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Administrative assistant and former Pine View parent Denise Valentine hangs decorations in preparation for Pine View's 50th anniversary celebration held Jan. 18. The special occasion was commemorated with the company of former alumni, former faculty members and the entire student body. PHOTO BY JADE FIRLIE AND GRAPHIC BY BRIANNA NELSON

by Madi Holmes  
Asst. Web Editor

After 50 years spent striving for continuous growth as a school, the Pine View community has paused in celebration for half a century of academic excellence. The monumental occasion was not taken lightly, as the entire week of Jan. 14 to 18 was allotted for numerous unique and eventful anniversary festivities. Nostalgic events, such as ADVEX, brought back a piece of Pine View's history, along with a school-wide assembly featuring guest speakers and an anniversary video.

Kicking off the week of events were dress-up days to induce school spirit across campus. Students and staff were encouraged to sport their Pine View colors of blue and gold on Monday, and to embrace their

true colors on Tuesday for Nerd Day.

In addition to Nerd Dress Up Day, Tuesday included a guest performance from a professional mariachi band outside of the auditorium. The group, who plays at the Mexican restaurant Mi Pueblo full-time, played traditional Mexican songs, top-40 singles, and even sang "Happy Birthday" to Pine View. The performance not only enhanced school spirit, but enriched the world language curriculum, an academic subject that has always been held with great importance at Pine View.

Wednesday was a blast from the past, as Pine View honored the decade it started. Teachers and students rocked hippie fashion of the '60s and '70s, as some of the era's top songs played before and after

school, as well as in between classes. The nostalgic theme of Wednesday led perfectly into Thursday's jam-packed and historic events.

Thursday, Jan. 17 marked the return of ADVEX, a Pine View tradition dating back to the old campus. ADVEX, which stands for adventure and explore, was a way for teachers to share their unique hobbies and talents with students. Students in grades 2 through 8 chose from 54 classes led by Pine View faculty, and spent the morning engaged in their assigned activity. "For example, I am a Spanish teacher, but I also taught calligraphy. And you might not know that I did calligraphy, but that's just another part of myself that I would expose to the students to get to know me in a different way other than just a Spanish

teacher," high school Spanish teacher, and longest-tenure current teacher, Patti Gerlet said.

The week of events ended Friday, Jan. 18, with an all-school assembly and an aerial drone photo. The drone photo, which used students and staff to spell out 'PV 50,' was shot by drone operator and alumnus Jonathan Warren. Before the drone photo to shoot session, a special 50th anniversary assembly was held in the gym. The entire student body, staff and alumni celebrated together with performances from Pine View's Voca Ensemble and Wind Ensemble guest speeches, a commemorative video and special student speeches from junior and senior class presidents.

continued on page 2

## The Torch reflects on the Parkland shooting

by Elizabeth Hopkins  
Match Editor-in-Chief

On Feb. 14 of last year, a gunman opened fire on Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., taking the lives of 17 students and staff members, along with injuring 17 others. Following the deadly attack, survivors of the massacre demanded action from Florida's legislature, sparking a movement through the formation of Never Again MSD. This serves as a political action committee advocating for strengthening gun regulations.

With waves of student-led activism, all eyes were on Florida, as the national conversation swung toward gun control. Even at Pine View, a mass school walkout transpired March 14 last year. In response to the public pressure, the Republican-dominated Florida legislature ultimately produced

the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Act.

The wide-ranging law requires, among myriad measures, school districts to provide at least one safety officer on all campuses. More information regarding the law's impact on schools is detailed in the attached graphic on page two.

Following the passage of the new law, the Sarasota County School District released a five-point plan to bolster security and safety practices. The measures included outlines for the law enforcement staffing of schools, as well as structural security upgrades.

In years past, the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office, along with local municipal police departments, shared the cost of providing school resource officers to the county's public middle and high schools.

### Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Act

The legislation sets parameters to limit access to firearms for those suffering from mental illnesses.

The legal age to own firearms is raised to 21, and background checks for obtaining weapons are more complete.

Additionally, the Act increases safety in schools by requiring each facility to assess campus vulnerabilities and have an assigned safe-school officer, as well as other safety staff.

GRAPHIC BY SARAH CATALANO

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Tenth-grader dances to the beat  
Marielle Newmark refines her art

Sports, p. 10



Football from an outside perspective  
Twelfth-grader reviews first sports game

Humor, p. 13



The correct bathroom etiquette  
Students offer advice on bathroom usage

## Commemorating 50 years

continued from page 1

by Madi Holmes  
Asst. Web Editor

"I was excited when Dr. Covert gave me the opportunity to speak, because I wanted to express my gratitude for the school that has become my second home. In my speech, I tried to show how the teachers, students, culture, and traditions at Pine View have shaped me and all other Pine View students for the better," twelfth-grader and Class of 2019 President Sachit Gali said.

Pine View's 50th anniversary was also an opportunity for the school community to reconnect with former staff members and leaders. Former principal Steven Largo made an appearance at the festivities on Friday. Largo showed his 'PV Pride' and honored the

progress that Pine View has made since he first became principal. "Pine View's notion of giving back and sharing gifts with others is something that the school, students and staff really embraced back then and I know is continuing now," Largo said.

A 1 - though Pine View's traditions were openly celebrated throughout the week, the school's deep history also lies in some of the people who worked behind the scenes of the anniversary events. Rosalea Jordan, baker for the supermarket chain Publix, revealed that this was not her first Pine View anni-

versary cake. Publix baked Pine View's 30th, 35th and 40th anniversary cakes in addition to this year's 50th. "My favorite part is when we're assembling the cake and all of the elementary students peek through the window and watch. It's truly special," Publix baker Mary Doughty said.



PHOTO BY COURTNEY NELSON

With 50 years in the making, Pine View was able to take a moment to reflect upon past achievements. Built on a bright past filled with traditions and academic excellence, Pine View continues to pave new roads in education that are sure to last far into the future.

## A year after the Parkland shooting

continued from page 1

by Elizabeth Hopkins  
Match Editor-in-Chief

After lengthy public disagreements between Superintendent Todd Bowden and Sheriff Tom Knight, Knight announced his plan to terminate the usual cost-sharing agreement in regards to school resource officers. Other agencies followed suit. Following negotiations, an 80 to 20 percent cost split between the district and all agencies, respectively, was achieved for the 2018-2019 school year.

Prior to this resolution, in April, the school board made the decision to establish an internal police force. Although this promised to save money, it garnered controversy for concern that there would not be enough time for the force to become operational before the coming school year.

Timothy Enos, named Executive Director of Safety and Security and Police Chief for the Sarasota County Schools Police Department (SCSPD) in December, explained the force is currently fully staffed. As required by the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Public Safety Act, 28 officers are stationed at elementary schools, previously without a law enforcement presence. Next year, the district plans to deploy SCSPD officers on all campuses, marking an end to the use of school resource officers within the district.

Funded by the State of Florida and local property taxes, Enos said that an internal force allows the school board greater "autonomy," allowing a security system "tailored specifically" to the school itself.

**Everyday, 47 children and teens are hurt by gun violence**

65 percent of Americans believe laws regarding gun sales must be stricter

**2018 had the highest number of recorded school shooting incidents at 97**

113 people were injured or killed during school shootings in 2018

Source: Brady Campaign, Politics, Center for Homeland Defense and Security, BBC

GRAPHIC BY BRIANNA NELSON

Another component of the original five-point plan established in the aftermath of Parkland was also developed prior to the 2018-2019 school year. In March, the school board agreed to invest \$25 million for the purpose of hardening schools across the district. At Pine View, just like all other schools in the district, among other structural developments, bullet resistant glass was placed in the front office and fencing was completed to create a single point of entry.

Furthermore, on-campus drills, previously characterized using color codes, are now defined as Lockdowns, Limited Lockdowns or Evacuations. "I think it's important that we move to plain language," Superintendent Todd Bowden said in an interview with ABC7. "That if we're in a lockdown, we say 'Lockdown,' so you don't have to scramble for some decoder."

This shift in policy was apparent during a district-wide drill Dec. 14, the 6th anniversary of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting; later that

day, the Sandy Hook Foundation's prevention program gave a presentation in schools across the district explaining how students can perceive warning signs from peers. "I think it's really important that we're educated about the gravity of easily overlooked behavior," eleventh-grader Stefani Wald said. "It opened my eyes; these sort of tragedies could happen here."

For students at Pine View, the Parkland shooting hit close to home; after all, the city is less than three hours away from campus. The need for stakeholder involvement has also been addressed by Enos through the continued development of School Safety Teams, directed at Pine View by Assistant Principal Allison Rini, which are "given responsibility on campus," Enos said.

These teams allow schools to address safety concerns on campus, as well as facilitate safety training for faculty and staff. "We're empowering our community to keep ourselves safe," Rini said.

## IN BRIEF

### AP course information night held

by Leo Gordon  
Asst. Match Editor

Held to showcase the extent of Pine View's AP course offerings, eighth- through twelfth-grade students and parents attended Pine View's first annual AP Student Parent Information Night (S.P.I.N.) Jan. 10.

Prior to the creation of the event, students relied mainly on word of mouth and course selection catalogs to learn about the details of AP classes available on campus. At the event, students and parents were given the opportunity to learn more about specific AP classes in 15 minute sessions led by the teachers.

In each 15 minute session, students and parents were offered course information handouts regarding coursework, prerequisites and exams for each specific class. In addition to the objective aspect of the experience, students and parents were also given the opportunity

to meet their future teachers "AP S.P.I.N. night was helpful because it helped me determine what courses I want to take next year. Last year, we knew less about what we were going into when registering for classes. I found it very informative and I think Pine View should continue with the even in coming years," tenth-grader Ethan Halbreich, who attended AP S.P.I.N. night, said.

The turnout at the event according to testing coordinator Lori Wiley, was much higher than expected at around 350 to 400 students and parents. "Overall, we are calling AP S.P.I.N. a success. We saw a high level of interest from our students and families, who took the time to come and ask questions and gather planning resources," Wiley said. "Our AP teachers demonstrated the passion and dedication they have for their students, their content area and their craft — our teachers love teaching."

### First schoolwide STEM night

by Zoe Merritt  
Asst. Opinion Editor

Pine View hosted its first schoolwide STEM night in the Student Union Jan. 15 from 6 to 7:30 p.m., bringing science enthusiasts of all grade levels together for an informative evening. STEM night was originally established by middle school science teacher and STEM night sponsor Hali Flahavan. Elementary STEM fair sponsors and elementary school teachers, Eduardo Maron and Mari Rosander, later joined her in organizing the evening.

Inside the Student Union, nothing was left untouched by science. The elementary side of the room housed second-through twelfth-grade science fair projects and tables with different activities. Set up by Mu Alpha Theta club members, wandering students could choose a table to learn anything from card tricks to how to create a paper hexaflexagon.

Students from Neil Gleitz's

middle school technology class displayed their coding project which lined the walls. On the high school side of the Student Union, an inflatable star ball was set up by science teacher Dr. Dylan Bell. Twelfth-grader William Giraldo stood by the doors and pointed attendees in the direction of the orange tape that would lead them to Room 013, where students watched a demonstration of a robo throwing frisbees outside. In side Room 013, other robot and engineering demonstrations were on display. Nearing the end of the night, Dr. Cover demonstrated a thermite reaction on the fire lane for parents and students to observe.

The first Pine View STEM night was a success with many parents and students in attendance. The night allowed for students to engage in different mathematical and scientific activities, and many hope the STEM night will return in future years.

### Alumnus' company furthers fertilizer

by Joanna Malvas  
Asst. News Editor

Pine View alumnus Eric Rosenthal and his father, Ed Rosenthal, returned to Pine View to share the history of their family company and NASA collaborations with high school students Jan. 17, during the week of celebrating Pine View's 50th Anniversary. The two have come to the Pine View campus numerous times, often meeting with elementary science classes to talk about their company, Florikan.

Their company was founded in 1981 and works to manufacture different types of fertilizers to help improve agriculture. These fertilizers also cater to the various needs of their consumer companies. The company has further partnered with National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) since 2007, producing fertilizer codings to help NASA foster environments to grow fresh produce in space.

In 2007, Florikan patented their work to advance agri-

culture. Even as the company evolved, the company stayed true to its corporate compass: and its mission to "evolve plant nutrition through technology." The company offer: product-friendly alternative: to pesticides that contain caustic toxins.

Through Florikan's technological advancements in fertilizer and successes with NASA, they have achieved breakthroughs, such as splitting the time it takes to germinate lettuce. The Rosentals have also earned esteem awards, including winning the Environment Awareness Award in 1995, receiving the Florida State Governor's Most Innovative New Product Award in 2008, and being inducted into The Space Technology Hall of Fame last year.

With their intriguing presentation and many achievements, the company impact: the future of agriculture "Something in space can improve life on Earth. What we do on Earth is changing agriculture," Ed Rosenthal said.

## Mariachi band performs for 50th



A mariachi band organized by Spanish teachers Patricia Zdravkovich and Judit Pauring performs in front of the office during fifth and sixth periods Jan. 15. The world language department often arranges for the group to perform in order to immerse students and staff in Hispanic culture, but this visit was special as it was to commemorate the 50th celebration. PHOTO BY BEN GORDON

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# FBLA club advances to state competition

*The rebooted club achieves success, with eight members winning first*

by Ella Hechlik  
Web Editor-in-Chief

Pine View's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) club recently advanced to the state competition after 14 out of 24 members qualified in the district competition Jan. 12. The district competition was comprised of over 120 individuals participating from different high schools in the area. States will be in Orlando March 22 to 25.

Because of its status as a national organization, district FBLA competitions are divided into specific counties across the nation. Pine View's district competition took place at Southeast High School in Bradenton and consisted of multiple counties in the surrounding area including Manatee, Desoto and Sarasota.

After an extended absence, the club was rebooted last school year by eleventh-grader and FBLA president Christiana Guan. The club is sponsored by English teacher Desiree Schell. "Last year mostly consisted of member recruitment, year is the official start," Guan said.

Leading up to districts, each club member studied individually for their specific event in the competition. Meetings consisted mostly of updates, fundrais-

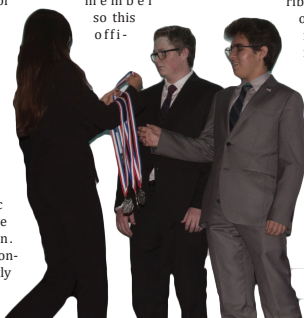
ing ideas and hearing from different speakers about running businesses and furthering their careers.

Students selected specific events they wanted to compete in — ranging from testing, performing, speaking, advertising and specializing in specific fields. Many of the events are completed at the actual competition, such as the performance and speech events, while others are finished beforehand and graded at the competition, such as testing events. "Half of the events are directly related to business, but there are multiple fields to compete in such as graphic design, journalism or political science," Guan said.

There is a list of competencies that include specific details on the FBLA website, and members are expected to self-study through the internet and textbooks that are available.

"I was really surprised and excited by how well we did considering it was our first conference," Guan said.

Medals are awarded for first, second and third place winners and ribbons are handed out to victors placing after. "It was really nice to see the entire club get together and compete. Many students qualified for states, and everyone is looking forward to the next competition" eleventh-grader and FBLA vice president Kris Selberg said.



Students from Future Business Leaders of America competed in various fields including speaking, advertising and performing Jan. 12 at the district competition. TOP: ninth-grader Sonica Prakash, eleventh-graders Kaila Stafford, Vincent Scuteri, Liam Williams, Faith Kern, Christiana Guan and Ethan Dayo. BOTTOM: eleventh-graders Bari Namgoong, Cara Kaminski, Hannah Varghese and ninth-grader David Howard. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY SAVANNAH JAMES

## Winners of FBLA's District Competition

### Advertising

1st - Christiana Guan

### Banking & Finance

1st - Thomas Rudloff

### Business Calculations

5th- Kris Selberg

### Business Law

1st - Ben Nicholson  
2nd - Vincent Scuteri  
4th - David Howard

### Economics

3rd - Claire Wang

### Global Business

1st - Savannah James,  
India Hirschowitz,  
&Jaden Wiesinger

### Health Care Administration

3rd - Bari Namgoong

### Intro to Financial Math

1st - Julia Kourelakos

### Intro to Business

1st - Sonica Prakash

### Job Interview

5th- Faith Kern

### Journalism

1st - Aliyana Sales  
3rd - Ethan Dayo

### Political Science

1st - Kaki France

### Public Speaking

3rd - Hannah Varghese

GRAPHIC BY NAINA CHAUHAN

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## Juniors hold 'See Something, Say Something' week

by Olivia Hansen  
Humor Editor

As a continuation of the class of 2019's "Start With Hello" program, the class of 2020 has taken their own approach to achieving the ultimate goal of a safe and secure environment at Pine View. The initiative took place Jan. 7 to 11 through the "See Something, Say Something" event by the Sandy Hook Promise organization. Class officers and students alike worked together to create a series of presentations, shown to grades six through twelve, to enact change within student relations.

This school year, the senior class implemented "Start with Hello," a week-long event taking place Sept. 24 to 28 that brought awareness to bullying and offered tips on how to reach out to others. Assistant Principal Tara Spielman was inspired

by an article she read to assign each class a different quarter of the school year to implement values of community at school. The week of Jan. 7 to 11 was set aside for the junior class, and the rest of the third quarter will be dedicated to the sophomore class' initiative.

"What we're doing was started by the Sandy Hook Promise Foundation, which is reporting instances of self-harm and getting someone who could help, or trying to help stop it yourself. We're kind of building off of what was created by this foundation after Sandy Hook because that could have been prevented," class of 2020 president Dominic Marhoefer said.

Junior class officers welcomed students who have a particular interest in the program to help share personal experiences and presenta-

tions to grades six to twelve. "Hopefully the 'See Something, Say Something' initiative will create a more open and trusting community. Victims of bullying hide things, and I hope it will be able to change that," eleventh-grade student Alex Gage said.

During the presentation Jan. 7, guest speaker Dalhia Perryman from Sandy Hook Promise, traveled to Pine View to encourage students to say something when they see potential acts of self-harm or possible threats. Class of 2020 officers followed Perryman's discussion with an impactful video, stressing the importance of student voices and awareness. The meaningful film left the usually boisterous room in silence, proving to place a lasting effect on the student body.

"If we promote safer working environments, in turn, we will promote student



Guest speaker Dalhia Perryman from Sandy Hook Promise talks to students on the importance of speaking up. The forum, held Jan. 15, was accompanied with a presentation by officers of the class of 2020 and videos. PHOTO BY ANNA LABINER

relations," Marhoefer said. "One of the primary foundations of friendship is trust, so I think getting to realize that we're all a school family, op-

posed to students who have their own classes, would be a huge step in the direction of actual, personal connected student relations."

## Student places at Florida State Fair Art Portfolio Competition

by Clyde Morgan  
Asst. News Editor

Participating in the Florida State Fair Art Portfolio Competition for the first time, twelfth-grader Ellie Bodor earned a place among 32 exhibitor spots. 350 students from 20 different counties attended the competition, where a panel of five judges reviewed

sculpture portfolios in order to select the artists. The Florida State Fair began Feb. 7 and will end Feb. 18 in Tampa; Bodor's pieces will be exhibited during the entirety of the fair.

Bodor's art portfolio consists of many beautiful and intricate wire sculptures

that portray a hidden message and consists of different vibrant hues. Some of her past sculptures here also incorporated metal screws and bolts.

One recurring theme in Bodor's art is fictional creatures. "I used to do a lot of things from the natural world, like animals and bugs, but I do more mythological creatures now," Bodor said. "Especially dragons, lots of dragons."

Of the art pieces Bodor submitted, 6 out of 10 were dragons and the remaining four were other mystical beasts.

According to Bodor, she never saw her artwork as a school activity or career, but she believes that it will be a lifelong passion she will pursue regardless of her surroundings. "I do it for myself, both for the comfort I find in my medium's familiarity as well as for the challenge of every new project," Bodor said. "Making artwork is a form of self-care, which is why it's too personal for me to sell my pieces. I am and have always been self-taught."

Bodor's inspiration comes from her favorite mythical books and stories. For example, one of her sculptures, titled "Plainswalker," is a mysterious beast that appears in the game of Dungeons & Dragons.

Bodor began working with wire at the age of 9 or 10 when she was playing with her mother's craft supplies. Bodor didn't think of it as art then, but the habit stuck around. "My mom likes to

remind me that my grandfather's side of the family was a line of English silversmiths — she thinks it's almost as though metalworking were a trait passed down by blood," Bodor said.

Although all of her sculptures hold a special place in her heart, Bodor recognizes the complexity of some. She believes "Plainswalker," "Pride," and "Leviathan" are some of her most ambitious and complex pieces to date, and she believes they show the most dramatic improvement in her artwork.

"Ellie is very self-disciplined and works on the detail of each piece until she is satisfied with the results," former Pine View art teacher Retsy Lauer said. "She is very open to critiques and suggestions for improvement."

Bodor has won Scholastic Art and Writing medals in the past, but placing in the State Fair Art Portfolio Competition considering her selectivity marks a particularly special accomplishment. "I was very surprised and glad to be chosen as an exhibitor. I didn't think I'd have a chance in a statewide competition and I'm honored to exhibit at the state fair," Bodor said.

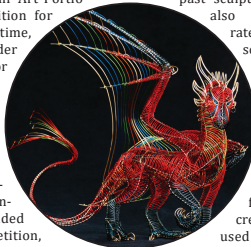


PHOTO PROVIDED BY ELLIE BODOR



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ELLIE BODOR

## buildOn hosts the first Pine View Family Movie Night

In an effort to raise money to build a primary school in Malawi, Pine View's chapter of buildOn showcased Disney's 'Coco' Jan. 18 on the quad

by Cate Alvaro  
Copy Editor

Partnering with the Sarasota Film Festival, Pine View's chapter of buildOn provided students and their families with a magical showing of Disney's "Coco" Jan. 18 on the quad.

The event began at 5 p.m., allowing guests to mingle before settling to watch the movie at 6 p.m. The club hosted the fundraiser in an effort to raise money to build a primary school in Malawi, Africa. Upon entering the quad, families were asked to donate \$10 to go to the cause.

Members of buildOn will be traveling to Malawi later this year in June to carry out their initiative.

The Sarasota Film Festival brought a screen and placed it in front of the Media Center. Along with a showing of "Coco," guests could purchase Errol's Jamaican jerk chicken and ribs, Domino's pizza, popcorn, desserts and an assortment of beverages. The concessions lined the side of the quad.

Modeling a STEM movie night

the fifth-grade teachers hosted five years ago, the club's event was just as successful. "[The STEM movie night] was a great event, so we wanted to do something similar," math teacher and high school buildOn club sponsor Summer Grantham said.

After the family movie night event, high school buildOn currently met their goal of raising \$30,000 to build a school in Malawi. Members are continuing to hold fundraisers for travel expenses of those making the trip. In the future, the club will be brainstorming more ideas to afford next year's trip to Nepal.

"The fundraiser allowed the high school buildOn chapter to not only work with the community interested in our cause but also the middle school buildOn chapter. We showed the video our chapter created from the trek last year to Haiti before broadcasting with the Sarasota Film Festival," eleventh-grader and club member Lindsay Farb said. "Overall, it was a fun night for the family and supporters of our hard-working club."



TOP: Staff and students enjoy a relaxing evening on the quad watching the hit Disney movie "Coco." buildOn used the event to further fundraising efforts for the building of schools in areas such as Africa. BOTTOM: Eleventh-graders Robert Noble, Lindsay Farb and Lily Dougherty helped pass out chicken, ribs, pizza, popcorn and desserts to the families who attended the movie night.

PHOTOS BY NINA VOLPPE

# ADVEX returns in honor of 50th anniversary



TOP: Eighth-grader Cole Nebel displays numerous paper flowers during ADVEX Day Jan. 17. These "Papel Picado" flowers were created in the classrooms of Spanish teachers Judit Pauling and Patricia Zdravkovich. BOTTOM: Middle school students began their ADVEX class by stretching to ensure they were warmed up. English teacher Cheryl Steele hosted a class along with tenth-graders Emely Fernandez and Marielle Newmark on Dance and Hip Hop. PHOTOS BY ELENA D'AMATO AND SAHIL AGARWAL

by **Tricia Saputera**  
News Editor

From rollerskating to acting, students in grades two through eight had the opportunity to venture into new explorations during ADVEX Day Jan. 17. Incorporating its goal to "advance and explore" into the name, the unique Pine View tradition was brought back to celebrate the school's 50th anniversary. Teachers were able to share their passions outside of class with students of different grades through activities such as kite surfing and quilting.

ADVEX was originally implemented at Pine View by founding Principal John D. Woolever in 1969. "It was a chance to explore and open yourself up to new ideas and new possibilities," Pine View Association (PVA) president and alumnus Ben Turoff said.

Longtime Spanish teacher Patti Gerlek said, "For example, I am a Spanish teacher, but I also taught calligraphy. And you might not know that I did calligraphy, but that's just another part of myself that I would expose to the students to get to know me in a different way other than just a Spanish teacher."

The day was mainly organized by third-grade teacher and School Events Coordinator Misty Tucak, who had taught ADVEX classes before the tradition stopped due to the increasing number of students and difficulties in scheduling.

However, for Pine View's special 50th anniversary, "The teachers came together and said 'Let's do this,' and we put together what we felt like was a two-period, exciting, fun adventure for every student," Tucak said.

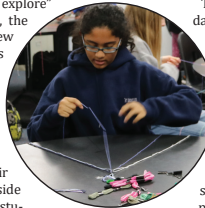


PHOTO BY CLYDE MORGAN

To accommodate the many students, math teacher David Nezelek helped by creating a computer program for students to list and be assigned to their preferred classes. In the past, teachers worked

together to schedule students into their ADVEX classes one by one. Additionally, aide Christa McCarthy helped Tucak find volunteers and create tickets for students to use when entering their respective classes.

There was certainly widespread support for ADVEX, as many teachers teamed up to host classes together, providing 54 different subjects to students. Even high school students, who were not able to sign up to take classes, supported the activity, by volunteering to help teachers.

Class of 1980 alumna Jacqueline McCormick returned

to campus as a volunteer for ADVEX, which she experienced during her time at Pine View "[Volunteering for ADVEX] is great, it really warms my heart. My mom taught here, and my sister and I went here, and my two sons went here. So all of us have different ADVEX stories and to recreate this now with the next generation is really nice," McCormick said.

As a whole, the interactive day was successful and thoroughly enjoyed by many. "I did the 'Puzzling Puzzles' class and it was rather challenging and I would be very excited if they would do ADVEX next year as well," sixth-grade Holden MacDonald said.

In the future, Tucak hopes to allow high school students to participate and perhaps turn ADVEX into an annual event. "I would say that we've had plenty of extremely positive feedback

**"I did the 'Puzzling Puzzles' class, and it was rather challenging, and I would be very excited if they would do ADVEX next year as well,"**

**Holden MacDonald, sixth-grader**

back we've had teachers who said that they really would like to do it again. We haven't heard whether it will become an annual event or not, but there's been plenty of people to step up to say that they would like for it to become an annual event," Tucak said. "I really think it's for gifted students, and that's what this school is all about."

## Check PVTorch.com



Scan this QR code to read the full story about alumnus Jonathan Warren who took the PV50 drone photo on pvtorch.com.

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## Pine View Robotics sweeps competition

VEX and TSA teams take their robotics skills to the regional competitions

by Sarah Hassan  
Match Layout Artist

During the 2018-2019 school year, the Technology Student Association (TSA) and the VEX Robotics Pine View teams flattened opponents, winning numerous awards for their accomplishments at competitions.

### TSA

At the TSA regional competition in Bradenton Dec. 1, the Pine View TSA teams received first place for Coding, along with second place for Coding and Prepared Presentations. Due to the limit of three

participants per team, TSA members divided into two separate teams. The first-place coding team consisted of ninth-grader Sonica Prakash and twelfth-grader William Giraldo, and the second-place team consisted of ninth-grader Uday Goyat and tenth-grader Gatlen Culp.

The students prepared for the regional competition with a team-coding practice. For the Prepared Presentation component, in which each person receives a topic and presents it 24 hours later, Prakash won second place.

She had a time limit of five minutes to discuss how to survive a zombie apocalypse. "[The coding event] was interesting because everybody had their own solution to the problems. We had to think of a way to get all of the solutions combined into one, and everybody has to agree on

**//** We had to think of a way to get all of the solutions combined into one, and everybody has to agree on the same thing."

**Sonica Prakash,**  
grade 9

the same thing," Prakash said.

The Pine View TSA club meets every Thursday to discuss upcoming events and to track the progress of each member. Practice

for the 30 different events of the competition consisted of self-preparation, however, members could rely on more experienced participants for help if needed. When at home, the individual groups would use programs like Skype or Discord to communicate with each other.

For the Coding event, the teams had previous knowledge on the topic, so individuals did not need to prepare as much compared to other events. The preparation consisted of practicing problems online that resembled



Robots created by twelfth-grader Alex Lindsay and his team compete in a shoving match. The competing teams created robots that vied to become "king of the mountain" in the competition at Lakewood Ranch Jan. 19. PHOTO PROVIDED BY DEBBIE BERMAN

questions posed at the competition.

TSA will be competing in a state competition Feb. 27 to Mar. 2 in Orlando.

### VEX Robotics

In Orlando on the weekends of Nov. 10 and Dec. 8, Pine View's two VEX Robotics teams won a total of four awards for their competitions. At the first competition, twelfth-grader Lucas Giffard's team, 212D (eleventh-grader Claire Wang, ninth-grader Brennan Halcomb and twelfth-grader Ben Hostetler) won the the Create Award.

At the same competition, twelfth-grader Alex Lindsay's

team, 212B (twelfth-graders William Giraldo, Joshua Perna and Matthew Vaccaro) won the Design Award. At the second competition, team 212B won the Design Award again and the Judges Award. Both VEX teams also qualified for the CREATE U.S. Open Robotics Championships.

The two leaders prepared for the competitions by practicing after school in engineering teacher and robotics clubs sponsor Drew Wormington's classroom to keep their engineering skills in check.

On Jan. 19, the VEX 212B team won the Excellence and Tournament Awards at a competition in Lakewood Ranch, allowing the team to enter the state competition

level a second time. The team qualified for states the first time on Nov. 10 in North Port for the Bobcat Brawl event.

"I am proud of my Pin View students on these respective teams. They worked hard and put in countless hours to prepare. It is a privilege to share the fields—with teams of this quality, Wormington said.

The VEX team will be competing at Heron Creeb High School in North Port at the tournament called Clasi at the Creek Feb. 23. In the future, the VEX team plans to compete for World Qualifier for both competitions: the Florida State VEX Championships and the competition at the University of South Florida.

## Talking Hues: A colorful twist on psychology

by Isabella Gaskill  
Asst. Web Editor

Color saturates daily life, yet despite its prevalence, the impact of color often goes unnoticed. Walking through the mall or down the street, the human eye is bombarded by energetic reds, bright yellows and vibrant blues from every direction. This constant exposure of different pigments popping up everywhere has its impact. The study of color psychology provides a deeper look into the influence of shades on emotions and decisions.

Color psychology is the study of how pigments impact

human behavior. An example of this is how people associate certain colors with certain emotions, such as blue with sadness and yellow with happiness. This area of psychology has backed up preconceived notions of what colors mean. Red, for instance, is often described as powerful and intense. Ac-

cording to [ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov), it has been proven that red increases one's heart rate and causes the strongest emotional reactions.

These effects go further than just moods, though. Certain colors may influence decision making, especially when shopping. According to ShortStack.com, 84.7 percent of people claim that color is

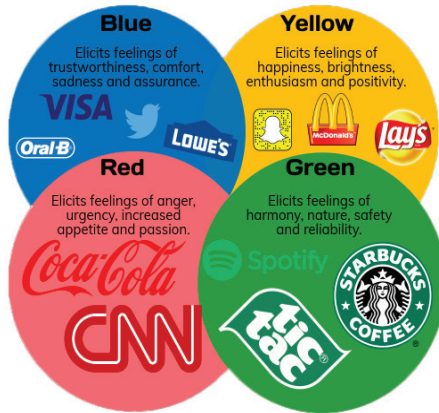
persuade consumers to make certain choices.

For example, blue is often utilized by banks and other companies that require the trust of the client to elicit feelings of comfort and assurance. On the opposite side of the spectrum, because of the intense emotions evoked by red, it is often used on advertisement signs to influence

buyer: to take advantage; clearance; and deals. Red also encourages appetite so it is commonly used by brands such as Coca-Cola and McDonald's to encourage consumers to purchase their products.

Color psychology can also be used to one's advantage in everyday

life. On the day of a big test throwing on a yellow shirt may help, as yellow has been linked to intelligence. Wearing green may also stimulate peaceful and calm feelings. The way that color impacts the human brain is a deep science, so be sure to pay more attention to the way color influences every decision.



GRAPHIC BY LEO GORDON

### What's New in High School Science?

The scoop on the remake of PV's purple building

- New Cabinetry
- Chemical-resistant floors and counter tops
- New drains for Marine Biology Honors tanks
- New portable lab tables and desks
- Drying racks
- Fume hoods in some classrooms
- Lockers replaced with chemistry storage room
- Deionized water stations
- Pull-down electrical cords
- Improved internet connection

#### What do the teachers think?

"Biggest impact is the flexibility. We can change things around depending on what we are doing that day."  
-Roger Siegel, physics teacher

"One of the biggest impacts is space with six sinks. We can move the lab tables around to make lab stations. It makes clean-up more efficient and safe so we have more class time."  
-Rebecca Kehler, biology teacher

"The camaraderie between my colleagues is really great. Every morning we come to school and we all motivate each other."  
-Angela Keiper-Wilson, biology teacher

## Student dances through the drama

### Tenth-grader brings beauty to her life through the art of dance

by Kasumi Wade  
Sports Editor

Moving with both practice and poise, tenth-grader Marielle Newmark has been a dedicated dancer since the young age of five, and has continued to refine her grace with her craft for the past 11 years.

Following in her mother's footsteps, Newmark first began to pursue dance through dance classes after showing an interest in the art at an early age. Newmark's mother, Lauraine Newmark, danced when she was younger, and decided to sign her daughter up after watching the enthusiasm she had for the art of movement. "Marielle's passion for dancing started when she started

to walk, and I think she felt inside, 'Why walk when you can dance?'" Lauraine Newmark said.

While Marielle was once part of the competition team, due to the hard balance between school, dance and extracurriculars, she no longer competes. According to Newmark, competing was simply too intense.

By practicing dance for her own good and not for her competitors and judges, she no longer has to restrict herself from fully loving the art of dance.

Newmark is currently pursuing her dance career at the Ovation School of Musical Theatre in Lakewood Ranch, Fla. She trains three days a week for an hour in acrobatics, jazz, hip hop and lyrical. Now performing in two shows a year at Riverview High School, Newmark rehearses several group dances and solos to showcase in the recitals.

When performances are approaching, practice schedules become more rigorous, which is well worth it to Newmark. "Show days are my favorite because my teammates and I finally get to put our hard work and preparation to the test," Newmark said.

According to Newmark, her dance coach, Kate Kulik, has truly been an inspiration, helping to deepen her interest and to become more invested in dance.

"She's an amazing dancer who really excels in all genres of dance.

"The feeling I get when dancing is amazing... Even when times have gotten hard with family, friends, and drama, it has always been something I could fall back on and always been there for me."

Marielle Newmark,  
grade 10



LEFT: Tenth-graders Marielle Newmark (bottom left) and Sydney Gough (top right) perform in Showstoppers, a competitive dance showcase. TOP RIGHT: Newmark demonstrates the level of flexibility dance has given to her. BOTTOM RIGHT: Newmark shows off a move from one of her hip hop routines. PHOTO BY MARIELLE NEWMARK

She's one of the best students I teach because she's really passionate about the art of dance," Kulik said.

Dance is an outlet for Newmark, and she said she uses it as a mechanism to calm herself and to destress. "Each dance is different and all convey different emotions. You can truly make every dance your own," Newmark said.

Newmark plans to continue dancing well into the future, as it is an important part of her life. "The feeling I get when dancing is amazing... Even when times have gotten hard with family, friends and drama, it has always been something I could fall back on and always been there for me," Newmark said.

**FEBRUARY HOROSCOPES**

**AQUARIUS** (January 20- February 18)  
You're flying high lately, so don't forget to share the wealth. Help out a friend in need or just spend some time with the people in your life. Your positivity is infectious!

**ARIES** (March 21-April 19)  
You've got a dream and it seems out of reach. Don't fret. Work in short bursts, a little each day and you'll accomplish your goals in no time at all!

**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20)  
You've been on an emotional roller coaster lately, happy one minute, sad the next. Slow down your roll and show a little love! It might help you find some balance.

**LEO** (July 23-August 22)  
Seems like your telltale heart is weighing heavy right now! There's a secret you've been hiding for some time now and it may be time to spill it. Don't worry, your friends will understand.

**LIBRA** (September 23-October 22)  
Hold up there, you! It's easy to commit to things and say you've got enough time to help everyone with their troubles, but don't neglect your own projects in favor of someone else's.

**SAGITTARIUS** (November 22-December 21)  
Someone in your life has been dragging you down lately, and it's been a major source of stress. It's time to sit down and have a serious discussion about the future of your relationship.

**PISCES** (February 19- March 20)  
It's the season of love, and you're someone who could use reminding of that right now. Remember that no matter what struggles you're facing, your friends have your back.

**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20)  
You're frustrated at certain limitations in your life, so now is the time for change. Being open to the suggestions of others could lead to a dynamic transformation and a few important revelations.

**CANCER** (June 21-July 22)  
Presents and packages are great, but they aren't the true meaning of life. Show your graciousness to the people in your life by giving instead of receiving. You won't regret it!

**VIRGO** (August 23-September 22)  
Uh oh! You've hit a major roadblock in something you're working on. You're stuck. The solution? Approach the problem from a new angle and you'll find the answer you're searching for.

**SCORPIO** (October 23-November 21)  
You've been lost in your own head for a while and your relationships have taken a hit. Pay a little more attention to the world around you and come back down to Earth. Your friends miss you!

**CAPRICORN** (December 22-January 19)  
You've been in a lull for quite a bit, so it's time to see what you can do to keep busy and be an active member of your community! Get involved with a new service project, or join a club!

GRAPHIC BY MADI HOLMES

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## ESCAPE

GRAPHICS BY BRIANNA NELSON AND ZOE MERRITT

Escape rooms have a lock on popular culture today, and are spreading like wildfire across the nation. Sarasota is no stranger to this phenomenon, and quickly catching on to the puzzle game craze. Will you escape in time?

### Escape Countdown

by Ben Gordon  
Sci & Tech Editor

Puzzling teenagers, friends and families alike, Escape Countdown has been challenging Sarasota's most adventurous and inquisitive since its opening in 2016. Each of the five escape rooms hold unique mysteries and clues that will lead to the guest's hopeful escape from the room. Guests must complete all of the puzzles and find all of the clues before 60 minutes goes by; if they are unable to finish the room in 60 minutes, they lose the challenge.

Upon entering the building, guests are greeted by a staff member who guides them throughout the entire experience as well as explains the rules and strategies for each room. Participants are asked to place all of their personal belongings in lockers, including cell phones and bags. Guests may choose to keep their cell phones with them but if a staff member catches them looking at their phone, five minutes are deducted from the 60-minute time limit. Further along the hallway are the escape rooms with seemingly ambiguous doors that lead to mysterious worlds inside.

In the "Trouble in Paradise" room, a category 5 hurricane is pummeling towards Siesta Key Beach. Guests must escape the beach and tiki bar rooms in order to get to safety before the storm hits. Hidden in the room are puzzles, padlocks and miscellaneous objects that must be used to escape. A large portion of time in this room is devoted to finding codes, sequences and letters that can be used to unlock doors and locks. In the midst of all of this, a TV screen displays the amount of time left for guests to escape.

Additional escape rooms in-

clude Mad Hatter, an Alice-in-Wonderland-themed room, Hyde Away, a Victorian London-themed room and Evening in Paris, a date night themed room.

Escape rooms do require some level of strategy, but at Escape Countdown, guests are also allowed hints which are given by the staff member controlling their room. Guest can hold up an "SOS" sign to cameras located around the room, after which the staff member will give a hint on the TV screen. Participants are allowed three hints outright but can earn more hints by singing, acting or telling jokes to the staff member. If a participant feels uncomfortable, they may press a button next to the door at any time and the door will open.



PHOTO BY BEN GORDON

While the escape rooms are great fun and are worth visiting, there are a few negatives. At \$30 per person, the prices can easily reach over \$100 for a family. It also seems that after four visits, guests will have run out of rooms to escape and will have to wait for new rooms to be designed.

Putting everything into consideration, Escape Countdown is an amazing place to spend an hour with friends and family. The price may be a little high, but if guests do not visit regularly, it is worth the price and is surely worth the visit.

Escape Countdown is located at 6525 S Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34231. The facility is open from noon to 8 p.m. on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays, noon to 10 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, but closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.

Rating:  
4/5 Torches



### Escape Reality

by Haleigh Brown  
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

Entering Escape Reality, one is immediately faced with a real life projection of their imagination. Welcomed by a waiting room filled with retro lockers and a random assortment of decor lining the walls, the facility's electric energy resembles the excitement of its escape rooms.

Past the greeting area, there are three options of escape rooms along the border, a bar comprising of light drinks and snacks, as well as a special place for parties and virtual reality experiences.

In a typical escape room, a group is locked into a themed room for an hour and must solve puzzles to unlock the door. Escape Reality provides each group with a walkie-talkie to communicate with staff members. Puzzles include decoding locks, finding secret passageways, as well as understanding



PHOTO BY HALEIGH BROWN

The three options for theme choices include Corporate Spy, Descent into Madness and Mafia Mayhem. Each are comprised of one room, except for Corporate Spy, which actually spans across two. This allows one to be based off of Dunder Mifflin, from the popular TV show "The Office," or Initech, based off the 1999 movie "Office Space." After one finishes their room, they gather with their party and are given a large assortment of costume options to put on before the staff snaps a picture of you to document the experience.

Opening its doors Labor Day of 2016, Escape Reality has now recently started offering a space for virtual reality where they provide two

escape experiences: Escape the Lost Pyramid and Goblin's Quest. Each room is \$27 per person, whereas the virtual reality costs \$30 per person. Both options offer a maximum of up to eight people.

Escape Reality also offers options for parties, with the main space located in the back, decorated with unique pieces. From sparkling sheets lining the walls to multicolored lights strung along the top, the room carries a retro vibe throughout the space. The area is comprised of the virtual reality setup at one end, with booth seating on the opposite side. Many games, such as air hockey and giant Jenga, are offered as well as several beloved board games. If one would like to block off the space for \$32 a person, this comes with two pizzas and a drink for each guest, along with karaoke and the entire game space.

Escape Reality offers a unique experience like no other with their dedication to their roles as actors in the escape rooms, complimented by the retro and eclectic decor, allowing one to feel like they have actually, escaped reality.

Located at 6250 N Lockwood Ridge Rd, Sarasota, FL 34243, open from 1 to 10 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays with extended hours from 1 p.m. to midnight on Fridays and Saturdays, closed on Tuesdays.

Rating:  
5/5 Torches



### 'Escape Room': the movie

by Brianna Nelson  
Opinion Editor

If there is one thing the horror genre and the film industry as a whole have showed, it is that pop culture rarely inspires good movies. And although I came into "Escape Room" with low expectations, it was surprisingly good for what it is, providing a fun romp for an hour and a half. However, with its main drawbacks falling on a lack of substance and plot-filled plot, the film will fade as another fad production unlike its physical counterparts across the country.

"Escape Room," directed by Adam Robitel, is a thriller-horror film based around six strangers being roped into a series of dangerous escape rooms for a cash prize. The movie throws the characters into various deadly scenarios while allowing us to learn more about the protagonists and their pasts. The movie released to mixed reviews, and for good reason. While the film as a whole surpasses its low expectations, it is ultimately unable to escape its mediocrity.

Despite its drawbacks, "Escape Room" has definite positives. One of the primary aspects of the film that keeps the viewer intrigued is the elaborate set

design. Every single scene is brought to life with the attention to detail in every escape room. One thing the audience will probably notice is how every room is a giant practical effect, and the effort placed into every shot is palpable. It's a delight for the eyes and honestly the strongest facet of the film.

A common complaint of the entire horror genre is the seemingly never ending parade of bad choices made by the main characters. "Escape Room," however, avoids falling into the pitfalls that plague young adult horror as, unlike other movies, the characters have genuine thought processes that you can follow. Even though most of the characters become irritating by the end of the movie, at least it is not for terrible decision-making. Instead, the characters become annoying with their interpersonal interactions that basically boil down to unnecessary rudeness.

A personal favorite aspect of this movie is the way it handles thrill and horror. Instead of exclusively relying on gore and similar crutches to incite fear in the audience, "Escape Room" is able to effectively use the thriller portion of its horror-thriller title. The movie uses quick cuts and other editing to skirt having to show excessive blood or

violence, to the benefit of the film as a whole. The movie is able to build genuine tension within the various rooms with an ever-escalating sense of danger and risk of death.

In terms of criticisms, however, this movie has issues to spare. I felt this movie was bordering in between being a quality film and just another lackluster B-movie, the epitome of a three out of five rating, and I am of the belief that this mediocrity stems from the lack of originality this concept provides. In the end, its inability to create anything new or provide a meaningful twist on its concept is its weakness. It leaves the

viewer unsatisfied and feeling empty once the fun and thrills of the movie are over.

Though the movie is visually appealing and thrilling, its lack of innovation to the genre and a weak plot towards the end of the movie hold it back. It's disappointing, because the movie had the potential and the budget to be something better.

Rating:  
3/5 Torches



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Scan this QR code to read Brianna's latest blog review of Bandersnatch on our website.





# Pine View's 50th anniversary

Pine View is a colorful community, cultivating generations of future leaders and bright minds. Its history is rooted in a high success rate, beautiful campus, and an unrelenting commitment to education. Nonetheless, what truly pulls Pine View together is the staff and student body. The drive and dedication shown by all who step foot on the current campus reflects a tradition of excellence, first established in 1969. This year we celebrate 50 years of Pine View, and the Torch invites you to venture back to the early 70's when the school was still taking root near current-day Alta-Vista Elementary School.



QUOTES COLLECTED BY ALYSON MIZANIN, AVA EPSTEIN, VIR PATEL, ANSON NGUYEN, KYLIE BATES, JONAS MEYER, CLAIRE CHRITCHETT, ELENA D'AMATO, APOLLONIA KROLIKIEWICK, JADE FIRLIE, LIZA STRONG, LUKE ROMINIECKI, VICTORIA LIU, MARYBETH DAMICO, MAX FRIEDLAND, EVAN CRESSELL-SIMMONS, NATHAN WEITZNER, COURTNEY NELSON, NEVAEH ZIMMERMANN, NICO BRION, SEBASTIAN GENELHU-BAZAN, SAM WRIGHT, TYRA MOTKAR





# est. 1969



Pine View is established by its first principal, John D. Woolever.



The first Cobalt is held in the spring, getting its name from being held in the science lab.



The Pine View Torch is established by alumni Aaron Stutz and adviser Bernice Brenner.



Mrs. Shea creates the first third grade sleepover



Pine View moves to the new campus in January.



Dr. Stephen Covert replaces former principal Steven Largo.

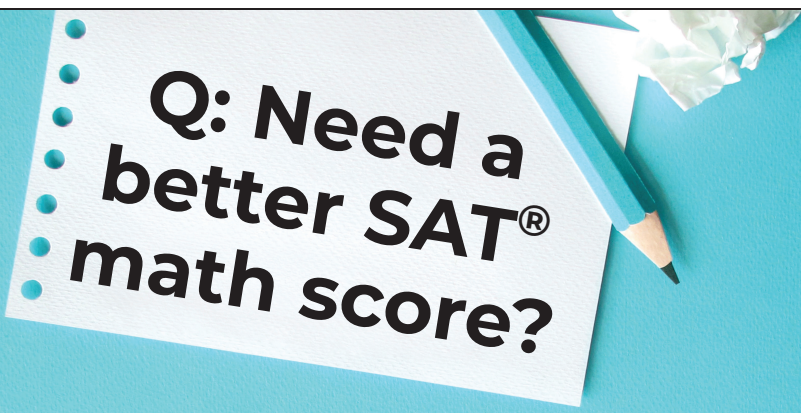


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# Torch makes its hoops hypotheses

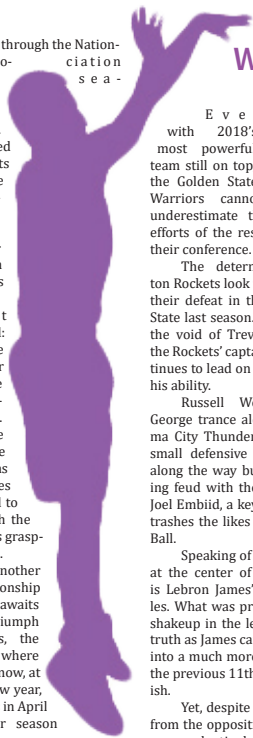
Who will finish where this season? — Staffer outlines NBA predictions

by Manny Rea  
Managing Editor

Only halfway through the National Basketball Association season, it's still tough to call a change in the tides of war. In a season riddled with power shifts and predictable wins, the contradiction makes for what can be either an aggravating or a fruitful season for basketball fans coast to coast.

Important dates lie ahead: a trade deadline on Feb. 7 to teeter the balance of the league and the All-Star Game on Feb. 17 to represent the culmination of the year's best. Also, as the decade reaches a close, a true end to an era comes with the last of the '98 class grasping on to the game.

Whether another cruise to a championship for Golden State awaits or a chance for triumph from competitors, the Torch evaluates where teams stand from now, at the start of the new year, to the waning days in April when the regular season will be finished.



## The Wild West

Even with 2018's most powerful team still on top, the Golden State Warriors cannot underestimate the efforts of the rest of their conference.

The determined Houston Rockets look to make a splash after their defeat in the playoffs to Golden State last season. Despite a struggle in the void of Trevor Ariza's departure, the Rockets' captain James Harden continues to lead on his own to the best of his ability.

Russell Westbrook and Paul George trance along with the Oklahoma City Thunder, combating not only small defensive and offensive issues along the way but also the antagonizing feud with the Philadelphia 76'ers. Joel Embiid, a key villain in the league, trashes the likes of Harden and Lonzo Ball.

Speaking of the Showtime Lakers, at the center of this season's stories is LeBron James' outing in Los Angeles. What was promised to be a major shakeup in the league has turned into truth as James carries a youthful squad into a much more hopeful season than the previous 11th place conference finish.

Yet, despite these growing strides from the opposition, the Warriors ride on unrelentingly. An already stacked

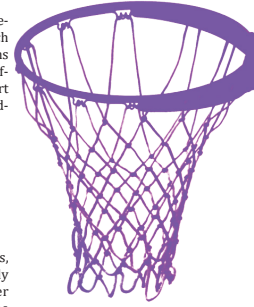
force of nature, DeMarcus Cousins' debut on Jan. 18 only proved how much more lethal the reigning champions can be. Dethroning them will prove difficult as they persevere on the court and in the collective soul of modern hoops.

## The Electric East

In the absence of LeBron James, the Cleveland Cavaliers have clearly been crushed without their former golden boy. Now an advantage to the rest of the conference, contenders, such as the Boston Celtics, Milwaukee Bucks and their "Greek Freak" Giannis Antetokounmpo, and the Kawhi Leonard-run Toronto Raptors, aim to take control of the East.

At only 24 years-old, Antetokounmpo stands proud with chart-topping performances in the conference. While slacking a bit in the standings, the Celtics remain playoff-worthy with the excellence of Kyrie Irving, looking to make a break in the opened-up conference.

The East also hosts many of the league's senior players representative of a different age. Veterans Tony Parker, Dwayne Wade and Vince Carter (one-half of the '98 class, alongside Dallas Maverick's Dirk Nowitzki in the West) are still kicking it, albeit in more relaxed and less-demanding roles, for their respective teams. Even former star Carmelo Anthony has been traded around from team to team like an unwanted puppy, most



recently moved to the Chicago Bulls from Houston on Jan. 21, and most likely to be passed around again come the trade deadline. Simply put, these are remnants of a time ruled by an old class of players, like Kobe Bryant and Paul Pierce.

While our attempts at court side divination are sure to fall flatter than six year-old Sprite Cranberry, it goes without saying that the NBA may hold indications of greater parity in the league. Even if the Warriors make it again and Steph ends up flaunting another toddler in Finals press conferences, time holds the key to competition. As so far evident this year teams have stepped into the void left by James' departure: Easterners now vie to take their shot at a championship. James in the West adds another shogun fighting for Western dominance. It is up to shifting pieces and players on the Jenga blocks to topple Dub Nation. And whether that happens in 2019 is yet to be determined.

## [an infographic]

## Gym by the Numbers

<h3>YMCA</h3> <p>Sachit Gali Grade 12</p> <p>"The YMCA is near Pine View, which makes it perfect for going right after school. Also, the YMCA offers a student discount which makes it cheaper than most gyms in the area."</p> <p><b>Locations and Hours*</b> 8301 Potter Park Dr, Sarasota, FL 34238 — open 7 days a week, 5:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 5:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Friday, 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Saturday, and 10 am to 5 p.m. Sunday.</p>	<h3>Crunch Fitness</h3> <p>Caroline Creevy Grade 10</p> <p>"I choose Crunch because it's closest to my house and has everything I need for a good price. I like that it's small but fits a weight room plus an open mat area so I can do workouts on my own, but also use the ergs or treadmills provided there if I need to. Also, many of my friends go there so I never know who I'm going to see when I'm there."</p> <p><b>Locations and Hours*</b> 3762 Bee Ridge Rd, Sarasota, FL 34233 — open 7 days a week, 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday, and 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.</p>	<h3>LA Fitness</h3> <p>Robert Rigano Grade 11</p> <p>"A few of my friends went there and they taught me how to lift so I figured I'd stick with them, and now more have joined so we have a pretty big group that goes. They also have good basketball facilities and a pool along with a hot tub. Everything is also very clean and well-maintained."</p> <p><b>Locations and Hours*</b> 4057 Cattlemen Rd, Sarasota, FL 34233 — open 7 days a week, 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday, and 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.</p>	<h3>Orange Theory</h3> <p>Ella Lenhart Grade 9</p> <p>"Orange Theory is different from other gyms. With gyms like LA Fitness or the YMCA you just buy a membership and go whenever you want. Orange Theory motivates you to workout every week with a trainer that is pushing you to the max, and that's why I love it."</p> <p><b>Locations and Hours*</b> 6509 S Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34231 — open 7 days a week, 5:45 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Saturday, and 7:30 p.m. to 12 p.m. Sunday.</p>
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\*Location closest to Pine View



## A Python's first football game experience

PHOTO BY WILLIAM KHABBAZ

by William Khabbaz  
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

As a proud Python, football games are the last event that would ever be written into my agenda book, well, prior to this winter break, that is. After receiving my acceptance into Syracuse University, I was invited to attend my first college football game in Orlando Dec. 28. The Syracuse Orangemen challenged the West Virginia Mountaineers for the Camping World Bowl Championship.

Accompanied by three of my closest friends, we ventured to Orlando to experience the vibrant bowl game. When pulling into the stadium, the buzz of energy and team spirit was tangible. This was something beyond my scope, and I felt out of place at times, but the general excitement for the Syracuse Orangemen kept my attention during the entirety of the game.

While enjoying the view from section 106, the game started off with the

crowd cheering and the ball in the air. As this was my very first football game, the energy of the gridiron induced an abundance of excitement from my friends and I. The first quarter started off slow. Syracuse scored their first points 12 minutes into the game with a 4-yard passing touchdown to running back Abdul Adams, putting them 4 points ahead of the Mountaineers after their previously scored field goal.



PHOTO BY FRANKIE GRASSO-CLAY

That was the first touchdown of the game and the crowd went wild. The sea of orange went up in a roar; that moment showed me the real reason behind the sport. It was the true essence of fandom and school spirit.

The game remained heated as the Mountaineers fired back with a touchdown in the first two minutes of the second quarter with a 3-yard run by running back Kennedy McKay. Even when the opposing team scored, there was still a feeling of joy. The air was filled with so much pride that it eliminated all fears of losing the game. It was a true sign of sportsmanship. I realized that this was just a game and a moment for fans to show their fighting spirit.

The second quarter ended with a



PHOTO BY WILLIAM KHABBAZ

field goal from the Mountaineers and another touchdown from the Orangemen. This left the score at 14-12, giving the Orangemen a two-point lead.

The third quarter was the slowest part of the game, both teams only scoring off field goals. By the end of this point in the game, the Mountaineers took a one-point lead against the fighting Orangemen.

The fourth quarter was the most eventful experience of my

life. Within the first five minutes of the last quarter, the Orangemen scored two touchdowns, with a field goal between them. The crowd went wild, Orange confetti everywhere and smiles filled one side of the stadium. The Orangemen defeated the Mountaineers 34 to 18. This was my first football game but it definitely won't be my last. Even though I don't know much about the sport, I can speak for the spirit that filled my heart with excitement and the willingness to learn.

The sea of orange went up in a roar; that moment showed me the real reason behind the sport. It was the true essence of fandom and school spirit.

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The third quarter was the slowest

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## Getting your fit on at Mantra Fitness

by Anna Labiner  
Features Editor

Often dubbed a simple exercise class targeted towards moms and yoga enthusiasts, Pilates serves as an engaging workout that is far from easy. This form of exercise aims to strengthen and stabilize participants — Mantra Fitness in Sarasota fulfills this goal. Founded in 2012 by Kathy Maloy, Mantra Fitness introduced Sarasota to a new style of working out, utilizing the Megaformer device to improve balance, flexibility and strength.

The Megaformer was invented by Joseph Pilates to help hospital patients build muscle but has since been integrated into the Pilates community. While Pilates can be performed on simply a yoga mat, Mantra Fitness promotes the use of the device, which has a bed-like frame with a platform that slides back and forth. The platform is connected to a set of springs that can be added or subtracted depending on how much resistance is desired. The machine engages the whole body and helps pinpoint which areas of the body need the most improvement.

One of the best things about the Megaformer is the versatility. Exercises can be performed sitting, standing, sideways, lying down, pulling on the hand straps and many other variations. The machine is quite sophisticated, with training many parts of the body using just one piece of sleek equipment.

Mantra Fitness offers a comforting vibe with a simplistic design and a soothing atmosphere. The staff is welcoming to newcomers, fully explain-

ing complex exercises on the Megaformers. Frequent visitors also perform the motions for reference to help others decipher the different aspects of the more complicated moves. The constant motivation and instruction from the trainer greatly improves the entire experience, especially for someone who is new to the Pilates scene.

According to Mantra Fitness employee Caroline Hughes, especially for high school athletes, Pilates is an excellent way to strengthen the opposing muscle groups that one can use for activities like track basketball, running and soccer. Overall, "It's a great strengthening workout for athletes or even people who just like to work out. It's fast, effective and a good alternative to things like running," Mantra Fitness employee Caroline Hughes said. Looking for a lower-impact exercise regimen, Hughes started Pilates after injuring her knee at high-intensity workout classes. She has been teaching at the studio for almost a year now.

The facility offers a variety of courses, from beginner to total body and costs \$18 for a first drop in class. Although the machines seem daunting at first, the staff advises sticking with it and guarantees a productive experience with fast results.

Mantra Fitness is located at 3906 S Tamiami Trail, Sarasota, FL 34231 and has varying hours.

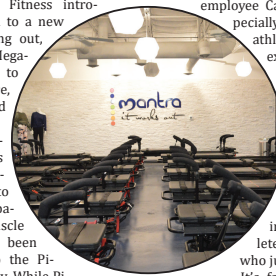


PHOTO BY ANNA LABINER

Rating:  
5/5 Torches



# Student practices to be on 'par' with the pros

by Sarah Catalano  
Sci&Tech Editor

From the tee box to tournaments, tenth-grader Lydia Vaccaro has been golfing competitively for eight years. Putting on a variety of courses, Vaccaro takes the game to the max, one swing at a time.

Initially joining golf due to her family's love of the sport, Vaccaro has since been encouraged to strive for greatness. "Since my family is very forward about golf, it's an everyday topic," Vaccaro said. "If they weren't as into golf as they are, I definitely wouldn't be as into it. It pushes me to do it a lot more."

Her brother and father have been large influences on her performance in the sport. Vaccaro's brother, Matthew, also plays golf and played on the same team as his sister, up until this year. Her father supports her endeavors in golf by acting as her caddy and by cheering her on.

"Lydia, as a player, is stubborn," twelfth-grader Matthew Vaccaro, said. "When she goes out to play, she goes out to win."

Three to four days a week, Vaccaro practices for at least three hours. She trains

with her team, Venice High School, at Pelican Point and Capri Isles, and individually at the Oaks club — playing in nine-hole courses to refine her skills. The players participate in regular drills that improve their game and help build companionship between team members, including putting the ball 3 feet from the hole, 50 times, with one hand and with both hands.

According to Vaccaro, her favorite part of the game is the short game — chipping and putting by the green. This part of the game involves hitting the ball with little force and requires more finesse to navigate the ball into the hole. "It's something that's very difficult for people to do when they don't normally play for so long, so it's where you get the most points in the game usually," Vaccaro said.

Tournaments are typically held early in the morning and can last from four to six hours, depending on the number of holes. They often involve shot-guns, in which all players tee off at the same time. Vaccaro plays in tournaments with the United States Junior Golf Academy (USJGA) and with the Venice High School girls golf varsity team. She participates in two tournaments a month for USJGA, and during a six month season, plays with Venice in three games every week. She scores in the low 80s.

"She's very positive, she's very upbeat. The other girls look up to her," Venice girls varsity golf coach Cary Wilgren said. "She had the best scoring average on the team. She also made it to the regional tournament — she was the only player that did."

Reaching regional level, alongside her can-do attitude, Vaccaro won MVP of her team for the year. "[The tournament] was really intimidating because everyone was so good, but it was also exhilarating because I was by myself and just going with it."

During practice about a year ago, Vaccaro shot a hole-in-one, marking one of her



PHOTO PROVIDED BY LYDIA VACCARO



Tenth-grader Lydia Vaccaro prepares to hit the ball during practice at a driving range. Vaccaro has been playing golf for eight years, now for both Venice High School and the United States Junior Golf Academy.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY LYDIA VACCARO

Lydia, as a player, is stubborn. When she goes out to play, she goes out to win. ”

Matthew Vaccaro, grade 12

proudest moments in golfing. According to golfdigest.com, the odds of an amateur golfer making a hole-in-one are 12,500 to 1.

Her role model, Gabrielle Tomeo, was the Florida State Championship winner three years in a row and currently plays for the University of Wisconsin. Like Tomeo, Vaccaro plans to pursue golf in college. Practicing this sport has not only taught her technique and skill, but also a more mature outlook on life. "It's a very patient game, because you'll hit some bad shots. When you hit a bad shot you have to recover and sometimes the game goes very slowly. You have to be patient," Vaccaro said.

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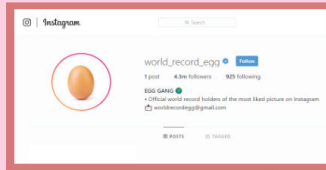
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## Meme of the Month

### Origin:

On January 4, an Instagram page featuring just a picture of an egg sprouted out of nowhere and has taken the world by surprise. This Instagram page, with the username `world_record_egg` had one goal to become the most liked picture on Instagram.



### About:

The Instagram profile achieved its goal in just over a week, and now has the most liked photo on Instagram, beating Kylie Jenner, who had previously held the record with 18 million likes. The `world_record_egg` is also verified and has over 50 million likes, Kylie Jenner being one of them.



Like any other popular "trend," people around the globe quickly hopped on to produce memes, often involving Kylie Jenner.



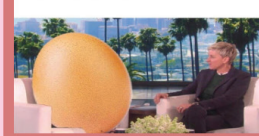
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The picture of the egg now has more than 2.9 million comments. The `world_record_egg` page has also begun to post pictures of an egg cracking. With each picture, the egg is slowly getting more and more cracked. What's inside the egg?

Graphic by Frankie Grassio-Clay  
Photos provided by Twitter

## Candy Hearts company faces catastrophe

by Anna Labiner  
Features Editor

With winter festivities now in the rearview mirror and winter break long gone, many cling to one last holiday to wrap up the festive season — Valentine's Day. Notorious for its abundance of marriage proposals and candy, the holiday is beloved by many. Sadly, this Valentine's Day will be missing one iconic aspect — candy hearts. As of two days ago, the controversial yet cherished sweets were pulled from the shelves after horrified customers found that the hearts displayed some startling and unsavory messages.

Customers everywhere were shocked as they opened their boxes of candy hearts expecting flirtatious quips and love notes, only to find passive aggressive phrases like, "I love how you just wear anything," "You really have a face for radio" and "Love is dead."

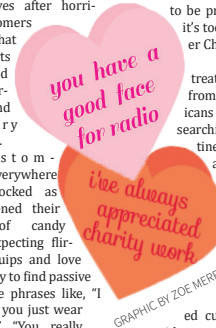
"I don't even like candy hearts but this is just appalling," twelfth-grader Lovisnt R. Eel said. "My girlfriend just broke up with me. I don't need a candy heart telling me that my hair looks dumb pushed back. I can't even eat my feelings away without being attacked. Valentine's Day is ruined."

Obviously, the general public is distraught about the whole situation and everyone is asking the question: Who is behind the hearts? Luckily, we finally have an answer: The candy heart production company, Help I've fallen for you and I can't get up (HIFFYAICGU), released an official statement

stating that the CEO of HIFFYA ICGU, Val N. Tynepun, had recently gone through a breakup and lashed out by writing down his anger on the holiday sweets. "I guess we should have seen this coming after his meltdown at the board meeting. He came in sweatpants and he was holding a gallon of chunky monkey ice cream. At one point he had a 40-minute-long argument with himself about calling his ex back. Looking back, we probably should have checked his ideas before sending them out to be produced, but I guess it's too late now," co-worker Chee Syjoke said.

With the chalky treats completely wiped from the shelves, Americans everywhere are searching for a new Valentine's Day fix, but to no avail. "Candy hearts are garbage but now I have to buy people actual gifts instead of just writing their names on one of the boxes," disappointed customer Eilav Cand said.

While the global tragedy does not yet have a viable solution, Principle Dr. Stephen Covert tells Pine View students: not to fear, as he has taken it upon himself to ensure that Pine View students have an enjoyable Valentine's Day. He has recently released his own exclusive line of candy hearts all featuring his classic quotes and sayings. Although he has no hair, Dr. Covert has a lot of heart and a lot of love to go around, so don't forget to pick up a specialized candy heart this Valentine's Day. Sayings range from "Remember you are standing on the shoulders of giants" to "Make it a great day Pine View."



GRAPHIC BY ZOE MERRITT

## The Torch tries reading The Torch: A harrowing adventure of trials and torment

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"News is the only thing I'll read and I only read that much because I'm in charge of it. Can you imagine if I actually read this whole thing? All 16 pages which all 32 of us on staff spend six straight weeks putting to-

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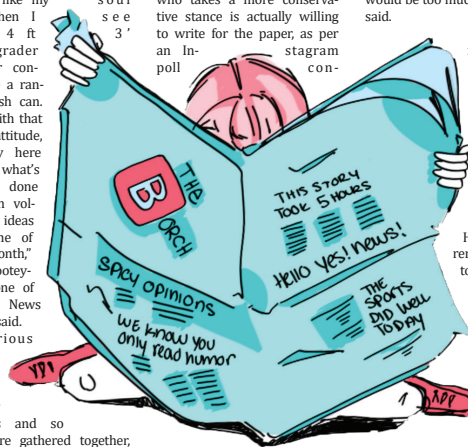
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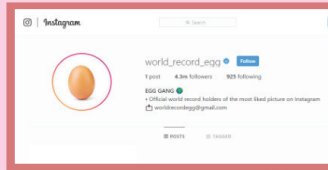
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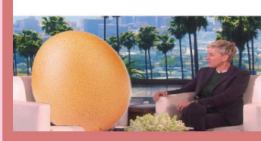
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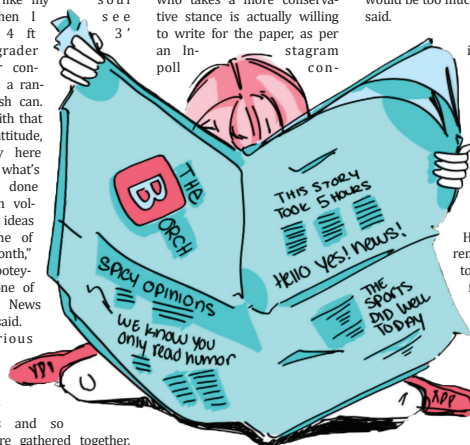
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GRAPHIC BY ZOE MERRITT

ducted following the distribution of the November issue. "I mean, it's not like we write our emails on top of the page or anything. And it's not like we urge readers to voice their opinions, as per the staff box which

## Exposed: Miley Cyrus is actually Hannah Montana

by Peyton Harris

Asst. Entertainment Editor

In an age of common-place conspiracy theories and discernible conclusions, it's refreshing to look outside the box and find solace in outrageously far-out ideas. After following a string of patched-together clues and tips from anonymous hotlines, I recently disclosed a comprehensive study that bewildered the entirety of the U.S. population: Hannah Montana is Actually Miley Cyrus: A Thread.

While it may seem like an overextended reach, I believe some very accurate points were made by me. For example, during the entire eight seasons of Hannah Montana, Cyrus and Montana were never once pictured together or even seen in the same room. This could have been the result of some on-set beef, but nevertheless aids my point. Additionally, in both pictures of Cyrus and Montana, they can be found posing with eerily similar "peace signs." In Season 3, Episode 4 of the famed Disney show, Cyrus and Montana could be found wearing the same shade of brand of lipstick. This overwhelming abundance of evidence seems too coincidental to be ignored.

In every episode of the series Hannah Montana, the introductory clip is ended by Montana placing a finger on her lips as to indicate a secret, which I am forced to believe is the result of a massive government cover up of Montana's true identity, Miley Cyrus. Why does the government want to suppress Cyrus' alter ego? Because they think anyone who is blonde doesn't have a right to voice her opinions.

To further advance my point, Cyrus was recently seen



GRAPHIC BY OLIVIA HANSEN AND FRANKIE GRASSO-CLAY

at the Women's March holding a sign reading "Blonde Rights are Human Rights." This can no longer be seen as a mere coincidence, but is clearly the result of such a cover up.

In case, the proof presented was rejected as inadmissible, I took the liberty of carefully analyzing every photo ever taken of Cyrus and Montana and found that in over 56 instances the two were found wearing the same star-shaped necklace. This could not occur unless Montana and Cyrus were friends, which wouldn't be possible.

With the surplus of evidence, I think it's reasonable to conclude that the famed Hannah Montana and Miley Cyrus are, in fact, the same person. My next goal is to obtain a sample of DNA from Cyrus and Montana, preferably a cheek swab, and prove they have the same genetic formula to justify my seemingly outrageous connections. However, I do believe that this plethora of empirical evidence is worthwhile and deserves a U.S.-sanctioned study to put this matter to bed, once and for all. Sorry for ruining your childhood, sweeties!

## [a column] Yikes! Your Pine View student is showing

Pine View's atmosphere consists mainly of hyper-competitive young individuals who strive to be their best self in every possible aspect of their scholarly lives. Sometimes, this is exhausting. The mindset that "If I fail (and by 'fail' I mean any grade below an A) this exam I won't be able to go to my top college and I will ultimately fail in all other aspects of my life" is inaccurate and unreasonable.

I knew what I was getting myself into when I came to Pine View after passing the "gifted test" as a five-year-old, which isn't the best age for demonstrating work ethic and behavioral standards, but okay. And maybe engraving this elitist mindset in my head made me terrified of failure growing up, since it wasn't in line with my expectations for myself, but okay.



Olivia Hansen, Humor Editor

A+," occurring between those who actually didn't study and are just dumb smart and those who are lying to counterbalance for their

It is okay to have high standards for yourself, of course, but constantly degrading the people around you who have different expectations for themselves is tiresome and inconsiderate.

It is okay to have high standards for yourself, of course, but constantly degrading the people around you who have different expectations for themselves is tiresome and inconsiderate.

academic competence. Either way this trivialize the hard work one student may have put into studying. In fact as we speak know is ceasing to do his math home work because he is "too smart." Low that for him.

Complaints about low A's that are clearly above average and something to be proud of, devalue others' hard work. Think before you speak. Ask yourself "Would a pretentious and annoying person do that?" And if the answer is yes, do not do that thing.

## The Torch explains proper bathroom etiquette Pine View's pervasive hygiene insecurity — here's how to navigate that

by Leo Gordon

Asst. Match Editor

According to a surprisingly reliable statement released by Pine View School students, using the loo during school, a process deemed normal by most, isn't as easy or irrelevant as one may think. "It's a whole process," eighth-grader Gotto Gough said. "One that nobody expects or understands."

According to Gough, a growing number of students believe they must live up to an expectation of proper bathroom etiquette, an old but undiscovered craze which applies to one's entire restroom experience from start to finish.

One of the most vital aspects of bathroom etiquette, according to the released statement, is exactly-timed bathroom usage — a time period expected to be not too long nor too short, but exactly right. If students don't live up to such standards, the prospect of teacher and student judgement comes into play.

"If you take too long to use the restroom, students and teachers will think you're going number two, which is an absolute no-no," twelfth-grader Haaf Togo said. "Some kids also

spend a lot of their restroom taking the 212 motto seriously, if you know what I mean, and I don't want anyone thinking I'm doing that."

If one's time in the bathroom is too short, the students explain, teachers may think a student is blowing off class outside of the classroom rather than legitimately using

**"If you take too long to use the restroom, students and teachers will think you're going number two, which is an absolute no-no,"**  
Haaf Togo,  
grade 12

the restroom, or even worse, that they haven't washed their hands.

Effectively, the anticipation of teacher concern, in particular, has been an important factor in students' bathroom concerns. Tenth-grade teacher Joe King, for example, expects students to spend exactly two and a half minutes in the bathroom, including walking time, with no exceptions. If students do not abide by his rules, severe consequences, such as

reduced potty privileges, will be implemented. "Lately, student bathroom usage during my class period has become an absolute pet peeve of mine. Why do kids these days feel that they're entitled to rid their system of waste? It's kind of crazy if you ask me. If students must use the restroom, their timing must fall within the guidelines of proper bathroom etiquette," King said.

To maximize their perceived personal hygiene, students also admit to purposefully rubbing their shirts and pants with water upon entering classrooms. "In terms of bathroom etiquette, this step is always required," eleventh-grader Geo Lordon said. "How else will people know I've washed my hands?"

To ensure all bathroom etiquette policies are followed, many students choose to bring a checklist and a stopwatch to the restroom with them.

"To me, bathroom etiquette is very important. In every one of my bathroom visits, I make sure to check off all items on my checklist: a total duration of three minutes, with the washing of my hands and the sprinkling of extra water on my shirt and pants to display great hygiene," bathroom etiquette expert Yuwant Tobeme said.

For weekly bathroom etiquette updates, simply contact any one of Pine View's four etiquette experts.



Eleventh-grader Geo Lordon times his bathroom visit to adhere to proper bathroom etiquette. Lordon, one of the four on-campus etiquette experts, does this as part of his daily bathroom routine to avoid social isolation and inescapable embarrassment. PHOTO BY OLIVIA HANSEN

[guest editorial]

## Slurring our intentions

by James Kim  
Grade 12

"Hey, Chink!" I turned around to face the scruffy elementary schooler that had just called out to me. More than offended, I was surprised. My first day at the new school in Connecticut and kids already knew my name.

"This isn't a rice field. Go back to China!"

He and other kids from around the lunchroom pointed and laughed. I clenched my fists. I wanted to call back names that would cut at him the same way his cut at me. But a strange intuition told me that shouting a racial slur at a kid twice my size wouldn't be good for my back, so I kept my head down and kept eating my rice.

Even at nine, I knew the significance of the words he used. Racial slurs were condemned because of their historic usage by Whites to keep power over people of color. But when I held my tongue eight years ago, it wasn't thoughts of racial justice that moved me to take a moral high ground. Instead, I was motivated by fear, knowing that using a racial slur, even in response to another, would only bring me more bullying.

Political correctness, known informally as "PC

Culture," is the movement to avoid words that harm disadvantaged groups. It dominates our headlines, debates, and in my own experience, fifth grade lunch periods. But it may be a system enforced by fear, not justice. A poll from YouGov last year showed that 69% of Americans thought it was never acceptable for a white person to use the "n-word." However, another poll from YouGov last year showed that 80% of Americans saw PC culture itself as an issue. Though PC culture has changed our actions, we may be doing so begrudgingly.

We've lost the original intent of the activists who moved to engender racial equality through fighting discrimination decades ago. Our current schemas of evaluating slurs are based off negative reinforcement, simply trained to avoid public ostracization instead of trying to reduce inequality. To its credit, a stigma alone has managed to drastically cut down the usage of words as tools for racial discrimination. But it's not a perfect system, and it doesn't tackle the root of the problem.

Last May, a white fan was called onstage at a Kendrick Lamar concert before being booed off for saying the

"n-word." Many condemned the fan's actions for saying such obscenities. In response, others vindicated her, saying the lyrics she recited were written by the artist. Because of our PC culture, too much attention was put on the justifiability of the word instead of the dynamic between the two parties that night. She wasn't asked to leave simply because of a word she said, but because she continued saying the "n-word" despite repeated requests for her to omit it. An emphasis on semantics fueled a pointless debate, when we should have been focusing on the actual discrimination.

At a school like Pine View, which so heavily lacks racial diversity, it's especially important to constantly re-evaluate our perspectives to avoid becoming biased in our bubble. I'm not advocating that anyone should use any words they see fit without care, but in fact the opposite. Instead of focusing our attention on specific prohibited words, we ought to evaluate what we say in context of those active in the discussion. Only in this way can we look up from our rice and fight racism with reason instead of restriction.

Also I'm not Chinese, dude.

## The Verdict



**School Security:** We are glad to see the county instituting measures to prevent violence in schools after tragedies like Parkland

**Parkland:** We are sad to see that school shootings and other tragic events have forced stronger security and fear nationwide.



**Pine View's 50th:** We are happy to see school-wide participation in Pine View's historic anniversary throughout the year.



## Some closure on disclosure: Prioritizing student safety in the digital age

by Odelia Tiutyama  
News Editor

With personalized learning services and the rise of online oriented schooling, it's no wonder that educators are being drawn to more technically advanced tools to better students' education. But it is clearer than ever that this is leading to data gathering skyrocketing. Parents and students are often left wondering how much information is at the fingertips of third party companies and even colleges.

Controversy has stirred in recent years. After various hacking scandals. From Facebook leaks to the Russian meddling in U.S. elections, fear over external control of data has come to the forefront. Parents of high school students have grown concerned. Though certain private information is protected as private under the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), there are no specific laws protecting the metadata of students collected by companies with educational benefit.

In the U.S., there is no comprehensive federal law regulating the collection and utilization of personal data. Although hundreds of bills have been introduced in recent years concerning technological privacy, the US has a sys-

tem of federal and state regulations that often overlap and contradict one another. Additionally, many agencies create their own guidelines that often do not involve informing users that their information is recorded and shared with third party companies. If recent events in Silicon Valley have taught us anything this past year, it is that we have to demand the industry act on the behalf of students. It is imperative that the government intervene and pass laws protecting students privacy in technology.

Due to the lack of laws protecting users' privacy in technology, companies such as Google, which have vastly expanded their reach into America's schools, store personal data that can easily be leaked. For instance, in October 2018, a vulnerability within Google exposed the personal data of approximately 500,000 users. According to Google, more than 20 million students use Chromebooks, Google's G Suite for Education has over 70 million users, and millions of students use Gmail and Google Docs for educational purposes. Therefore, the possible accessibility to

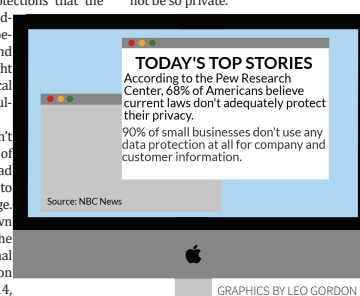
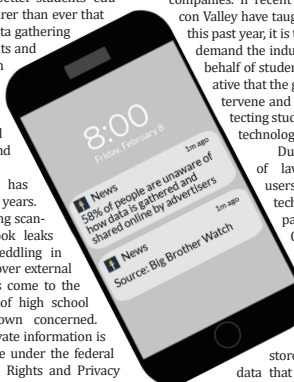
students' private information is concerning.

Another form of data collection that is of growing concern to students and parents regards the saving of drafts. Many companies fail to report that when a user drafts a post and then decides to cancel the post, the social network still keeps a copy — saving memory of something the person chose not to share. And this type of technology is also used with regular text and typing. Through the use of programs, such as LiveAgent, all keystrokes before "send" is hit are seen and sometimes recorded without the user knowing. The lack of transparency with companies saving unsent messages has sparked justifiable outrage, especially when users discovered that this content has been exposed to huge third party apps. The lack of protections that the government is providing for minors is especially irresponsible and the minimal oversight of these technological giants leaves us all vulnerable.

The problem isn't a lack of knowledge of the problem, but instead a lack of motivation to bring about change. Governor Jerry Brown of California enacted the Student Online Personal Information Protection Act (SOPIPA) in 2014, which prohibits opera-

tors of online educational services from selling student data.

In California, months after SOPIPA was signed into law, President Obama pushed to federalize a similar approach through his announcement of the Student Digital Privacy Act. The bill gained immense support from both the House of Representatives and the Senate, but it still continues to deteriorate in Congress: largely due to the industries attempts to get rid of it. Reintroduced in the Senate on May 23, 2018, the "Do Not Track Kids" bill gained strong bipartisan support however, the political momentum behind the bill has also fallen in recent months. With the technology sector pushing against these bills, it is important that the public continues to demand change as we realize our private information may not be so private.



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# The secret loopholes corrupting our politics

by Grace Johnson  
Match Layout/Artist

For as long as politicians have been passing laws, there have been politicians exploiting loopholes in a vie for power.

In recent years, one specific loophole has been dominating nationwide politics, especially in divided states like Florida. Super preemption laws are specific parts of a state law established to prohibit counties from enacting legislation that is not part of statewide law. This enables one party to gain an advantage, overriding the autonomy of local governments, home rules and purposefully placed checks and balances.

Super preemption laws give state governments an inordinate amount of power over their counties, allowing state governments to punish counties by withholding necessary funding or filing lawsuits against individual government officials.

Across the country, these laws have affected daily life, ranging from transgender rights to gun control. The preemption laws all have one thing in common: they are only enacted to stifle left-leaning legislation. The only places that have established super preemption laws are conservative-led states in an effort to suppress the laws of more liberal leaning counties under their leadership.

These laws have real impacts visible around the state. Counties prioritize and struggle with different issues and should be given the sovereignty to give their residents the extra protections and laws they need.

One issue that is hotly contested within Florida's super preemption laws is gun control. Post-Parkland, many counties tried to implement stricter gun laws. However, they quickly found they were powerless. This was the result

of a super preemption law, passed in 2011, giving the state government the power to fine mayors up to \$5000 or remove them from office if they try to enforce tougher gun regulations. On a county level, towns can face up to \$100,000 in legal damages if their gun regulations are not in line with that of the state.

Another example was in 2018, when the city and the officials of Tallahassee were sued for enforcing a local law prohibiting the use of firearms in public parks. Former Mayor of Tallahassee, Andrew Gillum, was forced into a legal battle along with many other local officials. The state used super preemption laws in an effort to deter the county from implementing these stricter gun control laws. This effort to suppress the

home rule of Tallahassee was thwarted through the use of pro bono lawyers who offered to help the county, as the financial burden would have pushed local lawmakers into submission.

The most dangerous aspect of super preemption laws is how often they are overlooked. It is simply outrageous that these types of rules are so often enacted in an effort to suppress liberal legislation. Despite its clear violation of home rule and the autonomy local governments should have, these laws continues to infect local politics with a certain air of corrupt injustice. Allowing these types of laws to pass is a clear exploitation of the checks and balances so carefully constructed within our government.

Super preemption laws give state government power over its counties.

Like the U.S. Supremacy Clause, they give state law priority over local law.

These laws allow state governments to withhold necessary funding or file lawsuits against government officials.

Super preemption laws are often used to suppress legislature at a local level in favor of state government.

GRAPHIC BY SARAH CATALANO

# [a column] Weighing intersectionality within environmentalism



Brianna Nelson, Opinion Editor

Environmentalists have spent years warning mankind of the dangers of ignoring the natural world in favor of selfishly using resources. However, what is often ignored during environmental discourse is the impact of longstanding systematic racism and classism. Environmentalism, like any other movement, needs to be intersectional in order to adequately address the way that our culture exploits both the environment and the lives of the disenfranchised.

We see specific impacts of environmental damage on minority communities. Whether it be the Flint water crisis or the federal response to hurricanes Katrina and Maria, it's clear that our government's apathy towards these minority populations hurts them most. Global warming is strengthening storms and making disasters more dangerous than ever; now is not the time for apathy.

However, this lack of care is only one aspect of the connection between racism and classism with the environment.

With these catastrophic disasters only exacerbated by global warming, people of color seem to be taking the brunt of the damage. For example, in 2018, we saw the Camp wildfire decimate northern California, but the damage transcended the blaze. Smog and other highly polluted air covered many high density areas such as San Francisco. Those who had the means left the city due to the dangerous air, but this wasn't an option for low income people in the area. Whether it

be the risk of losing their job for missing work or simply not being able to afford a plane ticket, poor people were left in the city. This exemplifies how even though these communities contribute very little to ecological damage, they are forced to deal with the consequences.

When the environmental movement recognizes the effects of racism and classism within our treatment of environmental concerns, true change can be achieved

policies that put the environment first, and this is important. When the environmental movement recognizes the effects of racism and classism within our treatment of environmental concerns, true change can be achieved.

New jobs in renewable energy can invigorate communities that were previously racked with poverty. Improving infrastructure in all regards can help revitalize cities that have fallen by the wayside in recent decades. All of this can be achieved by recognizing the effects systematic oppression has had on cities — and only then can environmental justice be achieved

# [staff editorial] Torch settles the subject discourse

Division in the modern era is commonplace. Our campus culture acts as a microcosm, reflecting the world around us through its student body. Although Pine View does not qualify as a STEM specialty school, it doesn't take a gifted kid to realize that humanities are somewhat undervalued on campus to the detriment of the student body, much like at other schools throughout the nation.

The humanities versus STEM discourse is not an affair to be taken lightly. This debate presents a serious issue in America's classrooms, where a traditionally well-rounded curriculum is fading in the face of a more workforce oriented academic track.

One notable example of this in the higher education arena is with the University of Wisconsin (UW) Stevens Point's recent eradication of six liberal arts majors: two- and three-dimensional art, geography, geology, French, German and history. The reason? Budget cuts. In an Atlantic article titled "The Liberal Arts May Not Survive the 21st Century," writer Adam Harris cites that in the face of reduced enrollment rates for the aforementioned

majors, administrators sought to offer programs that would dole out more career-ready college graduates.

UW-Stevens Point published an executive summary on the issue stating that the institution "will reimagine traditional liberal arts majors for students seeking applied learning to improve their career potential."

This posits problems for the social development of young adults who may — in theory — emerge well-equipped for the workforce, leaving colleges

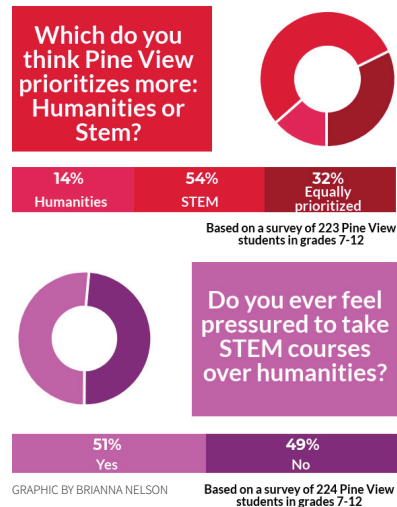
force. In an article published by the University of Northern Colorado titled "Importance of Humanities: Why should you get a degree in the Humanities and Social Sciences," it states that 3/4 of employers want employees with the aforementioned capabilities.

In the 2016 Forbes article "A Liberal Arts Degree is More Important Than Ever," writer Willard Dix supported the prior point, stating the following: "A liberal arts education can be very frustrating. It forces students to see multiple viewpoints and continually challenge their own. It removes the comfort of assuming there are 'right' answers to big questions."

At Pine View the division between STEM and liberal arts is all too real. Besides the discrepancy between course availability, the schism extends into the student body. Humanities students often express feeling cast aside by Pine View's pervasive emphasis on STEM education. Twelfth-grader Izabella Smith, an AP Art History and AP Studio Art: 2-D Design student, shared this feeling. "My entire time being at Pine View I've always felt like Humanities courses

What a liberal arts education guarantees is empathy building and deeper level comprehension and analysis skills.

with STEM degrees. What a liberal arts education guarantees is empathy building and deeper level comprehension and analysis skills. History is important to study so that our mistakes aren't repeated; courses like philosophy build higher level thinking skills. These skills are critical in the modern work-



like art and [curriculum] that isn't STEM, those courses have been looked down upon and that Pine View is fundamentally made to be aimed more for STEM courses. When you look at the art department versus those fancy new science labs, [the former] isn't funded nearly as much." Smith said "When I see how Pine View is advertised I think it should be changed to "Pine View School for those Gifted in STEM." Clearly, as per the poll regarding course pressure, not everyone feels this way, and it is important to note that much of the aforementioned funding was provided by outside donors.

The pertinence of liberal arts can best be summed up by the late Robin Williams in his role of John Keating in "Dead Poets Society." Williams said "Medicine, law, business, engineering — these are noble pursuits and necessary to sustain life. But poetry, beauty, romance, love — these are what we stay alive for." While biology and chemistry may teach us about our bodies and the systems we interact with, art and history shape our beliefs, and fundamentally, our personalities. Without humanities, our world may be survivable, but would such an existence be worthwhile?

# Pine View alumnus spearheads neural research through second 'Human Connectome Project'

by Nathalie Bencie  
SPARK Liason

Recent technological and analytical advances in brain imaging have enabled a new type of research for brain organization and connectivity in detail; something Class of 2013 alumnus Michael Mayer is taking advantage of. Since 2017, Mayer has worked as a research assistant for the research study The Human Connectome Project (HCP). Mayer has taken his interest in neuroscience to a whole new level in order to build a deeper understanding of the development of the human brain.

The HCP, initiated in 2009 by the National Institute of Health (NIH), is a five year project dedicated to the construction of a "network map" (connectome) that demonstrates the anatomical and functional connectivity in a human brain. The research will facilitate data to study brain disorders like Alzheimer's disease and schizophrenia.

"The large goal of the study is to better understand how the human brain changes across the lifespan," Mayer said. "This is actually the second Human Connectome Project... the first project, that most people are more familiar with, tested [young adults] ages 30 to 45 and was really successful."

The current HCP that Mayer researches does not specifically focus on a single age group, but rather the entire population of the U.S. ages 5 to 100 years old.

The HCP's research is done through a consortium of colleges each sponsored

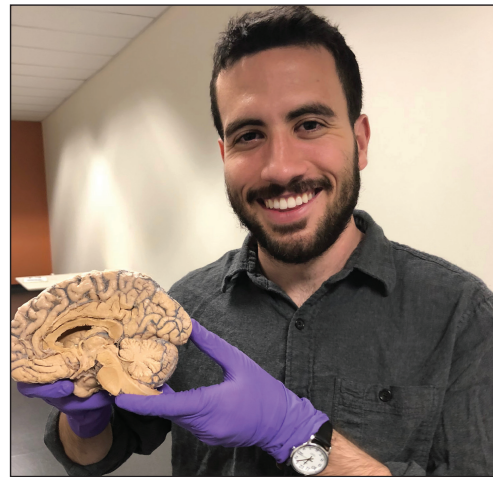
by the NIH: Washington University in St. Louis, the University of Minnesota, Harvard University and the University of California Los Angeles. Mayer currently works at the Harvard Undergraduate Campus within the Department of Psychology, studying the development of the brain of youth ages 8 to 21 through magnetic resource imaging (MRI) and brain scans. He is also responsible for collecting samples, recruiting participants for the study and conducting questionnaires.

"What we do is collect these really high power brain scans and we look at the anatomy of the brain; we look at the connections of the brain and we look at functions of the brain to start to build a deeper understanding of how the brain works and how the brain changes as you grow up," Mayer said.

Mayer's participation in the HCP began after his graduation from Dartmouth College in 2017 with a Bachelor's degree in neuroscience. Following his graduation, Mayer applied for an opening with the HCP as a research assistant and was granted the position.

Mayer's interest in neuroscience was never apparent to him until his sophomore year at Dartmouth. He initially entered as a film major, but eventually switched to studying neuroscience after taking a microbiology course that covered neuroscience.

"When I started taking a neuroscience class, I became really interested



Class of 2013 alumnus Michael Mayer holds a brain while working on the HCP project with Harvard University and the National Institute of Health. Mayer has been fascinated by neuroscience since he took a microbiology course his sophomore year of college. PHOTO PROVIDED BY MICHAEL MAYER

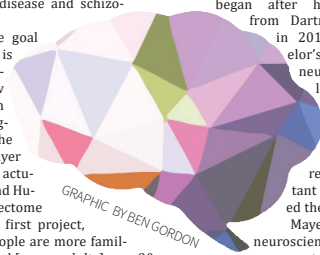
in consciousness and how the brain could develop a sense of self and basically how the brain creates feelings, how the brain creates conscious experience," Mayer said. "Really I'm just fascinated and in awe of how incredibly complicated the brain is and how poorly understood the brain is. We know so much about it, but at the same time, we know so little."

Mayer's Pine View career also influenced his current work with the HCP. "I took Mr. Bergman's AP Psychology class and I really enjoyed it. That class definitely opened my eyes, that I was

interested in psychology and social sciences," Mayer said.

"I feel like Pine View was a really positive environment to grow up in that has given me stability across the years, which quite possibly helped me get to this point in my life," Mayer said.

Mayer plans to pursue a Doctorate of Medicine and is currently in the admission's process to enter medical school. Before he attends medical school, he plans to work with a non profit that promotes community advocacy and organization for "people of a lot of different identities."



## Alumna writes for student-run magazine at Florida State



Class of 2016 alumna Jordan Glover displays a spread from FSU's student-run magazine, Clutch Magazine. Glover has been a member of Clutch since the fall of 2017 after learning about the magazine through her sorority. PHOTO PROVIDED BY JORDAN GLOVER

by Frankie Grasso-Clay  
Asst. Humor Editor

From being an editor of the Pine View Torch newspaper to writing for Clutch Magazine at Florida State University (FSU), Pine View Class of 2016 alumna Jordan Glover is no stranger to journalism. Her decision to continue writing in college blossomed from her love of surrounding herself with creative people, starting when she joined the Torch staff in high school.

According to Glover, she wanted to pursue journalism ever since she first read the Pine View Torch newspaper in elementary school. "I always admired the tight-knit, family dynamic of the Torch, which also drew me in," Glover said.

She further continued her

interest in reporting by applying for Clutch Magazine in the fall of 2017. Initially discovering the publication through girls in her sorority and talk around campus, she has been writing as a staff member for over a year now. The magazine is a product of College Merchandising Association (CMA), which is FSU's fashion club, allowing Glover to explore a wide variety of topics.

Before coming upon Clutch Magazine, she worked for another paper on campus. However, she said she didn't click with the publication as a whole and began looking for well-known magazines at FSU to join.

During her time with Clutch Magazine, she has gained experience as a writer and as an assistant to the

Lifestyle Section Director, and currently holds the title of assistant to the Content and Copy Editor.

"[My favorite memory was] when I helped to direct one of the photoshoots. We shot it at a really gross motel, but with an amazing photographer and with the right angles and editing, we made it look stunning," Glover said.

Further pursuing her interest in journalism, Glover interned with SRQ Media in downtown Burns Court over the summer of 2018. While she discovered the internship three weeks after the application deadline, the team accepted her into the program.

Glover held the position of Editorial and Marketing Associate, allowing her to get a taste of the advertising side of the media firm. She was also able to interact with real clients and businesses, along with experiencing the professionalism of working in a true office environment. Her work included reporting and writing articles for both the print issue and the weekly online columns.

"As a writer, I always tell people to always keep writing and fueling your creative passion in whatever capacity. It is important to surround yourself with like-minded people in college because they make you even better in your craft," Glover said.

Glover plans to continue working for the Clutch Magazine throughout college while double majoring in Advertising and Editing, Writing and Media with a minor in Sociology at FSU. She hopes to work at an advertising agency as a creative copywriter, strategist and social media analyst.

## [a column]

### Pine View: ever-changing, but always familiar

2019 means a lot of different things. It's the year of the pig on the Chinese calendar, it's my class' graduation year, I turn 18 later in June and Pine View just finished celebrating its 50th earlier in January. Now in the second semester of my senior year, I find myself reminiscing often, usually about how things change but also on how they remain the same.

Putting together the retro edition of the Luminary over the course of first semester, I found a poem from a former alumna in some old archives. It was an open letter to this school, and all of its quirks. Not much is different from 1969 honestly. The weather has gotten warmer, the cli-



Melissa Santoyo,  
Editor-in-Chief

individuals that surround us. From teachers with infinite patience for prodding questions and after-school tutoring sessions, to the friend that will be there when academic breaks are needed, this school's true shining grace is:

... what challenges students to pursue our interests earnestly is the individuals that surround us.

mate more humid, the grounds more crowded, the portables more prolific.

We still call our prom "Cobalt," still complain about little kids who don't know how to navigate their rolling backpacks properly.

What truly makes Pine View bearable in terms of the general high school experience is not our ranking nor our name, it's the people. This too has not changed since the school's inauguration. We have always been a place that promotes intellectual curiosity, and what challenges students to pursue our interests earnestly is the

its populace. I wouldn't be the person I am today had I ended up at Sarasota High or Riverview, that's for sure. While Pine View may seem unchanging, it catalyzes very real change within every student that passes through its gates. So close to graduation I truly realize that my time here is done — I have nothing more to grow from. But for the younger generations to continue to enroll and drag themselves across Portaball Land in the burning Florida sun, the possibilities are endless. So here's to 2019 and all that changes (and does not change).