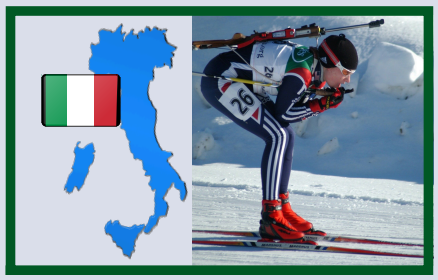
Hillside Middle School's

Tiger Tribune

Issue 2, March 2026

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No School? SNOW WAY!



Photo by Moira Winnyk, 6th Grade Photographer

It's been a record-breaking season, and Mother Nature has officially put our community to the ultimate test. Six calamity days have turned our academic calendar into a game of "will-they, won't-they" that would make even the best meteorologist sweat. While *students* treat the district's snow days like a winning lottery ticket, swapping textbooks for gaming devices and sleds, it's possible that not everyone shares in this enthusiasm.

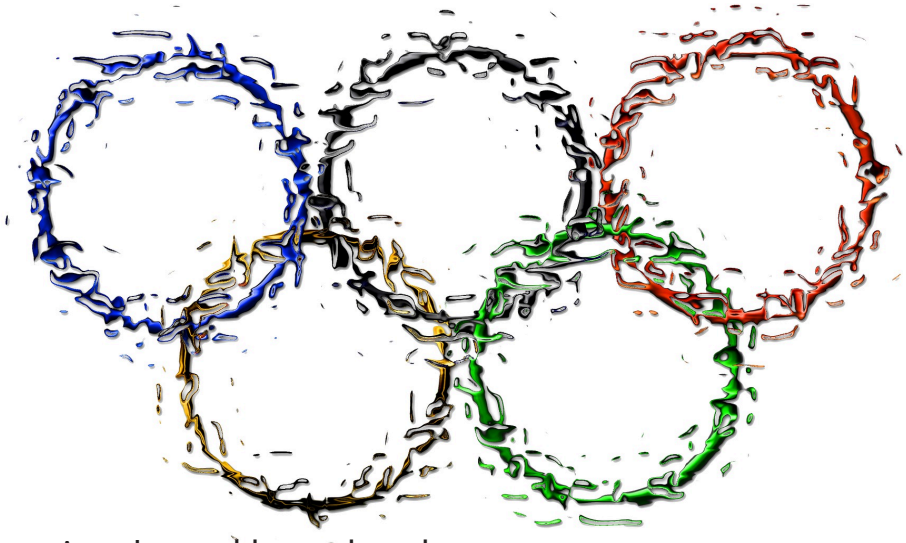
Parents are juggling work with Zoom calls while teachers are watching their lesson plans vanish into a white abyss. Is this a winter wonderland or a domestic disaster zone? We're breaking down the highs, the lows, and the icy anxiety surrounding the looming Ohio State Tests in April.

Read the full story on page 3.

Special thanks to the Winnyk Family for allowing us to use this photo for our newspaper!

Mama Mia! Team USA Shatters Records at the Winter Olympics in Italy

Article by Emma Cash, 5th Grade Reporter



Italy is famous for its ancient Colosseum, delicious food, and beautiful beaches, but recently the focus has been on the snowy mountains and ice rinks of northern Italy. The 2026 Winter Olympics took place in two Italian cities, Milan and Cortina, bringing together the world's best athletes.

The Winter Olympics is a massive event that happens every four years. It features 16 different sports, including favorites like figure skating, snowboarding, and ice hockey. There are also unique events like the biathlon, which combines cross-country skiing with target shooting, and a brand-new sport called ski mountaineering. In this new event, athletes must climb up steep mountains before racing back down on their skis.

American athletes shared many inspiring thoughts during the competition. Figure skater Madison Chock once said, “There’s something so unique and beautiful about skating… It’s the best sport.” When the pressure of the big stage felt heavy, skater Ilia Malinin reminded himself, "This is your moment. It’s do-or-die." He said he tried to let the nerves go and just have fun.

For legendary skier Mikaela Shiffrin, the experience was about personal growth, saying her journey helped her gain a “better understanding .of how the world works.”

The Winter Olympics also has a long and interesting history filled with amazing facts from the past and present. The very first Winter Olympics was held more than 100 years ago in 1924! In the early years of the Games, animals like horses and dogs were sometimes invovled in certain winter events and transportation. Today, the focus is completely on human athletes and the incredible speed and skill they show. For example, in the skeleton event, athletes lie head-first on a small sled and race down icy tracks at speeds of up to 140 kilometers per hour!

Team USA had a record-breaking year in Italy, winning a total of 12 gold medals. This was the most gold medals the United States has ever won at a single Winter Olympics. From the hockey rink to the ski slopes, these athletes showed that hard work and practice can lead to historic results.



Winter Olympics, re-enacted

During Physical Education class, 7th grade students were able to experience Winter Olympic-like events. Great reenactments, PE teachers!

Pictures and story coverage completed by photojournalist Reyce Kerns, 7th Grade.





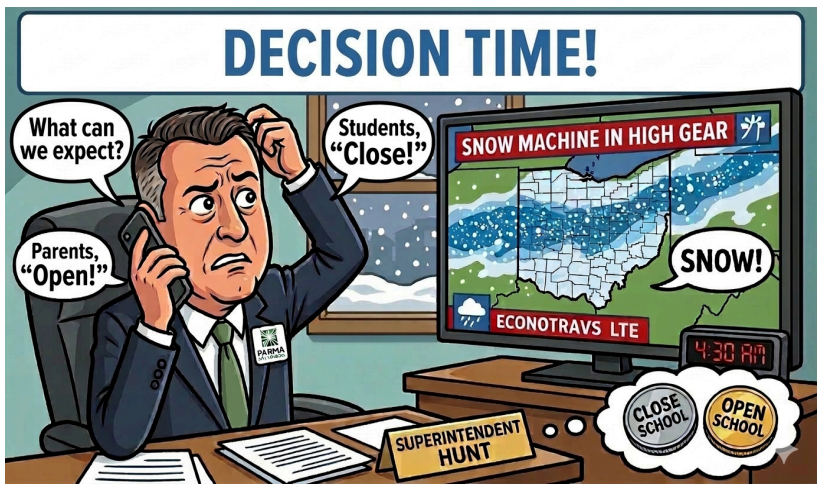


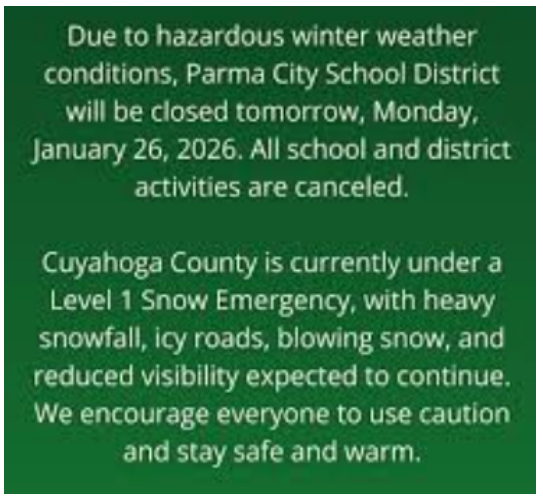


Chilling Out or Stressing Out?

The Reality of a Calamity Day







Article by CeCe Santander
8th Grade Editor & News Reporter

In January 2026, Seven Hills, Ohio, got absolutely slammed by a massive winter storm. For a few days, it felt like the snow would never stop until everything was buried under inches and inches of snow. People in the area were talking about it. For us students, it wasn't just about shoveling the driveway or wearing five layers of clothes, it meant a bunch of "calamity days." Our school district decided the roads were too icy for buses while the sidewalks were way too deep for anyone to walk through.

For most kids and teens, a snow day feels like a mini-holiday. When you get that text or call saying school is canceled, it's honestly the best feeling!

You get to sleep in, play video games all day, binge-watch shows or go sledding with friends at the park. Social media gets flooded with pictures of giant snow forts and mugs of hot cocoa, and for a minute, we totally forget about school.

When we finally return, everyone seems confused and out of sorts. It's hard to remember what we were even learning. This makes things way harder for the teachers, especially in math or science where they have to go back and re-explain stuff we forgot, which wastes even more time they don't have. The teachers really have it the roughest during these winters. Every snow day is over six hours of learning time that just disappears.

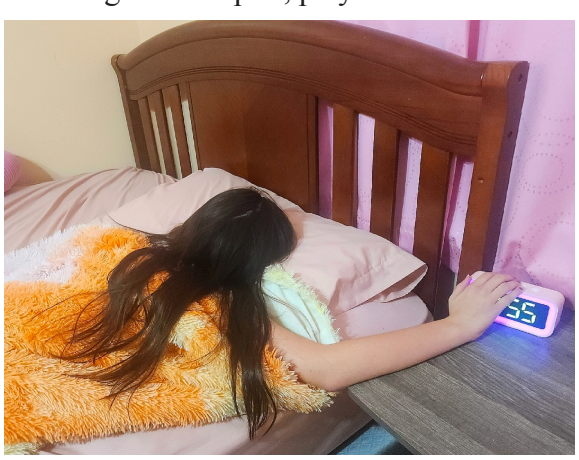
With the OSTs coming up so fast, they have to fit a ton of hard lessons into a tiny amount of time. When a day is missed, it ruins their lesson plans and they have to make the stressful choice of what's important enough to teach and what they have to skip or rush through It gets even more complicated because not all of the kids come back to class when they should. Kids might still be snowed in, or they convince their parents to stay home just one more day, so teachers have to do "double work" teaching the kids in class while also putting together make-up packets for the kids who are absent. You can see the stress on the teachers' faces. As everyone knows, test scores actually matter for school ratings on the state report card.

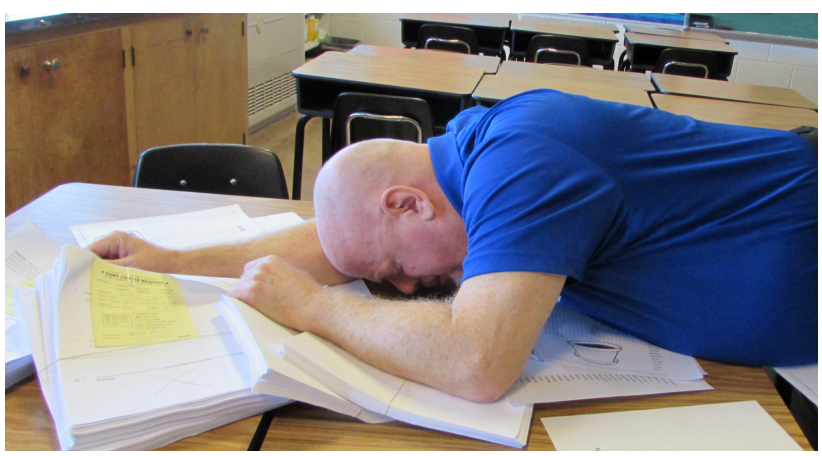
Snow days can also mess with our Hillside families, too. Parents have to scramble to find childcare or miss work if the announcement comes at the last minute. Some families really depend on school breakfast and lunch, so closing school for multiple days is a big deal.

Once the snow finally starts melting and spring shows up, it's time to get back to business. We have to work together. We can't control the crazy Ohio weather, but we can control how we handle it.

Pictures by staff photographers
-Sophia Garvin, 6th grade;
-Kazi Tomaro, 5th grade, and
-Moira Winnyk, 6th grade
(front page photo)









A Hillside student hitting her alarm clock knowing she can go back to bed and sleep; Mr. Schliecker stressing out trying to get his plans re- organized, Ms. Futey and Mrs. Best pulling their hair out attempting to motivate students and keep their focus, and Mrs. Boulas needing some time to decompress -- scenes like these were becoming the norm this winter!

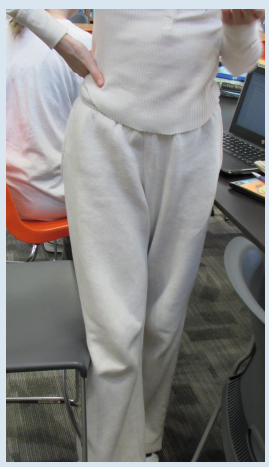
Pictures by Moira Winnyk, 6th Grade Photographer

















The Fashion Time Machine: How the Past Controls Your Closet

Article by Aviana Salobecke
6th Grade Reporter

Have you ever wondered why your favorite outfit is suddenly "cool" again? Fashion is basically a time machine, and right now, some of the most iconic styles from the past are making a huge comeback in our middle school hallways. From high-tech chrome to laid-back hoodies, there is a legendary story behind everything we wear.

One of the boldest looks today is actually a century old! Inspired by the Art Deco movement of the 1920s, the "Shine and Chrome" style uses metallic finishes to mimic the polished surfaces of machines and architecture. Today, that translates into eye-catching silver jackets, metallic chokers, and "glitchy" graphic tees. This look has popped up everywhere, from 1950s car detailing to 1970s disco balls, always proving that a little bit of reflection makes a big statement.

If you aren't feeling the futuristic vibe, you've definitely seen the 90s Mashup everywhere. The 1990s were a massive turning point for the world; it was the era of the first text message, Toy Story, and the rise of the World Wide Web. This high-energy atmosphere created a mix of styles we still love, like "grunge" ripped jeans and oversized graphic tees inspired by bands like Nirvana. Whether it's the pop-preppy look of mini-skirts or the bright neon colors of early tech, the 90s were all about being bold and experimental.

Finally, we can't forget the Cozy Core movement. This style took off during the 2020 lockdown when staying home became the "new normal." Since we weren't heading to big events, fashion shifted toward Athleisure, the perfect mix of athletic gear and lounge wear. Brands like Lululemon and Alo popularized neutral colors and soft fabrics like oversized hoodies and joggers. This trend proved you don't have to sacrifice comfort to look put-together, whether you're heading to soccer practice or just hanging out.

It is amazing to see how much history is packed into our closets. From the metallic shine of the past to the cozy hoodies of today, fashion is constantly evolving to help us express who we are. Out of all these eras, which trend is your absolute favorite to wear?

The Virtual Hangout - Why Everyone is Gaming in 2026

Article by Yaminah Abdelhaq
6th Grade Reporter

Imagine you're sitting in the back of the bus. Instead of everyone talking, you just see a row of glowing phones. Everyone is in their own virtual world. Gaming used to be something only a few people did, but now it's basically everywhere. In 2026, gaming is the new social media—a place where you can be whoever you want through your "avatar," which is just your digital character.

The virtual world is always changing because people love to express themselves. For example, a big trend called the "Green Avatar" blew up on Roblox in the game Grow A Garden. It was super popular last year, but then it kind of had a downfall because people got bored. For some gamers, it's more about having a cool status through your avatar than actually playing the game. Other people just want to see the crazy events, like Steal A Brainrot or the "Bruno Mars admin abuse" sessions. These games get so wild that students even make memes about them that blow up the school hallways on Monday morning.

If you aren't into the loud, crazy games, you might like "cozy games" like Animal Crossing or Disney Dreamlight Valley. These are short, calm games that help you relax. Student Kamila Gorlach says, "I like to play Roblox because it just keeps my mind off of everything and just calms my mindset." Britain Minyard also plays Roblox to stay calm. But it's also good to take a break sometimes. David Bubnick says, "I love video games but they can get boring if you play too much." Whether you're a "pro" or a "cozy crafter," there is a place for everyone in the 2026 meta.





Hydration Wars: The Brutal Battle for Best Bottle

Article by
Sara Hershberger, 6th Grade Reporter

Welcome to the high-stakes arena of the Water Bottle Wars! The competition is heating up as the overpriced Stanley, the leak-proof Owala, and the sneaky "dupe" brands battle for the title of the supreme hydration champion. Every student in the hall is picking a side, and the pressure is on to see which bottle will reign supreme in the lockers and classrooms of Hillside.

The main event features a brutal head-to-head matchup: Stanley versus Owala. While the giant Stanley cups are everywhere, the Owala is currently taking over the hallways with its tactical advantages.

When asked for their scouting reports, many Hillside students put their money on the Owala. The fans claim it wins because it is totally leak-proof, fits perfectly into a backpack, and keeps water ice-cold during a long school day. However, the Stanley isn't going down without a fight, as some supporters argue its massive size is the only way to stay hydrated during a long practice.

Even the faculty are getting involved in the drama. While Ms. Masella and Mrs. Wiles enjoy their Owala bottles, Mrs. Loescher enters the ring with her Manna, a popular dupe brand. She pointed out that while the big names are expensive, they do offer high-quality defense against lukewarm water. Even the classic Hydroflask is still a heavy hitter because of its tough stainless steel armor. In this war, plastic bottles are considered the weakest link because they leak under pressure and can't keep drinks cold for more than a single period.

The final scores are officially in, and the crowd is going wild. After a fierce battle of style and stats, the Owala stands alone as the ultimate winner! While every student has their own favorite teammate to carry to class, the Owala is the current champion of the Hillside Water Bottle Wars.

Photos by
Sophia Garvin, 6th Grade Photographer





Hundreds of Students Earn Top Honors at Terrific Tiger Tributes

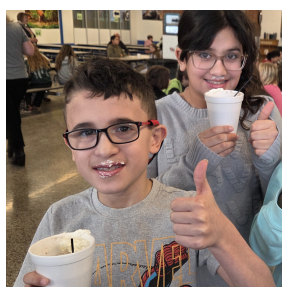
Article by Ollie Crank,
6th Grade Reporter

It is time to celebrate our amazing students! The Terrific Tiger Tribute is a special quarterly rewards program that honors every student who earns A's, B's, or C's and stays out of trouble. This event cheers students who follow the THREE R'S: being Respectful, Responsible, and Ready to Learn, while following all school rules. The school started these tributes because the staff believes it is so important to celebrate students who work hard and meet expectations.

There has been a fantastic turnout so far during the 2025-2026 school year. In the first quarter, a record number of 485 students attended the celebration! Even though the second quarter was a little smaller, still a proud 463 students joined the fun.

Each tribute has been a blast in its own way. During the first quarter, the gym was jumping with dancing and karaoke, while during the second quarter reward had everyone warming up with a cozy hot chocolate trivia party.















Of course, there is always room to make these parties even better. Sixth grader Moira Winnyk shared some helpful feedback about the first quarter event suggesting that having a wider variety of music during the dancing and karaoke might have encouraged more people to get up and join in on the fun.

Looking ahead, Mrs. Kubinski and the Hillside Middle School Resilient Learner Team are very excited for what is next. Mrs. Kubinski hopes that the third quarter will be Hillside's biggest reward yet, with even more students qualifying for this celebration than in the first half of the year. Hopefully, this tradition will stay strong for many years to come!



Photos taken collaboratively by
Kazi Tomaro - 5th Grade
Natalie Groth -6th Grade
Reyce Kerns -7th Grade
Haley Cancilliere -8th Grade

25 Years of Magic - Why the Boy Who Lived Still Lives in All of Us



Article by CeCe Santander,
8th Grade Student Editor

"It is our choices, Harry, that show what we truly are, far more than our abilities." With these wise words from Albus Dumbledore, generations of readers and moviegoers have been reminded that courage, kindness, and friendship matter most. As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone, it's clear that the magic of Hogwarts hasn't faded, it's grown stronger.

Back in 2001, experiencing Harry Potter was a massive event. Fans lined up outside bookstores, excitement buzzing in the air. The first film brought the wizarding world to life on VHS tapes and DVDs, watched in living rooms with family and friends. There were no streaming services or instant download, just the anticipation of rewinding favorite scenes and sharing theories face-to-face. Social media didn't exist. Instead, fans passed notes in school, debating whether Snape was a friend or foe.

Today, the way we experience Harry Potter is so different. Streaming platforms offer the films in stunning 4K resolution, and virtual reality lets fans wander the halls of Hogwarts as if they were students themselves.

Social media connects millions on TikTok and Discord, sparking global discussions. Yet, despite these high-tech changes, the heart of the story carries on. As Dumbledore reminds us, "Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light."

The books and movies continue to inspire hope and resilience. Students still sort themselves into houses, quoting lines only true fans know. It is a tradition passed down through families.

We still return to the boy who lived because we seek the wisdom of characters who feel like old friends. We remember Hermione Granger's realization that "Books! And cleverness! There are more important things, like friendship and bravery." We laugh at Ron Weasley's fear: "Why spiders? Why couldn't it be 'follow the butterflies'?" We learn from Sirius Black that "We've all got both light and dark inside us. What matters is the part we choose to act on." And we are moved by Severus Snape's single word, "Always."

Technology will keep changing, but friendship, bravery, and the dream of receiving a letter by owl post never go out of style. As Sirius Black once said, "The ones that love us never really leave us." Neither does the magic of Hogwarts. Whether you're watching the films for the hundredth time or reading the books aloud to a younger sibling, the adventure is always waiting, just beyond the cupboard under the stairs. As Hagrid says, "What's comin' will come, and we'll meet it when it does." Here's to another quarter-century of magic, and to the boy who lived, in all of us.

From One Week to One Month, 100 Years of Black History



Article by Aisel Kuzadzhyieva
5th Grade Reporter

February is Black History Month, and this year is extra special because next week marks the 100th anniversary of the very first celebration. Although the tradition began in 1926, it was originally only one week long. It was not until 1976 that February was officially named Black History Month across the country. It is surprising to think that it took fifty years for the celebration to grow from a single week into a full month!

A historian named Carter G. Woodson was the person who first decided to honor this history in February. He chose this month because it includes the birthdays of two famous leaders: President Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. President Lincoln, born on February 12th, signed the Emancipation Proclamation, and Frederick Douglass, born on February 14th, was a brave author who fought to end slavery. Since both men did so much for civil rights, Woodson wanted to use their legacies to help everyone learn about the many achievements of Black people throughout history.

To celebrate this big 100-year anniversary, people are finding creative ways to show their school and community spirit. Some people are even wearing fun glasses with the number 100 on them, while many families are hosting big dinners with their favorite traditional foods. It is a wonderful time to call your relatives and share a meal while talking about the past. Everyone should try to join in on this awesome event somehow, because every small way we celebrate counts!



Picture (above) courtsey of https://cohna.org/

The Great Hindu Awakening

Finding Balance on the Night of Lord Shiva

Article and photos by Nehali Day, 8th Grade Student Editor

At Hillside Middle School, our hallways are filled with families from a beautiful variety of cultures and backgrounds. Among these many traditions is Hinduism, a religion that some of our students and staff may not be very familiar with yet. To help bridge that gap, it's the perfect time to talk about a major holiday that just took place this past February 15th, 2026: Maha Shivaratri.

The name "Maha Shivaratri" literally translates to "The Great Night of Shiva." It is a sacred time dedicated to honoring Lord Shiva, one of the most important figures in the Hindu faith. While it might seem like just another date on the calendar, it carries deep meanings that can help all of us, regardless of our background, understand ourselves a little better.

Who is Lord Shiva?

In Hinduism, Lord Shiva is a powerful deity often called the God of Destruction and Transformation. It is important to know that "destruction" in this context isn't a bad thing; it's about breaking down old, negative habits or "ego" to make room for positive change and new beginnings.

Shiva represents the perfect balance between stillness and action. You might notice he is often shown with a snake around his neck, which symbolizes his fearlessness and mastery over his environment. By celebrating this night, the Hindu community shows respect for Shiva's role in keeping the universe in balance.

Why Do Hindus Celebrate?

Why do millions of people stay awake for this specific night? There are three main reasons:

First, a Divine Union: Maha Shivaratri marks the wedding anniversary of Lord Shiva and his wife, Goddess Parvati. Second, the Cosmic Dance: Tradition says this was the night Shiva performed the Tandava, a powerful dance that represents the cycle of life: creation, preservation, and change. Lastly, Light Over Darkness: Ultimately, the night symbolizes the victory of knowledge over ignorance. It's a reminder to always seek the truth.

Traditions of Worship

There are many ways to observe Maha Shivaratri, both in large groups and in the quiet of one's own home. The most common way is by visiting a Mandir (a Hindu temple).

During prayer, many people chant the mantra "Om Namah Shivaya" 108 times in a row. This ancient saying means, "I honor the divine within myself." At home or in the temple, people also make offerings to Shiva, such as Fresh Fruits and Honey (sepresenting sweetness and health); Bilva Leaves (special leaves that are considered sacred to Shiva); and the Jagran (many people participate in an all-night vigil called a Jagran, where they stay awake until dawn to meditate, sing, and reflect).



Why Is It Still Important Today?

You might wonder why a religious festival is relevant to a middle schooler today. Our modern lives are often "loud" and incredibly fast-paced. Maha Shivaratri encourages us to hit the pause button and practice self-Control (learning to manage our anger and ego); patience (being kind and steady when things get stressful); Introspection (taking a moment to think about our actions and how they affect others).

While the world is full of distractions, Shiva's message is to stay "awake" not just by skipping sleep, but by staying aware of our choices and seeking inner peace.

In conclusion, Maha Shivaratri is much more than just a festival, it's a journey toward self-improvement. It challenges us to let go of negative habits and focus on becoming the best version of ourselves.
By slowing down and reflecting, one cangrow into more positive, balanced people. This "Great Night" reminds the Hillside community that every ending is simply a chance for a new, better beginning.



Left Pic:. Shows the way Hindus respectfully praise God with their right hand. Top pic: Nehali Dey dresses in traditional cultural clothing to represent Lord Shiva dancing with grace.

Chills & Thrills of the Winter Sports Season

Boys Basketball

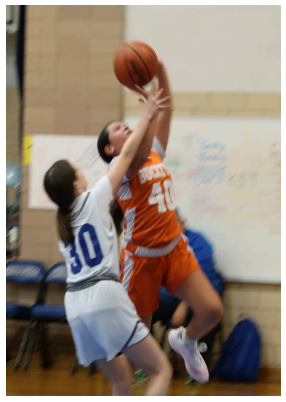








Girls Basketball

















Cheerleading











Wrestling

Photos by 8th Grade Photographers and Student Editors:
Nehali Dey and Jacob Hershberger

Touchdowns, Tacos, and Trendy Tunes

Why We're All Obsessed with the Super Bowl

Article by Islam Yahi
7th Grade Sports Reporter



The Super Bowl is one of the most awaited events in American history. Whether you play football or just love the snacks, everyone is stoked for the big game. It's the most-watched TV event of the year, usually drawing over 100 million spectators. People tune in for a reason, so let's find out what makes it so special!

Beyond the fame, winning the Super Bowl is a massive payday. Players on the winning team individually earn roughly $180,000. Not only do they get a huge bonus, but they also bring home a replica of the team's championship trophy. These replicas alone are worth about $20,000 each, making it a very successful day at the office.

If you aren't watching the players, you're probably watching the commercials, which now cost about $8 million per advertisement. Companies pay this much because they know 100 million people are watching, which means a lot of potential customers. They also hire massive stars to grab your attention. For example, Sabrina Carpenter starred in a Pringles ad called "A Love Story," and Dunkin' Donuts famously paid actor Ben Affleck $10 million to appear in their commercial.



Lately, some companies have tried using AI to save money on filming, but it doesn't always work. Coca-Cola recently faced major backlash for a "hyper-realistic" AI Christmas ad that fans thought looked terrible. Because of the drama, ranking the best and worst ads has become a fun Super Bowl tradition.

Of course, you can't have a game without food. Stadium food is notoriously overpriced, but some of the new trends are actually pretty interesting.

Of course, you can't have a game without food. Stadium food is notoriously overpriced, but some of the new trends are actually pretty interesting. Many stadiums are now mixing spicy honey and chili lime flavors into classics like pizza, wings, and nachos. They've also started serving "questionable" snacks like cheeseburger dip and "bruffles"— which is just short for brownie truffles. If you eat two pizza rolls, six wings, and a brownie, you're looking at about 1,200 calories! It's definitely not the healthiest meal, but it's part of the experience.

For those watching at home, fans have found creative ways to stay entertained. Some teens have even started making "DIY stadium bars," which are basically hats with cup holders and snack trays attached so you never have to reach for your food. To keep things interesting during breaks, people play "Commercial Bingo" or scroll TikTok to see live reactions and stats. Some fans even make bets on random things, like what song will be performed at halftime.

Speaking of halftime, the show is just as big as the football game. While the players are resting, global superstars like Bad Bunny take the stage to perform for the massive crowd. It's the ultimate mid-game party that keeps the energy high until the final whistle blows.

To the Moon and Beyond

Northeast Ohio Helps Launch the Future of Space Exploration

Article by Adhaine Desinor
7th Grade Cartoonist as Guest Reporter



Humans have an incredible, natural desire to explore our planet, but some people feel that curiosity even more deeply, they want to know what lies in the vast mystery of deep space! This is exactly the case for four brave NASA astronauts who are preparing to venture to the moon for the first time in over five decades. This groundbreaking mission is called Artemis II, and it is setting some seriously "out of this world" expectations for our future.

What makes this mission even more thrilling for us is the local connection. Right here in Northeast Ohio, NASA Glenn Research Center has been a powerhouse in making the Artemis missions possible. Since Hillside Middle School is right in the heart of the action, we have a front, row seat to history!

According to NASA, Artemis II "will demonstrate a broad range of capabilities needed on deep space missions. "We can already see that this is true just by looking at their ride, the Orion. This spacecraft, officially the Orion Multi, Purpose Crew Vehicle, is currently the only one in the world capable of carrying a crew into deep space. It even features the world's largest heat shield to keep the astronauts safe during their fiery re, entry into Earth's atmosphere.

The four astronauts chosen for this historic journey are just as The crew will blast off on the Space Launch System (SLS) rocket from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. During the 10, day mission, the crew will travel 4,600 miles beyond the far side of the moon, farther than any human crew has ever traveled before! While they won't actually land on the lunar surface until the Artemis III mission, this journey is a massive leap forward that breaks records and proves that the sky is definitely not the limit.

inspiring as the tech they're flying in. The mission pilot is Victor Glover, a U.S. Navy Captain and test pilot who will become the first person of color on a lunar mission. Joining him is Jeremy Hansen, a y took part in

the first all, female spacewalk in 2019 and is now set to be the first woman to ever go to the moon! Finally, the mission commander is Reid Wiseman, the former chief of the Astronaut Office. Wiseman shared his excitement in an interview, saying the image he wants to see most is his crewmates' faces illuminated by the "glow of the moon" as they fly around its far side. While the excitement is building, space travel requires everything to be perfect. NASA originally hoped to launch earlier, but they recently had to move the date because of a few technical hurdles. During testing, engineers discovered a helium flow issue in the rocket's upper stage and a small problem with a valve on the Orion capsule. To fix these and ensure the crew is 100% safe, NASA rolled the giant rocket back into its hangar. Because of this, the official launch is now scheduled for no earlier than April 1, 2026.

The crew will blast off on the Space Launch System (SLS) rocket from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. During the 10, day mission, the crew will travel 4,600 miles beyond the far side of the moon, farther than any human crew has ever traveled before! While they won't actually land on the lunar surface until the Artemis III mission, this journey is a massive leap forward that breaks records and proves that the sky is definitely not the limit.



connections closer to home

The Great Girl Scout Cookie Showdown

Article by Chloe Vaughn, 5th Grade Reporter



The Girl Scouts have officially shaken up their 2026 cookie lineup with the release of a brand-new flavor called the "Explormore." This tasty treat blends chocolate, marshmallow, and toasted almonds. Unfortunately, to make room for this new creation, the organization had to retire two other favorites: "Toast-Yay!" and "S'mores." While the newcomer is making waves, a recent survey at Hillside Middle School shows that students prefer the classics, even if they can't quite agree on which one is the best.

The results of the survey were shocking, revealing a huge divide between the grades. Students in grades 8 and 6 crowned Samoas as their number one pick. Grade 7, however, went in a different way and voted Lemonades as their favorite cookie.

Most older students hadn't heard about the new Explormore cookie yet, but local 5th grade Girl Scouts at HMS chose this new flavor as a top-tier contender, stating everyone should try them. In the end, (drum roll, please) Samoas cookies were the overall winner in our building.

Do you agree with the outcome of the survey? Which Girl Scout cookies are YOUR favorite?

The Silence is Loud!

The Hidden Cost of Ghosting Your Friends



We've all felt that sudden sting: you send a hilarious meme or a quick question about the math homework, only to see that little "read" notification staring back at you for hours—or even days—without a response. While we usually hear about adults "ghosting" each other on dating apps, it's become a major part of middle school culture, too. We use it to escape social pressure or avoid awkward vibes, but even if we don't realize it, ghosting is making our friendships more fragile and hurting the people we care about.

So, why do we do it? Usually, it's about avoiding conflict. It feels a lot easier to leave a message sitting there than to explain to someone that you're not in the mood to talk. Other times, the "always-on" nature of social media just gets overwhelming, and we shut down. Some people even use ghosting as a weapon,intentionally ignoring a friend to show they aren't a priority. But regardless of the "why," ghosting is a move that can seriously damage someone's self-confidence and cost you a good friend.

The consequences of hitting that ignore button follow you into the real world. When you've blatantly ghosted someone online, seeing them in the hallway the next day is incredibly awkward. It's hard to even make eye contact when you know you left them hanging. Plus, when people don't know why they're being ignored they usually assume the worst and start blaming themselves. By normalizing ghosting, we are losing the ability to have honest conversations about needing space or setting boundaries.

To be clear, being a good friend doesn't mean you have to be glued to your phone 24/7 or reply within seconds. There is a huge difference between taking time for yourself and intentionally leaving someone in the dark. You are allowed to take a break; it's all about how you handle it.

This week, try sending one honest text instead of leaving someone to "read." If you're feeling overwhelmed, just say, " Hey, I'm taking a break from my phone for a bit, I'll hit you up later." It's that simple. Then you can actually relax without the guilt of an unanswered message hanging over your head. We need to stop being afraid of a little honesty and start considering how it feels to be the person on the other side of the screen.

> ***"Ghosting is a move that can seriously damage someone's self-confidence and cost you a good friend."***



Written by
Michael Mays,
8th Grade Student Editor

A Symphony of Seasons: Middle School Stars Shine at Normandy HS













The Hillside Middle School music department delivered an exceptional series of holiday concerts this past December, showcasing a level of artistry that far exceeded expectations for performers of their age. Held within the professional atmosphere of the Normandy High School auditorium, the events featured a full slate of choir, band, and orchestra performances that captivated the community. The evening served as a testament to the immense musical talent of our students, whose technical precision and emotional delivery were truly impressive to witness. Much of this success is owed to the dedicated leadership of Mr. Plasterer and Mr. Stretch, whose expertise and tireless effort in refining these ensembles resulted in a seamless, high-quality production. Their ability to inspire such a sophisticated sound from middle schoolers provided the audience with a night of world-class entertainment and a festive celebration of local music education.

Prior to Winter Break, Mr. Plasterer and students from the orchestra, spread holiday cheer by performing outside of classrooms. The orchestra visited all hallways of the school for this unique mini - concert, such a treat for all!





Welcome to our newest staff members!



Left to right: Aviana Salobecke, Kseniia Irza, Claire Davis, and Abby Halbasch

Just for fun...

Hallway Talk

Which 2026 Blockbuster Hit Will Earn Your Ticket?

Article by Emma Brown
5th Grade News Reporter

Movie theaters are heating up this year! There are so many awesome movies coming out in the summer of 2026. Grab your popcorn and find a comfy seat, because the "Battle of the Blockbusters" is officially here. If you love movies, you need to mark your calendars for these big films hitting the big screen.

The action starts on May 1st with **Avengers: Doomsday.** Soon after, **Toy Story 5** arrives on June 19th, followed by **Supergirl** on June 26th. The fun continues in July with **Minions 3** on July 1st and the **Live-action Moana** on July 10th. Finally, the summer ends with a bang when **Spider-Man: Brand New Day** swings into theaters on July 24th.

If you can't decide which ticket to buy, here is a quick look at what these movies are all about.

First, the **Avengers** are back! This movie shows our favorite superheroes learning how to work together as a team to save the day.

If you like toys more than capes, **Toy Story 5** features Woody and Buzz dealing with a brand-new character who loves high-tech gadgets. The toys aren't sure they like this new electronic friend very much!

Next, the **Minions** are going on a wild adventure, but this time they are traveling without Gru.

If you enjoy the ocean, the live-action **Moana** follows her as she sails away from her home to explore a whole new island.

Finally, in the new **Spider-Man** movie, Peter Parker tries to hang up his suit so he can focus on being a regular college student.

Since there are so many great choices, we asked some students at Hillside Elementary which movie they would choose. If you only had $20 to spend, which one would you pick? This summer is going to be full of action, laughs, and fun stories!



Students at Hillside were asked, "What movie are you planning on seeing this summer?"



Maxine Kline says she will probably see Spiderman because those movies are action-packed and usually have lots of things going on.



Aliyah Al Rajaeb choses Moana. She thinks it will be funny, but also have action in it.



Lucas Parker says he'll see Toy Story 5 because Woody is the best action fighting character.



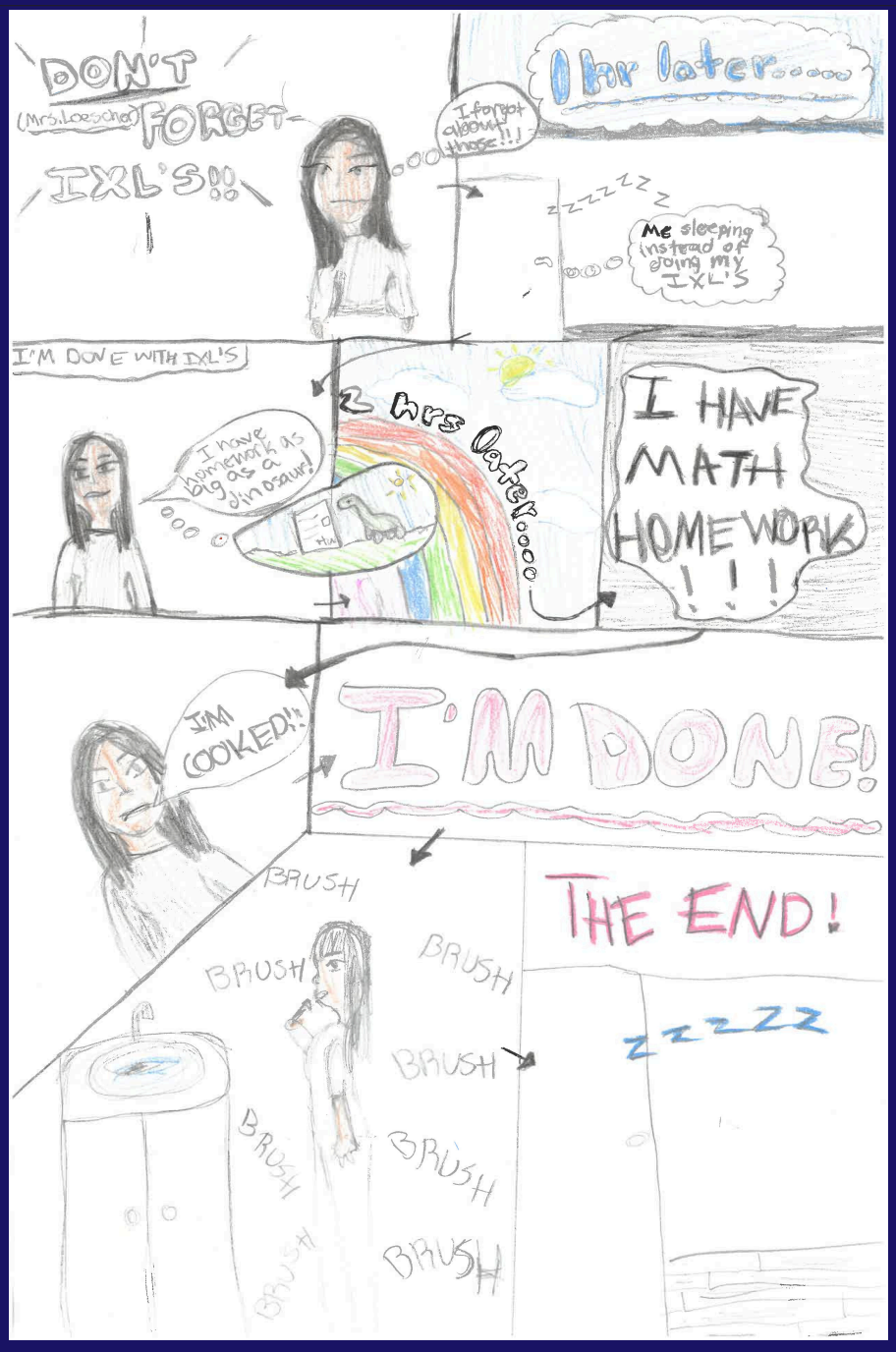
Audrey Horodynski says Minions will be the movie to see because those characters are the best, especially Bob.



EJ Makroglou votes for Avengers. He states all the Avengers movies have been very good with the super heroes working together.

HillSide Humors





Comics created and illustrated by:

(Above:) 7th Grade Cartoonist, **Adhanie Desinor**

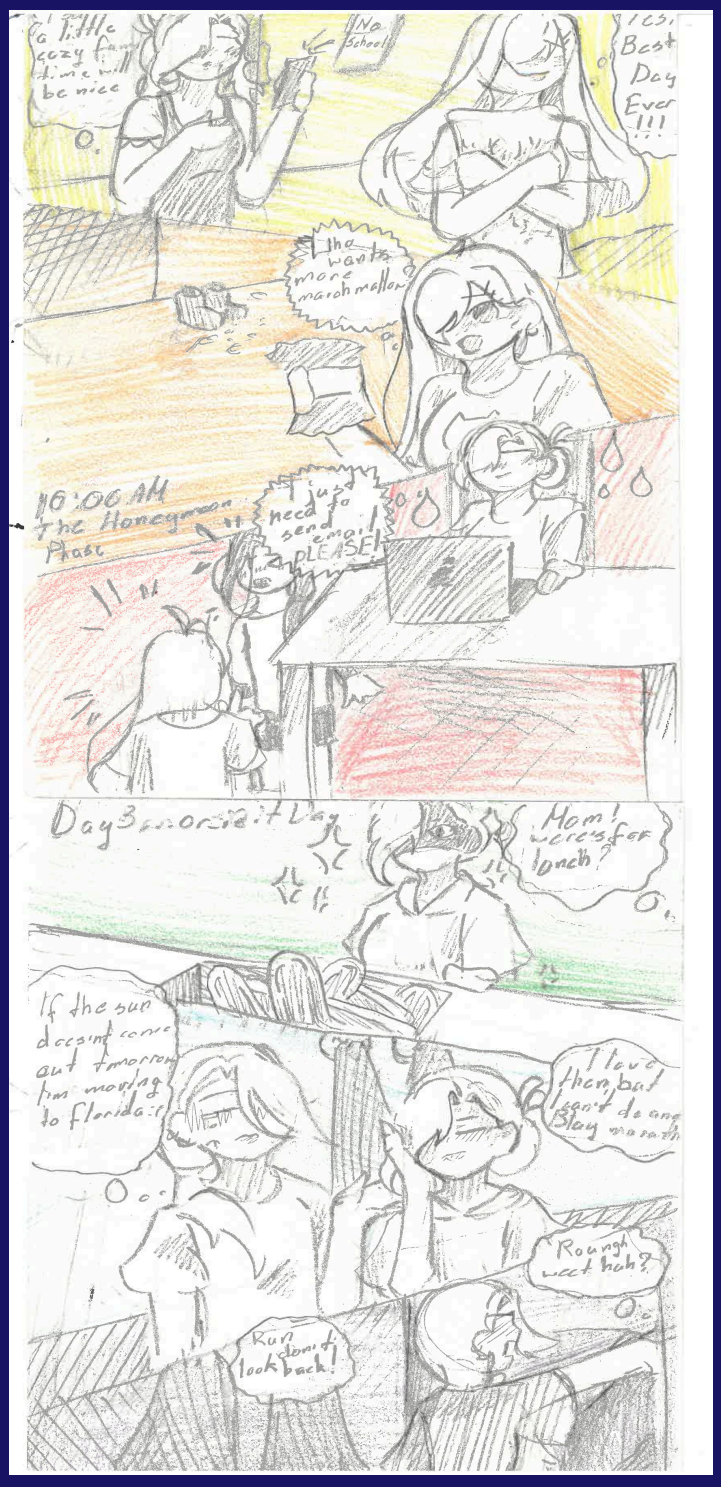
(Top Right:) 5th Grade Cartoonist, **Christina Otero**

(Below:) 8th Grade Cartoonist, **Olivia Garvin**





Humors continued





Comics created and illustrated by:

(Left:) 5th Grade Cartoonist, **Kseniia Irza**

(Top Right:) 7th Grade Cartoonist, **Abigail Halbasch**

(Below:) 5th Grade Cartoonist, **Paiton Long**

Clipart created by:

(Left corner.) 5th Grade Cartoonist, **Claire Davis**







Snapshots at HMS - second Trimester









































