

# THE SPRESS

March 26, 2026

\* NEW MOVIES

\* EASTER ORIGINS

\* NFL NEWS

## Madness in March

Kolby Kostelnik



**Iowa's Alvaro Folgueiras celebrating after making the game-winning shot against #1 seed Florida**

March is the best time of year for all basketball fans. Cinderella runs, crazy upsets and thrilling endings to all the games. March Madness is the popular nickname for the annual NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Basketball Tournaments. It is a massive single-elimination competition held every spring, featuring 68 college teams playing in seven rounds. It spans March and April to crown a national champion.

A popular tradition to March madness is making a bracket to try and predict which teams will go all the way in the tournament. Many people in the U.S. create these brackets on popular sports websites like CBS Sports and March Madness Live. You could even make money off of these brackets or you could just play for fun. The estimated amount is about 60 to 100 million. At South Park High school, twenty-eight out of sixty students will create a bracket hoping to predict big.

The main goal every year is to create the "perfect bracket". People will make multiple brackets

every year and still the perfect bracket has never been completed. The chances of creating a perfect bracket are 1 in 9.2 quintillion. You have a better chance of winning the Powerball jackpot three times, so does this make you think if it will ever be done?

The closest anyone has ever come to a perfect bracket is 49 consecutive correct games, achieved by Ohio man Greg Nigl in 2019. After correctly predicting the round of 64 and 32, his bracket ended up busting in the sweet 16 when Purdue beat Tennessee.

According to statistics, most brackets lose the perfect streak in the first day or two of the tournament. Before the first games of the tournament this year on March 19, 30 million brackets were perfect, but after day one, only 14,000 brackets remained perfect.

Will this be the year someone achieves the perfect bracket and makes history?

## Origins of Easter traditions

Cassie Oxford



The Bible makes no mention of a bunny who delivers decorated eggs to children on Easter Sunday. Have you ever wondered why a religious holiday like Easter is branded with bunnies and chocolate eggs? What does the resurrection of Jesus have to do with any of these things?

While it may seem bizarre, rabbits are an ancient symbol of fertility and new life, which represents the season of spring, so it makes sense that a bunny was chosen for Easter. But how did this come to be? The idea of the Easter bunny first arrived in America when German immigrants settled in Pennsylvania in the 1700s and brought with them the tradition of an egg-laying rabbit called “Osterhase.” Their children would make nests for the bunny to lay its colored eggs. Over time, the tradition spread across the United States, and the Easter bunny soon expanded to include chocolate, other candies, and gifts, with Easter baskets replacing nests.

Eggs are an important part of Easter as well, which are likely linked to pagan traditions. The egg is a symbol of new life and has been associated with pagan festivals celebrating spring. However, from a Christian perspective, Easter eggs represent Jesus’s resurrection. Why do people decorate eggs, though? One explanation for this custom is that eggs were originally forbidden during Lent, so people would decorate them to mark the end of the fasting period.

Did you know that Easter is the second-best-selling holiday for candy in America? Chocolate eggs are obviously a must-have Easter candy, but another candy that rules Easter is the jelly bean, which became associated with the Easter holiday in the

1930s. According to the National Confectioners Association, over 16 billion jelly beans are made in the United States each year for the Easter holiday. Additionally, marshmallow Peeps are a staple Easter candy that come in many flavors and colors, and they were first sold in the 1950s.

These Easter traditions and themes make the holiday special for those who may not celebrate its religious aspect. However, for those who do, it is important not to forget the true meaning of Easter and take time to reflect on the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus.

## NFL signings and trades

Devin Kelly

The NFL free agency signing window opened on March 11, 2026, and since then there have been some crazy free agency signings and trades this off-season.

The top five free agent signings

#1 - Kenneth Walker signed with the Kansas City Chiefs on March 9, 2026 to a three year, \$45 million deal with \$28.7 million guaranteed. Before signing with the Chiefs, he was drafted by the Seattle Seahawks in 2022 and played for them since. He was named the MVP of Superbowl LX before entering free agency earlier this year.

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## IMPORTANT DATES

**March 26: End of third quarter**

**March 27: No school**

**April 3-7: No school**

**April 9-10: Drama Club presents “Shrek” at 7:00pm**

**April 11-12: Drama Club presents “Shrek” at 2:00pm**

**April 22: Earth day**

## Movie galore, we want more!

Jeremy Oxford

With the season of spring in action, many families and friends are already planning their vacations and summer activities to come. Along with trips to sandy beaches or even barbeques at home, there are many new movies coming out in the spring/summer for your families to enjoy. Here are the top 5 most talked about movies coming soon, ordered by their released date.

### The Super Mario Galaxy Movie (April 1)

Mario ventures into space, exploring cosmic worlds and tackling galactic challenges far from the familiar Mushroom Kingdom. This movie is the sequel to “The Super Mario Bros. Movie” that was released in 2023. Some of the known actors are Chris Pratt, Keegan-Michael Key, and Jack Black who all star in other funny and enjoyable movies and TV shows. With a PG rating, it’s a great movie for all ages to watch, especially younger kids.



### Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu (May 22)

Once a lone bounty hunter, Mandalorian Din Djarin and his apprentice Grogu embark on an exciting new Star Wars adventure. Instead of a fourth season, the director of the Mandalorian decided to make a separate movie to serve as a cinematic relaunch for the franchise. The main known actor from the Mandalorian TV show, Pedro Pascal, is now acting in the new Mandalorian movie. The TV series is rated TV-14, so the movie will most likely be the same.



### Toy Story 5 (June 19)

Woody, Buzz, Jessie, and the rest of the gang’s jobs are challenged when they’re introduced to electronics, a new threat to playtime. This is the fifth film to every kid’s childhood movie series. Some of the known actors in this movie are Tom Hanks, Keanu Reeves, and Tim Allen who all star in other known films, such as Forrest Gump, John Wick, and the Santa Claus trilogy. With Toy Story’s G rating, it is a movie for all ages to watch and enjoy.

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## Movie galore, we want more! (con't)

Jeremy Oxford

### The Odyssey (July 17)

After the Trojan War, Odysseus faces a dangerous voyage back to Ithaca, meeting creatures like the Cyclops Polyphemus, Sirens, and Circe along the way. This is a movie made from a well-known Greek myth by the same name. Some of the most known actors/actresses are Matt Damon, Tom Holland, Anne Hathaway, and Zendaya. Ms. Radcliffe, English teacher, shares that she is very excited to watch this movie since she teaches “The Odyssey” to her students. She also says that she’s mostly intrigued to see Tom Holland as Telemachus, but was indifferent to the thought of Matt Damon playing Odysseus. This movie will most likely be rated R due to its violent scenes and suggestive themes, but producers are still weighing their options.



### Spider-Man: Brand New Day (July 31)

Peter Parker tries to focus on college and leave Spider-Man behind. But when a new threat endangers his friends, he must break his promise and suit up again, teaming with an unexpected ally to protect those he loves. This is the fourth Spider-Man movie to the Tom Holland Spider-Man franchise, following the story of his friends and family who lost their memories of him. Some of the most known actors/actresses are Sadie Sink, Tom Holland, and Zendaya, as Sadie Sink became mostly famous due to her acting in the famous tv show “Stranger Things”. “Spider-Man: Brand New Day” is expected to carry a PG-13 rating, so it’s a great movie to watch as a family.



## NFL signings and trades (con't)

Devin Kelly

#2 - Trey Hendrickson signed with the Baltimore Ravens in a four year, \$112 million deal. Before signing with the Ravens, he played for the Cincinnati Bengals for five years where he was named a four time Pro-Bowler.

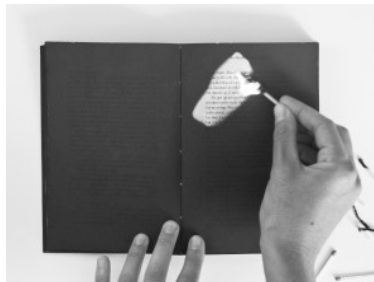
#3 - Daniel Jones signed a two year extension with the Indianapolis Colts for \$88 million. Additionally, he could earn up to \$100 million in incentives. Prior to his extension, he had a one year contract with the Colts where he was competing for the starting quarterback job.

#4 - Alec Pierce also signed a four year, \$114 million extension with the Indianapolis Colts. Prior to the extension, he played the previous four seasons with the Colts after being drafted by them in 2022.

#5 - Malik Willis signed a three year, \$67.5 million deal with the Miami Dolphins, with \$45 million being guaranteed. Before moving to Miami as an unrestricted free agent, he played for the Green Bay Packers as their backup quarterback.

## Interactive books

Kate Seitz



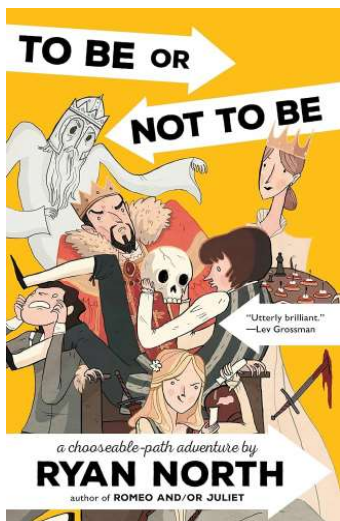
### Fahrenheit 451 (Super Terrain's edition)

This interactive edition of “Fahrenheit 451” doubles as an art piece by Super Terrain, a French graphic designers collective. Only 100 copies total were produced, costing \$451 each (haha). In this special edition, the only way to actually read the book is to burn the pages. They start out blackened, and upon being exposed to heat will reveal their contents. Though the purchase is quite unrealistic for the average person, the concept of it is quite interesting, so it gets an honorable mention.



### S. by Doug Dorst

“S.” by Doug Dorst is best described as a book within a book. In the book S. is a novel, Ship of Theseus, which was written by a mysterious author. The real story unfolds within the margins through written notes between two college students who are trying to unveil said mysterious author’s identity. The book is complete with various physical inserts like postcards, maps, and photos, which act as clues as the reader tries to discern the author’s identity alongside the characters. All these add up to make a multi-layered, interactive, and unique reading experience.



### To Be or Not To Be

“To Be or Not To Be” by Ryan North is one of many examples of a choose-your-own adventure novel. As the title indicates, this book is a chooseable-path retelling of Shakespeare’s “Hamlet.” Readers can choose to play as Hamlet, Ophelia, or King Hamlet (who dies on page one and becomes a ghost), giving a multitude of options with over 100 possible endings. Each ending features a full-page illustration from a different artist, as an added bonus, along with a “Ham-o-Meter” to tell you how closely you followed the actual play. Choose-your-own adventures are great not only because you as the reader have agency and get to direct the course of the book, but also because you get multiple different stories for the price of one! “To Be or Not To Be” is by no means the only option for a choose-your-own adventure novel if you’re not a Shakespeare fan; there exists many across a variety of genres and age ranges, so choose-your-own adventures are a great way to find an interactive novel suited to your tastes.





- Mini-THON is a charitable organization that raises money for pediatric cancer research and patient support.
- Any student can join Mini-THON. If you missed out this year, you can always join next year.
- Mini-THON raises money all year long for this important cause.
- At the end of the school year, we have a huge celebration to recognize our efforts - Mini-THON!

If you want more information, please see Mrs. Peterson or Mrs. Scullo!