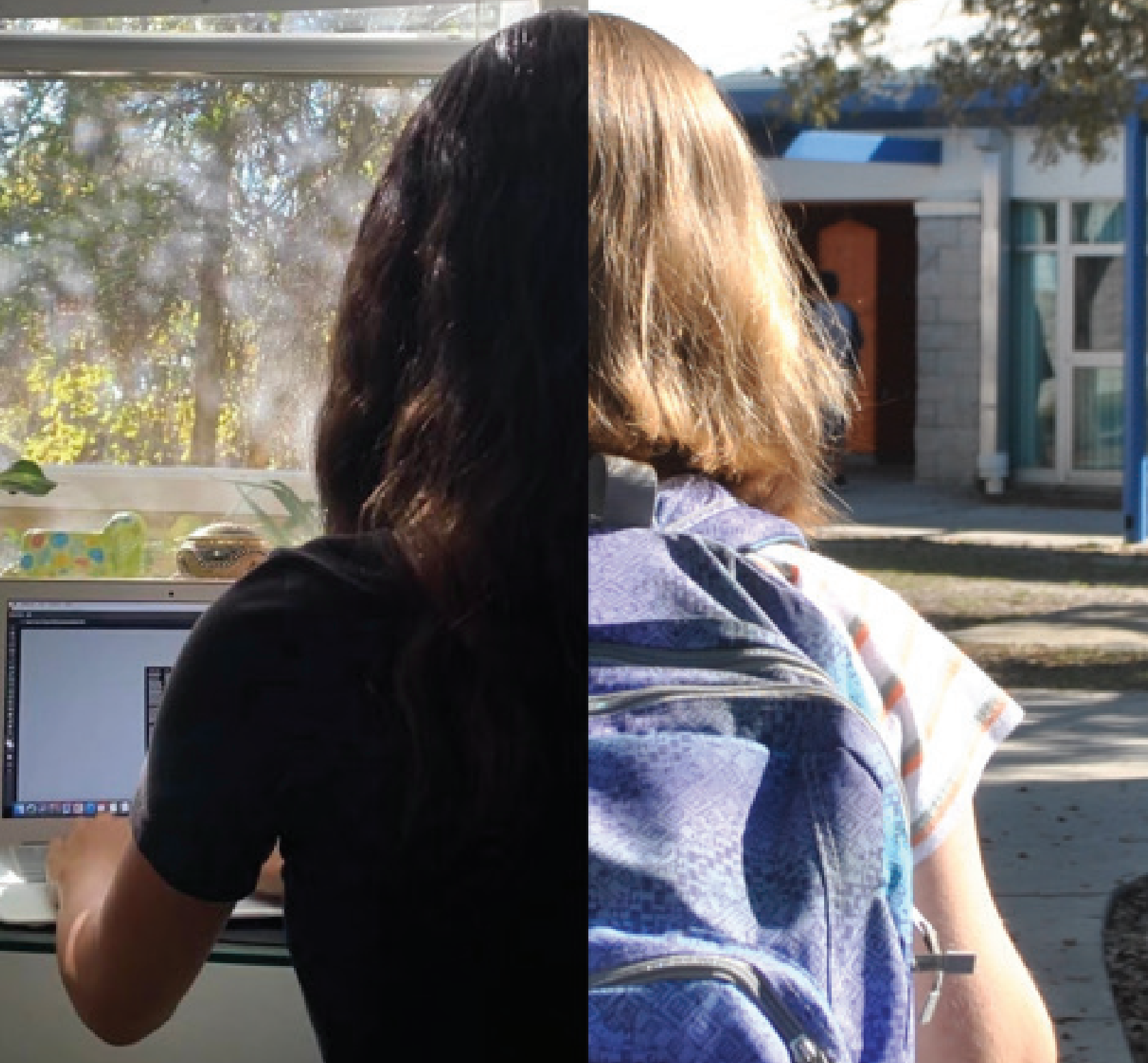


SPARK

newsmagazine



The Spark

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FRONT AND BACK PAGES MADE BY SHELBY BRANN AND FAITH BOSSMAN
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Additional and Original: The Pine View Campus

By Lindsay Luberecki

Cranes tower over the school, hauling materials up multiple stories. Voices shout, and tools buzz and hammer. Behind the plywood fence, scaffolding and concrete walls peer out, catching eyes. This is the scene students have been faced with since they arrived back from winter break: the construction of the new building on campus.

"It is going very well...we are on target to finish, actually a little bit ahead of schedule," said assistant principal Melissa Abela, who is the construction liaison.

She said the building is progressing well and is scheduled to be completed in December of 2021.

"I'm just really glad that it's going to be happening...I'm learning as well," she said.

Many students at Pine View know about this new building. Between fenced-off areas, "no trespassing" signs, and construction noise, it surely has a presence. Something they may not know as much about is the rest of Pine View's campus: the original part.

There's quite a bit of history behind the design and architecture of the campus, which was designed in the mid-1990s. The campus was designed by Carl Abbott, an architect currently based in Sarasota who has designed many well-known buildings and has worked in Honolulu, London, and New York.

The campus of Pine View is set apart from many other schools by the fact that it is formed by many individual buildings. Each of the 14 original buildings stands alone, and they are connected by numerous courtyards and walkways. This layout draws back to the old campus of Pine View, before the school moved to its current location.

"Students that we talked with [from the old campus] all loved the fact that the buildings were separate," Abbott said via a phone interview. "The buildings were autonomous: they lived on their own, they worked on their own, and they could be a part of a group."

The architectural style of Pine View is unique as well. In the world of architecture, there are two main, and opposite, modern styles: international (which focuses on the man/machine-made-ness of building) and organic (which focuses on earth materials and

the earth-ness of building).

Abbott's work is influenced by both styles, since he has studied both, and since Sarasota is a place where these two styles have melded together. He said that Pine View is unique in the fact that it is a fusion of these two styles, incorporating elements of both.

"The use of the courtyards and spacing of the buildings...is definitely organic," Abbott said. "The big spans you get in the auditorium and library...without columns, that's more international style."

Also, the use of color on the buildings is organic, but the metal panels themselves are international. Abbott drew inspiration from the layout of the University of Virginia campus.

When designing the school, Abbott said he also focused on a connection with nature. He said that he believes these connections are important psychologically, and this belief led him to incorporate the favored green spaces into the

campus, such as the quad and the courtyard.

The Media Center, another favorite spot, has some history behind it, too. Anyone looking at the campus can see how this building towers above the rest; eyes are immediately drawn to it.

"That's where the source of knowledge is coming into place, and so that to me is the building to give hierarchy to," Abbott said of the Media Center.

Abela said that this has been a big focus for her and her team, and that she looks forward to the new building's incorporation.

"I think it's going to be a beautiful addition to the campus. I think that we already have a beautiful campus, and this is just going to highlight everything," she said.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY SUNCOAST AERIALS



**It is going very well...
we are on target to
finish, actually a bit
ahead of schedule."**

Melissa Abela

Middle School Assistant Principal

MONTH OF HOPE

BY: ANNA KIM

What's the first word that comes to mind when you hear the word 'April'? Many people think of budding flowers, pleasing colors, or even fun prank wars. For others, this month has a different meaning: hope.

Mothers In Crisis, Inc., an organization helping families, founded the National Month of Hope in 1991 to spread worldwide hope and to help people in need find a better path for their lives.

In 2020, the focus of this month was health because of the COVID-19 pandemic. This year, one of the main priorities is also the well-being of our community. In addition, the world is looking ahead. 2021 is full of promise, and many people believe that it can't be worse than 2020!

What will you do to spread hope?

The New Face of COVID-19

By Anna Kim

In the past months, numerous healthcare workers, scientists, researchers, and political figures have been working together to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Whether this means identifying new strands of COVID-19, updating vaccinations, distributing vaccinations, or creating new standards, new discoveries and worries have arisen across the planet.

One of the main concerns about the virus is its variants. These occur when a mutation to the virus' genes occur. These new strains are expected for RNA viruses, like the flu and Covid-19, because they evolve over time. One version of the coronavirus is called B.1.1.7 and became the most common version of the virus in the United Kingdom.

Different strains have also been found in California, South Africa, and Brazil. The B.1.1.7 is being found to be more contagious and more easily stuck to our cells.

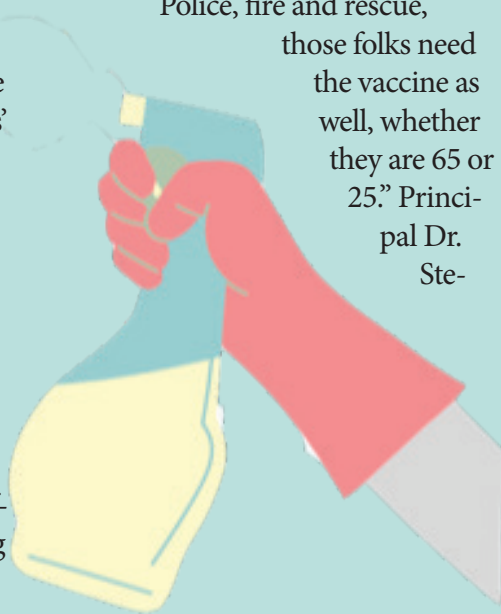
Another topic that has been deeply discussed by many is the coronavirus vaccine. The two vaccines that are authorized and recommended by the CDC, or Center for Disease Control and Prevention, are the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna's Covid-19 vaccine.

The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, an mRNA vaccine, is recommended for people 16 and older and includes two doses around 21 days apart. Moderna's Covid-19 vaccine is also an mRNA vaccine and includes 2 doses around 28

days apart. Both vaccines help the human body develop immunity to the COVID-19 causing virus, but without having to actually contract the illness.

In Sarasota county, the vaccine is being offered and prioritized to those on the frontline and those who are 65 or older. School staff and essential workers are also in need of the vaccine.

"Police, fire and rescue, those folks need the vaccine as well, whether they are 65 or 25." Principal Dr. Ste-



phen Covert says. "When you pick up the phone and dial 911, you want to make sure there's someone there that's healthy to come help."

Covert also expressed his concern for teachers, bus drivers, aides, cafeteria workers, and additional school staff since they were not yet prioritized for the Covid-19 vaccine. He said he believes that putting public educators next in line will greatly benefit everyone and will help keep Florida in business and moving forward.

Millions of people around

the world are eager to receive the vaccine, including Covert. Covert mentioned his mother, whom has a connection with Dr. Anthony Fauci, while discussing his confidence in Fauci and the vaccines that have been approved.

"I trust Dr. Fauci, my mom trusted him with her life- he was her doctor. I trust him with mine. I trust science... I absolutely will get it as soon as it's available," Covert said. "He is exactly back then, like he is on the news today. He is just as personable, just as genuine, just as confidence-inspiring as you can imagine. He's a wonderful doctor and a very compassionate man."

As for Pine View, administrators are still discussing events for this year. They are still unsure of field trips, and how best to help all students: remote and in-person.

Many challenges come with both ways of learning. For example, technical difficulties, wearing masks, staying six feet apart, and lacking personal connections through computer screens.

Students and staff express their hopes for the time when everyone is back on campus and seeing their friends when it is safe and back to normal — whatever that may be in the future. The numbers appear to be decreasing; and administrators want to keep it this way.

"Now is not the time to let up. We need to stay vigilant and look out for one another and help everyone stay safe." Covert said.



Diversity at Pine View: Closing the Gap

By Faith Bossman

With a notable racial and socioeconomic gap within Pine View's demographics of students, Principal Dr. Stephen Covert has promoted universal screening as one of the solutions to this issue. Since the summer of 2017, this test, which Sarasota County has supported, has been made accessible to second graders from Title 1 schools. Still, the universal screening process has not been the ultimate solution in amplifying diversity, having both shortcomings and successes on varying levels.

Fundamentally, universal screening has directly alleviated the issue of biased identification. Students that don't have access to higher level resources inherently have a disadvantage in vocabulary and language-based IQ tests, such as the KBIT-2 Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test. With Universal Screening employing the Naglieri Nonverbal Ability Test, students are more likely to exude giftedness in visual and nonverbal evaluations.

"It is a challenge, because the kids that we're trying to reach aren't even here yet... It's about giving those [Title 1] schools, and those schools' teachers tools to help close that opportunity gap for their students," Covert said.

The Co-Coordinator of Diversity in Gifted Schools (DiGs), twelfth-grader Vincent Pascasio has expressed a positive outlook on universal screening as well.

"A great example of the universal screening method working is in Orange County, where several years ago they

decided to offer universal screenings in economically depressed schools," Pascasio said. "What they saw was an almost 8% increase in identifying gifted students of color followed by an over 5% increase the year after that among diverse students. I don't pretend to know all the angles and challenges about universal screening, but personally, I cannot see it as bad for students."


As Covert also explained, universal screening skips the step of teacher and parent recommendations. Ongoing implicit and racial bias has played a factor in recommendations, leaving racially diverse students to not be considered for screening in the

first place. The principal of McIntosh Middle School and the school district's recently named first Director of Innovation and Equity, Dr. Harriet Moore, has witnessed such bias firsthand, with her son's own giftedness being called into question.

"[My son's teacher] stood beside me one day, and she said, 'I don't know if your

son is gifted, or is just quick...' If he had been blonde and blue-eyed, would she have said that to the mother? Why should we even question if he should be identified or even looked at as gifted?" Moore said.

Additionally, recognizing 'gifted qualities' is a skill that the majority of teachers and parents are not fluent in. This was a key discussion point in the "Access and Equity in Gifted Education" webinar, hosted by Covert Jan. 20. The keynote speaker of the webinar, Joy Davis, is an educator of over 40 years and an expert with a masters and doctoral degree



We need to open our minds to what giftedness can be in any population."

Joy Davis

Ph.D in Gifted Education and "Access and Equity in Gifted Education" Speaker

in Gifted Education. She had explained how the first step in limiting the gap involves “peeling back layers of bias and past experiences,” eliminating the limited perception of what giftedness is not.

“We need to open our minds to what giftedness can be in any population. I think so many times, teachers have the idea that a gifted student is the one who answers all the questions, and that may not necessarily be the case... They are not your goodie-two shoes, apple-of-youre eye kind of kid all the time,” Davis said.

Inevitably, universal screening has not fully resolved other aspects that have contributed to the lack of diversity at Pine View. While the gifted screening process has been reformed, this is only half the battle. Encouraging students of lower income groups, as well as racial minority groups, requires further action. Moore clarifies that there is a hierarchy of needs that students must have when transitioning into a new, gifted environment; in this sense, for students to be incentivized to stay and achieve, they must have a sense of belonging within the program.

“When you look at the hierarchy of needs... Before you can get to Self-actualization, the step below it is Achievement, and the step below that is Belonging. If students don’t have a sense of belonging, then how are they ever going to achieve? So, it really becomes, not an achievement gap, but a belonging gap,” Moore said.

However, Moore does allude to such students reaching achievement when the parents are involved in the process. This is still problematic, because with the majority of students of color coming from the north end of the county, parent involvement is difficult when people lack the transportation.

“Sometimes, the kids that get into [our gifted] program, just like some of the kids that get into Pine View, when they start feel-

ing that they don’t have a sense of belonging... they start doing things to self-sabotage so that they can be removed or that they are forced to leave,” Moore said.

Moore has pursued building a support system for students of color and lower income students within McIntosh Middle School in order to encourage diversity throughout the school and its gifted program, such as hiring teachers of color and utilizing a mentorship system. By the same token, Pascasio believes that recruiting a more diverse staff and administration at Pine View would be a positive step to create a more inclusive environment that is representative of racial minorities.

In another light, Davis has involved previous DiGs club members and Pine View alumni in writing the first chapter of her book, “Empowering Underrepresented Gifted Students: Voices from the Field.” This book is set to be published in the summer of this year.

“People who are very bright and very sensitive aren’t going to want to be in programming that doesn’t tell the true story of their history, that is not authentic or if the material doesn’t represent them. I’ve heard it over and over again, from students and parents, about the lack of representation in materials, the lack of authenticity that students are exposed to,” Davis said. While universal screening does not address all of these multifaceted concerns, it is still a progressive step regardless.

“I can tell you, it’s a mission worth continuing, because whether it’s one student who is identified that wouldn’t have been identified, or whether it’s a 100, you still change the potential life trajectory of that student,” Covert said. “So, every student that can be identified, whether they end up in Pine View or not... our goal has simply been to open the doors and close the opportunity gap. We would love for there to be more diversity at Pine View, but our goal is to simply close the opportunity gap.”

The Excitement of Art

By Cora McGinnis

The precise folding and intricate details of Art 3D excites 7th grader Mia Quijano. She enjoys the skill and focus it requires to make good, quality art. Art 3D takes patience and perseverance. She says it is important to admit when you make a mistake, because mistakes are a part of the process in art.

"I often find myself messing up, but I start over and don't give up," said Quijano.

As art has always been a top choice as her elective, Quijano has fun trying new techniques and skills. In her Art 3D class, there are a wide variety of mediums starting from colored pencils to spray paint. The wide range of materials used are unique and have different effects on various surfaces.

"It can be messy, but it's worth it in the end," she says.

Quijano said she enjoys the excitement

when she walks into her art class. There is always a new project, or an art piece waiting to be finished, she said. Each day is different: some days are folding paper into small shapes, and other days involve painting. Quijano encourages every student to try art because it offers many skills such as focus and creativity.

"Being creative is key," she said. According to Quijano, Art 3D has taught her many observational and collaborative skills over the years.

PHOTO BY CORA MCGINNIS



The Remote to In-Person Transition

by Avery Johanning

It's no secret that remote and in-person learning have some distinctive differences. When you're at home, you have to stay on top of yourself and learn how to focus. When you're in-person, you have to manage your time and deal with the new standards, like wearing a mask and using desk shields. Seventh-grader Anna Jin knows both sides of the story. She said that the biggest differences between remote and online learning include the time it takes to do homework, as well as interacting with her teachers and peers in classes.

"It's surprisingly easy to adjust to in-person learning," Jin said. "It's weird to have these two mindsets, but you can tap into both."

Jin said that you get more done with remote, but also brought up the social environment of remote learning.

"It feels like I had a piece of tape over my mouth, muting and unmuting. My speech is restricted to giving answers to problems, people don't even get to know me," she said.

There's also the issue of homework to take into account. "Homework actually took me longer online than it is in-person. Just trying to write my homework down from blackboard can take me thirty minutes," Jin said.

All in all, it seems that remote kids and in-person kids can all adapt to the challenging circumstances this year throws at us.

Pirouetting Under Pressure

By Shelby Brann

Almost every day after school, Sophia Doyle rushes to dance at Soul Studios, mentally preparing for her practice. She feels the strain in her arms and legs, reaching high for the perfect pose, all thoughts about the next math test leaving her mind. Anxiety and worries don't exist here, at the studio, Doyle is simply a talented dancer becoming one with the music.

On every school night except Wednesday, Doyle goes to Soul Studio for a three-hour practice. Many people would scoff at such long hours, but she takes the challenge in stride, masterfully dealing with both heavy homework and hard classes. Saturdays are a mash-up of homework, friends, and, of course, an extremely long practice.

"It makes for a lot of late nights, but it's worth it," Doyle said, smiling.

Doyle's classes consist of all different types of lessons; tap, hip hop, jazz funk, lyrical, leaps and turns, stretch and strengthen, as well as ballet and pointe.

Every Pine View student needs a getaway from all the stress and homework that accompanies a gift-

ed school. Doyle finds her own release in the emotion of movement.

"I love to dance because I like to express my emotions and dance it out. It's a fun way to exercise," said Doyle.

Doyle is never one to back away from a challenge, whether that be handling math homework, or figuring out the perfect spin.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY SOPHIA DOYLE

Singing Success

by Zachary Johnson

Adithi Amoes, an eighth-grade member of choir, believes that music is an artistic form which allows people to express their thoughts. Amoes has been a member of choir since it was available, and she is very involved.

"I have had an interest in music and singing," Amoes said, "and my friends persuaded me. I don't regret the decision to join choir."

However, that doesn't mean that choir has been all easy going.

"Reading music was one of my greatest challenges. It was hard to learn it because some of the songs are in different languages, and it was a challenge to learn to sing in those languages."

Amoes has a true passion for music, but being so heavily involved with choir has created some issues with balancing choir with other sports and her life.

"I somehow manage to do it," Amoes said.

Amoes's friend, fellow eighth grader Shalini Nair, does choir with her, and has some compliments to give.

"She is a good singer," Nair said, "always on task and hardworking. A lot of the people don't pay attention, but she does."

Nair said that Amoes inspires her through her passion for singing and inspires her to work harder. Amoes plans to use her experiences and skills with singing in choir for high school, and would even like to continue as a profession if possible. If not, then as a hobby.

One Size Fits Small

By Shelby Brann and Lindsay Luberecki

In malls across America, one can often see teenagers wearing outfits with the brand name of Brandy Melville: skirts, sweaters, tops—everything imaginable and fashionable. These clothes are gorgeous, surely, and not one article is the same as another. However, there's one thing in common with all these clothes: the size.

Most of their clothes are sold in a single, locked-in size: XS/S, which corresponds to about sizes 0-2. There are a few exceptions; however, the sizing only goes up to a medium at the absolute most.

This narrative is often debated about, proclaiming that “one size fits all.” One size does not fit all, especially in the modern times of today. Skinny is gorgeous, but so is curvy and plus sized. This way of selling clothing can be extremely damaging and demoralizing. No one enjoys the feeling of trying on an outfit and knowing it's too small to begin with, especially if said outfit is supposed to fit “all.”

Not only do stores like Brandy only sell a specific range of sizes for every shopper, but these sizes are also extremely small. The narrow range of sizes offered (XS-M) isn't close to reflective of all the different sizes and body types people have. A size 0 piece of clothing is typically made to fit a waist size of about 25 inches, and a size 2 fits a waist of 26 inches. The average waist size for teen



GRAPHIC BY JIAYI ZHU

girls, according to the CDC, is 32.6 inches. No one should be expected to magically fit into a certain size, especially if this size isn't representative of many of the people shopping for these clothes.

Many businesses keep their doors open, rightfully, to all sizes and body types, for fear of driving away customers. Brandy, however, does not seem to share this mindset, and the question has arisen on several occasions about whether or not Brandy is striving to instead force plus-size bodies to lose weight so they can wear smaller size clothing.

The bottom line is that all body sizes are beautiful. That's it. There should be a welcoming environment in every store to make sure that teens feel comfortable in their own skin and not afraid to wear the clothes that they want to wear.

THE IQ CONDUNDRUM

By Gabrielle Mussey

You overhear a student who achieves highly academically tell someone else what their IQ is. Their IQ ends up being lower than who they told, a student who achieves poorly academically. Surprisingly, this is a common occurrence with students and hints at the issues with some of the common ideas with IQ.

What even is IQ?

IQ stands for intelligence quotient and was developed in the early 1900's by Alfred Binet. Binet originally developed IQ to identify students who needed extra help in school. In contrast, IQ is now used to help identify students for "gifted" programs, with the cut-off usually being an IQ of 130. Despite this cut-off, though, there are many gifted students with IQs of 128, 125 or even lower.

These students can exceed as well or more than a student of a higher IQ, and can need just as much enrichment. This causes people to speculate whether or not these "gifted" program requirements are completely

fair and accurate.

Now, knowing that a person's IQ doesn't exactly mean they will be inherently more successful, do Pine View students also feel this way?

Students' Opinions

As a "gifted" student that also comes from a "gifted" mom, seventh grader Lucy Justus thinks IQ may look good on applications, albeit hard work and good decisions will pave the way for making her more successful than the average person. Or as Justus said, "...if a person is doing the best that they can and reaching their full potential." In her opinion, this is the upmost factor in becoming more successful, not IQ.

Seventh grader Avery Johanning only considers her IQ if someone asks her about it, but otherwise she says, "...there are many other ways to evaluate people."

Success is based on if people have "... the right blend of using [their] smarts and being compassionate to other people," Johanning believes.



Dear Cancel Culture: You're Cancelled

By Jiayi Zhu

Cancel culture: a modern form of ostracism in which someone is culturally blocked from having a prominent public platform or career.

As the internet sparks influencers and celebrities with growing platforms, their careers don't seem to last very long.

Cancel culture has been a growing phenomenon as the hashtags 'cancelled' and '___ is over party' flood the internet. This brings up a debatable question: does cancel culture really hold people accountable or does it turn a blind eye to a person's ability to learn from their mistakes?

Cancel culture was built from a good purpose – to call people out on their wrong doings. But recently, it's been way out of control. Many of the people getting cancelled are losing a platform because of something that they did years ago – not to mention people pick and choose who they want to cancel.

Not only is cancel culture extremely performative, it's also just blatantly ignoring the fact that people can grow and learn. Disrespectful and offensive

actions are taught and are definitely not permanent.

This being said, cancel culture depends on the situation. It's a matter

of whether these allegations still apply to the person today.

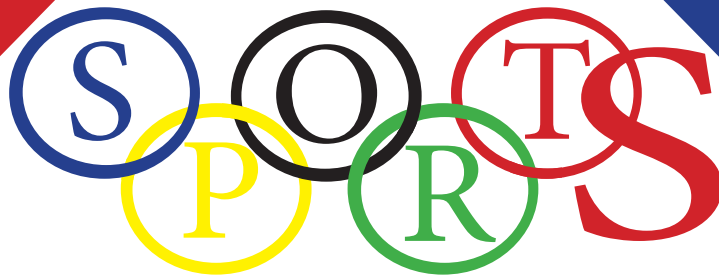
As already mentioned, cancel culture

can be used for a good purpose – but that's only if people know when and where to stop.

So, what do you see when you take a closer look at a 'cancelled' person's account? Comments insulting and attacking with no remorse. Don't take it the wrong way, though. Saying slurs, being racist, homophobic, or any of the sort is completely unacceptable and shouldn't be tolerated. But what if they have made it completely clear that it does not reflect the person they are today? That's where the attacks continue, digging a hole that the person can't possibly get out of.

Next time you participate in cancel culture, ask yourself this: Are you doing it because you want to hold the creator accountable or because you want to pretend that you're making a difference?





How are Remote Students Staying Active During Quarantine?

By Terry Shen

Because of COVID, our world is so much different from before. Many students, both remote and in person, have had their exercises hindered in one way or another. Exercise is very important to both physical and mental health. Especially to many remote students, it is much harder to get outside and be active. However, many students have found creative ways to get past these obstacles.

To Eli Juckett-Malone, it's been a struggle to be able to exercise and stay fit like he used to. Before the pandemic, Eli used to run around his neighborhood daily for about 20 minutes. Nowadays, he only has the opportunity to get out once a week. Even though it is harder for him to go outside and exercise, he is able to exercise indoors with a pull up bar. "I've noticed a significant change in my upper body strength," Eli said. Eli said that he recommends a pull up bar as a form of exercise for those who cannot get out as much as they like, yet still stay safe, healthy, and active.

For others, such as Aiden Nisberg, quarantine has been a double edged sword, bringing both new opportunities to exercise, as well as limiting old fitness activities. Since the start of quarantine, Nisberg has been able to spend more time with his family doing family activities, such as family bike rides, where Nisberg enjoys riding his scooter. However, he hasn't had the opportunity to be able to meet up with his friends to play sports with them as much as he would like.

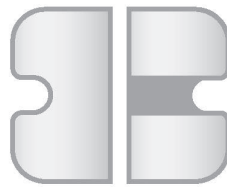
Although COVID has made a big impact on many students, Some students such as Nicklaus Bown haven't found COVID to have much of an impact on their exercise. Besides occasionally having to wear masks, Bown hasn't noticed that much of a difference from now, when compared to before COVID. He rides his bike with his father every day, goes to the gym, plays soccer, and golf. Overall, he is still able to keep fit during quarantine.

COVID has affected everyone differently. Despite this, health is still very important, and everyone should still try to exercise. Exercise is absolutely essential to having a happy and healthy life. Anything from doing a light workout indoors, to doing vigorous exercise outside is beneficial for you.

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Benefits of Exercise

By Emma Renyolds

Better
grades

Opportunity
to socialize

Improves
posture

Strengthens
heart

Lessens
stress

Better
sleep

Improves
memory

Lessens risk
of illness

Strengthens
bones

Python Survivor

By Jiayi Zh

This episode, six contestants are being nominated today to attempt survival in the frightening, deserted, bare... Westfield Mall. Yes, you heard that right. The mall we haven't heard about since 2016 and the only reason for its presence in current days is because of the AMC and Costco. Scary, I know. On top of that, two contestants are eliminated each round as they must complete survival challenges. First, let's introduce our contestants.

First up, mandarin teacher Margaret Higgins, who's the OG of the OGs of Python Survivor, being a Pine View graduate herself. She's planning to Tiktok dance her way to victory! Next, math teacher Stephen Folts. He's one of the most famous people in the mall, as he runs a YouTube channel with a whopping 200 subscribers. He's going to be switching up the content a little from baking to vlogging as he tries his best to survive. Most importantly, he has a dog named Higgins who he has brought along.

Speaking of animals, you could say our

next contestant is a little bit of a "Crazy Cat Lady" (in a good way): Science teacher Hali Flahavan here loves cats, tea, minions, and science!

Our next contestant, science teacher Dylan Bell, is probably in a secret science cult with Flahavan (don't take our word for that). In

this competition, he hopes to escape his students who have been avidly stalking him on Instagram. For a little bit of much needed pop of color in the barren Westfield Mall, we have art teacher Haley Brown, who loves art and is honestly just happy to be here despite the dire circumstances

Next, science teacher David Yotsuda is someone who you'd want on your side.

He takes his love for life science and applies it to inhaling food.

Now, on with the first challenge... Six contestants will enter. Only four will leave. The challenge?

We'll start off easy. There are four major components of survival – shelter, water, fire, and food. But this is no typical survival environment.



However, there is one thing that any sane and functional person would need and want – food. Now, I know not all the contestants here today are sane and functional, but the camera crew is getting hungry. Let it begin!

The six contestants scatter out throughout the mall. Their options are limited, but no one said the food was good. Folts runs straight to the Auntie Anne's, holding up his vlog camera as Higgins follows right behind him. Stale moldy pretzel secured! On the opposite side of the mall, the other Higgins raided the Dippin' Dots machine. It was like three months expired but that's impressive considering that the mall itself expired a year ago. Bell headed to the food court and grabbed about 20 boxes of chicken nuggets as Flahavan went to the AMC, acquiring 3 boxes of sour patch kids. Speaking of candy, Brown ransacked the candy shop. Yotsuda headed over to the conveyor belt sushi restaurant and picked up 50 pieces of sushi. Next, everybody had to meet up at the kid's playground with the food. As everyone gradually got to their destination, Yotsuda was the only one not holding food in his hand.

"Wait, guys. Was I not supposed to eat the food? All the walking made me super hungry!" he said.

Nope. The food was obviously for the camera crew. Well, that answers our first elimination. The question as to how Yotsuda ate fifty pieces of sushi in his five-minute walk here is a mystery we may never answer. Suddenly, Brown walked in with a somber expression.

"Guys. Guys. You won't believe this but... I just had a bag of candy in my hands and now it's gone! And I have no idea how! I swear."

Scan this link on your phone to get access to the ending of this suspenseful story about teachers competing with each other to win Python Survivor. Each challenge helps portray the teacher in their entirety. Who do you think will win? Will our surprise contestant take it all? Or will the OG Python take it all? No one can ever truly know unless one scans their phone into the rest of the story. But until then, the answers to these questions will remain unknown.



SPOILER ALERT:

Higgins (the teacher, not the dog) waves at Lenerz after he has just emerged from his hiding spot within the mall.

How he got there? No one will ever know. Is Higgins happy to see someone she knows pretty well? Yes. Now, is Lenerz happy to see Higgins? The answer to that is yes as well, when you've been cramped up in a mall for the equivalent of four years you're happy to even see a human. Let alone, a whole camera crew filming a challenge in which you get to be creative and resourceful.



The Secret Life of Students

By Jada Davidson

It was closing time yet again, and the adults had gone home as usual. Eighth grader Sof T. Spoken decided to walk around campus. While Spoken was enjoying his walk, classmate T.R. Ouble convinced her classmates to create 'elephant toothpaste' in Mr. Yotsuda's classroom. "We should not be doing this! What if Yotsuda walked in right now? I will not allow this to continue!"

Allen Order shouted, and sprang in action, desperately trying to stop the madness.

He eventually pinned Ouble to the ground in pure rage. "Why are you smiling? There's no reason to"

Or- der

stopped dead in his tracks when he saw Snea Key holding a huge bottle of yeast and water. Key sneered, then poured the yeast and water mix into the test tube that was used for the experiment. Without warning, an insane explosion of color flooded the classroom. Intel Ligent quickly opened the door, allowing the students to get halfway across campus.

Meanwhile, students were relaxing in the cafeteria, until I.M. Messy threw a tomato at Kay Otic. "FOOD FIGHT!!" Otic yelled.

As you can imagine, anyone who entered the cafeteria was pummeled by flying food. Such was the fate of Spoken, who came out covered in gravy, mashed potatoes, tomatoes and ice cream. The nearest bathroom to the cafeteria was in the office, but that door was locked. And the bathroom in the cafeteria was not a proper choice for obvious reasons. So, Sof T. Spoken went to use the bathroom near the media center. When Spoken arrived at the bathroom, 6th grade boys were wrestling and horsing around. This just can't get any worse, he thought.

He shot the 6th graders a threatening look, then went about his business. "I might as well go to the gym to work off all this negative energy I have right now," Spoken muttered.

Poom! Squeak! Poom! Those sounds of sneakers squeaking on the gym floor, yelling, and people getting hit with red balls were only a small bit of the chaos that was happening in the gym. An intense dodgeball match was taking place. Balls flew left and right; Spoken barely dodged any stray balls that came towards him. "You know





Students race out of the classroom in haste haste and panic, after Snea Key gave them quite a fright. ..

what? I'll make a deal with these irritating numb-skulls after gathering all the students," Spoken muttered. After all the students were in the gym, Spoken found a megaphone in the gym teachers' closet. "Everyone be quiet and listen up!" He yelled through the megaphone. Everyone froze in shock and turned toward Spoken. "You all have been extremely irritating, and I have HAD IT! Since you all have so much energy, we should settle this with a---a----a dodgeball match!"

Almost every student shot up in joy, exhilarated by the thought of throwing gleaming red balls at their peers. But next thing they knew, red balls were annihilating them...

I.M Messy happily engages in tormenting students, by throwing soda cans and other miscellaneous items at innocent victims.. Pictured on the left is aone helpless victim of this grouser.



SOCIAL MEDIA

A NECESSARY EVIL

By Adeline Von Wowern

“Ring, ring,” you get a notification. A notification waiting for you to open it. Curiosity pulling you in and interest not letting you stop scrolling. Social Media is the necessary evil of our society. We need it, we love it, but we hate it too.

During Covid a lot has changed. Social media lets you connect with people when Covid restrictions kept everyone apart. But social media has also contributed to some disasters too. On Wednesday, January 6, 2021, a riot went on at the Capitol, with the help of social media, or more precisely, due to the former president, Donald Trump, tweeting three different times leading to the domino effect of violence.

Now That we are home and trying to escape from the dangerous virus attacking our world, what's left to do. “I’ve definitely used social media way more than before,” Lucy Justus (7) said, “because of all the time we had in

quarantine.” Justice explained, the boredom of not being able to see your friends or go out is just unbearable. “I feel like we use social media as a way to escape from reality,” she said.

“I definitely feel addicted, you can spend hours on social media feeling like only ten minutes have passed.”

- Lucy Justus

Social Media use has increased tremendously since the Pandemic has started, studies have shown that social media consumption has increased by 72% and posting has increased by 43%. According to King University, social media can affect the brain's

decision making and emotional process function. Now that we are using Social media more than ever, we need to make sure that our screen time is limited.

But what is the point of social media? It's not only a way to connect with your friends, but also a way to connect with people around the globe. “You can see what's going on in their lives,” Justus said, “without actually being with them.” Social media allows you to socialize with people all over the world. You can make friends that you have never met before. Our world is expanding. And social media is too.

Although it sometimes can be a way to overshare. Social media may not be the vicious monster we all believe it is. It is true sometimes the influence of social media can reach too far, and can be harmful like with this past example, but we all must admit, we just couldn't live without it.



WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO?



By Micheal Hu



"Classical and dubstep. I listen to it when I am sweating block game and playing piano for adrenaline."

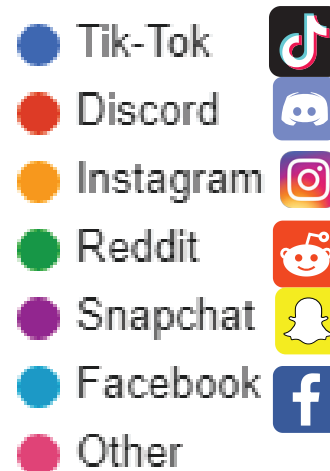
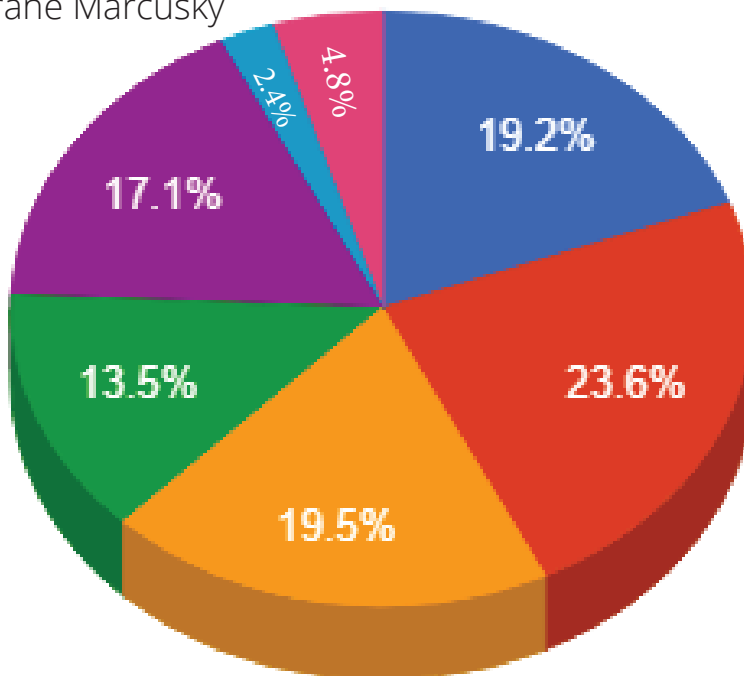
-Sam Wang

"I listen to what's popular now and a lot of Broadway musicals. I also like songs that have a meaning behind them. I listen to the lyrics a lot."

-Delaney Lockwood

Most Popular Social Media Apps

By Coltrane Marcusky



416 Students
Grades 6-8

SPARK PLAYLIST

March 2021 | Part One



DRIVER'S LICENSE

ESCAPE (THE PINA COLADA SONG)

SWEATER WEATHER

OUT OF MY LEAGUE

WONDER

MOTION SICKNESS

YOU BROKE ME FIRST

MILLION DOLLAR BILLS

THEREFORE I AM

BRAZIL

BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

ANIMAL

Y.M.C.A

OLIVIA RODRIGO

RUPERT HOLMES

THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

FITZ AND THE TANTRUMS

SHAWN MENDES

PHOEBE BRIDGERS

TATE MCRAE

LORDE

BILLIE EILISH

DECLAN MCKENNA

QUEEN

NEON TREES

VILLAGE PEOPLE

BY DONELLE GRONE AND FAITH BOSSMAN, GRAPHIC BY
FAITH BOSSMAN AND FELICITY CHANG



BRINGING BACK OLD ENTERTAINMENT

BY BRENNA CULLEN

Cassette players, introduced in 1968, allowed purchasers to effortlessly play prerecorded music in any car. The cassette would be placed in a tape recorder, and the magnetic tape inside would pass around the magnetic heads of the recorder. Each magnetic head corresponded to a different level of loudness or frequency of the music.



The Game Boy was an 8-bit handheld game console that was especially popular among children in 1989. With various Super Mario and Pokémon games, the Game Boy was a huge hit. Over 118 million Game Boys were sold worldwide, making it the third-bestselling video game console of all time.

One of the most popular kids toys in the 90s' was the Tamagotchi, released in November 1996. This small, cute device housed a digital pet, which would vary based on the Tamagotchi that was purchased. The Tamagotchi, which had multiple games, also had a "connect" feature that allowed kids to sync their Tamagotchi and play with their friends'.



GameCube, a highly controversial home video game console, was released in 2001 by Nintendo. The console was, quite literally, a purple cube with a cord attaching a controller. The games the Cube offered were like most others at the time, but the GameCube was still titled as a significant loss for the Nintendo business.

Whether it was the pressure of Mario Kart or the thrill of Wii Sports, we all remember Wii being a part of our childhoods. Made on November 19th, 2006, the Wii set included a sensor, remotes, a balance board (which was necessary for some games), a steering wheel (also optional) and CDs of various games.



Released in 2009, ZhuZhu pets were another popular toy among children. The rodent-like imitations were battery run and would simply zoom around when powering them on. Kids could purchase "playgrounds" for their ZhuZhu pet, and happily watch their rabbit, mouse, zebra, or cow glide down the miniature slides.

FLASH FACTS: A YEAR OF COVID

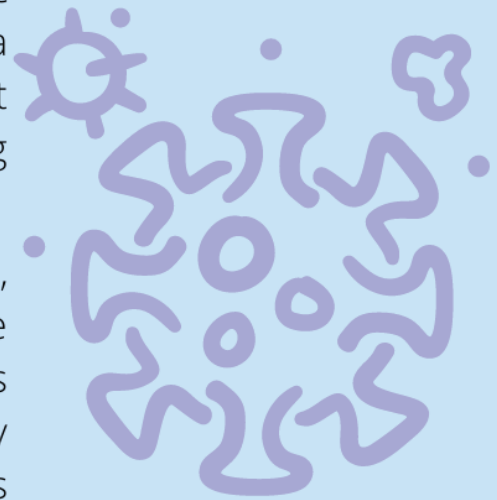
By: Ethan Kim

Viruses are proteins that contain genetic information, they are harmless without a host but when the virus obtains one, it injects DNA into the cell, becoming dangerous.

Using the cell's parts, like the ribosomes, the DNA forces the cell to create replications of the virus. When the cell's resources run out, the virus purposely lyses (explodes) itself. The new viruses then spread out to find more hosts.

Sometimes, the DNA changes. This might be due to it being copied wrong or the DNA has been damaged. This defect changes the daughter viruses' code and is slowly spread until it's prominent. This keeps going on until there is a noticeable change in the virus.

This is happening with COVID-19, and although it isn't clear if this change makes the new virus more spreadable or more deadly, scientists are keeping an eye out for more changes.



What has the effect of Covid-19 been on your daily life during the past year?

"Recently my parents got COVID, so I am forced to stay home. I have also been limited to the activities I can do such as basketball."
-8th Grader Brandon Haney

"During this time, I feel as if I have been less social now than my past two years due to me having fewer people to talk with."

-8th Grader Matthew Brown

Interviews by: Abhinav Yeruva

Hand Sanitizer



Research by:
Madylin Hagney



Soap

- Doesn't cover the whole hand as thoroughly
- More easily accessible
- Must have 60% or more alcohol to be effective
- Can't kill as many different germs as soap can

- Far more thorough in covering your hands
- More effective at killing certain types of germs
- Can remove pesticides
- Soap has surfactants so the virus slides right off

www.cdc.gov

Meet the Aides of Pine View!

By Lindsay Luberecki

Many Pine View students enjoy spending time in the Media Center during their lunch period. Others may enjoy being active and having fun at fields. Others still may love dining and eating with friends in the cafeteria or out in the quad. But the people that make these activities possible are unknown to many students: Pine View's aides. These aides are the superheroes, so to speak, of the school. Without them, many of these favorite Pine View experiences may not be possible, and the school would be very different. They do so much for us each day, whether it's keeping the Media Center in order, working in the cafeteria, bringing students to fields, or keeping the school safe.

In this spread, we aim to introduce some of the superheroes at Pine View; more specifically, people middle school students may see or interact with every day but may not know well. Read on to get to know some of the aides that make our school such a great place!

PHOTOS BELOW BY SHELBY BRANN



By: Calista Ream

We all know our teachers well at this point in the year, but what about the other staff at Pine View, such as the aides? Let's introduce you to one. Lenny Gross is a P.E aide at Pine View. His favorite part of working as an aide is "seeing the kids grow into something special."

Gross has worked at Pine View for eight and a half years now.

"I chose this profession because I wanted to work with kids. It's easy to get out of bed in the morning because I really do enjoy

Lenny Gross



PHOTO BY CALISTA REAM

coming here," he said.

Gross loves to work in the yard and the garden, and he loves to bike. He is a hairdresser at Lenny's Hair Kuttery, and is a former owner of the successful small business.

"I wanted a second career and [to] do something different," Gross said, while explaining why, 7 years ago, ownership was transferred from Lenny to his youngest sister.

Gross started the business 35 years ago and he still works there in the evenings and on Saturdays. "I love the creativity of cutting hair," Gross said, "even after all these years."

By: Sofia Giannattasio

Pine View has no shortage of aides on campus, but there's only one Nicolina Aristi. You might have heard of her, but do you really know her?

Most people who go to St. Augustine go for the landmarks, such as the Castillo de San Marcos, but Aristi isn't your average vacationer.

While others shop on the cobblestone roads, or dine on the beach, she goes on ghost tours and to spooky museums in the city.

Learning about haunted history is just one of the many unknown hobbies of media aide Aristi. This year is her second working at Pine View, but she's been loving ghost things forever.

"It's always been my passion," she said, "and I love horror movies, especially anything Stephen King."

At school, Aristi supervises the Media Center. When not answering phones, helping around, or closing the office, she loves to cruise around in a golf cart

Nicolina Aristi



PHOTO BY SOFIA GIANNATTASIO

with the wind on her face. But the best part about her job, she said, are the kids.

"They're like a walking soap opera! I'm all about the tea. Ask anybody, they'll tell you that Ms. Nicci knows all the juice," she said.

She has two children, but since both are boys, she decided she "couldn't be the only girl in the house, so I just had to get two female dogs!"

So, she did: Zelda, a big German shepherd, and Penelope, a sassy small chihuahua.

"They're quite a pair," Aristi said. "Zelda is 2, still a crazy puppy getting into all kinds of mischief, while Penelope is 6 and does nothing but sleep all day."

Once, Aristi came home from work to find that Zelda had gotten out of her crate and was sitting in the bedroom, but the strangest

thing was, the door to the bedroom had been closed!

If you're ever in the Media Center, be sure to stop by and say hi to her.

By Samuel Wang

When people talk about frontline workers, they usually think about first responders, but they may not realize that the aides in school are frontline workers, too. Due to the pandemic, Pine View became severely understaffed and needed a new library aide. Cynthia Pflug is one of these new aides.

She said one reason she became a Pine View aide this year is that “nothing would be ‘normal’ or ‘as it was before,’ so the opportunity was there to make changes.”

Pflug’s main job is to keep track of books, but her duties are different from those of other library aides. She

Cynthia Pflug

is the only one that solely focuses on the library, so she is responsible for its books, digital books, textbooks, and digital or remote access.

“I love the library. Pine View had an opening, and it was my entry to working in the district,” she said.

Outside of school, Pflug does a lot of reading. She says it helps her to experience things outside of her perspective. She also recently started reading K-drama (Korean drama)

because it helps her learn “about the culture, history, values, etc.” According to Pflug, reading is like a window to the world, and a mirror to herself.

Overall, Pflug said that taking this career was a great decision.

“Every job has things to love, and

things to work and change. So far, I have rather enjoyed it!” she said.



PHOTO BY SAMUEL WANG

By Eleonore Cantin

Melissa Dooley is one of the lesser-known monitorial aides. She has been working at Pine View School since 2018.

“I love to be at the Media Center,” she said.

She enjoys helping with students’ educations and making sure the school is safe.

“I am known for finding lost things...I can find anything, from misplaced books to lost keys,” she said.

Students aren’t the only ones who can check books out from the Media Center; Dooley can and

“I love to check out books,” she said.

She enjoys mystery, sci fi, and young

Melissa Dooley

adult books. She’s excellent at recommending young adult books to students since she’s read them all.

“Chapter books made for children are my favorite,” she said.

She additionally said that they are so much more interesting than books for adults.

When she is not assisting students, Dooley loves to open a good book and sink away in a new world. Some of her other interests are genealogy and board games. She loves to discover family history and be involved in the past. Board games are her passion, so much so that she is the chess club sponsor.

“Since no one stepped up to sponsor the chess club this year, I asked if I could, and they said ‘Absolutely!’” she said.



PHOTO BY ELEONORE CANTIN

By Eleonore Cantin

Robert McGuire (also known as Bob) is an aide who also works as a substitute teacher, which makes him stand out from other aides. McGuire said that he likes all subjects because students at Pine View already know most of the material, which makes his job a lot easier.

When he's not teaching, he's helping in other ways.

"I am basically another pair of eyes for the school, and I make sure that the school is safe," he said.

McGuire's full-time job is as a real-estate agent for

Robert McGuire

Michael Saunders on Siesta. He said that he chooses to also work at the school because he loves the kids.

He's been at Pine View School for four years now. He also likes that the students are so aware of everything and rule following, so to speak.

He is married, but has no kids or pets.

"You kids are too expensive," he said, laughing.

Regarding hobbies, McGuire said his other job takes up too much time for him to do many other things, but he does love to walk on the beach with

his wife.

Mi-



PHOTO BY ELEONORE CANTIN

By: Shelby Brann

Susan Ebers, a monitoring aide at Pine View, said that her favorite part of her job is helping others—including students, faculty, and staff. Before being an aide, she was a teacher for about forty years.

"I no longer wanted to be in the classroom but still wanted to be around children and students," Ebers said.

The solution? Putting her talents to use in the Student Union, the Media Center, and occasionally the guidance office. Each day, Ebers works hard to assist both her coworkers and students at Pine View.

"I enjoy working in the Media, Student Union, and Guidance

Susan Ebers

areas daily, helping students and staff throughout my day," she said.

Ebers has been working at Pine View for four years now, ever since she retired from her teaching position. She can be seen working hard to create the environment that students know and love. Whether it's shelving books, delivering students to the guidance offices, or lending a hand inside the cafeteria, Ebers does her best to make Pine View a great place for administrators and students alike.


Luckily for everyone at Pine View, Ebers enjoys her work, particularly working with students. Known mostly from the cafeteria, students love and respect her greatly.

"Pine View is an awesome school," "The students are very polite, considerate, and always welcoming."

she said.

PHOTO BY SHELBY BRANN





Dedicated to all the
victims of COVID-19 and
essential workers.

SPARK