

# the torch



see features p. 8 & 9

Vol. XXXIII, Issue III

PVTorch.com

Thursday, December 21, 2017

## LIGHTING THE WAY

Providing opportunities for those traditionally underrepresented in gifted education

by Sana Rahman  
Editor-in-Chief

Keeping in line with the county-wide emphasis put upon decreasing the achievement gap among minorities, Pine View has funded a \$12,000 universal-gifted screening program, a precursor to full, gifted evaluation, for all second graders in Title I elementary schools in Sarasota County. The pilot program initiated this year uses the Naglieri Nonverbal Test-III Edition to assess students.

All across the county, the representation of minorities in gifted programs has been minimal; this includes Pine View, where only 33

percent of the student population is of a minority group. "There are some racial disparities, there are some socioeconomic disparities... and that is something our district really wants to address," Elementary Assistant

Principal, Alison Rini, said.

Last year, Rini was a part of the subcommittee called "Minority Representation in Gifted Programs." When an investigation was done to see if representation was equitable across the district, the recommendation for universal screening was brought up.

"Instead of parent/teacher referral, all kids are screened, eliminating any potential source of bias,"

Principal Dr. Stephen Covert said.

The screening is done using the Naglieri Test, an addition made to the county's gifted screening program, as it is a nonverbal assessment. Because children in lower socioeconomic homes often are exposed to vocabulary that is not as advanced, studies have shown that lack of exposure affects their ability to show commonly-seen signs of giftedness. In efforts to find students who are gifted, but represent their aptitude in a different manner, the nonverbal test has been implemented.

Of the students that partook in the pilot program, 245 met the criteria to get fully evaluated for gifted screening. These students need parent consent before proceeding with a full site evaluation. Then, if the student meets the requirements to get in a gifted program after the full evaluation, the student then has to decide whether they want to stay at their districted school, go to a gifted cluster site or attend a school like Pine View.

please see page 2

GRAPHIC BY SUZANNE BROWN

## Scholarship program draws controversy

by Melissa Santoyo  
Opinion Editor

Amid a controversial lawsuit, the Sarasota County School Board finds itself faced with an issue concerning the validity of a scholarship aimed to award teachers, not offend. The "Best and Brightest" scholarship, worth up to \$6000 and spearheaded by the Florida Department of Education, has drawn criticism from educators due to ostensible racial and socioeconomic discrepancy within its eligibility restrictions.

The scholarship program, which began in 2015, provides teachers with a bonus based on their academic performance prior to teaching. The most vexed segment of the qualifications list is that of the standardized test restrictions. In order to be considered a viable candidate, applicants have to "have achieved a composite score at or above the 80th percentile on either the SAT or the ACT based on the National Percentile Ranks in effect when the classroom teacher took the assessment..." This requirement is stated within the scholarship application, much to the chagrin of some educators.

Since 2015, the application requirements have undergone some modifications. For one, as of July, 2017, the rank will be lowered

to the 77th percentile. Potential scholarship applicants can also "use scores from other assessments that measure cognitive ability to qualify," as specified in a House of Representatives Staff Analysis.

This may seem like a potential solution, but there are still those instructors who have not been eligible in the past years and have therefore lost money that could have been used for classroom materials.

Since some educators chose not to take the SAT or ACT as high-school students, this is where discrepancies arise. There are teachers who did not take it for lack of resources, meaning that as students they did not have access to fee waivers or even the exam itself. English teacher Dr. Paul Dean is one such individual. "I never took the SAT in high school, but I know that I've taken the [Graduate Record Exam] after I completed college... So, I find it sort of weird that our legislature considers it important to give rewards for people who took a test in eleventh grade, but not to make any kind of a reward for a grad-school course, that of course I would be in the [80th] percentile," Dean said.

please see page 2

## New teacher evaluations introduced



Science teacher Steve Dacey goes over the objective for the day with his class. Teachers including Dacey will be evaluated by an informal joint walk-through throughout the year, conducted by all assistant principals and Principal Dr. Stephen Covert. PHOTO BY KASUMI WADE

by Riley Board  
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

Although they are new to Pine View this year, joint walk-through administrative evaluations have already existed around Sarasota County for many years, as a means to increase administrative consistency and improve the teacher evaluation process. Joint walk-throughs, which involve a group of administrators entering a

classroom together in order to calibrate observation methods, have been implemented for the 2017-2018 school year at Pine View and aim to bring a level of continuity to walk-through practices.

"We want to make sure that we're all focused on the things that really matter at this school, like our strategic goals and how are we getting there," Assistant Principal of Curriculum Tricia Allen said.

"We practice by going into classrooms together." Throughout the year, each teacher is assigned to an administrator who will visit their classroom periodically to write formal evaluations. In joint walk-throughs, all of the assistant principals and Principal Dr. Stephen Covert gather together and visit one classroom assigned to each of the administrators, for five minutes each, over the course of a class period.

"What we're trying to do is make sure that if someone has, let's say Dr. Covert, for an administrator, they're having the same experience that they would have had with any other administrators, and vice versa," Allen said.

The joint-walk throughs are not actually evaluative, and are informal; they are not entered into the evaluation database at all. Allen said, "They're informal, for the benefit of the administrators, so that we become stronger as a team. However, sometimes a teacher asks me to enter a joint walk-through into the evaluation system, and I do."

please see page 3



PVTorch.com:  
[@PineViewTorchDotCom](#)

Humans of Pine View:  
[@humansofpineview](#)



The Luminary:  
[@theluminarymag](#)

The View:  
[@theviewyearbook](#)



The Torch Website:  
[PVTorch.com](#)



Use the free app Snapchat — available for iPhone and Android — to scan the QR codes located in the paper and access online content.

## index

- 1 News
- 5 Sci & Tech
- 6 Entertainment
- 8 Features
- 10 Sports
- 12 Humor
- 14 Opinion
- 16 Focus

Entertainment, p. 7



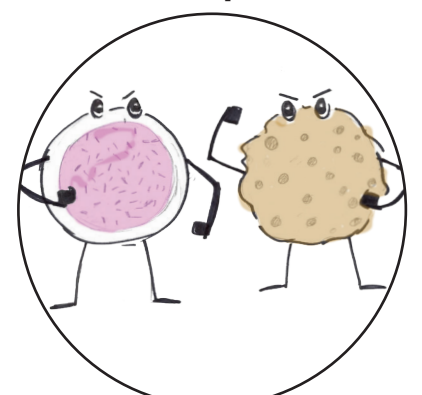
"Annie": behind the scenes  
A look into Drama Club's production

Sports, p. 10



Student wins first place title  
Runner wins cross-country states

Humor, p. 12



The great cookie showdown  
Lofthouse or loser?



## Universal gifted screening implemented throughout Sarasota County

continued from page 1

by Sana Rahman  
Editor-in-Chief

"Students who need to be challenged need access to programs which only schools like Pine View can offer," Principal Dr. Stephen Covert said.

In addition, videos featuring Pine View students at all grade levels, titled "Pine View in Action," are going to be used to show students who may be interested in Pine View, as result of the universal screening, what the school has to offer. The videos are up for display on the Pine View website and are available on YouTube.

However, the initiative to increase diversity among gifted programs is not something that solely administration has focused on. For example, tenth-grader Vinay Konuru has been working to address this issue since eighth grade. "Seeing that Torch article about diversity at Pine View [Oct. 2015] actually is what peaked my interest, and I started looking into it more, and I was surprised by how long this issue has been going on," Konuru said. "From there, I immediately began contacting people, like administrators to see why this problem



Assistant Principals Tara Spielman (far left) and Alison Rini (far right) meet with representatives from various groups on campus to discuss the achievement gap among minorities. Pine View has funded a \$12,000 universal gifted screening program for second-graders at all Title 1 elementary schools in Sarasota County. PHOTO BY NATHALIE BENCIE

has not been fixed."

Aside from numerous conversations with administrators, Konuru is also in the preliminary stages of creating Digs Diversity in Gifted Schools, a coalition of Pine View students who hope to bring awareness to the issue

on diversity.

"I think it's really important to provide equal opportunities to those in lower socioeconomic situations so they have the chance to get the gifted education that they need and deserve," twelfth-grader Isadora Gruber said.

## Best & Brightest teacher scholarship faces discrimination claims



Math teacher Josh Michalajko helps a student with her math work. The Best & Brightest Teacher Scholarship is given to teachers like Michalajko who performed above the 80th percentile on the SAT or ACT. PHOTO BY KASUMI WADE

continued from page 1

by Melissa Santoyo  
Opinion Editor

Due to inequity among these individuals, teachers who consider themselves to be at a disadvantage have taken action. Florida's largest teacher labor union, the Florida Education Association (FEA), filed a lawsuit this past September in which the State Department of Education and all of Florida's 67 school boards have been named as defendants. Among these, Sarasota County's very own

school board is included.

Consensus among campus educators regarding the Best and Brightest program has yielded mixed results. Even educators that receive the scholarship find the reward itself to be more than unfair. "I've gotten \$13,000 in the last two years from the Best and Brightest program, and I don't think I deserved it more than most other teachers at this school who didn't get it," social studies teacher John Schweig said. "I think it's a bogus way to judge teachers, and I think it sets teachers off against each other. I

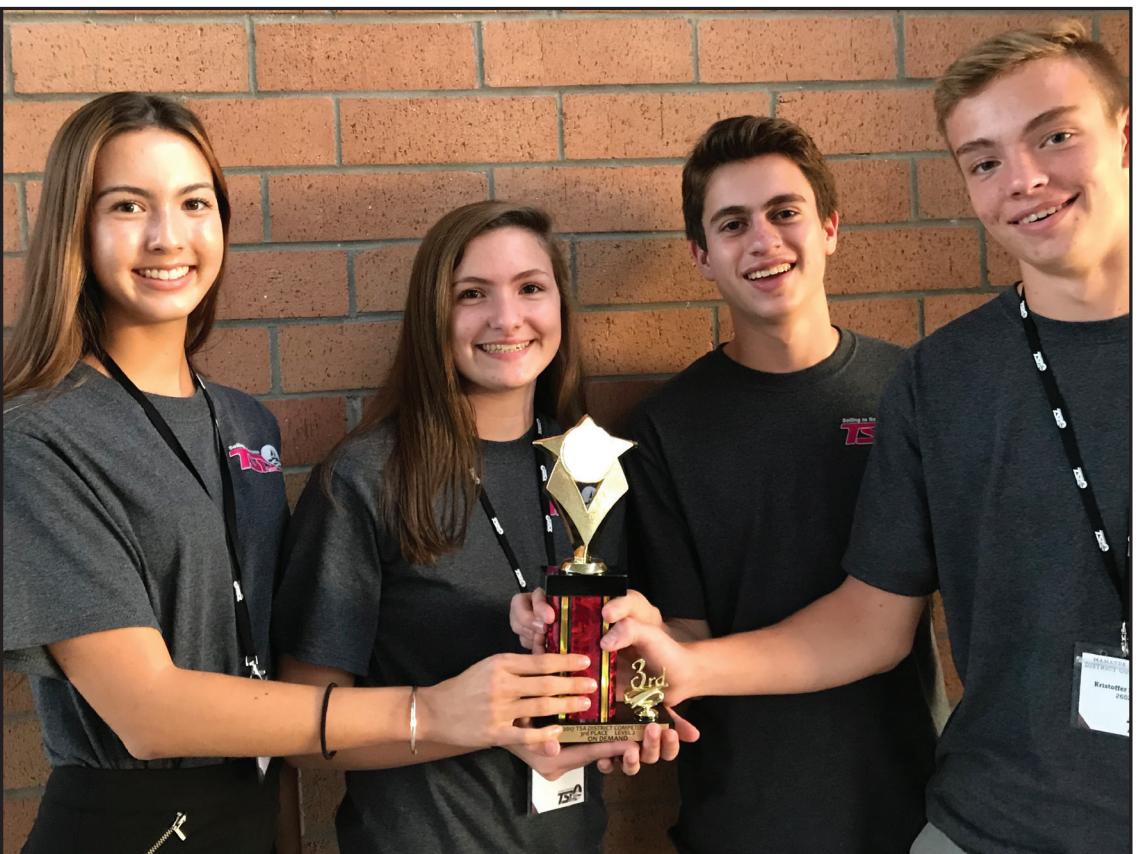
think it was created by people in Tallahassee who don't understand what makes a good teacher."

The FEA filed this lawsuit with claims that the Best and Brightest program directly violates both the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992. The 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion,

"I think it was created by people in Tallahassee who don't understand what makes a good teacher."  
John Schweig,  
Social studies teacher

sex and ethnic background, while the latter legislature ensures protection from prejudice on the basis of marital status, pregnancy, handicap or age. The U.S. district court has yet to reach a final decision on the matter.

## Technology Student Association wins first place in competition



Members from Pine View's Technology Student Association pose with their trophy after competing at the District TSA Competition at Braden River High School Dec. 2 (FROM LEFT: eleventh-graders Gia Douglass and Narissa Kelliher, tenth-graders Alex Douglas and Kristoffer Selberg). Pine View won first place in Extemporaneous Speech, third place in On Demand Video and third place in Technology Problem Solving. PHOTO PROVIDED BY DREW WORMINGTON

## IN BRIEF

### Students participate in charity concert

by Zach Bright

Web Editor-in-Chief

Starting off the winter season with a love for music and a generous spirit, Young at Harp hosted its first ever "Winter Charity Concert" Dec. 1 at 7 p.m. in the auditorium.

Several high school students and members of Young at Harp were featured playing a variety of music, from cultural stylings to classical renditions.

Eleventh-grader Charlotte Murphy, founder and chief executive of Young at Harp, played several songs on the harp. Beginning the event with "Le Cygne," she played alongside tenth-grader Jack Gallahan. Principal Dr. Stephen Covert played "To A Wild Rose" on the euphonium with Murphy later in the concert. Murphy went on to play "Rondo Allegro Agitato" in a quintet with tenth-graders Tricia Saputera and Jackie Seitz on the violin, tenth-grader Mar-

guerite Andrich on the cello and ninth-grader Leo Gordon on the viola. In all, 14 different pieces were performed.

As a nonprofit organization, Young at Harp plans to donate all funds raised from the event. "The performance was a great way to combine music and giving back to the community," eleventh-grader Kailin Huang said. Huang played "Dance of the Yi" on the guzheng—a traditional Chinese stringed instrument—during the charity concert.

The student organization was started by Murphy, who has long had a passion playing the harp. Honing her skills over the course of nine years, she studies the harp with Katherine Siochi, the principal harpist at the Sarasota Orchestra. The organization can thank Murphy's penchant toward the stringed instrument for its name and the goals it achieves.

### Construction to continue into the new year

by Nathalie Bencie

News Editor

As presumably noticed by students and staff, classrooms in Building 8, the auditorium and the Student Union were renovated over the summer; construction on campus continues to occur in a timely manner.

Finished in late October, the auditorium's improvements feature revamped seats, new speakers and audio and visual equipment, and up-to-date lighting controls. HVAC system was also renovated, along with new paint, new carpeting and refurbished stage curtains. The restroom plumbing also underwent repairs.

Inside the Student Union, old ceiling tiles and lights were

replaced, and the entire building received a paint job. The kitchen also underwent renovations with new exhaust fans and improved air conditioning units.

Renovations in Building 4, the orange building, have neared completion as teachers are scheduled to return to their original classrooms starting Dec. 21. Building 12, the yellow building, will be the next facility to undergo renovations.

"The middle school science teachers in the yellow building will be moving into the north portables while their building is going under HVAC construction," Assistant Principal Sue Fair said. "These renovations will continue until the end of the school year."

### Policy updated to allow students to freely sit in quad after school

by Suzanne Brown

Asst. Editor-in-Chief

After years of unenforced policy, students take back the green. High school students are now officially allowed to sit outside in the quad after their last class.

During the November Shared Decision Making Team (SDMT) meeting, attendees unanimously voted to change outdated policy that previously specified high school students must report to a designated study hall — of which included the Media Center, Student Union or club meeting, yet not the quad — once school ends at 1:01 p.m. Now with the most recent revision immediately in effect, students will be granted the freedom of sitting outside in the green area as long as they are visible from the front office.

The previous policy had been featured on the back of course selection cards under safety and supervision guidelines. The policy

stated, "Students who remain on campus after the end of their day will report to a supervised study hall."

Assistant Principal Tara Spielman explained that the policy restricting students outside was put in place a few years ago for students' safety. "The rules were in existence. They weren't necessarily being followed to the degree we wanted them to be," Spielman said. "The focus now is more on students who might be outside of that visible area, and obviously that's for safety. Because if let's say a parent calls, we need to be able to know where students are."

Spielman noted that the areas outside of office supervision included the basketball courts, track area and inside the locker pods.

Active SDMT member and social studies teacher Robin Melton said, "If the privilege [of sitting in the green] is not being abused, why not give it back to you guys?"

...real **SCRATCH** baking!  
breakfast • lunch  
artisanal breads • decadent desserts  
gulf gate village • sarasota  
941.922.2253 • like us on facebook!

**JIM'S Small Batch BAKERY**

**Scott K. Petersen, Esq.**  
Board Certified Business Litigation

(941) 203-6075 - Office  
(941) 203-6076 - Fax  
Scott@SKPLegal.com

1515 Ringling Boulevard  
Suite 860  
Sarasota, Florida 34236  
www.SKPLegal.com



# World Language honor societies expand horizons

## French Honor Society

by **Brianna Nelson**  
Asst. Opinion Editor

The French Honor Society (FHS) has recently been increasing its presence on campus with a wide variety of activities and events. In the past, FHS was primarily known for its annual Valentine's Day rose sale, however, this year, the honor society is trying to change that and increase its scope across campus.

With many events focused on francophone (French-speaking) culture, the French department is trying to grow the honor society initiative to promote the awareness and appreciation of this culture. "What we are trying to do is educate students and make them realize that there are 65 countries around the world where French is an official language, a heritage language or a mother tongue," French teacher and honor society sponsor Diana Siwicka said.

FHS is currently planning on hosting an event that will occur in March, National French Week, which includes a trivia game to promote French language, culture and history. FHS also hosted the croissant distribution for the PSAT in October, which allowed the French department to get the word out about French culture and overall increase its activity on campus.

This increased presence is likely to influence the enrollment

of fifth-graders into sixth-grade French, as students are able to further understand and appreciate francophone culture. The FHS and French department have been attempting to not only be known to those in the upper levels of French, but also to everyone on campus. "The French Honor Society has been able to organize and grow

“Students should know francophone culture and language. This is going to open many doors for them in the future.”

**Diana Siwicka,**  
French teacher

remarkably compared to previous years," eleventh-grader and Vice President Shelly Barber said. "We're all working hard to accomplish new goals. We want FHS to be a brand name on campus that won't just benefit upper levels of French learners but also everyone."

To continue reinforcing the

French department, FHS is also planning a crafts sale this December along with the usual rose sales in February. These efforts, along with other fundraisers, including a PDQ community event, go toward raising money for a scholarship fund for future trips to Canada and other francophone countries.

FHS is trying to get this trip labeled as school-sponsored trip order to allow PVA to help with the costs. This is still tentative; until then, FHS is placing the money in its scholarship fund.

The French department is also trying to bring more French-speaking artists and speakers onto campus to express the variety of francophone culture. "We are just trying to shake things up a bit and start bringing different artists, so I'm looking into bringing a new artist to campus," Siwicka said.

The club is also attempting to show French fashion and other aspects of the culture through school field trips. At this time, Siwicka is planning a visit to the Dali Museum in St. Petersburg, Fla., which is currently holding an exhibition of the Schiaparelli fashion house to show the history and culture of French fashion.

"We are just trying to make our students aware of the importance of French in the world," Siwicka said. "Students should know francophone culture and language. This is going to open many doors for them in the future."



**TOP: Eleventh-graders Melissa Santoyo (left) and Ellie Bodor (right) make crafts to sell for French Honor Society. BOTTOM: French Honor Society members build "message in a bottle necklaces" miniature glass bottles with a personalized letter in each of them, to fundraise for their club. PHOTOS BY TRICIA SAPUTERA**



**TOP: Spanish teacher and club sponsor Patricia Zdravkovich (right) sells "pan de muerto" to students Nov. 2 in an effort to raise money for National Spanish Honor Society. BOTTOM: Zdravkovich poses for a photo with eleventh-grader Park Dietz during Dia de los Muertos. PHOTOS BY ANNA LABINER**

## National Spanish Honor Society

by **Alexa Mollod**  
Copy Editor

The National Spanish Honor Society has launched the 2017-2018 school year with a new sense of vigor, spirit and dedication. Through its efforts to bring appreciation of Spanish culture to the Pine View campus, this honor society has been more involved than recent years.

Though the honor society has not necessarily begun any new initiatives yet, it has vastly improved upon its annual programs and events. Last school year, Spanish National Honor Society president Jose Perez began a program at Fruitville Elementary School in which honor society students would visit the ESL (English as second language) students at the school and help them overcome the language gap and achieve success.

This year, according to Vice President and twelfth-grader Sarah Mihm, the program is better than ever, and the number of volunteers has almost doubled due to various reforms.

President and twelfth-grader Hadleigh Schwartz noticed that the number of volunteers for the Fruitville Elementary program was

dropping. She decided to organize the same program at Wilkinson Elementary School, as it is closer to Pine View and has a higher percentage of ESL students; this allows the honor society to reach out to and help even more struggling

“We wanted to expand [the program] and welcome even more mentors from Pine View, of all Spanish levels....”

**Hadleigh Schwartz,**  
grade 12

children. "We want to expand [the program] and welcome even more mentors from Pine View, of all Spanish levels, because it is a really fun opportunity," Schwartz said.

Each year, the National

Spanish Honor Society celebrates Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), Nov. 1 and 2, by selling "pan de muerto"—sweet, sugary bread. This year, Schwartz ordered the bread from a local Mexican bakery, Guerrero's, and the bread completely sold out. According to Mihm, Schwartz was surprised. "Students came to buy pan de muerto, and I had to tell them it was all gone," Mihm said.

Learning Spanish culture is not only delicious, but also fun; the Pine View campus lit up with festive Mexican music Nov. 21 from a Mariachi band thanks to the National Spanish Honor Society. "The band really brought language and culture to the Pine View campus," Mihm said.

Schwartz and Mihm, as president and vice president, work closely and diligently to make the honor society an active campus organization. "In years prior, students would be in the honor society and not even know it," Mihm said.

This year, the members are active and fervent in all of their efforts. "There are many opportunities to have fun and welcome Spanish speakers of all levels to celebrate Hispanic culture," Schwartz said.

## Joint walk-through evaluations introduced by administration

continued from page 1

by **Riley Board**  
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

Administrators look for a couple of things when they enter a classroom for a walk-through: they want to see that learning intentions are posted in the classroom and that students are aware of what they are learning about. Allen said, "Can kids actually tell you if you ask what they're learning and why they're learning it, and explain why it's important?"

The "Joint Walk-Through Observation Notes" sheet that administrators use during the walk-throughs includes questions like, "Is the learning target articulated orally? Is it referred to throughout the period? Can students articulate why they are learning this?" and "Is there student interaction or discourse?" The achievement of these goals is marked on the sheet. After the walk-through, the administrators gather and debrief to confirm that they are all on the same page, before providing feedback to the teacher by email or in person.

The joint walk-through system has been successful at other high schools in Sarasota, including Riverview, Booker, Venice and North Port High School.

Shannon Fusco, Assistant Principal of North Port High School (NPHS), said, "We use a variety of types of walk-throughs

here at NPHS. Joint walk-throughs are quite common to calibrate expectations. Teachers in Florida are evaluated on a rubric system. As with any rubric, opinion can interfere with the interpretation if those using the rubric don't train to the same expectations. Joint walk-throughs allow us to see and discuss the same observations and calibrate our results. In addition, we get to enjoy the classes together."

Social studies teacher Roma Jagdish is one of the teachers who has experienced a joint walk-through. "I think it's great if two administrators can see you perform. If one sees something that the others don't, you get more recognition for things you do well," Jagdish said.

However, the additional evaluations this year are not meant to reflect the quality of teachers at Pine View. "Our teachers are incredible, and we have so many amazing things happening, that as school administrators we should stay in touch with what's happening at our schools," Allen said. "My goal is that teachers know that I know, and that [Dr.] Covert knows, that we have one of the finest groups of educators in the world here, and our data shows it. I want our goal to be to think 'I'm not done, I'm not done perfecting myself until the day I retire.' And if anyone thinks 'I'm a great teacher, that's it, I'm done,' then they're missing out on some really great opportunities for growth."

# Teen Publishers

## FREE WORKSHOPS

LEARN FROM REAL-WORLD PUBLISHED AUTHORS, BE THE FIRST TO READ PRE-PUBLISHED BOOKS, AND MORE!

**(941) 365-7900**  
**12 SOUTH PALM AVE.**  
**DOWNTOWN SARASOTA**

FIND OUT HOW TO JOIN AT [WWW.SARASOTABOOKS.COM/TEENS](http://WWW.SARASOTABOOKS.COM/TEENS)



## Club works to support hearing impaired students

*Serteen continues to promote deaf and hard-of-hearing language and perspective*

by **Tricia Saputera**  
Asst. Match Editor

With a rise in awareness of the hearing impaired language and culture, Pine View has joined the initiative. To further advocate the realities of the deaf and hard-of-hearing communities, Serteen, a club founded in 2011, teaches American Sign Language (ASL) to students. Members visit Oak Park — a special-needs school — twice a year and advance their ASL knowledge on a weekly basis. Serteen has continued to promote the understanding and acceptance of hearing-impaired communities through the leadership of President and eleventh-grader Rainy Lifton.

Inspired by a book about Helen Keller, Lifton began teaching herself ASL using textbooks and online resources the summer after eighth grade. To become even more proficient, she attended a two-week summer immersion camp at Gallaudet University this past summer. Located in Washington D.C., this university focuses on allowing the deaf and hard-of-hearing to have the same education others do.

During the two weeks she

was at the university, Lifton was unable to use her voice and thus had to communicate only through ASL. “I thought I knew a lot before I went to Gallaudet, but immersion is just the most amazing way to learn. I learned so much there in two weeks, more than I had in two years, and it was incredible,” she said.

To continue practicing ASL, as not many around her can sign, Lifton visits Oak Park School nearly every weekday, a school in Sarasota County for special needs children. She mainly helps those in the hearing-impaired classroom, assisting the teachers and helping the students with their classwork. “I love it, it’s really fun. It’s my favorite thing — I look forward to it every day,” Lifton said.

As president of Serteen, Lifton is highly involved with its initiatives and activities. Serteen is the teenage branch of Sertoma International, an organization aimed to help those affected by hearing loss. Every Thursday at 1:00 p.m. in Portable 4, Lifton teaches ASL to her fellow club members. Serteen also throws two parties per year for Oak Park School, in which each member of the club is partnered with a student. At the most recent party at Oak Park Dec. 7, the stu-

dents made finger paintings, had a dance party, played with bubbles, made hot chocolate and participated in more fun activities. “It was really cool. I’ve never had experience with special-needs kids before, and I honestly think that it’s an experience that everyone should have because it taught me so much,” twelfth-grader Amanda Gerulski said.

Lifton recently taught Gerulski some ASL on a bus ride for a Speech and Debate trip. Ever since then, Gerulski fell in love with the language and recently joined Serteen two months ago. “I’m so excited to go back and sign with [the Oak Park students] and just have fun with them again because they’re just the sweetest kids,” Gerulski said.

Serteen is pushing boundaries and holding Silent Night Jan. 12 in the gym, where it will be educating primarily elementary students on ASL, introducing them to the language and playing games. Serteen is also raising money to hopefully send a club member to a summer immersion program at Gallaudet, letting another experience the journey Lifton was able to have. “You really can’t understand deaf culture fully unless you’re in it. They teach you a lot about the history, because Gallaudet is where ASL started, and it’s very, very important in the deaf community. I think it’s very important for everyone that’s passionate about sign language to visit it,” she said.



**TOP:** President of Serteen, eleventh-grader Rainy Lifton, dances with a hearing-impaired student during their recent trip to Oak Park Dec. 7. **BOTTOM:** Members of Serteen help finger paint with Oak Park students.

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY KATHERINA ZDRAVKOV

CALL TODAY  
379.9100



**MUSIC COMPOUND**  
Inspire Collaborate Educate

ASK ABOUT OUR VAN

Music Compound provides an environment to inspire, collaborate and educate children and adults in pursuit of their love of music.



GUITAR SAXOPHONE TRUMPET PIANO VOCAL VIOLIN UKULELE  
1751 CATTLEMEN ROAD WWW.MUSICCOMPOUND.COM

Beautiful Smiles  
for a Lifetime



**EHRlich & SALLAPUDI**  
Orthodontics

**Nitin Sallapudi, DDS, MSD**

Board Certified Orthodontist

www.crossbite.com

**VENICE**

941.485.7006

140 Indian Avenue  
(Across from Venice High School)

**ENGLEWOOD**

941.475.6860

900 East Pine Street • Suite 121  
(In Lemon Bay Professional Center)

A short drive from Pine View School



## Starting from scratch with a student-made app

by Elizabeth Hopkins  
Asst. Match Editor

Recently competing at the second annual SRQHacks Hackathon, eighth-grader Bear Mancinni and his team won first place at the event on Oct. 13 to Oct. 15, pitching the Carma Rider app, offering a carpool service similar to Uber for students. No stranger to STEM, he has skipped ahead through grade-level courses through FLVS and is currently taking Dual-Enrollment Precalculus and AP Biology as an eighth-grader. Mancinni is also taking initiative with extracurricular technology activities of his own.

"I wanted to make an app of my own, but unfortunately my tech class isn't that level yet," Mancinni said. As a result, Mancinni and his parent's were looking around for an opportunity in the world of technology, eventually finding the SRQHacks Hackathon.

Although the nature of hackathons vary, all events defined as such are collaborative and tend to be quite inclusive, usually free of charge. Hosted by the Education Foundation of Sarasota County, SRQHacks Hackathon was specifically designed to allow students to create and pitch an app idea revolving around a certain theme — this year's being education and solving community issues. The event was held at Ringling College of Art and Design, with approximately 100 students from across the district attending. Competitors were randomly divided into 10 teams by the staff, to avoid placing students from the same school in a group together. These teams were then placed in large private rooms, in order to allow group members to discuss and create in privacy. Additionally, a handful of mentors were distributed among the teams, with Mancinni noting that "they tried to be as helpful as possible without necessarily 'giving' us anything."

The event was three days, though the bulk of the work was completed on the second day, with attendees working from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. "The room was all paper by the end of it," Mancinni said. What set Mancinni's app idea apart from the rest of the herd specifically was that Mancinni's team actually took inspiration from someone in their own group, developing an app in line with a student's real life experiences. This teammate was living in a district outside of Sarasota, where a school he wanted to attend was just beyond



**Eighth-grader Bear Mancinni (top row third from right) poses with his hackathon team. Mancinni created the Carma Rider App Oct. 13 to Oct. 15 at the SRQHacks Hackathon event at the Ringling College of Art and Design.** PHOTO PROVIDED BY BEAR MANCINNI

his reach, as his parents could not drive him and the bus system could not comply. As a result, this student had no choice but to attend an underfunded, underachieving school in his local vicinity.

The Carma app is designed to alleviate this issue faced by too many students. With Carma, parents as well as other volunteers would serve

**"I felt like I was really lucky to be in a team that worked together so well."**  
**Bear Mancinni, grade 8**

as drivers. Parents would also have the ability to schedule and track rides, and students can view their schedules and when rides arrive. Drivers can even schedule their rides and earn points for driving safely and consistently, incentivizing this program. Additionally, there would be a location in every school in a district utilizing the app that allows students to schedule rides, clearly requiring all schools' cooperation. Mancinni also explained the PALS program would even be used for vetting potential drivers. "I know from asking around that the majority of Pine View parents would do this already if they

knew how, and there was a system for it," Mancinni said.

Mancinni expressed that his team was able to manage their time very effectively, opting to create a presentation featuring a mock-up of the major features of the app and its aesthetic, rather than a website, which many of the other teams chose to do. "Our app is extremely complex," Mancinni said, pointing out that the projected amount of time to actually build it would be 35 weeks. "Nothing would appear in three days."

On Sunday, the app was finally presented by the team to a panel of judges, including Superintendent Todd Bowden, as well as local business leaders and event organizers. After the team won, each member received an Apple iPad Pro. "I felt like I was really lucky to be in a team that worked together so well," Mancinni said.

Currently however, the app is in development as it needs funding and grants in order for it to be produced, even if the upkeep, according to Mancinni, is very minimal. Recently, however, at the last session of Grid Un-Locked, a review of local traffic and congestion held at The Francis event venue, the team communicated their idea once more to a wider audience. There will be a significant amount of red tape involved in effectuating any kind of change in cooperation with the school board and district. "It could take a while even if it is easy," Mancinni said, noting that it is quite possible the app will materialize in the Sarasota area or another.

## [app reviews]

### Teach yourself: Language Learning Programs

#### Memrise

by Cate Alvaro  
Sports Editor

In an effort to enhance the teaching of foreign languages, Memrise: Language Learning, is an app that educates participants of everyday words and phrases of different languages. This app helps to teach users different languages through various games and quizzes.

Memrise takes on a space-themed design and encourages the user to prepare for "takeoff" with different levels of languages. This is done in order to create a basic foundation of the course and then build upon it. Once entering the lesson, the app displays flashcards with foreign words and English translations. It also plays a recording of the pronunciation of each foreign word. After rotating through the flashcards, it quizzes the user, by a matching format, to measure how much knowledge has been retained.

After completing the matching portion, Memrise provides videos of natives speaking the vocabulary. Different responses to what the people say are offered at the bottom, and the user must select the appropriate responses. Once this exercise is complete, the app then plays an audio recording of the foreign word and the participant must choose the correct English translation.

When the user gets a question correct, the app rewards him or her with a number of points, encourag-



PHOTO PROVIDED BY UK.PC-MAG.COM

ing the user to keep playing. At the end of a lesson, the program totals the number of points earned by the user and offers an upgrade to a different space character. It also unlocks different prizes with the more points the user earns. The goal is to learn five words a day; the program separates the vocabulary words into two categories: learned and mastered.

The app is of no cost, however, one may purchase the Memrise Pro option for a month at a price of \$8.99. Memrise Pro refines the student's listening skills through audio recordings of native speakers, targets difficult words so the student will remember them better and offers speed review mode. The team offers various discounts on their Memrise Language Learning app.

**Rating:**  
**4.5/5 Torches**



#### Babbel

by Mackenzie Dyrda  
Entertainment Editor

Babbel is an application that combines technology and varying learning methods to help anyone conquer a new language. A specialized team of language experts crafted the program to make sure learning a new language is easy and lasting. This app contains courses that are created by professional linguists, educators and authors.

Babbel currently offers 14 language courses including French, German, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. The app teaches how to hold real-life conversations and how to perfect intricate pronunciations with its speech recognition technology.

The speech recognition tool measures how the user's pronunciation matches the audio track provided. Each lesson is specifically tailored to each of the languages to cater to all learning styles. The way an English speaker learns French, for example, is different than the way an Italian speaker learns the same language. This language app takes this into consideration, and benefits the learners with useful content, maximizing the learning effect, according to Babbel Custom-

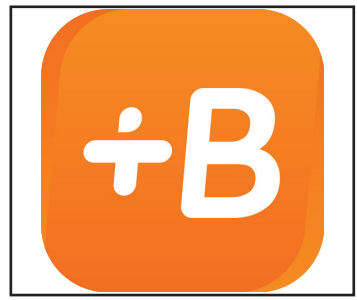


PHOTO PROVIDED BY EDUCATIONALAPPSTORE.COM

er Service. Each lesson ranges from 10 to 15 minutes, easily enabling on-the-go learning for those with busy schedules. After each lesson, a review session allows the user to practice the vocabulary and grammar learned in that specific lesson, and also past lessons, to help the user retain the information.

Registration with Babbel is free, and the first lesson in every language is free to try as well. Unfortunately, free users only have 10-minute sessions. The paid version is needed to truly master a language. There is a monthly fee of \$12.95 for full access to the courses.

**Rating:**  
**5/5 Torches**



## [an infographic]

# Virtual Reality

**How the brain is tricked**  
VR tricks the brain by simulating two different angles of a scene to both eyes, allowing for a sense of depth

Adding shading and texture of different objects also help create a realistic setting

**How the VR world is made**  
Rules of the natural world (like gravity) apply to the virtual world as well

HMD makes it seem like people are surrounded by a life-like setting/environment by using sensors

**The technology is still not perfected ... yet**  
Images in the HMD must update at a fast rate to prevent "VR sickness," similar to motion sickness

The devices need powerful hardware to run

Sensors that track the user's head must be quick to avoid VR sickness

**Various applications of VR**  
Used by businesses, such as real estate to show buyers what houses look like without even going inside the house

Used for educational purposes as well

Used in medicine such as for simulating surgeries or as treatment for mental illness

**Painting & Waterproofing, Inc.**

*No Job Too Small!*

2004 Ribbon Terrace      Jorge (español): (941) 915-7088  
North Port, FL 34286      Yelly: (941) 822-2773  
Office: (941) 429-9115      Fax: (941) 429-6828

[www.picassopaintinginc.com](http://www.picassopaintinginc.com)

Phone: (941) 426-4029  
Fax: (941) 426-2059

**WARM MINERAL SPRINGS**

M O T E L

12597 South Tamiami Trail  
Warm Mineral Springs, FL 34287

wmsmotel@aol.com  
[www.warmmineralspringsmotel.com](http://www.warmmineralspringsmotel.com)



## Eighth-grader takes the crown in several pageants



**Eighth-grader Madeline Boehm receives the crown for Miss City Beautiful Teen in Orlando. She was inspired by her mother to start competing in beauty pageants.**

PHOTO PROVIDED BY MADELINE BOEHM

by **Noelle Bencie**

Asst. Sports Editor

Mid-stage and center spotlight, eighth-grader Madeline Boehm's time in pageantry stems from a lineage of success stories. Having won both the Miss City Beautiful Teen and Miss Florida Junior High America, the rookie participant has been competing for a year but she demonstrates the same skill as her mother, Maryann Boehm, who was former Miss Florida 1991.

Originally inspired to dive into the pageant scene by her mother, who also earned best overall act in Miss America 1991, Madeline's start in pageantry came in the form of Maryann's 25-year reunion pageant; an event, in which many attendees convinced her to start pageantry and follow in her mother's footsteps. According to Madeline, her grandmother

pushed her toward pageants in order to carry on the family tradition.

Madeline is currently preparing to compete nationally at the Miss America Junior High School pageant in Little Rock, Ark., and has already competed in four pageants prior: Miss City Beautiful Teen 2017, Miss Florida Junior High America 2018, Miss Manatee and Miss Gainesville. In each pageant, she takes part in three categories: the "Interview," "Fun-Fashion," and "Evening Gown." When competing in the interview portion, she is placed in a room with judges, where she is asked questions about her role models and her strengths and weaknesses. The competitors then have three to four hours to prepare for the fashion portion of the competition after the interview. In this segment, participants select an outfit that they think would

most fit the category of the judges' choice. The final category is the evening gown. Boehm wears her favorite dress for the evening gown portion and wears the same dress for each competition. "My dress is from Regalia... and I love it. It is my dream dress," Boehm said.

Boehm held the title of Miss City Beautiful Outstanding Teen 2017 when she competed this past October for the Miss Florida Junior High America 2018, walking away with a win. "The City Beautiful pageant is basically Miss Orlando. I represented Orlando in the statewide pageant, and I was an ambassador for the City of Orlando. Now, I represent the people of Florida and all the different cultures that are in this state," she said. Boehm is going to represent Florida in the national competition in Little Rock, Ark., in June 2018.

Boehm will be competing against 50 girls in her age group, each representing a different state. According to Boehm, her least favorite part about competing is the selectivity. She believes that each girl deserves a crown for being involved in such an amazing experience. "A majority of my best friends now are from pageants because they are all smart, have amazing personalities, are talented and are just really good girls to be around," Boehm said. Her pageants are coordinated by her director who handles the paperwork and scheduling. Her director also helps her choose what to wear, what to say and how to strut down the runway.

Boehm hopes to continue pageantry into high school and college. "I want to go back to the Miss America system pageants after, hopefully, I win Miss America Junior High, but my goal one day is to be Miss America," Boehm said.

[a review]

## Manny's Tacos To Go!



**Manny's Tacos To Go! features five taco types: pollo, lengua, carnitas, al pastor and carne asada.**

PHOTO BY ALLIE ODISHELIDZE

by **Allie Odishelidze**

Humor Editor

Tucked away in the parking lot of Nick's Bar, Manny's Tacos To Go! is the pinnacle of fine Mexican cuisine. The taco truck's unassuming exterior conceals the delectable nature of the food hidden inside.

Serving only traditional Mexican tacos, Americanized taco condiments such as cheese, lettuce and sour cream are not offered. Served upon two warm, stacked and soft corn tortillas, the limited menu features five options: pollo, lengua, carnitas, al pastor and carne asada.

The two standouts of this menu are carnitas and al pastor. Literally translated, "carnitas" means "little meats." Made by simmering or braising pork in lard or oil, carnitas truly provide a melt-in-your-mouth sensation. Carnitas' sister meat, al pastor, is a pork dish brought to Mexico via Lebanese immigrants. Marinated in a variety of flavors including chilies, spices and pineapple, the pork is then roasted in a vertical rotisserie fashion. The meat is then sliced thinly off the spit and served.

For those seeking something a bit more exotic, lengua presents an interesting option. A dish prepared from a slowly-simmered cow's tongue, lengua has a nice chewy, yet soft texture.

Those transitioning from American tacos to the tradition-

al type may find that carne asada is the way to go. Featuring grilled beef, this is most similar to the American-style fajita. A delightful choice in any regard, carne asada is prepared to have a distinct charred flavor; combined with the tasty marinade, nothing more is desired.

All of these tacos are served with lime, pico de gallo, cilantro and cabbage. The lime complements all of the flavors of the tacos delightfully, and when accompanied with the other accouterments, the deal is sealed.

Pico de gallo is a salsa made from tomato, onion, cilantro, lime juice, salt and jalapeños. Topping the tacos with jalapeños brings just the right amount of spice to life and the additional cilantro ties in all the flavors exceptionally.

To further flavor these tacos, both green and red sauce is provided. The green sauce is used more for flavoring rather than spice, while the red sauce requires a more cautious approach. A particularly spicy option, this sauce packs a punch and should be used sparingly. The price of these tacos are \$2 each.

While it is a great traditional Mexican option, there are no

“All around it is a great place to get your taco fix.”

**Isabella Stepanek, grade 12**

options for vegetarians as of now — unless a corn tortilla with pico de gallo is a vegetarian's cup of tea.

The only other downfall is the unusual hours; open only Friday and Saturday from 5 p.m. to 1 a.m., it is not necessarily ideal. However, the positives for this establishment far outweigh the negatives.

"The beef and carnitas were definitely my favorites. There's really a meat flavor for everyone. If you want some spice, the red sauce is very spicy. All around it is a great place to get your taco fix," twelfth-grader Isabella Stepanek said.

Manny's Tacos To Go! is located at 4463 Bee Ridge Rd., Sarasota, Fla. 34233

**Rating: 4.5/5 Torches**



## DECEMBER HOROSCOPES



### AQUARIUS

January 20 - February 18



Stock up on those cold-weather essentials; snow is in your winter break forecast!

### ARIES

March 21 - April 19



Second semester is just around the corner. You're going to be tested with how well you can weather the storm, so take time for yourself over break to regroup and relax.

### GEMINI

May 21 - June 20



Bundling up is the way to go for you, Gemini. Invest in a warm, soft blanket and get comfortable this season.

### LEO

July 23 - August 22



The cold weather is getting to you, Leo. Hit the beach over break and catch some waves and rays. Sand angels anyone?

### LIBRA

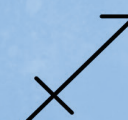
September 23 - October 22



Out with the old and in with the new is your motto, air sign. New year, new you, right?

### SAGITTARIUS

November 22 - December 21



Appreciate the small things people do for you. Noticing these little niceties will keep you humble. It feels good to be grounded.

### PISCES

February 19 - March 20



Try something new over break—you may end up with a new favorite hobby. Enter the new year with a healthy curiosity and an open mind!

### TAURUS

April 20 - May 20



Find a unique hot chocolate recipe to test out with your friends. They'll be surprised with your creativity and sweetness.

### CANCER

June 21 - July 22



Follow your own mood and don't let others drag you down. Channel this positivity to motivate your imaginative, artistic side. Good vibes are headed your way!

### VIRGO

August 23 - September 22



You are an outgoing sign, so making new friends comes naturally to you. Check out a new coffee shop with some new friends this season. They could become your new go-to's.

### SCORPIO

October 23 - November 21



First semester was not a breeze for you, Scorpio. Reward your hard work! Catch up on your three R's. They are well deserved.

### CAPRICORN

December 22 - January 19



The sun moves into your sign tomorrow, Capricorn. Although your duties and responsibilities may be calling, balance is the key to life.



**CLARK ROAD ANIMAL CLINIC**  
COMPASSIONATE CARE  
QUALITY SERVICE

**THOM A. SMITH, D.V.M.**  
**EVELYN ANDRE HANSEN, D.V.M.**  
**RICHARD FUNK, D.V.M.**  
**IAN HANNIGAN, V.M.D.**

**PHONE 941.922.5007**  
**FAX 941.922.3166**  
**WWW.CLARKROADANIMALCLINIC.COM**  
**HOURS BY APPOINTMENT**

**5728 CLARK RD • SUNRISE PLAZA • SARASOTA, FL 34233**



**PERFORMANCE EYECARE**  
FAMILY FOCUSED. LIFETIME CARE.

**Henry J. Bausback, OD, FAO**  
**941.361.9491**

**COMPREHENSIVE EYE EXAMS**  
GLASSES • CONTACT LENSES • EYE HEALTH EXAMINATIONS

**FULL OPTICAL SHOP WITH LICENSED OPTICIAN ON PREMISES**

1058 N. Tamiami Trail, Suite 105 (Across from Van Wezel)  
performanceeyecaresarasota.com






**SKAT**  
SHUTTLING KIDS AROUND TOWN

We are a premium transport and carpool management service for youth, ages 5 and up, in and around the Sarasota County.

We transport your precious cargo from school to after-school activities.

**RESERVE A SEAT TODAY!**




MUSIC GYMNASICS DANCE TUTORING FARMS SPORTS TAE KWON DO  
WWW.SKATSRQ.COM

We are a premium transport and carpool management service for youth, ages 5 and up, in and around the Sarasota County.

We transport your precious cargo from school to after-school activities.

**RESERVE A SEAT TODAY!**



# Taking a look behind the curtains of "Annie"



**TOP:** Seventh-grader Annika Trout breaks out in her rendition of "Tomorrow." **BOTTOM:** Tenth-graders Ella Peavely and Reed Spahn attempt to deceive Gregory Karcz's Warbucks as Lily and Rooster, their respective characters. PHOTOS BY GWYN PETERSEN

**by Naina Chauhan**  
Match Layout Artist

With arduous rehearsals three times a week, it sure is a "hard-knock life" for Pine View Drama Club members. Taking the challenge with passion and vigor, the club has recreated "Annie," the classical musical. The show, managed by English teachers Blake and Lori Wiley, opened Dec. 15 and 16. Twelfth-grader Alexandra Moyer served as the stage director and created the vision for the show; she taught the script, created the choreography and directed the actors. Moyer was the

executive decision-maker, but she applauds her amazing crew that helped bring the plot to life. Moyer said, "It has been stressful trying to juggle directing and college applications, but it's an experience I wouldn't trade for anything." The audition process, according to Moyer, was an educational and fun experience; the students had to present a one-minute monologue and sing for their audition. "I really liked the idea of a show that showcased our middle-school students. They are always so nervous in auditions, but I love these kids and they have so

much talent to offer," Moyer said.

Pine View Drama Club productions are managed by English teacher Lori Wiley, but they are put together entirely by the students. The officers of the club voted and chose "Annie" as their fall production. "Annie" was chosen in order to highlight the middle-school members of the club, as the majority of the main roles are children. "With a mostly middle-school cast and fresh faces, the Drama Club hopes to present an amazing show with great singing, choreography and energy," Blake Wiley said.

Tenth-grader Liv Brown was the costume manager, as well as the tech director, so she was responsible for making the costumes for each member. Brown worked with her mother to make the costumes to ensure they added details to the play that illustrated the time period and setting.

Ninth-grader Natalie Williams was in charge of the makeup for the show. Make-up is essential to the production as a wide variety of ages and characters are being portrayed.

The play is based off of the 1982 film version of "Annie." The main characters are Annie, played by Anika Trout, Oliver "Daddy" Warbucks by Gregory Karcz and Miss Agatha Hannigan by Isabella Monzon.

The students met once a week for their regular club meeting, and also three times per week for rehearsals. The rehearsals were Mondays and Fridays from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. At the rehearsals, students started with warm-ups and reviewed the choreography. They then ran through various scenes, and worked on certain parts of the choreography and vocals. Lori Wiley said, "Every year I marvel at how dedicated the students are."

"We spend so much time together and really have become a family," Moyer said. "I honestly could not have asked for a more flexible, loving, cooperative and respectful cast and crew."

**Annika Trout as Annie**

"We all support each other. We are one big family. Theater is my greatest hobby and my safe place, that is what is so incredible about it."



**Isabella Monzon as Miss Agatha Hannigan**

"I enjoy the run-throughs the most because the scenes come together and the dance numbers look almost flawless. I also enjoy being backstage during the show and seeing the crowds reaction to the show we put on."

**Joey Chen as Grace Farrell**

"I think most people assume that auditioning is the worst and the most nerve racking thing ever, and in some ways it is, but at the end of the day, it's about knowing your material and going into the room with confidence."



**Gregory Karcz as Oliver Warbucks**

"We rehearse long hours every week, so I get to spend a lot of time with the cast and really grow closer to all of them. It's great to be able to act and do something I love and make new friends in the process."



PHOTOS BY ELLA HECHLIK

Our Business is About

#LifelongRelationships

Lifelong Relationships



**Team**



**Customers**



**Community**

We support  
**The Pine View Torch**

Visit us Online Today at [CoolToday.com](http://CoolToday.com)

[f/GetTheBestFromToday](https://www.facebook.com/GetTheBestFromToday)

Never an Overtime Charge • 7 Days a Week • Call Today to Schedule Your Appointment!

**CoolToday**  
CACO55539

**941.584.8689**

PlumbingToday  
CFC1428793

EnergyToday  
EC13005317  
Electricians



# A W O R L D

## EVA PRESTAMO

by **Olivia Hansen**

Asst. Humor Editor

Eleventh-grader Eva Prestamo's life changed drastically when she moved to the United States from her hometown of Monterrey, Mexico in September of 2010, along with her four siblings and parents. Her father, Juan Prestamo, co-founder of a textile company, realized that the only way for his business to grow and thrive was to bring it to the United States, so he moved his family across North America to Dallas, Texas.

The public education system in Monterrey proved to be defective, as schools were low-funded and run-down. "I remember seeing a public school once from afar and I could automatically tell it was not private due to its state and condition — the building was old and unkempt," Prestamo said. "Although the Mexican public school system is improving, it is still at a very low state in comparison to the United States." When Prestamo's father informed her that she would be attending a public school in Texas, she was immediately filled with concern due to her memories of the public schools in Mexico. "I was surprised because I only expected to get a level of higher education by paying for it, but seeing free, quality education for everyone made me realize everything that this country had to offer for everyone," she said.

Prestamo was overjoyed with the amount of gratitude shown by Texans when she first arrived in Dallas. "Texans were my kind of people; they were full of life and extremely fun to be around," she said. "Over the three years of living there, I created more intimate friendships than I ever had and met some of the most important people in my life who have impacted me in many different ways."

The first social aspect of America that Prestamo noticed was the level of equality that everyone stood on, despite social or financial statuses. According to Prestamo,



in Mexico, citizens are indirectly placed into a social hierarchy, depending on income and rank in society. "Everyone [in the United States] has the same start-line for success; it is up to each individual to decide how hard they are willing to work to be the best," she said.

According to Prestamo, when she arrived at school, she noticed the lack of cliques and the welcoming attitude from students and teachers. In contrast to those in America, the students in the Mexican schools were selective — it was hard to fit in as a new student. Luckily, Prestamo was born and raised in one town, where she grew to know a comfortable group of friends that she would stay with for years.

"Mexico had a lot of life for me because of the people that gave vibrance to my days. Once I was apart from them, it was hard for me to find substitutes from the energy and life I used to be surrounded by," Prestamo said. "I longed for my home land and had a hard time adapting to the new American environment."

One of the main differences Prestamo noticed when she moved to America was the amount of safety provided. Though she never experienced a criminal encounter herself back in Monterrey, she knew of many cases of people close to her family being kidnapped, abused or even killed by criminal organiza-

tions. "My mother would never let me get in the car barefoot so that if criminals ever pulled us out of the car I would still be able to walk with no discomfort," she said.

With the memory of the poor conditions of schools in Mexico, Prestamo hopes to see a change in the way governments establish educational programs so that all students can obtain a worthy education and be successful. "The level of opportunities in America is what drives me to strive to become someone who is the change that the unfortunate citizens in all countries are seeking," she said.

The nostalgic memories of Prestamo's "favorite place on Earth" is what made the move so difficult for her. "Nothing will ever be able to replace the warm, cultural feeling in Mexico — the feeling of belonging somewhere and sharing many commonalities with the people that surround you," she said.

According to Prestamo, she is eternally grateful for the opportunities provided in our nation and she wants Americans to realize the gifts they were naturally born with — freedom, education and the ability to control their futures. "Americans need to stop once in a while, look around at the kind of unique life they live and know that there are many people in the world who don't get to be in such a privileged position. They need to realize how fortunate they are." Prestamo said.

by **William Khabbaz**

Features Editor

The educational system of the United States is a program for students around the world. With this mindset, students must go global and embrace the world. Many immigrants have traveled long distances with the land of opportunity. The world campus shows the multitude of cultures and opportunities given by the school. With this, we can gain your perspective by featuring foreign students from their country to pursue the



## THOMAS RUDLOFF

by **Haleigh Brown**

Match Editor-in-Chief

After living in for Brazil for 13 years, eleventh-grader Thomas Rudloff moved to the United States and experienced the culture shock of a lifetime. Sao Paulo, the largest Portuguese-speaking city in the world holds Rudloff's heritage and story of growing up through his childhood years.

Settling in Florida when he was 13 years old with his mother and two brothers, his family was content with their decision to move. Rose Rudloff, his mother, said, "I was very happy that we moved because it's safer here, and the education is better. Back in Brazil, I didn't feel safe. Here we live in a small town, and I know my kids are safe."

Rudloff came to Florida because the climate was considerably similar to that of San Paulo, which made himself and his family feel more comfortable with the transition to the United States. After attending Laurel Nokomis Middle School and Venice High School, Rudloff ended up at Pine View in tenth grade. "The first difference I noticed socially was where everyone places their pencil cases. In Brazil, the pencil case is always on the desk, and when I did that here, everyone stared at me," Rudloff said.

Along with the many differences within the classroom, one large dissimilarity between Brazil and the United States is the act of changing classrooms throughout the day. Instead of the students pick-

ing up their belongings and going from teacher to teacher, the teachers themselves are the ones who change classrooms.

In Brazil, there are two tests per semester in each class. While at Pine View, students are tested on a weekly basis. Even the textbooks are different. In Brazil, all textbooks have to be purchased and can sometimes be as expensive as college textbooks. In Florida, not only does Rudloff not have to buy the textbooks, but he also says he has more access to helpful resources like Khan Academy.

"Just like any other U.S. town, there are good and bad parts of the city [in Brazil]. I was fortunate to live in a good neighborhood, but the suburbs are usually the worst areas with some that are completely controlled by gangs," Rudloff said.

Outside of the classroom setting, Rudloff noticed a stark contrast between the freedom in the United States in comparison to Brazil. "Simply just walking around the corner with your dog is something that is unthinkable in Brazil. With the high criminal rates and the terrible traffic, there are always armored cars. Here [in Florida] everything is more open and free, and everyone is more friendly," Rudloff said.

For Rudloff, his daily routine consisted of accounting for at least 30 to 40 minutes of traffic minimum and up to two hours maximum. Rudloff described his life in Brazil as "calculated" and "stressful." In Florida, Rudloff is able to arrive places



faster and have more time in a day to do what he loves.

"When I was coming to the states, I thought I was going to meet a bunch of southerners who eat McDonalds all the time and are really fat," he said. "And then I came here and was shocked that everyone was normal. Most generalizations are wrong." If Rudloff had stayed in Brazil, he believes he would be doing the same thing he is doing now — studying — but in a more stressful environment.

Although Rudloff would vacation in Brazil, he says that he would not move back. According to Rudloff, adapting to English was hard at first but he eventually he came to learn it entirely as a tenth-grader at Pine View. "I noticed at the end of sophomore year that I started to

think in English instead of Portuguese. It was weird as I would start to mix up the two while talking," he said.

Rudloff found it very easy to make friends upon moving, adding to his overall positive outlook on Florida and the United States. "Thomas and I first really met in Model UN when I needed help preparing for my first conference. I had no idea what to do and he helped me figure it out. We also have math together so we just started talking a lot and became friends very quickly," ninth-grader and friend of Rudloff, Marguerite Andrich, said.

"Even though people refer to America as the land of opportunity, it's more than that. It's an actual place you can call home," Rudloff said.



# WORLD VIEW

United States is often seen as the only ar-  
country, but to understand the world's  
and see what is beyond their perception.  
ing and far to one day come face to face  
variety of ethnicities within Pine View's  
ures all focusing on the academic op-  
n this features spread, we hope to wid-  
our students who have left their home  
eir educational dreams.

## EDUARD GRODSKII



**by Ryan Wasserman**  
Web Section Editor

Traveling from halfway across the world, ninth-grader Eduard Grodskii said goodbye to his community in Moscow, Russia and moved to the United States when he was 10 years old with his parents and brother. As a new student at Pine View this year, Grodskii has observed the many differences between the United States and his home country.

Before moving to Sarasota, Grodskii and his family initially lived in Bradenton, enjoying the many local beaches and the different climate in comparison to Russia's. "I wanted to see new things, have new opportunities and learn how other people lived," Grodskii said.

During his time in the United States, Grodskii has experienced many differences between Russia's educational system and the United States. "In Pine View, you get to choose what you want to study. You

didn't get that in Russia, and it is nice," Grodskii said. According to Grodskii, the schools in Russia only offer a small variety of electives, and the vast majority of the curriculum is mandatory for students to take whereas American schools provide a wider range of topics.

While Grodskii enjoys having the freedom to choose courses suited to his interests, he believes there is a downside to this luxury. "In Russia, you come out of school knowing a little bit of everything. That way, you can always know that you would be ready for college and whatever you wanted to do," he said. "In the United States, you only know what you want to know, so you sometimes end up unsure of what you will be doing in the future."

Additionally, Grodskii noticed the significant difference in the enrollment of schools between the two countries. "In Russia, you have about 30 people in your grade, and you are always seeing each oth-

er because the school is so small. The whole school is one or two buildings," he said.

According to Grodskii, the schools in Russia enforce a stricter environment where students are not allowed to interact with their peers at all during class. He says that the United States is a more accepting place. "In America, people are welcoming and kind. They understand my culture," Grodskii said.

As of now, Grodskii has not yet come face to face with any problems or challenges while living in Florida. "English isn't that hard to learn, and the people here are very nice," he said. "My parents handled all of document problems for me, and people are very nice to immigrants here."

Upon moving to the United States, Grodskii has encountered a common misconception that he would like to set straight. "If there were one thing that I had to tell people about moving here, it would be that it is somewhat easy. People always think that coming here is so hard, but it really isn't."

Another difference Grodskii notes is that Americans have some privileges that Russians do not. "In America, people can just start a business or speak against the government, but you can't do that in Russia. You just have to be a regular guy," he said.

Grodskii believes that his future is more open in America. "If I were still in Russia, I would go to school, get through college and get a regular job. I wouldn't have nearly as many options as I do now," he said. "I like the United States, and I'm happy that I'm here."



## GREAT

# LAOWATDHANASAPYA



**by Ben Gordon**  
Asst. News Editor

Tenth-grader Great Laowatdhanasapya's life took a major turn when he and his family moved to the United States from Phuket, Thailand when he was 12 years old. After attending a British school in Thailand for years, Laowatdhanasapya and his family decided that it would be a great opportunity for their family to shift to the United States in order to pursue a higher quality education and gain more opportunities in the future.

Laowatdhanasapya attended a private school that incorporated English and Thai language during

his time in Thailand. Although he was receiving a quality education in Thailand, the chances of being accepted into a college in the United States were low. "If you come from Thailand, you don't get as many opportunities to get into a college in the United States as you would if you were from the United States," Laowatdhanasapya said. As a result, Laowatdhanasapya and his family relocated to the United States.

Upon entering the United States, Laowatdhanasapya noticed that society is much more organized than that in Thailand because of more enforced regulations and laws. "It's safer to live in the

United States. For example, America has laws for everything. Back in Thailand, nobody followed the laws. Here, you have to follow them," Laowatdhanasapya said.

According to Laowatdhanasapya, the adjustment from the workload in Thailand to the workload in the United States was a difficult. "It was challenging to catch up on all of the school work because the academics at Pine View are much more advanced than the courses I was taking back in Thailand," he said. In Thailand, schools participate in IB programs, whereas Pine View participates in AP courses. Because Laowatdhanasapya was not old enough to partake in IB programs while he lived in Thailand, the jump from normal classes to AP courses was a challenge as well.

Although Laowatdhanasapya acknowledges that there are many resources for students in the United States at Pine View, he believes students at his school in Thailand received more resources. "Because my school in Thailand was private, we received everything we needed, including pencils, pens, textbooks and notebooks. In the United States, each student must buy their own supplies," he said. Additionally, according to Laowatdhanasapya, his

school in Thailand provided more resources for things like clubs and after school activities. "Back at my old school, clubs were required for every student. Because of this, we received time every day to participate in clubs and after-school activities," Laowatdhanasapya said.

Regarding the social environment in the United States, according to Laowatdhanasapya, there is less time given for social interaction in America than in Thailand. "In the United States, everything revolves around school. You wake up early, go to school, and after school, you have to do your homework. By that time, you have few opportunities to interact with friends," Laowatdhanasapya said.

Overall, Laowatdhanasapya says that America is a good place to live, yet Sarasota is a little boring. If he had not come to America, Laowatdhanasapya believes that he would have lived a more interesting life with more free time, but also one with less opportunities for a higher-quality education.

"I had to make the sacrifice of leaving Thailand in order to receive a better education and have a better job as an adult. In the long run, it will pay off," Laowatdhanasapya said.



## Eleventh-grader wins Cross Country State Championships

by Kasumi Wade  
Asst. News Editor

First to cross the finish line Nov. 11 at the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) Cross Country State Finals, eleventh-grader Ben Hartvigsen took home the gold. Hartvigsen competed in the 4A division for Sarasota High School at Apalachee Regional Park in Tallahassee, Fla. While this was not Hartvigsen's first time winning a high-school race, it was his first time winning a major title such as state champion.

Inspired by his father, a successful runner who has competed in many marathons, Hartvigsen began his running career by running local 5K road races in elementary school. In middle school, he ran for Pine View's middle-school track team. He then moved on to run for the Sarasota High School Cross Country and Track teams; he has been a member of the teams since ninth grade and plans to remain there throughout high school.

Over the summer going into tenth grade, Hartvigsen decided to get serious about his running career and dedicated a lot of time and effort into becoming a better runner. Since then, Hartvigsen has won several races, including districts and regionals. "Districts was the first high school cross country race I ever won. Winning it, as well as regionals, was very motivating and really prepared me for states," Hartvigsen said.

Hartvigsen started intensely training for states this past summer by putting a lot of time and effort into difficult practices. "Near the end of the race my legs really started to hurt and I knew there was someone right behind me, but I just tried to keep holding on," Hartvigsen said.

According to Hartvigsen, all practices are very important and hold a purpose. While long runs help with endurance, sprint workouts are necessary for producing speed, helping a lot with the end of a race. "After the race I had a lot of people come up to me and congratulate me or hug me, and some people were almost in tears. But I never really felt as



if I had won until they called my name up to the podium and I received my award," Hartvigsen said.

According to his cross country coach, John Stevenson, Hartvigsen's work ethic, de-



**TOP LEFT:** Eleventh-grader Ben Hartvigsen poses with Assistant Coach Alan King after receiving the first place medal. **BOTTOM LEFT:** In the middle of the race, Hartvigsen runs the course at Florida State University (FSU). He has been running since elementary school. **RIGHT:** Hartvigsen crosses the finish line at FHSAA Cross Country State Finals with a time of 15:39.6. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BEN HARTVIGSEN

sire and trust in coaching makes him an excellent runner. "The best aspect of Ben that I love working with is his strive to be a student of running and trusting in the process. Ben has a great grasp of how to succeed. He understands becoming a great runner is a process and cannot be done overnight," Stevenson, said.

After achieving his goal at states, Hartvigsen ran one last race for the season Nov. 25 in Charlotte, N.C. Hartvigsen ran the Foot Locker South Regional at McAlpine Greenway Park, where he finished twenty-ninth out of over 280 runners.

After running the same course last year, Hartvigsen knew he would enjoy attending this race with fast runners to challenge him. "Performance wise, I didn't do as well as I hoped, but am still happy with my race and glad I had the opportunity to go," Hartvigsen said.

As Hartvigsen still has one more cross country season before he graduates, he hopes to break the Sarasota High School record and attend a national meet. "It is going to be really hard, but I think if I work hard enough I can do it," Hartvigsen said. He plans to continue his running career in college.

## The Torch Tries: Goat Yoga

### Taking a stretch on the wild side

by Ella Hechlik  
Asst. Web Editor

Goat Yoga or "animal yoga" has been sweeping the yoga community for the past few months. The premise is that everyone is given an opportunity to enjoy yoga classes, while having fun with animals in a new and different way.

This class allows everyone to leave with something new to tell their friends. Fruitville Grove began hosting these classes in October of this year.

Each class includes a variety of basic yoga moves, including "downward dog" and "swan diving." The yoga is easy-going and is designed to immerse the participant with the goats. For many, this experience can be nerve-racking, and a waiver must be signed by an adult before participating. However, the goats are extremely friendly.

It is recommended to bring a towel instead of a yoga mat, as the classes take place outside in the grass, and goats will be walking on it. In each class, there are four baby goats, and a few older goats to watch over the babies. The goats come over to people and brush up against them as they perform different yoga moves. The goats are used to bring laughter to the class and create a new experience each time.

While participating in goat yoga, many of the baby goats will jump on the backs of the participants and cuddle with them as well as other goats.

Yoga instructor, Michelle Leon, teaches the yoga classes and also runs the Facebook page, "Goat Yoga in Sarasota." Leon stresses the flexibility of each class and welcomes people to stop certain exercises to take a quick selfie with the goats as they approach.

"I love sharing the practice of yoga and making it accessible to everyone. For the past three and a half years, my intention was to open the world of yoga up to someone whom has never tried it before. That is what I absolutely love about goat yoga," Leon said.

People of all ages attend these classes, including those new to yoga. Yoga experts also attend these classes to enjoy a new and exciting yoga experience.

The goats are held in a separate area until all of the participants have arrived and



**Goat yoga participants stretch for the class as the goats mill around them; often, the goats will jump on the backs of the participants. Fruitville Grove offered goat yoga classes this October.**  
PHOTO BY ELLA HECHLIK

settled in. Then, food is placed in the enclosure and the goats are set free to roam around.

The classes are extremely flexible and relaxed and last about an hour to an hour and a half. When the classes end, each person is allowed to stay behind and take pictures with the baby goats.

Tickets for classes are available on their Facebook page only. However, tickets sell rapidly so make sure to purchase them quickly. All of the December classes are currently sold out, but January dates will be released soon. Each class costs \$30 per person and has an age limit of 12 years old and up. Also, multiple holiday packages are available to purchase through the Facebook page.



PHOTO BY ELLA HECHLIK

**WED DEC 27**  
*through*  
**SAT DEC 30**  
**2 & 7 PM**  
Sailor Circus Arena

2017

Sailor Circus

presents

the High Flying Holidays

Watch as more than 100 kids flip, fly and soar!

ADULTS  
\$20

CHILDREN  
\$15

GET YOUR TICKETS NOW!

**THE CIRCUS ARTS  
CONSERVATORY**  
PERFORMANCE. TRAINING. OUTREACH. LEGACY.

**941.355.9805**  
**CircusArts.org**



# One-on-One: two coaches' perspectives on Pine View's basketball teams

by Josh Gulyansky

Web Section Editor

Sticking with the Pine View middle-school basketball team for over 10 years, Scott Wolfinger and Joe DiGiacomo are looking forward to another great season as coaches. The team is split into two groups with DiGiacomo coaching the girls team and Wolfinger coaching the boys team. The two work together to train, prepare and practice with the middle-school students for their games against other schools. The Torch interviewed the coaches, before the season officially began, about their experiences with both of these teams.

**How long have you been coaching for the basketball team?**

Wolfinger: I have been coaching the boys basketball team for 21 years, since 1996.

DiGiacomo: I coached the girls basketball team at Venice from 1995 to 2005, but I have been coaching the Pine View girls basketball team for 12 years now, from 2005 to 2017.

**Why and how did you start coaching for the team?**

Wolfinger: When it was my first year at Pine View, I was looking for another source of income so I decided to try coaching the basketball team. I ended up really enjoying it, so I have continued ever since.

DiGiacomo: I started coaching the basketball team because I have always loved sports, and watching the kids get better and better over the years is amazing.

**What is your favorite part about this job?**

Wolfinger: I love watching the players grow as a team and getting to know them differently on the court than in class.

DiGiacomo: My favorite part of the job is seeing the girls do well and enjoy playing the game. I can see when a girl is struggling, and needs help in certain areas. Helping them practice in the mornings is another great part of the job.

**What is your best memory of being a coach?**

Wolfinger: My best memory of being a coach was in 2010 when we won the championship and all of the fans jumped off of the bleachers and swarmed the team.

DiGiacomo: My best memory of being a coach is a few years ago when the Pine View girls basketball team won five county championships in a row. This is a hard thing to do, no matter how well the team plays.

**What is the selection process to be a member of the team?**

Wolfinger: There are two days of tryouts in which the players do regular drills, layups and free throws. We record all of this and choose 12 players to make the team.

DiGiacomo: Girls have to come and try out for the team by showing if they can dribble, shoot decently



Coaches Joe DiGiacomo (left) and Scott Wolfinger (right) pose with basketballs after practice. They have been the coaches for the middle-school basketball teams, adding up to over 30 years of experience.

PHOTOS BY JOSH GULYANSKY

and pass well. I sometimes even recruit girls from my P.E. classes if I see that they are fast and athletic.

**What do you look for in a member of your team?**

Wolfinger: I obviously look for a certain height in a player since that is very important, but I want the players to be athletic and fast as well.

DiGiacomo: I look for members who work well with other people, and who are athletic in general. I have had many girls on the team who have played a different sport before, and decided to switch to basketball. I need the players to be

nice kids and to want to give basketball a shot.

**What are the strongest qualities of your team?**

Wolfinger: I think this year our strongest qualities are our experience and "basketball IQ." The players understand the game and are very tough on the court when they play.

DiGiacomo: Our team has not played in a game yet, but if looking at the practices, I'd have to say that the strongest quality of the team is that they work well together, and have great attitudes toward the game.

## Meet the Players

### Boys Team

- Bo Bloom 8
- Brady Bloom 8
- Colby Byrd 8
- Danny Childs 8
- Weelo Ghamra 8
- Alex Kempton 8
- Kevin Nishioka 8
- Michael Peavley 8
- Sid Sharma 8
- Camden Wozniak 8
- Joey Digiacomo 7
- Griffin Moritz 7
- Triston Parsons 7

### Girls Team

- Maddy Boehm 8
- McKenna Flaherty 8
- Anna Guentner 8
- Lilly Lockhart 8
- Lexie McGrady 8
- Ashley Reynolds 8
- Alex Roumi 8
- Julia VonArb 8
- Emily Hazlett 7
- Katie Hazlett 7
- Camille Johnson 7
- Isabella Monzon 7
- Chloe Ratner 7
- Emma Sineath 7

# Madison Hannon impresses' competitors



Twelfth-grader Madison Hannon demonstrates the clean-and-jerk move at the Sarasota High-North Port High duel. Hannon has participated in weightlifting for the past two years.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY MADISON HANNON

by Madi Holmes

Web Section Editor

Lifting the weight of stress and school off of her shoulders, twelfth-grader Madison Hannon uses weightlifting as her after-school pastime. Hannon has been weightlifting for the Sarasota High School girls team for approximately two years now, and has been recognized locally and at the district level for her weight class. Having a successful family history in athletics, including a past power-lifting father in the Marines, it was only a matter of time until Hannon picked up a bar.

However, before Hannon joined weightlifting, she was a member of Sarasota Crew. The consistent rowing motions in Crew had taken a major toll on Hannon, until she discovered weightlifting as a helpful aid for her constant back pain. "I loved the feeling of heavy lifts and maxing out at Crew," Hannon said. Due to her natural talent for weightlifting and support from her family, Hannon

decided to leave Crew and switch to weightlifting full time.

"[Hannon's] dedication to everything she does

**"I have watched lots of girls come and go, but practice and dedication is key if you want to go far."**

**Madison Hannon, grade 12**

really comes across, especially in sports and weightlifting," a friend of Hannon's, twelfth-grader Sana Rahman, said.

Hannon placed fifth in her weight class of 129 to 139 pounds at Port Charlotte High School regionals last

year. There are seven weight classes ranging from 101 to over 200 pounds, with different awards for each.

More recently, Hannon won first overall at the Sarasota High School-North Port High School duel Nov. 30—an accomplishment she was very excited about.

Hannon has been celebrating her achievement while also rigorously training in strength and endurance. With this training, she hopes to make it to states in Panama City this upcoming season.

The demanding sport requires Hannon to train and work her muscles daily. She practices Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays with her team, but also practices Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays at Real Fitness Sarasota with a personal trainer. Practice usually consists of weight-training, cardio and stretches that last about an hour to an hour and a half. Her dedication has led her to create a rigorous schedule so she can continue to improve and increase her strength.

"I have watched lots of girls come and go, but practice and dedication is key if you want to go far," Hannon said.

Her consistent goal-setting has gotten her to be in the top two of her weight class, allowing her to lift at every meet. Her max bench, the maximum amount of weight she can lift, is around 135 pounds and her max for clean-and-jerk, in which the bar is lifted up and over the head, is around 155 pounds.

Hannon's weightlifting career is in its early stages, and she hopes to place in states this upcoming season. She also aspires to follow in the foot steps of her idol, Mattie Rogers, an Olympic weightlifting record breaker, and make a debut at the Olympics someday. As high-school girls weightlifting continues to be a scarce sport, Hannon plans to be a leader in breaking the patriarchy in sports.

# Tenth-grader gets his kicks as team captain



PHOTO PROVIDED BY KRISTOFFER SELBERG

by Ben Gordon

Asst. News Editor

Running, passing with ease, and scoring goals with ease, tenth-grader Kristoffer Selberg plays competitive soccer at FC Sarasota and Riverview High School. Selberg has played soccer for 10 years, beginning when he was 5 years old.

Selberg's parents signed him up for soccer because they both played soccer as children and wanted their son to follow in their footsteps. Although Selberg initially began playing soccer at his parents' request, he now

plays the sport for his own personal enjoyment. "My favorite part of playing soccer is being a member of the team. I love the environment of working together. It's a great feeling," Selberg said.

He began his soccer career by playing recreational soccer — characterized by no competitions or tryouts — which he played until he was 11 years old. Selberg started competitions at the age of 9 with FC Sarasota. "I had always loved watching soccer games and was ecstatic when I started playing in competitions," Selberg said. Competitive soccer is more intense, with tryouts based on talent, ability and more matches.

Selberg currently plays club soccer, which is played by a group of members separated into teams, allowing him to develop both individual and team skills. He plays for FC Sarasota, where he is a team captain. Selberg helps to convey the coach's instructions to the team and provides leadership for his

teammates. Last year, Selberg played varsity soccer at Sarasota High School as a team captain. This year, Selberg is playing varsity soccer at Riverview High School.

Selberg has winter practices at Riverview High School Mondays through Fridays from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., and has practices at FC Sarasota from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. He usually competes in a game every weekend. According to Selberg, his biggest accomplishment in soccer is being the only ninth-grader on the varsity soccer team at Sarasota High School last year.

Selberg's coach at FC Sarasota, James Wood, said, "I chose [Selberg] to be our team captain for a number of reasons. The most important factor is his ability to drive the team to do better, to work harder and to provide an example to our other players."

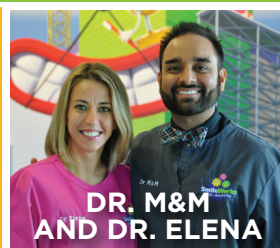
In the future, Selberg plans to continue to incorporate soccer into his daily life.

## Have Fun AT THE DENTIST!

SPECIALISTS IN PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

Designed to delight & warmly engage children from 1-18 years old, Sarasota's most modern & unique pediatric dental office will entertain & invite your kids to learn about their dental health!

We help you file your insurance. Call us for a complimentary benefits check.



DR. M&M AND DR. ELENA

THE SMILEWORKS DIFFERENCE



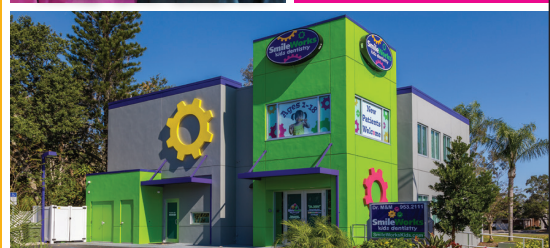
Dr. M&M's Mini Molars, Ages 1-3



Parents Welcome Back



24/7 Emergency Care



Now Accepting New Patients

3103 Fruitville Rd, Sarasota

SmileWorksKids.com

941.953.2111





## Millennials are ruining everything

by Anna Labiner

Asst. Entertainment Editor

Recently, Americans have been losing some of their favorite pastimes and activities, and one age group is to blame — Millennials. These avocado-loving, selfie-taking youngsters are taking the world by storm, and are killing everything from the napkin industry to quality food chains like Applebee's. This outrageous behavior must come to a stop, before we lose all of the values of American youth.

Before Millennials, American youth would buy houses and get married at a much younger age. Now, these incompetent young adults are choosing to focus more on their jobs and career choices rather than on finding a spouse. This decrease in marriages has in turn caused the decline in the diamond industry, even though these Millennials should be making enough money to afford them, using their salaries that they make from working at gas

stations and grocery stores. It's ridiculous that Millennials are more worried about "paying for food and rent" than they are about purchasing diamonds.

If these Millennials were even serious about purchasing a home in the first place, maybe they should stop spending all of their money on avocado toast. The large sum of money spent on avocado toast could go toward a home, so these lazy Millennials can stop living with their parents, and start collapsing the economy by getting mortgages.

Although Millennials show no interest in purchasing a home, they are showing interest in the environment, and are killing the fossil fuels industry. According to the Bay B. Oomer's Association, fossil fuels have decreased by 56% in the past 19 years, and tragically, by the year 2023, there will be clean, non-polluted air for the American public to breathe in every day. Is this really the future we want to provide for the next generations? A population destined for environmental conservation and "saving the bees?"

Of course, the only logical way to solve this problem is to completely tear apart the ozone layer.



Millennial poses for a photo while she eats her artisanal avocado toast. According to old people everywhere, the Millennial generation is ruining everything.

GRAPHIC BY ALLIE ODISHELIDZE

If Americans don't take a stand, soon we'll all be living in sustainable homes with clean water. Of course, the only logical way to solve this problem is to completely tear apart the ozone layer, a project that is being worked on by the Nation Association of Resource Consumption.

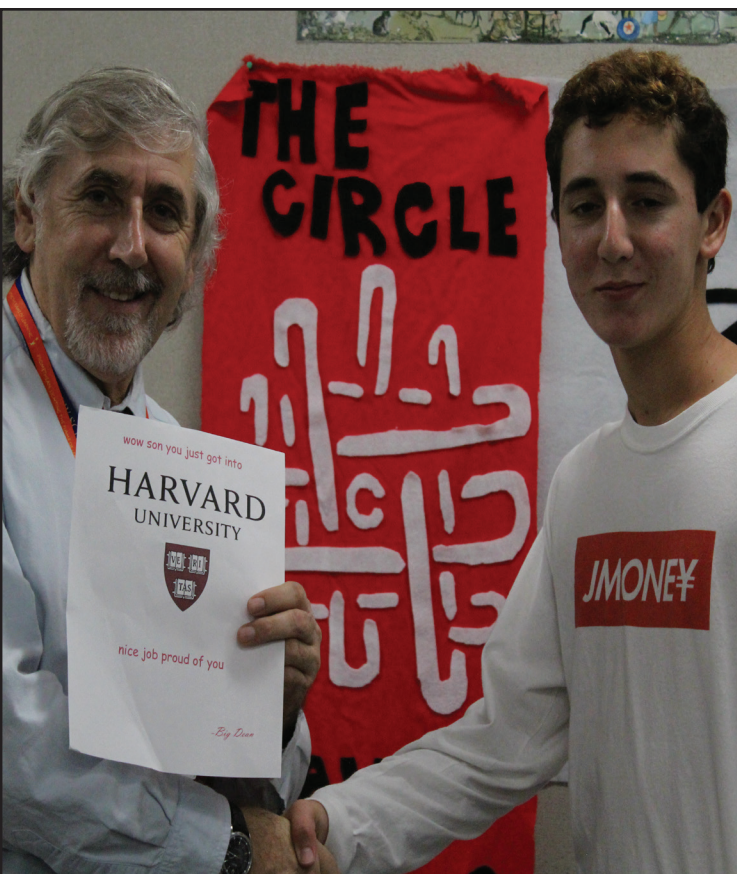
But it seems that the environment is not the only thing this generation suddenly cares about. These hippy-dippy Millennials are all advocating for free public healthcare, a luxury that these

pampered kids don't need. Back in the good ol' days, people dealt with their problems themselves. Instead of going to a doctor and getting unneeded medical attention, they just died.

Along with these complaints, Millennials are also obsessed with caring for their mental health instead of just letting it fester and suffer in silence. For some reason, they think that other people want to listen to their problems.

All in all, Millennials are ruining everything, one complaint at

a time. The demise of some of the best industries fall onto their shoulders. Even items like napkins aren't free from their clutches. Since Millennials are all buying paper towels rather than napkins, the napkin industry has suffered — even though anyone with common sense knows that a rough paper towel will never compensate for the velvety touch of a napkin. Nothing is safe from these cruel, hashtag users, and Americans everywhere are quaking at the thought of what the future of Millennials will look like.



Tenth-grader Large Dolla Money poses with a representative from Harvard University. The SoundCloud rapper was accepted into his schools on merit of his "bars" alone. PHOTO BY BEN NICHOLSON

by Zach Bright

Web Editor-in-Chief

"Community, Identity, Stability." The motto of the idyllic futuristic state achieved in Huxley's "Brave New World," it highlights uniformity as a key to a stable utopia. And while we haven't yet found this successful formula for humans, we have discovered its application to the Lofthouse frosted cookies.

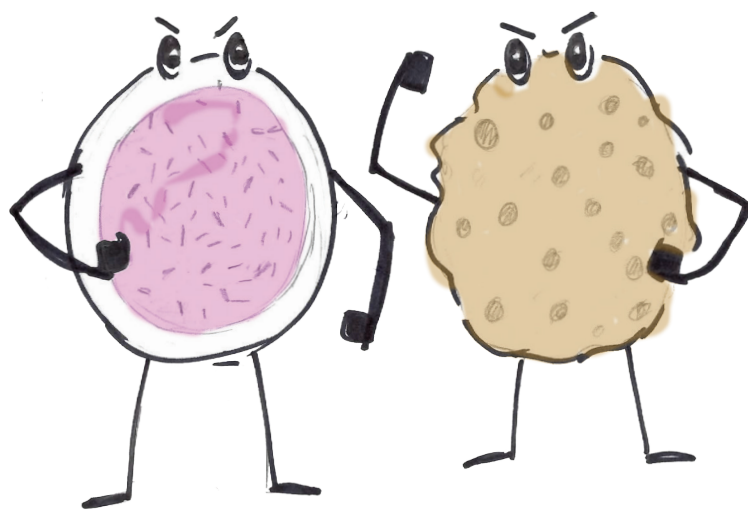
These delicacies from heaven always have an even consistency and texture, perfectly crafted every time. With your everyday chocolate chip cookie, the shape and structure is always drastically different, making one's cookie consuming experience a chore. With the the frosted cookie, people can live easy knowing what their cookie's caress will feel like upon entry into their gastrointestinal tract.

Covered with a circle of colorful sprinkles atop neon goodness, this sugary delight is complete with all the nutrition you'll need. Some may point to the use of unnatural chemicals as a negative, but in fact, chemicals are good for the body. Pastry nutritionist Dolores Fuertes Barriga said, "Toxic ingredients work to clean out the colon in an antiseptic fashion, and are beneficial for the colon just like a hearty poop."

Every party has them, and by the end of any gathering, children and adults alike have already gobbled them up. Lacking any harmful nuts, cacao, or termites, these cookies are meant for anyone, regardless of dietary restrictions. Great for any event, from an infant's birth to an untimely death, this dessert puts the "fun" in funeral.

Tracing their roots back to 18th century Nazareth, Pennsylvania, these round crumbly cookies also have a key historical importance ingrained in the minds of every American. Where would America be without the Lofthouse frosted cookie? Baked good historian Pub Licks Kooky said, "I can't imagine the signing of the Declaration of Independence with Ben Franklin chowing

## Cookie showdown: Lofthouse or loser?



GRAPHIC BY SUZANNE BROWN

down on an oatmeal raisin instead of a frosted cookie. Without those sweet treats, he wouldn't have had the gout to inspire his pursuit of American liberties."

Moreover, those who support Lofthouse cookies know that they are backing an American-made product produced by patriotic domestic industries. Beatrice B. Beebee of the Better Business Bureau said, "When you purchase a box of Oreos or Chips Ahoys, you might as well be buying an Apple phone manufactured in a Chinese sweatshop. I only buy frosted cookies because I'm an American."

In short, hating these cookies is quite simply hating America.

by Suzanne Brown

Asst. Editor-in-Chief

We've all had them, even me, but I'm not proud of it. There they sit, a staple of every tacky school, office, and birthday party: Lofthouse frosted sugar cookies. Yeah, those pale disks of flour topped with an inch of unnaturally fluorescent frosting. (Seriously, these things probably glow in the dark thanks to all their artificial coloring.) They're sad, they're unappetizing, and they really, truly need to go.

Perhaps most despicable of the generic dessert is its very label as a "cookie." These cookies fall apart the moment they're picked up, and have the texture of small cake (albe-

just to have some guy who repeats the phrase 'Gucci gang' for four straight minutes get in over me."

Despite what the title of the most recent LP, "Cheddar on top of my Pesos on top of my Dead Presidents on top of my Paper," might suggest, Large Money Dolla comes from humble roots. "When I first came to school in second grade, man, my dad drove up in a Tesla!" Money Dolla confessed, on the verge of tears. "Mr. Largo pointed and laughed at me, and said I

would never be worthy of the extra degree!" Thankfully, Money Dolla is now always carried to school on the backs of servants riding in his Bugatti Chiron, which is carried by more servants.

Whether one is reading his resume or talking to him in person, Money Dolla's clout can be

felt in the air. "I've never seen any student out of the thousands I've interviewed that could lay down verses quite like Money Dolla," Yale University interviewer Lil Yaley, said. "When he raps it's like he's speaking in another language. Literally. I can't understand a single word he's saying."

Furthermore, Money Dolla's impact on his city has been undeniable. "Long ago, Sarasota used to live in harmony," Pine View mother Lilo Zivert said. "But everything changed when Money Dolla attacked. He would walk into our houses, scream, 'ESKETIT,' and start freestyling. He has truly taught us to appreciate the silent, quiet, contemplative nature that surrounds us."

Though Large Money Dolla admits that his future is somewhat hazy he believes this development will change his life. "I hear a lot about crews at Harvard, yeah?" Money Dolla said. "They're irrelevant, fam. Money Dolla's got the best crew. Money Dolla got college game! ESKETIT!"

“He would walk into our houses, scream, ‘ESKETIT,’ and start freestyling.”  
Liloo Zivert,  
Pine View parent

it not a very good one). Even according to the google definition, a cookie is "typically ... crisp." While crispiness is not necessarily a crucial requirement, texture is vital to the anatomy of a good cookie. Freshly baked chocolate chip cookies are one of the most respected desserts out there (and a personal favorite). But why? Because a deliciously rich, chewy inside with a crispy outside is the epitome of all that is good in the world. Clearance rack frosted sugar cookies are the very antithesis of this. To even associate them with the category of cookie — alongside legends such as the Oreo or Publix chocolate chip cookie — is heinous.

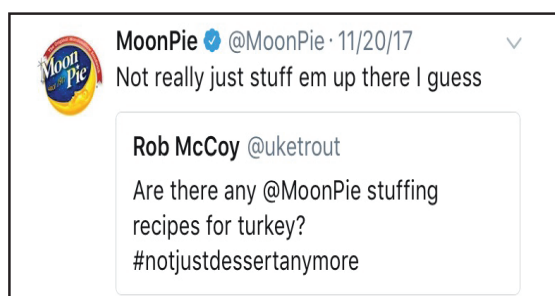
On a recent poll conducted on my finsta, the people spoke. For those who had taste, many expressed their disgust regarding the more than lackluster Lofthouse sugar cookies. One commenter noted, "Forreal these cookies are bad. They are like made out of partially dried play-doh." Another accurately surmised the truth and said, "Bad sisters leave my mouth feeling dry." Me too, sister. Me too.

I can almost guarantee that every person (or their mom) that purchases these cookies is not doing so because they actually find them appetizing. No, these cookies are the definition of "I forgot I signed up to bring food to the party, so I'll stop by Walmart and pick up the cheapest thing there." Anyone who claims these cookies are good concerns me. Is this the standard you have accepted into your diet? What's next? Oatmeal raisin?

The presence of crumbly, sugary cake disks at every special occasion has somehow made them socially acceptable. The sheer popularity of these cookies is what allows them to thrive. Now is when it ends. Wake up, America. We can put a stop to their consumption and production all together. Please, just get anything else. Have some dignity.



## [meme of the month]



PHOTOS PROVIDED BY TWITTER

Most companies use their social media platforms as a way to promote their brand with appealing photos and promotion for their potential customer. The classic and somewhat overlooked afternoon snack, the MoonPie, has taken a different approach.

The company uses active Twitter action led by employees diligently working to create lighthearted comedic responses to comments about their pies and spontaneous thoughts. In honor of Friday the 13th this October, the account tweeted "Hey kids did you know if you say, 'spooky lil MoonPie' three times in a mirror on this day nothing's gonna happen what is wrong with you." This tweet got 1,630 likes and was retweeted 487 times. This post was a smash hit.

The stream of MoonPie consciousness was further perpetuated with the tweet, "Some days you're the moon and other days you're the pie not real sure what that means

but if you're feeling sad we can talk about it." This hit 10.4k likes and was retweeted 3,850 times.

Overall, this unconventional advertising method has benefited the account, as it has racked up over 54.5k followers since their apparent social media approach has changed.



Scan the QR code above to visit MoonPie's Twitter page

## [a column]

### Vine: the voice of a generation

On the 27th day of October in 2016, a great tragedy was announced: the much loved social media application "Vine" would be shutting down. The video app featuring six-second looping videos was one of my greatest sources of happiness. The thought of a world in which Vine no longer existed was my nightmare.

When Vine officially shut down in January of this year, I quickly turned to Vine compilations online. These compilations brought temporary light to the eternal darkness that is the life of a Pine View student.

As a solely temporary relief, the true return of my happiness came with the announcement by the creator of Vine that a second rendition of the social media platform is in the works.

To celebrate this new, future Vine, "V2," here's a few of my favorite, school-appropriate Vines.

#### 1. "Look at all those chickens."

One of the most wholesome Vines to exist, this video features a young girl gesturing to a large flock of birds — birds that are not chickens. The audio accompanying the video is the aforementioned young girl saying, "Look at all those chickens." The simplistic happiness of this vine will bring a smile to any face.

#### 2. "Broom broom, I'm in me mum's car."

A true Vine classic, this video grew to popularity in July of 2014. Featuring a teen girl and her mother, the girl says, "Broom broom, I'm in me mums car." In response the mum says, "Get out me car." The girl's dejected "awh" in response is a relatable mood on a daily basis. It is a Vine whose humor stems from the simplicity of the video, and it is a true icon in the Vine community.

#### 3. How slippery are bananas?

Originally adapted from a longer video, this vine features a



Allie Odishelidze, Humor Editor

teenage boy in his kitchen. He begins his video stating his scientific intentions — to determine whether or not banana peels are actually slippery. He slides his foot around and ends up slipping on the banana peel. When he slips he attempts to save himself by grabbing a cup of water, inevitably flinging the water. After this video went viral, this clumsy boy became internet famous once again when he made an adorable post about him and his boyfriend.

#### 4. "It is Wednesday my dudes."

Applicable on a weekly basis, this Vine features a man wearing goggles and Spider-Man suit, screaming into his mirror. A take on the classic "record yourself in the mirror," this man in this Vine says "It's Wednesday my dudes," followed by a loud screech. A fun Vine to reference every week, it is a reminder of the redundancy that is life.

#### 5. "I wanna be a cowboy, baby!"

A truly wholesome Vine, this Vine features an old man holding a beverage saying, "I wanna be a cowboy, baby!" This is then repeated when he is featured swinging on a playground apparatus with apparent joy.

While Vines are more of a visual experience, this rehashing of Vines is a trip down memory lane as I eagerly await the release of V2.

## [an infographic]

# the ANATOMY of Winter Break



## PANIC-TINGED ELATION

School is out and life is good. Two weeks full of promise and sleep. Winter break is here but with that comes the inevitable need for nondenominational presents and planning. Chances are there are still gifts you need to get, trips you have to pack for and family members you eagerly await. Although school is out, there is no lack of things to be done.



## PURE, UNADULTERATED JOY

Following a frantic beginning to winter break, the days between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day are unequivocally the best days of the year. Not only do you lack concern for schoolwork seen only during this period time and for the first three weeks of summer, you also are likely full of good food. Holidays typically bring family, friends and food and all of these contribute to the best part of winter break.



## HOPEFUL DREAD

New year, new me. We've all heard it before. During this period, we dread the beginning of school — the inevitable return to grind szn. As we dejectedly await our return to school, we promise ourselves to "do better next semester." We are hopeful for the fresh start; a fresh start that will unfortunately be full of the same mistakes.



## 'Will this be on the test?'

*Pine View's testing mentality is a reflection of the detriments of learning for a final exam*

by Sarah Mihm  
Managing Editor

A classmate raises a hand and asks the teacher, "Will this be on the test?" The rest of the class nods their heads at this question, silently wondering if the teacher is discussing seemingly irrelevant material. This is a common scene that I have found myself a part of here at Pine View, both as the individual asking the question and one of the many nodding along in agreement. Only this past year have I truly begun to think about what this implies for not just my peers and myself, but also for the future of Pine View.

Being a student in America is synonymous with being a test-taker. From vocabulary tests to the SAT, my education is filled with tests. I do not intend to argue against all forms of testing, for I acknowledge the need to assess students to determine if they are, in fact, doing their job of learning. However, I strongly disagree with the testing mentality that has overtaken our education system.

Florida has a long history of standardized testing. According to

the Florida Department of Education, the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test was created in 1998 to improve our schools. This was followed by the Florida Standard Assessments and End of Course tests, but the principle has stayed the same. According to the Foundation for Florida's Future, our "data-based accountability system" is "nationally lauded." This contradicts U.S. News' rankings of the states in regards to education — Florida is ranked twenty-ninth.

This may not seem applicable to our unique school, though; we rank thirteenth in the nation. However, I would still argue that Pine View is falling into the testing mentality.

The example I started this article with is only the tip of the iceberg. Teachers are limited to testable material, specifically in Advanced Placement classes. Too often are educators forced to cut out interesting topics or skip interactive, informative activities due to the need to cover material that will be on the exam.

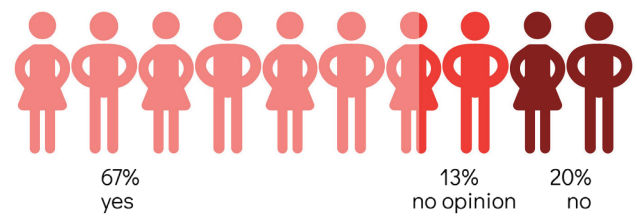
This is not a teacher nor administration problem. It is a mindset

within all, including the students. The SAT does not define an individual. Yet, it is what classmates, teachers, parents and colleges use to scrutinize all of us throughout the stressful time of senior year.

Learning is starting to become strictly limited to what is applicable to an exam, and there is nothing sadder than that. In a New York Times opinion story, a teacher wrote, "We cannot enrich the minds of our students by testing them on texts that purposely ignore their hearts. . . We may succeed in raising test scores by relying on these methods, but we will fail to teach them that reading can be transformative and that it belongs to them."

Despite this, students will continue to ask the teacher if what they are discussing will be tested. We are all trapped in a system that values what can be applied to a standard; Pine View's future lies in resisting the urge to test solely for the exam. For, if any group of people can go into the world and change our education standards, it is Pine View teachers, administration and alumni.

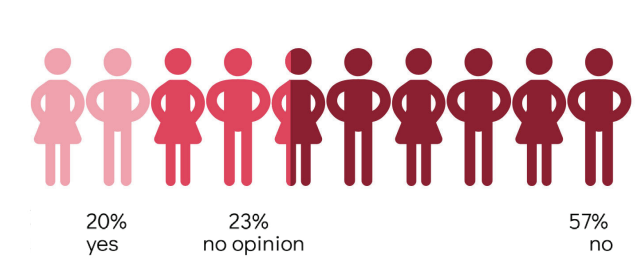
Do you think teachers at Pine View base their course on the FSA, EOC, or AP exam?



Do you believe these statewide exams are an accurate reflection of all that a course should be teaching?



Do you prefer a course that is limited to what will be on the "test"?



Based on a survey of 163 Pine View students in grades 7-12.

GRAPHICS BY BRIANNA NELSON

[student voices]

## The Net Neutrality Debate: Students discuss the importance of a free internet



Brian Zhang, Grade 9

"The internet exists as a universal resource that anyone can access and through its users it has expanded to more than just a form of research or communication... To have the very people who provide our [internet access] separate us from certain sites through a paywall is simply immoral and irresponsible."

"Obviously net neutrality affects everyone who uses the internet...but also, I think it's really important to focus on the effect it has on small businesses because if we lose net neutrality, it won't hurt big businesses like Amazon or Target... individual people who are trying to sell products or services or advertise themselves [are] not going to be able to do that because people aren't willing to pay more to access 'premium' websites."



Stefani Wald, Grade 10



Sloane Kolesar, Grade 12

"I believe that it is an important part of our society that we keep the internet open and accessible... Businesses capitalizing on the need of humans is pretty terrible, and I think that as a people, we should attempt to stop that... Not being able to access media and other forms of entertainment does create an educational gap, a socioeconomic gap... that would be the worst case outcome."

"Net neutrality is important to me because it stands for freedom of speech and freedom to have access to information, because in a lot of countries, such as China and Russia, you find that governments are kind of coming in and impeding on what kind of information their citizens have access to. However [without] net neutrality it would be corporations due to the capitalistic nature of America. These corporations would step in and limit what information the people would have access to."



Jade Goyette, Grade 11

# The Torch

PVTorch.com

**Editor-in Chief** Sana Rahman\*  
**Asst. Editors-in-Chief** Riley Board\*, Suzanne Brown\*  
**Copy Editors** Annie Hassan\*, Alexa Mollod\*  
**Web Editor-in-Chief** Zach Bright\*  
**Match Editor** Haleigh Brown  
**Managing Editor** Sarah Mihm\*

**News Editor** Nathalie Bencie\*  
**Asst. News Editors** Ben Gordon, Kasumi Wade  
**Sci & Tech Editor** Manny Rea  
**Entertainment Editor** Mackenzie Dyrda\*  
**Asst. Entertainment Editor** Anna Labiner  
**Features Editor** William Khabbaz  
**Sports Editor** Cate Alvaro  
**Asst. Sports Editor** Noelle Bencie  
**Humor Editor** Allie Odishelidze\*

**Asst. Humor Editor** Olivia Hansen  
**Opinion Editor** Melissa Santoyo\*  
**Asst. Opinion Editor** Brianna Nelson\*  
**Focus Editor** Gwyn Petersen  
**Graphics Editors** Zach Bright, Suzanne Brown  
**Asst. Graphics Editors** Ben Nicholson, Brianna Nelson, Naina Chauhan, Leo Gordon, Madi Holmes  
**Photo Editor** Cate Alvaro  
**Asst. Photo Editors** Ella Hechlik, Tricia Saputera, Gwyn Petersen, Ben Gordon,

Anna Labiner, Noelle Bencie, Kasumi Wade  
**Asst. Web Editor** Ella Hechlik  
**Web Section Editors** Josh Gulyansky, Madi Holmes, Ben Nicholson, Ryan Wasserman  
**Asst. Match Editors** Elizabeth Hopkins, Tricia Saputera  
**Match Layout Artists** Naina Chauhan, Leo Gordon  
**Adviser** Christopher Lenerz  
**Principal** Dr. Stephen Covert  
 \*Denotes member of editorial board.

The Torch covers topics, issues, events and opinions of relevance to students grades seven through twelve. The Torch is published six times a year by Pine View School and maintains membership in the Florida Scholastic Press Association. Press run is 1,900 copies are provided free of charge to student and faculty and staff.  
**Editorials.** Unsigned editorials

and The Verdict represent the views of the editorial board. All other articles reflect the opinions of the individual authors unless otherwise noted.  
**Letters.** The Torch welcomes reader reactions to the published content in the form of letters to the editor. Submit typed letters to letters@pineviewtorch.com. Letters should be less than 300

words and contain the author's name and grade, although the author may request anonymity. Submissions may be edited for authenticity, grammar, clarity and length.  
**Guest columns.** The Opinion section of The Torch is an open forum for campus editorial commentary. The Torch welcomes guest editorials written on topics

relevant to readers. Contact the Opinion Editor at melissa.santoyo@pineviewtorch.com to discuss an idea.  
**Reader Input.** Submit story ideas, comments and questions to the editor of Sci & Tech, Entertainment, Sports, Humor, Opinion or Focus at the email addresses given at the beginning of each section. Email the News

Editors at news@pineviewtorch.com. Address general comments and questions to the Editor-in-Chief at sana.rahman@pineviewtorch.com. **Advertisements and subscriptions.** To place an advertisement or purchase a subscription, email sarah.mihm@pineviewtorch.com. The Torch reserves the right to refuse any advertisement.



# The Verdict

**Minority Representation in Gifted Programs:** We are sad to see an achievement gap afflicting minorities within Sarasota county.



**Minority Representation in Gifted Programs:** We are glad to see efforts toward decreasing the achievement gap in Sarasota county.



**Best & Brightest Scholarship Program:** We are sad to see teachers miss out on monetary rewards due standardized exams such as the SAT.



**Foreign Language Honor Societies:** We are glad to see the French and Spanish Honor Societies forming a presence on campus and spreading culture.



## [staff editorial]

Read the full story online at PVTorch.com by scanning the provided QR code.



# The bias behind domestic terrorism

*The discrepancy in definitions spurs religious misconceptions behind what America regards as terrorism within its borders*

by Annie Hassan  
Copy Editor

A year full of unfortunate events: it's not too hard to say goodbye to 2017. However, to properly transition into the new year, it is important to review what happened this year: the increase in the number of domestic attacks in the United States. Tuning in to hear the news is disconcerting because, due to the frequency of these attacks, we are left anticipating the next disaster. What's worse, the attacks committed by Muslims in the United States not only are more likely to be condemned as terrorist attacks but also receive more media coverage. This raises two major questions: what ultimately is the true definition of domestic terrorism, and does the media play a role in shaping how the public views terrorism?

Unfortunately, there is no legitimate answer to the first question. According to the FBI, domestic terrorists are defined as "individuals and/or groups inspired by or associated with primarily U.S.-based movements that espouse extremist ideologies of a political, religious, social, racial or environmental nature."

Additionally, federal law states that domestic terrorism accounts for any acts harmful to people that are in direct violation of U.S. criminal law or any state laws and occur in the U.S. and its territories. Dan Gerstein, former undersecretary at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, explains it best: "We don't really have a good understanding of what terrorism is."

Recently, two attacks have occurred in the state of New York, both carried out by foreign-born Muslims who immigrated to the United States. The New York truck attack, planned by Sayfullo Habibullae-  
vic Saipov, happened Oct. 31 in Manhattan, N.Y., where he drove a rented pickup truck into a busy bicycle path near the World Trade Center, killing eight civilians. According to CNN, authorities discovered a note located near the truck expressing Saipov's allegiance to Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). Almost immediately, this attack was labeled as an "act of terror" by both New York's Mayor Bill de Blasio and

the media. He is currently charged with 22 murder and terrorism charges, and his next hearing is Jan. 23.

Just ten days ago, Akayed Ullah detonated a self-made explosive device at a major commuter hub in New York City, injuring several others including himself. According to CBS News, Ullah stated ISIS inspired him to carry out the attack. Afterward, de Blasio said the incident was an attempted terror attack. Now, Ullah will be charged with federal and state terrorism charges.

In 2015, Dylann Roof, a white supremacist, orchestrated a shooting at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C., and killed nine people. He was officially labeled a white supremacist but never once was he labeled as a terrorist. Considering the FBI's definition of domestic terrorism, Roof is a terrorist. Not only did he harm innocent civilians

but he also had a racial motive for doing so. According to The New York Times, he even said, "I do feel sorry for the innocent white children forced to live in this sick country and I do feel sorry for the innocent white

people that are killed daily at the hands of the lower race." He was later convicted of a federal hate crime and is currently serving on federal death row.

While these attacks are vile and should be condemned by all, it is evident that religious bias has crept into our way of classifying who is a terrorist. Ever since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, there has been some unspoken bias that gravitates toward linking Muslims with committing attacks. The media exacerbates the issue by dedicating more footage toward attacks done by Muslim perpetrators with many news outlets bringing in their own political views into the matter. This not only divides the public but also stirs even more distrust in a world already rife with prejudice.

According to the Government Accountability Office, 106 attacks were committed by right-wing extremists in the United States from Sept. 21, 2001 to the end of 2016. This is a little less than the 119 done by Muslim extremists during the same

## [a column]

# In reality, none of us started the fire

True to America's blame culture, Millennials are the latest scapegoat. Blaming younger generations for current issues is typical of older adults throughout American history. In today's pop culture and sociopolitical circles, the adults contributing to this blame culture are characteristically known as the Baby Boomers. The reality of the situation lies not in those Millennials who have inherited a slew of unstable legislation and fractured foreign relations, but rather in the fact that one of their preceding generations, these so-called Baby boomers, inherited the same issues.

To be considered a Millennial and to, therefore, be susceptible to the classic "Baby Boomer Blame," you must have been born between 1982 and 2004, according to Live Science. The Pew Research Center, on the other hand, cuts the qualifying range at 1997. This disconnect between definitions denotes the evident discrepancy; these generations are subject to the blame game, but the individuals involved cannot even decide on a standardized age range.

While I personally think of myself as part of the latest generation, Gen Z, the truth is most teenagers and young adults headed to college today will face criticism nonetheless, for Millennials are simply the subject of controversy.

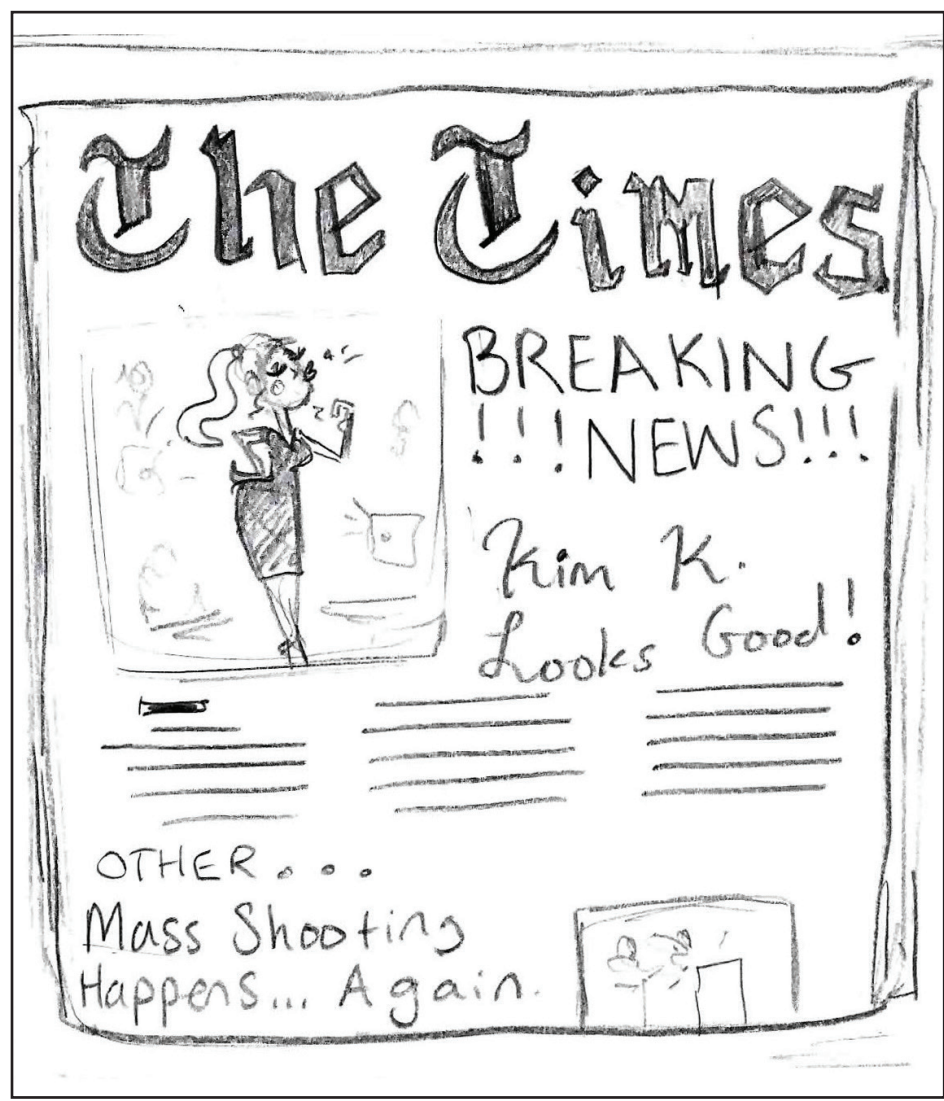
Billy Joel phrased it best when he sang, "It was always burning since the world's been turning," in the adult contemporary classic "We didn't start the fire." Originally released to the public in 1989, the song speaks of America's blame culture; it's a consistent social trend for older generations to push fault onto younger individuals for the issues neither party directly instigated. In a 1989 Rolling Stone interview, Joel publicly responded to the criticism of his catchy tune had received. "It's not meant to sound preachy," he said. "What I'm trying to get across is that we didn't start this stuff, we inherited it."



Melissa Santoyo, Opinion Editor

Some generations prior to the Baby Boomers, there was the "Greatest Generation." This is a group of individuals born from 1910 to 1924. These individuals lived through the 1940s and 1950s, time periods which were fraught with political tensions derived from major historical events frequently alluded to throughout Joel's lyrics. This serves to emphasize his message, that the Baby Boomers don't merit the blame.

In reality, no single generation is directly at fault for the root of most of these issues. Whether it be Baby Boomers ruining foreign relations or the fact that younger adults today are slowly withdrawing from the diamond industry, America's blame culture achieves absolutely nothing. Pushing responsibility for major sociopolitical and economic catastrophes only allocates a meaningless stigma. Cohesion between generations, as foreign as it may sound, is the only way to properly address these affairs.



GRAPHIC BY SUZANNE BROWN

time period. However, these numbers do not even account for all of the attacks that happened this year, including the Las Vegas shooting, the Charlottesville, Va., incident and even the New York truck rampage.

Research cited by Erin Kearns (University of Alabama), Allison Betus (Georgia State University) and Anthony Lemieux (Georgia State University, Global Studies Institute) claims that the media tends to provide more coverage for attacks done by Muslims — even more so for foreign-born Muslims — despite these attacks being uncommon. According to a study conducted by Cato Institute report with data from the past 40 years, the chance of an American possibly being killed by a foreign-born ter-

rorist is one in 3.6 million.

Although providing all these statistics may help in informing the public, what we need to do is ask ourselves the questions many dare not to ask. If Roof was a Muslim, would he have been deemed a terrorist? Would the media have covered the crime he committed more in depth? Even though we cannot be sure of the answers to these questions, what no one is really thinking of — or maybe even looking for — is a solution. We can shape the future by enforcing a specific definition of terrorism and maintaining journalistic integrity by objectively reporting issues as they are.

*\*Editor's Note: all content was produced prior to Dec. 11*



## Pine View alumnus hits a high note

*Daniel Landers pursues his music career by performing worldwide*

by **Tricia Saputera**  
Asst. Match Editor

Class of 2011 alumnus Daniel Landers is an original singer and songwriter with over 160 songs in his catalog. Landers has performed shows all over the world, most based in New York City — the heart of entertainment.

Landers launched his singing career at an early age. Performing overseas in Germany and Austria from age 9 to 13 in seasonal specials, he has had plenty of experience singing for audiences. At age 13, Landers switched genres from European pop to American contemporary, to go along with his transition to performing more in the United States. However, his international career did not stop there.

When he was a senior at Pine View, Landers was invited to audition for, and then made it onto, the famous show “The X Factor” in the Netherlands, where singers of all ages compete to win the vote of the judges and the public. Landers made it to the final four on the TV show, but withdrew after discovering the finale was the same day as Pine View’s graduation. “I had been at Pine View since second grade, and because of how much I had gone through there and how much I had grown there, I felt that I owed it to myself to walk alongside my brother at graduation. So, I withdrew to do so,” Landers said.

At graduation, he sang and played the guitar to Bon Jovi’s “Who Says You Can’t

Go Home.” “Everyone was kind of spreading their wings and going out, but for me, it was always really important to remember because I’d already done that, coming home is always more rewarding than you think it is in the moment,” Landers said.

Landers found balancing his music and schoolwork difficult, especially at a school like Pine View. In the midst of the busy college application season, he was flying back and forth to Amsterdam almost every two weeks for the show. “It was not easy to pursue simultaneously, but it really depended year by year which teachers I had,” Landers said.

“Coming home is always more rewarding than you think it is in the moment.”

**Daniel Landers, class of 2011**

“Ms. Ames is one of the life-savers who I particularly remember being really helpful and amazing because she said this is a once in a lifetime opportunity, you have to do it, do not think twice about what is going on at school, we’ll figure out a way for you to get caught up when you get back.”

“[Landers was] always a very enthusiastic student who was also really gifted and passionate about music. I remember, even in his early high school years, him traveling with his mother internationally and singing at concerts — it’s amazing,” science teacher Flo Ames said.

After graduating, Landers attended the University of Miami, majoring in music business and minoring in songwriting. However, after two years, he suddenly planned to drop out to focus on his singing career. Before leaving, his adviser suggested finishing his education through the online program, and Landers decided to enroll, not



Pine View alumnus Daniel Landers performs in front of a crowd. Landers has written over 160 songs, with his most popular song being “Love Me Tonight.” PHOTO PROVIDED BY SAM LICHTENSTEIN

knowing if he would have the time to finish. Landers ended up finishing and double minoring in songwriting and sociology. “I ended up taking more classes than I needed to in areas not required, and they all ended up being in sociology, and I ended up with the double minor,” Landers said. “I definitely attribute my curiosity for the different areas of academia to Pine View because we always had really cool academic offerings that other schools didn’t have.”

Nowadays, Landers can be found performing his own shows and doing opening performances for other artists in New York City. He has opened for many singers, such as Aaron Carter and Daya. Landers has a really good relationship with Webster Hall, a nightclub with daily concerts that is temporarily closed due to renovation, and is frequently called to perform opening acts and excite the crowd with a couple of songs.

Though he performs quite far from Florida, Landers’ music stays close to home. His most popular song, “Love Me Tonight,” has over 700,000 views on YouTube, and its music video was recorded in Sarasota. “Self Destruct,” another hit, also had its music video based in Sarasota.

Singing is not the only form of entertainment that Landers enjoys. Landers has also participated in a few TV pilots and commercials, and is currently collaborating with his mother on a movie, hoping to incorporate his music into it and film several scenes in Sarasota. “[Being a musician] gives me a sense of unexpected stamina because just when you feel like you are at your lowest, most discouraged point, there will be something that you’re doing in music that makes it all worth it. It takes all of those fears away, and those sad moments are totally outweighed by the happy ones,” Landers said.

## Twelfth-grader has a ‘knack’ for politics

*Student interns for State House of Representative candidate*

by **Leo Gordon**  
Match Layout Artist

Upon completing social studies teacher Sean Murray’s civics class almost five years ago, twelfth-grader Alex Anacki walked away with a newfound love for politics. He is now interning with Florida House of Representatives Democratic candidate Margaret Good through his externship class at Pine View.

Anacki sincerely enjoys political affairs and working within the political community. “I really like having the ability to change other people’s lives through the candidates I volunteer with,” Anacki said. “Talking with voters is an eye-opening experience and it has really helped me recognize how much economic and social inequality there is in our society today.” Anacki has been involved with Florida politics since 2016, when he interned for the Florida Democratic Party to help the party gain positions in local and national government. He has been working with Good’s campaign since September 2017 and will continue working there until the special election in February.

The campaign Anacki interns for began as a result of state representative Alex Miller’s resignation from Florida District 72’s state house position. On the recent Dec. 5 primary between Good and her democratic opponent Ruta Jouniari, Good prevailed with a 44-point margin. As a result, Good will compete against James Buchanan, United States Congressman Vern Buchanan’s son, for the available state house seat.

Anacki interns for about 10 hours per week, often doing policy research, calling voters, knocking on doors or going to events and fundraisers with his candidate.



Twelfth-grader Alex Anacki poses with Florida House of Representatives Democratic candidate Margaret Good. Since September, Anacki has been working with her campaign. PHOTO PROVIDED BY ALEX ANACKI

“It’s a pretty big commitment for me, and requires me to keep my schedule as open as possible in case any last-minute events come up,” Anacki said.

Anacki’s favorite part of the internship is researching policy and discerning the best way to describe his candidate’s views to possible voters. “I’m passionate about communications, so it’s interesting to see how phrasing shifts the way people think about politics,” Anacki said.

“I really like having the ability to change other people’s lives through the candidates I volunteer with.”

**Alex Anacki, grade 12**

As for a future in the field, Anacki is still deciding how he wants to incorporate the subject into his work. “I’m interested in international development as well, so I am determined to find a way to reconcile all of my interests and still make an impact on the world through my career,” Anacki said, “I am absolutely thrilled to work for such a qualified candidate and am very excited to continue working with the Democratic Party.”

## [a column] Embracing our studying differences

Going on my eighth year as a student at Pine View, I have seen a fair share of trends come and go, ranging from my elementary-school obsession with Silly Bandz to the Vera Bradley frenzy in middle school. While I can confidently say that these trivial trends no longer define me as a high schooler, I find it interesting how some stereotypes relating to work habits still define me today.

One of the great things about Pine View is that as a student, not only do you get to take challenging courses, but you are able to surround yourself with brilliant students. Like many Pine View students, I have always been someone who strives to achieve the best grades I possibly can, and I know that can only happen for me if I dedicate time and effort to school. Over the years, there is one basic testing narrative that I have seen replayed over and over during my time at Pine View, and it goes a little like this:

A big test will be coming up, and being someone who gets anxious about tests and very much so wants a good grade, I study excessively by re-reading the textbook, highlighting all my notes and making study guides.

The day of the test will come around, and I’ll strike a conversation with a fellow student about the test. While I admittedly may be overreacting about how hard the test is going to be or about how nervous I am, the student’s response only adds to the stress. He or she says something along the lines of, “Oh, I didn’t even study for the test. I didn’t even open the textbook. It’s not going to be that hard.” For the kids that approach certain subjects with ease, I envy you. For the kids that think they have to hide



**Sana Rahman, Editor-in-Chief**

their studying in order to be “cool,” this is a mindset that doesn’t need to exist.

At Pine View, there definitely is a huge stigma around “trying.” Over the last eight years, I never questioned this testing mentality before, but now as a twelfth-grader I realize that I, alongside other students who face similar situations, don’t deserve to be degraded for caring. When did studying for a test become a weakness? When did showing passion for a project become a negative? When did being genuinely interested in a subject become irrelevant?

So, for younger Pine View students reading this, I hope you take away that emotions are not a bad thing; they humanize and motivate you as an individual, or, at least they have for me.

I have finally come to the point where other people’s comments about my studying habits do not affect me — I’m happy and confident with the student I am today. However, if there is one thing I want my columns to be, it is impactful. So, for younger Pine View students reading this, I hope you take away that emotions are not a bad thing; they humanize and motivate you as an individual, or, at least they have for me.