella Melvin said. "I only like Valentine's Day for the candy," Olivia Melvin said, agreeing with Bella. Archer Ferguson and Jordan Johnson also only liked the treats.

Some people like Valentine's Day for showing people they love them. Mrs. Holmes said, "I think it is a good day to show people that you love them." Axel Higbee said, "I like going on dates with my friends." Carter Black really enjoys Valentine's Day. "It's my day to flirt like crazy and pull all the ladies!" "On Valentine's Day, something clicks in Carter's head. He goes crazy!" Reese Bagwell admitted.

When you enter middle school, students take it to a whole new level. Middle schoolers are suddenly going all out on their boyfriends/girlfriends. We're talking gift baskets, flowers, chocolate, Alanis, roses, Sephora products, and even 40 ounce Stanleys.

Eddie Bazinet even confessed he Gives chocolate to the G gender."

What's the G gender? We don't entirely know. Even Mrs. Olson agrees. "Middle schoolers take it a bit too far," and she thinks it's, "just another day."

Valentine's Day is tricky for middle schoolers and perhaps others. Will you celebrate this year?



How the Heart became the symbol of Love

By Addison Woodland

You may not think about your heart much, but here are some really interesting facts about your heart. You probably don't know how hard your heart works. It is so amazing how much energy it creates every day. It even has enough energy to power a truck!

Your heart beats over 100,000 times a day! Now that is a lot of pumps. Did you also know that your heart pumps about 1.5 gallons of blood every minute? These are just some of the many things your heart can do!

Let's get into how the heart became the symbol of love. If you think about it, your heart is kind of gross, it is just constantly pumping blood. We see the familiar heart shape almost everywhere we go. Either on shirts, in a text message ,and things like that.

So exactly why is the heart the symbol of love? The anatomical heart was a romantic offering. Through bad drawings the shape morphed eventually into the familiar shape. The common heart became popular through playing cards and Valentine's Day cards in the 17th-19th centuries.

And that my friends, is how the heart became the symbol of love!

Is That Trash?

By Zia Jones

Did you know that the number one most littered item around the world is cigarette butts? And did you also know that over a million animals die yearly from either eating or getting stuck from our trash? Not just humans are suffering for our mistakes.

But the real question is, why do humans litter so much? We know it's bad for the earth and we know we shouldn't litter so much and yet we still do. Humans litter because we are lazy, unaware of what we are doing to the planet, and insufficient waste management facilities contribute. Most of the time we don't even look around for a bin, we just carelessly throw trash wherever we want.

Also, to clean up our own trash yearly can cost more than 11.5 billion dollars. That is a lot of money, and businesses are paying a large portion of that amount.

Even when we put our trash in the bin like we are supposed to, dump trucks take that trash and put it into landfills. You're thinking, "I don't see the problem here" but when dump trucks take trash to the landfill where deadly toxins can seep into our soil and contaminate drinking water, then there is a problem for all of us.

So don't litter, but is having dump trucks take our trash to a landfill really the best option?

What is love?

By Lauren Darling and Hadlie Saxon

Other than the song (What is Love?), many people have a completely different version of love. What makes love different from caring? Can you love things other than a person? We are here to answer the BIG questions.

Lauren Darling suggested that "love isn't just loving someone but loving how you feel around someone or something."

Hadlie Saxon argued that"love is the feeling of affection or having a deep connection with someone or something."

Can you love something other than a person?

Yes ,you can love your bed, food, social media and you can have deeper love like animals, memories and people or ideas! Many people love obvious people like parents, family members, and mentors like coaches, leaders, advisors and others.

How is love different from caring?

Caring occurs when you display kindness and concern for others, while love is an intense feeling of deep affection and a passion for something.

Love isn't just for someone, but a feeling you can feel toward anything and anyone! Always love who you love and be kind to everyone around you.

Twisting Minds: The Rubik's Cube Craze

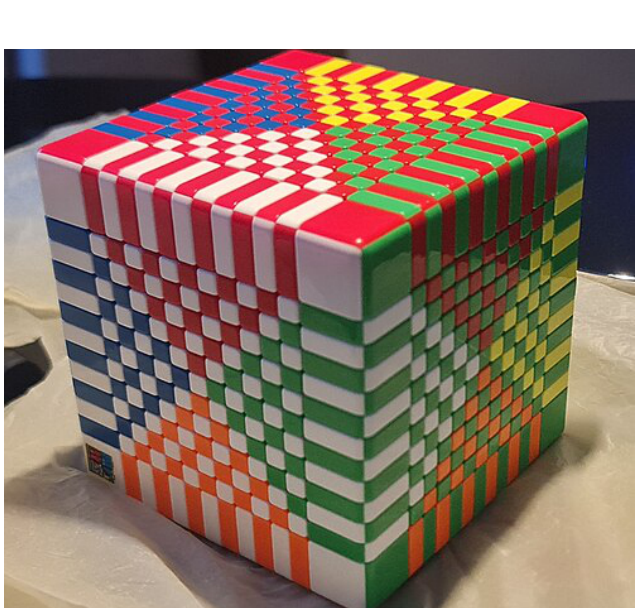
by Chesney Andress

The almost impossible rRr believe. This illusion to the mind is crazy. I have aRubik's cube myself, and it is really hard. Jacob Moch, in the class of 2012, solved 5 Rubik's Cubes in 4 minutes.

So this impossible must have some strategy, right? Or does it?

ADHD might just do the trick. People with ADHD have a better chance of solving Rubik's Cube because of their hyper focus. Hyper focus helps them with their puzzle solving, it is technically a clue that will just click and they will then know better the other people for how to solve it.

So this impossible cube is crazy, and has some techniques. But in the end it is just one cube.



A Story on How to Make a Story

by Liv Wagner

Have you ever felt inspired to write? Make something? I have, and I am going to teach you how to make your very own story!

First, you need to decide what kind of story you're going to write. You can write a scary story, fiction, non-fiction, informational, or even personal stories! After you've picked what you're going to write about, you need to make a title. Or you can write your story first!

After your title, write who the writing is by and if you do decide to put in pictures include the illustrator.

After that, you can then think about an introto your story. You can introduce characters or add a little action (Just a little) to get your reader hooked.

After writing an intro, you can decide if you want to do chapters or one big story. Now you need to get the story going, make a little problem so when you get to the middle of your story you can make that problem into the climax! For example, have a lizard that likes to eat poison and later in the climax make it eat toxic waste and grow huge! Have your main character fix or defeat the climax.

After the climax, make a calm ending like a tea party or a safe village. Boom, you're done! If you're doing an informational story you need to do your research on your subject. Then organize all those facts into a story!

That's how to make a story.

New Year's resolutions in the middle

By Harper Quinones

Happy New Year!

Have you ever heard people say "New Year, New Me"?

What does that really mean?

I'm going to interview a few people and find out who their "new self" is. First I interviewed Marley Meyers from eighth grade.

Her new year's resolutions are to "work hard to get ready for high school basketball, and to live by the Kobe Bryant's statement, 'The moment you give up is the moment you let someone else win.'

So her new self is going to be a very motivated hard worker.

Next I interviewed Eli Baker who also is in 8th grade who said that his new year's resolution is to "Go hunting and fishing more."

I think in 2026 Eli Baker will be spending a lot of time outdoors.

Last is Avalynn Anderson who's new year's resolution is to get her grades up and to work hard. So I think that it is safe to say that people with New Year's resolutions are intending to make a change for the better in 2026.

When love is lethal

By Clara Price

What are you thinking about getting your partner for Valentine's Day? Maybe some chocolate or roses, teddy bears or jewelry? Whatever you're giving your partner, I think death is not high on anybody's lis—unless you are a spider.

The male black widow spider has a pretty sad love life—and no I'm not talking about being alone on Valentines Day. For sure that might be better then the alternative.

Black Widow's love life starts out scurrying around randomly until a female black widow lets out a chemical that alerts the male to her location.The males have to be quick to find the female or another male might beat them to it.

After the female has laid her eggs she will bite the head off of the male and eat him, leaving the spider babies without a dad and the mother without a problem.

For Valentines Day, be glad you're not a spider.

A male angler fish's love life is just as bad, some might say worse.

The love life of a male angler fish starts off at the bottom of the ocean with him just swimming around randomly until he finds a female. The male anglerfish is significantly smaller than a female, so to mate, they burrow into the female's skin and stay there. Once the male angler fish's job is done, he slowly starts to disappear, his organs start to disintegrate into nothing until they are just a lump of skin.

The reason for this is he can't eat because he is just a lump of skin, so he doesn't get any nutrients, henceforth he just withers away. What on earth is the reason for this?

So for Valentines day don't turn into an Angler fish. Good luck and hope that your partner doesn't bite your head off.

Interviewing the artist (Grace Olson) as a young student

By.Ember.Lenhart

For my profile of a seventh grade artist, I interviewed the artist Grace Olson in 7th grade.

So what is your favorite art style?

My favorite art style is "goblincore" and I haven't gotten it down though. Goblincore is a mix of nature and fantasy.

What is the thing you draw the least and is hardest for you?

Hands and occasionally backgrounds.

Why is this?

I am most interested in original characters.

What do you draw the most?

People.

What art supplies do you use the most? And why?

Acrylic paints.

What is your favorite type of hybrid people to draw like half human half something else?

Half bird people.

What fandom do you like to draw?

Life series and Hermitcraft.

Tumbling is a great sport

By Everly Marcott

I want to explain the sport of tumbling to you.

How is tumbling a sport? What does tumbling mean? How did tumbling get invented? And who invented tumbling?

If you have ever thought about these questions here are the answers.

Tumbling is a sport because you need to be athletic and strong to tumble. You need to be flexible and when your tumbling you are actually pretty much working out. So that's how tumbling is a sport.

Tumbling means to perform an acrobatic or a gymnastic exercise. Handsprings and somersaults in the air (flips) are common in tumbling and gymnastics.

Tumbling become a sport from ancient physical training and circus arts.

Who invented tumbling? Friedrich Ludwig Jahn "The father of gymnastics."

Avah Dehart says she likes tumbling because she can feel strong and her favorite tumbling tricks are layouts back tucks and back handsprings. Avah started tumbling because her older cousin Delaney inspired her. Avah has been tumbling since she was about 5 years old. Avah is a great tumbler who has been tumbling for about 5 years.



Cheyenne Green featured in an Instagram post from OSU

Green is first NCAA Division one athlete in years

By Colton Carey

For the first time in recent school history, the Pleasant Hill Billies are proud to say, we have one of our own playing at the NCAA Division 1 level. That person is Cheyenne Green, a former Billies' volleyball star player. Cheyenne received a full-ride scholarship to Oregon State University to play volleyball.

"Playing at the Division 1 level is definitely a ton of work and effort, but it's extremely rewarding and so much fun," said Cheyenne Green, a current outside hitter for the Beavers.

Cheyenne was one of the captains on the Billies volleyball team who led them to a third place finish in the 2024 OSAA 3A Volleyball State Championship.

It can be hard for someone to handle being a Division 1 athlete and still manage time for school-work and other things.

"Balancing school with my volleyball schedule definitely took me some time to figure out, but once I did all it took was good time management and staying on top of homework."

"Most days, I typically spend 4-5 hours doing volleyball related things. Whether those hours are full of practice, lifting, doing treatment/rehab, watching film, our days normally look around the same for the amount of time that we put in on a daily basis," Cheyenne said.

Being a Division 1 athlete can have its pros and cons for all of its participants, but the bonds built with others can be really sweet.

"[It's] the best thing about being a Division 1 athlete for me, the friendships and bonds that you get to create when being on the team."

"There are some days that are hard or draining, and it makes that much more rewarding when I am on a team with friends who are all in this together."

At Oregon State, Cheyenne Green played 49 sets across 19 matches, finishing the year with 40 kills and 26 blocks. She led the team with 3 service aces in a sweep of UC Irvine on Nov. 12. Cheyenne also had seven kills and seven blocks in a reverse sweep of Saint Mary's on Nov. 6, hitting .429.

Having had a season and career best of 10 kills on a .316 clip at Seattle U on Nov. 22nd, I think it is fair to say, Cheyenne is making our Billie community proud, and the NCAA take notice.



Anna Crawford goes up against Marist Catholic in a tight game


Soleis Jones is arguably one of the best defensive players in the league. Here, she is racing against a Marist player on her way to the basket.

Tenacity and Toughness

By Josie Heacock

To the surprise of the general public, the girls basketball team has been making great strides in league. Many people thought with the graduation of many key players, the girls basketball program would be struggling to stay afloat. But instead, the complete opposite has occurred.

They started the season strong, gaining key wins against tough opponents in pre-league play. Now, the girls are steadily climbing in league, where they are predicted to advanced to league playoffs and the state tournament.

Soleis Jones, a senior, and Sari Strinz, a junior, have dominated defensively, running intense trap scenarios and helping the Billies gain easy layups early on in the games.

Anna Crawford, a junior, and Zeta Homes, a freshman, have worked the blocks as posts and used their size to score easily over other teams. Guards like Kaylee Johnson and Karsyn Stapleton have lead the team offensively with their three point shooting and skilled ball handling.

The girls greatest strength is their tenacity. When everyone else counts them out, the girls battle. Their toughness, defense, and grit set them apart as a team to beat.





Pictured: Doug Green soars into an easy layup. This season, Doug has been an important contribution to the boys basketball team's success. The boys are currently 8-0 in league and have an overall record of 18-4. One of the team's strengths is in their varied roster which includes players from every grade. Freshmen Luke Melvin and Cole Jackson have stepped up as a talented players, following the leadership of seniors Landen Melvin, Jacob Neely, Chase Vargas, and Isaiah Wilson. Juniors Noah Johnson and Doug Green are also crucial to the team's success. The team is predicted to win league and make it to the state tournament.


Sari Strinz pushes her way through the Marist defense. Sari is not only an impressive defensive player, but a formidable offensive one too.



Chase Vargas elevates over the Creswell defense in a home game. The boys won 60-54.


Jacob Neely powers down the court, scoring on Creswell using his athletic edge and tough physicality.

Satire

Wrestling could be improved

By Louise Ferrigno

Wrestling... is quite the sport. It is an intense and demanding sport—honestly wrestlers are some of the busiest and the most responsible people I know.

Wrestling seems to make them punctual, responsible and tough. It is very impressive to see what these athletes can do.

Scary too...I know any of them could whoop us.

Although I love wrestling and the people who do it, I have a list of improvements.

Shouldn't we make wrestling more fun for girls to watch? I think so.

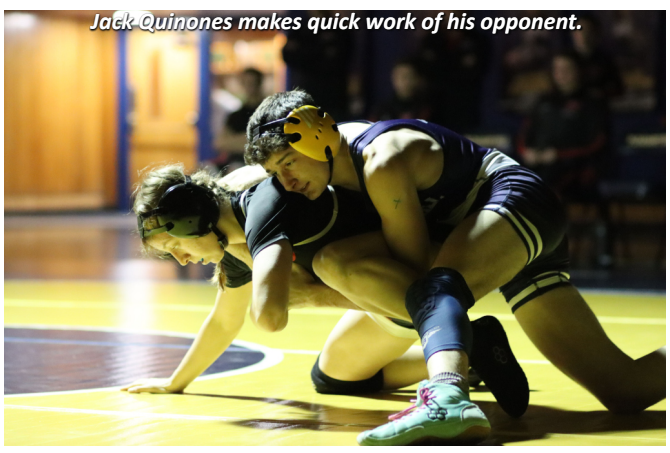
In all this is a joke and I think wrestling is great but here's the list.

- There should be style points (based on your outfit you still get to advance in another bracket).
- When you lose you should have to do a hand stand for a minute—enough said.
- Meets should strictly be on the weekends.
- Meets should be later in the day because who wants to be on a stinky bus at 4 in the morning.
- They should wear hats because someone is gonna get lice and it's not gonna be fun.
- Wrestlers could wear masks to look like sumo wrestlers.
- Wrestlers, well known for muscled bodies, could wrestle bare chested like the ancient Greeks did.
- Wrestlers could dedicate their win to their favorite sweetheart and give them a rose when they defeat their opponent.


Peyton Buckley gets advantage over her opponent.



OHSET rider Eva Aguilara races her horse around the birangle pole to earn a speedy 20 seconds


Jack Quinones makes quick work of his opponent.


Zaira Duarte takes control of her opponent to a quick pin.



A Paiute elder lived in the Great Basin and the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. Much of Paiute land and water was forcibly taken from them by white settlers and soldiers.

I am Paiute

By Josiah Houck

Who are the Northern Paiute native Americans?

What many fascinating tales have been forged by the people who have lived in the harsh and unforgiving environments of the high desert and south Sierra Nevada mountains of eastern California?

The Paiute, my ancestors, called Pyramid Lake of Nevada and other places home. I will introduce you to the incredible people who survived white depredation and still cherish their heritage close to their heart.

The story of the Paiute people starts in the earliest sense in the paleo-indian era over 12,000 years ago.

The Northern Paiute settled in the area now known as Owens Valley in eastern California. Owens Valley was an extremely fertile oasis, set back long before settlers had ever arrived and set out to colonize. White settlers took over the water sources of the Paiute in California and Southern Utah impoverishing them and depriving them of their rights.

The Paiute people saw the land and decided to settle and build community. This laid the foundation for the culture that made the people what they are today and in millennia past. This time period in the Paiute history is known as the "Time Immemorial."

Art is one of the most important things to the Paiute. Paiute art was beautiful but also functional. Consider beautiful woven baskets made of thousands of tiny beads that are woven together into a complex and beautiful basket that can be used to store or carry something for a family or group.

This art is still made today in the tribe. The basket weaving art of the tribe is not just a practice of need or cultural practice but one of the tribe's legacy. Other arts like beadwork are a very common practice as well, but things like petroglyphs (which are art etched on stones) are even more ancient practices.

My Cousin and her Obsession

by Peyton Horton)

My cousin has a passion for collecting rock crystals. Every trip or vacation to the coast or anywhere far, we always have to stop to look for crystals to buy. If she finds one on the road she always has to keep it with her until we get back so she can put them with the rest of her huge collection of rock crystals.

She originally started this collection with a friend of hers back when she was around five or six years old, and the habit stuck with her like glue. Every birthday or event she always asks for either a rock kit to make her own type of crystal rock, or just crystal rocks.

You could even call her a crystal collector.

My family didn't think much of this when she was younger but once she got older we all realized she's got a crazy obsession with these crystals. It's not even funny at this point when she has a suitcase half full of just rock crystals.

Some of us think she'll sell them if they go up in price but she's had them for too long to even do such a thing.

One thing is crystal clear, rocks can be a girl's best friend—if you are my cousin.

We love our pets

By Reese Dockery and Junie Epperson

There are so many different kinds of animals and pets in the world, each one is important in their own way. We asked three middle schoolers some questions about their favorite pets.

We asked Addison Woodland in 6th grade how many pets she has?

Addison said, "Five: one dog and four horses."

It seems a lot of people have dogs just like Addison. Then we asked her what are a few of their pets' names are.

"Nellie and Luna, which are some of my horses, and my dog, Dax." She also told us her favorite pet she has is her horse "Streek," because she loves doing barrel racing with her horse.

To get a couple more opinions, we asked Hadley Saxon in 7th grade the same questions we had previously asked Addie. Hadlie said, " I have 9 pets, some are inside pets and some are outside pets" Some of Hadlie's pet's names are Norah, Rip, and Nala. " My favorite is my kitten Nala, because she's mine."

After we interviewed Hadlie our last interview was Klayton Perkins in 8th grade. Klayton responded to the same questions as the others and these were his answers. He has 3 pets, two cats and one dog. We asked him what their names are and he said, "The two cats are Guss and Jigger, and the dog is Riley." His favorite pet is Guss because he likes that he is mean.

We went around asking people what their favorite pet is and the majority was dog with three out of five liking dogs the best. Pets are very important to lots of families and bring lots of love.

Line Dancing

By Tyson Humphrey and Katin Black

Mrs. Lea Williams, our PE teacher, loves line dancing ever since she started in middle school. The first middle school line dance she learned was *Cotton Eye Joe*. Her favorite line dance is the *Lonely Drum*.

She said 'She is not a partier so she doesn't line dance at clubs." Mrs. Williams' husband hates line dancing and has never liked it. Williams went to the rodeo to line dance. She got training for line dancing in middle school and high school.

She breaks it down in four or eight count steps. She likes country music to dance to. Her husband does not know how to line dance. Williams prefers swing dancing over line dancing because it's more challenging.

A lot of reactions were positive. Williams said it is fun because you can do it anywhere. She makes it fun with students because she chooses good music they like. She does not know if we will see her dance with her husband.

A whole Lott-a Love: *Issa dishes on love*

By Paisley Crawford

Issa Lott is relatively new to this school. She is an 8th grader who is mature, funny, wild-spirited and courageous. So I decided to interview her about "love."

The first question I asked was how would you describe love to someone?

Issa said "it's very messy, but it's also very emotional—just because middle schoolers have so many emotions at that age and so that makes it a big emotional roller coaster in between being obsessed with someone one day and then the next day literally hating their guts and face."

Then I asked have you ever liked someone?

She said "100% I feel like I've had crushes on multiple people in my lifetime, but I think there are like one, or two who I wanted to devote my time to."

How many times have you felt this way for someone?

Issa said "I'd say twice but one of the times was very serious I don't know how to explain it, there's like one person for everyone that you'll truly like. Like a soulmate I guess."

If you've had a lover, what did you guys do?

"As someone with ADHD and a lot of other things that make it really difficult to let myself be happy in a relationship, the people that do end up dating me need to have certain things that I'm striving for.

That includes a lot of communication on their part, like reassurance and a lot of understanding but not in like the cheesy way like in the way of they understand my little habits. "People usually know as me being "Issa core" as I am a very loud and just overall a lot to deal with. I also force them to cuddle with my horsies because# exposure therapy" she said.

"I need to forget so take me to Florida"– Taylor Swift

Florida trip does not disappoint

by Hattie Bruns

Have you ever traveled, by plane, boat, or car? Then you know the gutting feeling when you've forgotten your phone back at the house! Now I have committed my fair share of forgetfulness on long trips.

My recent excursion took me to Florida! The winter there was oddly warm with temperatures in the high eighties. The heat was excruciating, waiting in lines and walking around the Disney World parks. We made endless memories with our family and friends and we definitely will not forget them anytime soon.

My personal favorite park was Hollywood Studios. In that park, I rode the Hollywood Hotel Tower of Terror twice at night and it was so invigorating! At Hollywood Studios, there are many more rides like Rock'n Rollercoaster which is more on the extreme scale for coasters. If you have little siblings or kids you might want to try Slinky Dog!

In Magic Kingdom's Tomorrowland is a coaster called Test Track that is the fastest roller coaster in all of Walt Disney World with a speed of 65 mph!

They had recently added a new addition into Tomorrowland called TRON Lightcycle, you ride it like a motorcycle and it takes you through many turns after a launch which is 59 mph! TRON is typically a 1hour and 20-30 minute wait at night!

One of the best tips that I can give you if you take an adventure to Disney world is to use the DAS pass. If you do not know what that pass is, it is a pass that puts you into the lightning lane which was previously the fast pass. DAS stands for disability access service.

My brother is autistic and has a hard time in crowds and waiting in lines so we decided to get him a DAS pass. What the pass will get you is five people to take with the DAS pass holder onto a ride.

My trip was a wonderful nine days.



Paisley Crawford and Izzy Lott

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Grandparents by heart

By Lawson Halstead

John and Marianne Brooks are more than friends. They are family to me.

Even though I have biological grandparents, there is nothing better than having someone that is more than just a friend. The Brooks are more than a friend to me. I see them as sort of like grandparents. My parents trust them, so I get to do a lot more things with them than I would with my friends.

The Brooks treat me like a son or grandson. They take me hunting, fishing, reload bullets and spend time with me. I see them as mentors and friends. I can trust that they are mature enough to make good choices.

Some of my favorite memories are fly fishing with John Brooks along with shooting boats.

I do not live far away from John so that makes it easy for my mom and dad. When we don't have school, that's where we spend our time. But all of our chores have to be done at our house first.

My favorite memory is fishing with John when we went up to Dolly Parton. Once when we were fly fishing with my little brother, Royce, I didn't catch anything, but it was fun anyway.

Going out in the woods and spending time are other favorite memories. I love hunting with John. I haven't shot anything with him, but my older brother Vaun shot a bull elk with John.

Some of my favorite memories with Marianne Brooks are spending time with her and eating "Peeps." She is addicted to peeps. We also joke around, spending time at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife building. She worked there until she recently retired.



Junie Epperson and Reese Dockery work on their art project for MS. Jampolsky. Jampolsky inspires a joy for art.

Ask Cupid

Cupid (pen name)

Need advice for Valentine's Day? Well I'm here for you.

I asked some students what questions they have about Valentine's Day and I answered.

"How early should you ask someone to be your Valentine?"

This all really depends on if you are dating this person or are just "talking," but I would say around 1 week or a half a week before Valentine's day. Just so there's time to get everything you need or just in case something happens and you can't do it anymore.

"How should you ask someone to be your valentine?"

I would just go up and ask, even though I know it's awkward or scary. Just go. The worst they could say is "no" which sounds super cringey but super true.Go with your gut and add some confidence and you should be ok. If you want a more detailed way there are some articles in this newspaper that can help you a bit more.

"How do you know what to get your boyfriend/girlfriend for Valentine's day?"

It all really comes down to what they like or what reminds you of them. If they enjoy fishing, maybe a little tackle box with some fish themed snacks. It all comes down to the person and their personality.

"What should you actually do on Valentine's day?"

This relies on what you and yourValentine or your friends want to do. It could be chill with just watching a rom-com and eating chocolate. It could also be a fun game night or maybe a romantic date. It doesn't have to be much, it just has to be time together with the person or people you love. Isn't that what Valentines Day is all about? Love and how do we show it?



Students in Ms. Voughs health class build card towers.

Northers' Very Good Relationship Advice

By Thurber Northers (pen name)

Dear Reader…

My mailbox is always overflowing with pleas for help about relationships. And so, in an effort to meet the constant demand for my wisdom, I have compiled a list of some of the best tips to improve your relationship with your partner.

First off, make sure to always send texts in groups. Make a game out of it. Try to send a text message every hour until they respond. This type of persistence will demonstrate your availability. Remember, your personal life is secondary to your partner's.

Whenever your partner seems the slightest bit off, ask them what's going on. This is a serious situation! Keep asking until you find out what's up. If your partner has a resistance to sharing what's bothering them, this means they're HIDING something (probably bad feelings about you). Pursue the truth at all costs.

Make frequent, excessive, and public gestures of affection to your partner. However, you need to focus on yourself at the moment. While you may portray feelings for them, remember that the goal is to elicit a positive response from the crowd regarding you.

As you continue to perform your love for your partner, you will develop a desire to feel that same attention from them. In fact, you may start to notice that they hold a resistance to reaffirming their feelings for you. This is a dire situation. You must proceed with caution and demand constant validation from your partner.

If all else fails, remember you can always threaten to leave. Threats are a crucial part of testing the strength of a relationship. It will prove if your partner actually cares. The final takeaway is: you can't ever just let the relationship be.

Readers, I appreciate your constant commitment to my methods. I promise that with dedicated effort, these tips will pay of—in big ways!

Sincerely, Thurber Northers



Taylor Gielish and Colt VonOrtloff find make the best of the phone ban by finding fun in mini Etch-a-Sketch players.

I Love Max Verstappen and You Should Too

by Seth LeBow

Imagine perfection.

That's the closest phrase to describing what it feels like to watch Max Verstappen drive a Formula 1 car at the absolute limit. The kind of driver who makes chaos look controlled, pressure look comfortable, and dominance feel almost casual.

Loving Max Verstappen isn't just about supporting a winning driver. It's about appreciating a once-in-a- lifetime competitor who has reshaped what excellence in Formula 1 looks like and the numbers and historic moments prove it.

Max Verstappen is a four-time Formula 1 World Champion, winning consecutively from 2021 through 2024, a feat that etched his name among the sport's all-time greats. Across his career so far, he has amassed over 70 Grand Prix victories, more than 125 podiums, and dozens of pole positions.

His career has been defined by records from the very beginning. He became the youngest driver to start an F1 race, the youngest to score points, the youngest podium finisher, the youngest race winner , and the youngest driver to achieve a grand slam the sport has ever seen.

The peak of pure dominance came in 2023, when Max delivered the most statistically overwhelming season in F1 History. He set the record for the most races won in a season (winning 19 of the 22), the most consecutive victories (10), the most laps led (1,003), the most hat-tricks in a season (6), the most wins from pole, and achieved the highest win percentage ever in a single season (86.36%).

In 2024, Red Bull no longer had the fastest car, McLaren and Ferrari frequently matched or exceeded Redbull on outright pace. Despite this, Max still delivered when it mattered most.

Nothing encapsulated that better than Brazil 2024. Starting 17th on the grid in chaotic, rain-soaked conditions, Verstappen carved through the field with surgical precision. By the time the checkered flag fell, he hadn't just won–he had won by over 20 seconds, delivering one of the greatest victories in history. It wasn't just speed; it was control. During this race, Max set the fastest lap 17 times and not only that, 10 of his 11 final laps were faster than everyone else's.

Then came 2025, a season that erased any lingering doubt about his greatness.

Midway through the year, Verstappen found himself 104 points down in the championship–a deficit that would normally end any title challenge. Red Bull no longer had a reference car. On pure performance, Verstappen was often driving the third or even fourth-fastest car on the grid, regularly outpaced by Mclaren and Mercedes, with Ferrari occasionally joining the fight.

And yet, the comeback happened.

Race by race, Verstappen clawed back points through relentless consistency and flawless execution in the greatest championship comeback in history. Max somehow managed to achieve the most poles (8), wins (8) and laps led (454) in the car he was given. He fought all the way to the final race of the season (which he won) barely losing the title by 2 points.

That consistency isn't a short-term phenomenon. It's a defining trait of his career. Verstappen hasn't finished outside of the points since 2016. Even more staggering, from mid-2022 onward, he led the Formula 1 World Championship for 1,029 consecutive days, a stretch of authority that speaks not just to dominance, but control of an era.

During this period, Verstappen also delivered history on pure speed alone. At Monza in 2025, he set the fastest lap ever recorded in Formula 1, achieving an average speed no driver had ever reached. In the race, he went further, winning the fastest full-distance Grand Prix in Formula 1 history, proving that even without the outright fastest car, his execution could still be flawless.

What makes Max Verstappen special isn't just what he wins, it is how he wins. His race intelligence is elite. His car control is unmatched. His mentality is relentless. Early in his career, he was raw and aggressive. Instead of losing that edge, he refined it. He kept the hunger and added discipline.

You don't have to support his team. You don't have to love every move he makes. But if you love racing–real racing–you should love Max Verstappen. Because drivers like him don't come around often. They don't just collect titles–they redefine the standard.

And years from now, when people look back on this era of Formula 1, they won't remember who won.

They'll remember Max Verstappen.