

Building 17: A Whole New World



In its final stages of construction, Building 17 gazes across the Pine View campus. The building will be open come second semester. PHOTO BY FELICITY CHANG

by Lora Rini
Match Editor-in-Chief

The loss of the long wooden fence surrounding construction on campus will be a dramatic change to Pine View's landscape, but it will come with an even bigger one: the official opening of Building 17. The new building has enough classrooms that every teacher who is currently in a portable will be able to move to a brick-and-mortar room by the end of winter break, and some of the new classrooms have unique characteristics that are unseen elsewhere at Pine View.

At first glance, many teachers' new classroom assignments might seem random and unnecessarily complicated. Some teachers who are already in physical buildings are assigned to move to Building 17, leaving their classroom open for somebody else to move into. Meanwhile, some middle school classes currently held in portables will not be moving to Building 17, instead occupying vacancies left by teachers in other buildings. However, this new layout was designed very strategically.

"My whole thing was

that I had a real issue putting younger students like my sixth-graders and even some seventh-graders on the third floor of a large building. They're still young, they're still smaller in stature, so that's why we had to make the decision [to move teachers out of the physical buildings], because I didn't have enough people to put in those third floor classrooms," Assistant Principal Melissa Abela said.

Inside the building, teachers from similar departments are located near each other to make collaboration easy. The second and third floors are very similar in layout to each other, and all the specialized rooms are located on the bottom floor.

The choir room's current location in Building 16 is plagued by bad acoustics, tight space, and long walks. In Building 17, it will be a completely different story.

"They actually have acoustical tiles in the room to help dampen sound, and if there was no carpet in the room, it would be very what we call live or very echoey," choir teacher Seth Gardner said. "Outside of the carpet, there is some sound

absorbers and there's extra reinforcement between the rooms so that there's less sound bleed. The other thing is that with my room specifically, they built it so it was not under another room."

Physics teachers Malele Nzeza and Roger Siegel are moving into new rooms as well. The physics rooms have ample storage space, but perhaps their most unique feature is their ceilings, or rather, their absences of ceilings. All the pipes and beams are exposed to give physics students a firsthand look at the composition of a building every day during their lessons.

"Because of the way the ceiling is, there will be more experiments that we'll be able to do. We'll be able to hang things that are heavy [and there is room] for people to get more equipment because there is more storage now," Nzeza said.

The integration of Building 17 into the Pine View campus will be a big adjustment for teachers and students alike, but there is a lot to look forward to. In this new environment, many classes will be enabled to grow into an even better version of the current curricula.



Project manager Nathan Renner looks across a physics classroom during an October tour. The physics rooms' high ceilings will give students a look at real-life applications. PHOTO BY ALYSON MIZANIN



Boxes full of furniture are being moved into Building 17. All classrooms will have 25 student desks, and teachers will arrange their rooms over winter break. PHOTO BY FELICITY CHANG

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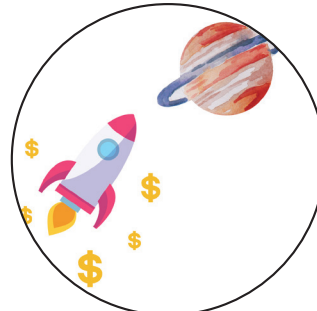
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Foster angel program touches hearts

by Isabella Kulawik
Sci-Tech Editor

The Foster Angels program has touched the lives of children across the county, as well as students and teachers within the Pine View community. For more than five years, Spanish teacher Judit Pauling has run the program; because of her efforts, Pine View has become the top donor in DeSoto, Manatee, and Sarasota Counties. Donating has become a pivotal part of her class each December.

"It's important not only to educate students but also to teach compassion ... how to be giving and how to be thankful about your own stuff and your blessings," Pauling said. I think all these are important things that they should have in the classroom, not just strict grammar or vocabulary — you cannot really understand until you're part of it."

Now, teachers across Pine View sponsor Foster Angels during the holiday season. Students donate in class and then come together to buy gifts for each child.

While teachers have helped to make the program what it is today, students have also played a pivotal role. Eleventh-grader Felicity Chang has volunteered since middle school. She continues to support any way she can, from walking to Walmart with her grandfather to shop before she could drive to scouring websites for a specific brand of sensory toy on a toddler's gift list.

"I remember I went home and I had an envelope with all my babysitting money. I checked the envelope and I went in and I said, 'Mrs. Pauling, I have my babysitting money that I made

for these past two weeks, I want you to take it and I want you to do it for Foster Angels,' and that was the first donation we had that year," Chang said.

AP Biology and Biotechnology teacher Angela Keiper-Wilson is an avid Foster Angels supporter. Her dedication to the program began one night after Pinnacle. After getting home, she and her husband sat on their couch at 11:30pm and decided they were going to

like disappointment to go into this quiet home. So I said that to her ... It's the only conversation I've ever had with her."

That night, they signed up for fostering classes. Once they finished, they met their three-month-old foster daughter, Arianna, within a week.

"It was nice with Arianna; she gave us a purpose. You think your whole life, 'I'm going to be a mom, I'm going to be a great mom,' and then they're like, 'You're probably not going to be a mom,'" Keiper-Wilson said.

Keiper-Wilson and her husband took care of Arianna until she was one year old; she was then reunited with her parents and paternal grandmother.

"You don't get a lot of closure. This is a person you teach to eat, and to sit, and to walk, and if I saw her on the street, we wouldn't know each other.

It's sad because you lose a little bit of yourself, but I wouldn't change it for the world — I loved it," Keiper-Wilson said.

The day before Arianna left, Keiper-Wilson found out that she was pregnant with her now three-year-old son, Tyler. Keiper-Wilson and her husband aren't currently fostering but are considering doing it again when their son is older.

One year by mere coincidence, Spanish teacher Patti Gerlek's class sponsored Arianna and purchased gifts for her. Keiper-Wilson has sponsored children every year with the help of her students.

"It's really beautiful, how the students come together. It wasn't just for my Arianna — it was for all the kids that we did as well. So I love that program. I think it's beautiful," Keiper-Wilson said.



Tenth-graders Lana Ghamra and Sophia Sanchez pass around a Foster Angels fund collection jar. Pine View has become a top donor in the region. PHOTO BY FELICITY CHANG

become foster parents.

Keiper-Wilson and her husband began their fostering journey after six years of being unable to conceive. Speaking with third-grade teacher Susie Shea at Pinnacle led to the decision. This meeting happened by chance; in fact, Keiper-Wilson wasn't planning to attend until being invited by Principal Dr. Stephen Covert.

"[Shea] said, 'You're two people who have a home that you want to fill with love,'" Keiper-Wilson said. "We built [our house] with the intention of having kids. I have a niece and two nephews, and when they're over, it would be loud and you could hear all these beautiful sounds ... For six years, it was just my husband and I and our cat. It was quiet and it just stopped feeling like a happy home ... It just sounded

Inflatable planetarium opens



Standing in front of a mural painted by eleventh-grader Jackie Wassermann, science teachers David Yotsuda and Marie Rosander instruct students before entering the planetarium. The structure can be found in the Star Lab, which was previously known as the TEL studio. PHOTO BY SARAH HASSAN

IN BRIEF

Committee created to organize, fundraise for Cobalt

by Lindsay Luberecki
Asst. News Editor

With COVID-19 causing financial setbacks and limiting fundraising opportunities in the last two years, funding for Pine View's annual prom, Cobalt, has posed new challenges.

Usually, the junior class plans and pays for the event, with juniors paying a ticket price and seniors attending for free. While the ticket prices will remain the same, the junior and senior classes are funding the event this year in order to feel more at ease financially. There are two directors and a committee for each class planning Cobalt.

"We're working on a bit of a tighter budget this year,"

senior co-director Kani Schram said. "[Seniors] have to pay for graduation this year in addition ... That's a really big expense."

Because the class of 2022 didn't get to plan a Cobalt last year when they were juniors, they are being given the opportunity to plan one this year.

"It's not something that's usually done every year," junior co-director Olivia Liu said. "There's a lot of adapting ... [but] it's tons of fun."

In November, the committee ran a Gratitude Grams fundraiser in which students could purchase turkey-shaped notes to send to someone along with a goodie bag. More fundraising plans are "in the works," junior co-director Ocean Bruinius said.

Pine View raises over \$6,700 in Mayors Feed the Hungry drive

by Faith Bossman
Features Editor

Pine View raised \$6,784 for the Mayor's Feed the Hungry food drive this year — more than double last year's total.

Elementary school council sponsor Sara Kolsky has been in charge of Pine View's Mayor's Feed the Hungry drive for the past four years. This year and last year, the school raised money; the two years before, they collected food boxes.

Pine View was also number one in the county for raising money.

"It shows that we give back to our community, and that we take care of one another," Kolsky said.

Altogether, 55 classes

raised money for the drive. Some of the teachers who raised the most money include fourth-grade teacher Debbie Delaney, math teacher Summer Grantham, Chinese teacher Kitty Wang, and English teacher Megan O'Mahony, all of whose classes each raised over \$500. Kolsky attributes this year's increase in money to all students being back in person this year, as compared to many students being virtual last year.

"Because of the pandemic, people are feeling in their hearts and wanting to give back and help those that are in need ... We have a very generous student body and families that are willing to help out and give back," Kolsky said.

UPCOMING

advisory days

JANUARY

26

Human Trafficking
Prevention

FEBRUARY

23

Prevention of Self
Harming and
Suicide

MARCH

23

Awareness of Resources
and the Process for
Accessing Treatment

CLASS MEETINGS

march 11

GRAPHIC BY ZOE MERRITT

STUDENT WORKERS WEIGH IN ON THE FIGHT FOR \$15

A narrative take on student food service employees' values and experiences

by Felicity Chang
Web Editor-in-Chief

Beyond the tinted glass doors of Sarasota restaurant Cafe BarBosso – etched with the overlapping knife and fork of their logo and the statement “Eat, Laugh, Love or Else” – vivid, eccentric paintings line monochromatic walls. Above the counter is an expressionistic rendition of the DaVinci classic “Mona Lisa,” complete with a bright, surrealist background decorated with butterflies, flowers, and a large, unnerving eyeball with sky-blue lids and The Vitruvian Man in its iris. She smiles – and the eye stares – unblinkingly at the workers below, accompanying them through the routine of opening hour on a typical Wednesday afternoon.

The faint chords of Alicia Keys’ “Empire State of Mind” drifts through the boisterous chatter of kitchen staff and servers as ice cubes clink in water pitchers, receipts screech while being printed, and the front-of-house landline persistently rings. “If I can make it here, I can make it anywhere, that’s what they say,” Keys belts as eleventh-grader Jessica Barrett picks up the phone. It’s a reservation inquiry, a request she is well-accustomed to handling after two months on the job.

Like many other student workers, Barrett started working part-time to make some extra cash, in addition to gaining job experience before entering the “real” world. One of her coworkers, twelfth-grader Erick Morales, has been working at Cafe BarBosso since April 2020, with a similar, albeit more specific, motive: saving up for a backpacking trip in Europe.

“We are doing a dive program, me and my friend,” Morales said. “We’re going to get a divemaster internship in

Canary Islands. And then after that, we’re just getting a Euro Trail ticket, or a Eurail ticket. We’ll see where that goes.”

Eleventh-grader

people is really important,” Tiubin said.

“And it’s taught me a lot about myself because I know I don’t want to work in the service industry when I’m older,” Messier said. “It’s given me more of a drive to go to college and work hard in school and do really well for myself, so I don’t have to do this as a full-time job.”

“You see adults working, and they’re unhappy,” Tiubin said. “Managers always complain, and you see the detrimental effects that it has on their mental health and physical health also.”

This sentiment of being unwilling to continue working in the service industry after high school and college is prevalent as it becomes increasingly more difficult to stay afloat financially when part-time jobs for “extra cash” turn into the only means for survival. “Fight for \$15,” the Service Employees International Union-funded campaign to raise minimum wages to \$15 per hour in seven states — including Florida — is a prime example of how full-time workers have responded to being underpaid and overworked.

In November 2020, more than six million Floridians approved a ballot initiative – publicly known as Amendment 2 – to raise the state’s minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2026, and according to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Florida’s minimum wage has been raised to \$10 per hour since Sept. 30 of this year. The minimum

standards in a lot of places, especially if you’re working in the food service industry,” Brotherton said. “There’s people doing whatever they can, and honestly, I’m a dependent, still, and my parents are very successful ... I mean, yeah, [consumers] might have to pay a little bit more, but in general, it could give people a better leg up.”

Moreover, the recent minimum wage increase is accompanied by more job openings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Messier said many of his coworkers at his previous job at Publix quit out of concern for their health during the onset of the pandemic, and Tiubin said she was promoted to the Team

school or work on other extra-curriculars because work and school is their life and that’s it, which is hard. I kind of recognize that, but I also don’t think I understand the full experience of it.”

According to Morales, Amendment 2 may not directly affect him yet, but he sees how it can help other people.

“A lot of the people who are older, like the waiters in the kitchen, juggle multiple jobs, like random jobs, and it really is their life,” he said. “The people in the kitchen, they always talk about how they’re doing laundry in the mornings and then they come here and work ... When we’re talking about ‘Oh, how was your day?’, they’re like, ‘Oh... I was at my other job.’”

These waiters and kitchen workers, donning black shirts with capitalized white text that spells out “Eat Your Pasta, Mind Your Business & Pay Your Bill” on the backs, often converse with other

employees while working next to the same stainless-steel counters and vermilion walls. Their laughter and lighthearted discourse can be heard beyond statues decorated with Jackson-Pollock-style splattered paint and big brown bags of Sir Galahad artisan flour — because sometimes cutting bread to fit into takeout boxes sparks an unspoken comradery amongst young people working service jobs to get by.

“Everybody should have a customer service job for at least some point,” Messier said. “If you’re going to do it, do it in high school, because it builds character and it makes you learn more about yourself and also be proud of yourself for doing something you thought maybe you couldn’t.”

PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS BY FELICITY CHANG

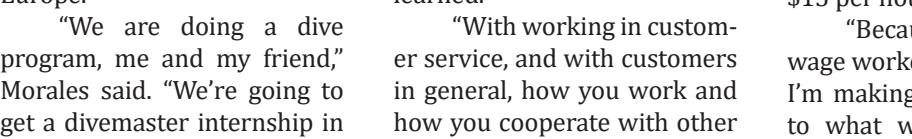
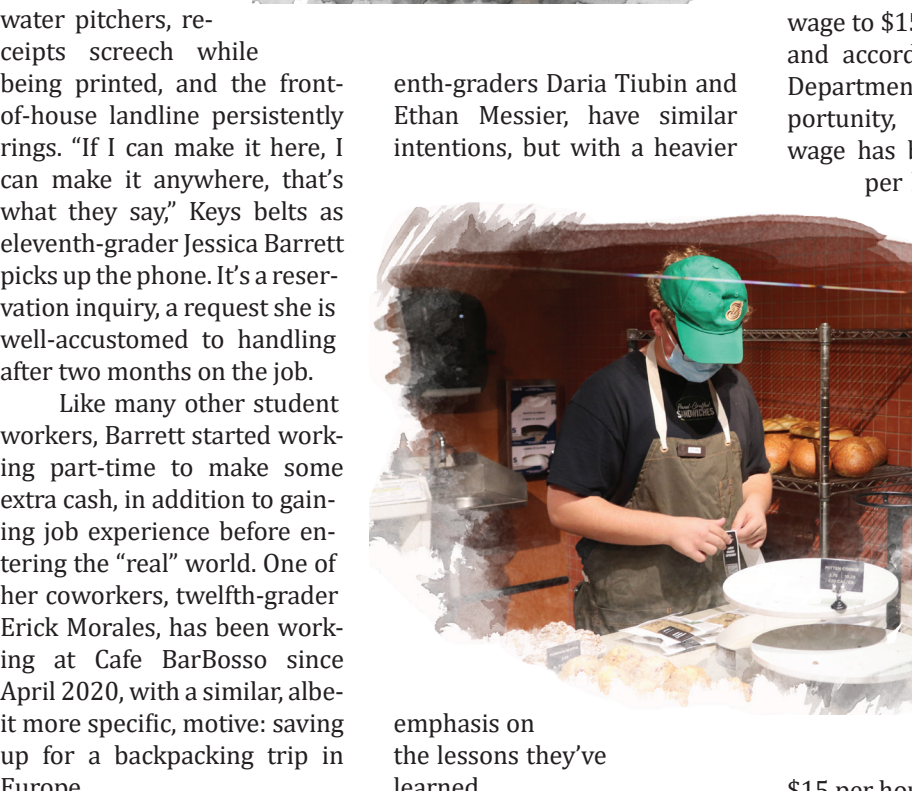
Lead position after working for two months. According to High School Guidance Counselor Lynn Halcomb, the guidance department started a bulletin board for job postings in November due to emails that they’ve received from Chick-fil-A requesting for Pine View students, specifically, to apply for employment.

Although some are applying for these positions to earn savings, like Morales or Brotherton, or perhaps to gain life experiences, like Tiubin or Messier, there are students who have other motivations.

“Every year, we’ve had students who have worked to support their families and not necessarily being the sole provider, but definitely helping to pitch in,” Halcomb said.

When asked about her

thoughts on student workers who may be supporting their families, Brotherton said, “It’s not an easy decision for any kid to make. Most of the time a kid that has a full-time job can’t really set aside a bunch of time to see their friends outside of



wage will increase by \$1 each year until it reaches \$15 per hour in 2026.

“Because I’m a minimum wage worker, I know that what I’m making really is not close to what we consider livable

emphasis on the lessons they’ve learned.

“With working in customer service, and with customers in general, how you work and how you cooperate with other

PV welcomes furriest new addition

by Lindsay Luberecki
Asst. News Editor

As the sun rises and solitary high schoolers trickle onto campus, one student is not alone. Twelfth-grader Ruby Copsey strolls with her golden doodle, Sage, giving commands and holding a piece of cheese as a reward for good behavior.

Sage is a medical alert dog. “Her main job while she is working is to smell for fluctuations and alert me if something is medically wrong...I trained her to recognize and then paw at me when it was an event... and I know to brace myself or sit down,” Copsey said.

Copsey got Sage when she was nine weeks old, planning all along to train her as a service dog. She worked with Jeanine’s Professional Dog Training, who prepares people to train their own service dogs.

Since she’s had Sage, Copsey has put hard work and effort into training her. They’ve been to many public places; Copsey estimated that she spent anywhere from one to three hours a day training Sage.

“She put so much work into it,” twelfth-grader Kara Larsen, Copsey’s good friend said. “She has [it] in the back of her mind all the time.”

Sage was a quick learner

when it came to training, which Copsey attributes as being the reason why Sage could come to school so relatively soon. Now nine months old, Sage is “ahead of the curve” and “very, very well behaved,” she said.

When she first met Sage, an immediate bond formed be-



Ruby Copsey stands with her service dog, Sage. In December, she began bringing Sage to school. PHOTO BY LINDSAY LUBERECKI

tween the two. Copsey would sleep on the floor with Sage before she could jump onto the bed and spent hours with her.

“[Our bond] was a very special thing, and that’s part of why she’s a great service dog,” Copsey said. “From the very beginning you could tell that her first priority was keeping me safe and checking on me.”

Copsey recalls when she took Sage on a walk during their first week together. Sage noticed a stranger walking down the street and “would not keep her eyes off him.” Copsey said that she finally realized Sage was “protecting Mom.”

She described Sage as perceptive, aware of her surroundings, and lovable. Sage “sees that dividing line” when she’s working or not, and Copsey said that “when you take her vest off you can let her in the backyard... she looks like a pet.”

As of early December, Copsey has begun bringing Sage on campus for the first three periods. They’re quickly working towards full days, easing her into school life.

There are still a few worries in the air, like how Sage handles rolling backpacks. Copsey has taken her to the airport to experience luggage and has brought her during elementary and middle dismissal to get her adjusted. Though concerned about how Sage will handle distance during science labs, Copsey is teaching her that that separation will be okay.

“She’s a really cute puppy,” Copsey said. “[We] immediately bonded. Her tail was always moving. She knew that I was home for her.”

Alum hosts radio show

by Shelby Brann
Web Asst. Editor

On an average morning in a building just outside Washington, D.C., bright lights flash in a dark room as the city wakes. All across the area, people turn on their radios to listen in. Behind the scenes, Pine View Class of 2014 alumnus Robert MacDonald-Davies rushes to flip switches and make final adjustments as the show goes live. In a few months, he’ll be hosting his own radio show.

Though still in the works, the new show will begin broadcasting in early 2022. Exact details aren’t official yet, but it’ll be featured every Saturday and Sunday for a half-hour to discuss news. MacDonald-Davies will be hosting and producing the show himself for Salem Radio, a Christian conservative radio network based in Dallas, Texas. He looks forward to broadcasting.

“It’s a fantastic opportunity; Washington, D.C. and the surrounding market is the seventh-largest radio market in the country, so it’s a huge opportunity to create a brand for myself... It’s a really good time to be able to jump into the media sphere and not necessarily be so polarizing — maybe add a voice of reason, of civility, to the equation that has been lacking a lot,” he said.

This isn’t MacDonald-Davies’ introduction to the media business. He formerly co-hosted

and produced a talk show that premiered on a radio program known as “Real Talk,” which is broadcasted in the Tallahassee general area. He first joined “Real Talk” in his sophomore year of college after his friend informed him of an internship.

“I thought it was a really cool opportunity to try something new and see if it would

credits former Pine View English teacher Nicole Light for his perspective of the media. He believes her influence instilled in him the idea that a person should always listen to both sides of the story.

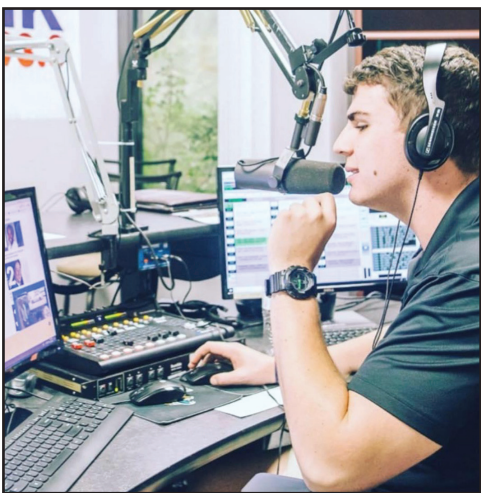
Light spoke of MacDonald-Davies fondly, reflecting when he would engage with his peers in her British Literature class. She enjoys catching up with him through Facebook.

“Rob is very deeply confirmed in his convictions, and he has deep beliefs about the world and what’s right and what’s wrong. And he was never afraid to not only speak his mind, but also defend not just his opinions, but the opinions of other people around him,” Light said.

Light said she always envisioned MacDonald-Davies’ success as a leader.

“He has this conviction, and it’s this deep confidence in his beliefs ... That’s something that I just knew that that would take him to a place of leadership,” Light said.

Though he is excited for the show to begin, MacDonald-Davies has more on his mind than just the next few months. He hopes to one day host his own syndicated radio show. He is ready to charge forth, take the reins of the upcoming show, and “build a pretty big audience,” he said. For him, this is just one step in the beginning of a career in radio media.



MacDonald-Davies works with recording equipment. His new show will begin broadcasting in early 2022. PHOTO PROVIDED BY ROBERT MACDONALD-DAVIES

be something that I liked; obviously, [I] ended up falling in love with it and here we are, six or so years later,” he said.

MacDonald-Davies said that his vision of the media was one of connections and truth that should be “focused on trying to present the news in as straight of a way as you possibly can.” This outlook developed during his time starting and working with Pine View’s Young Republicans club. He

Lamenting the Library: Lack of research resources affects students



Pine View’s main library desk overlooks countless novels. Diminishing emphasis and funding in regard to libraries is proving problematic for Sarasota students. PHOTO BY JOANNA MALVAS

by Joanna Malvas
Managing Editor

As classes like AP Research continue to utilize online sources for work, the inadequate emphasis on funding for librarians and digital databases is becoming increasingly apparent. While reduced funding for libraries is a trend across Florida schools, Sarasota is one of the few school districts that doesn’t provide any certified media specialists for its libraries.

Media specialists were dropped from elementary schools in 2009, and all media specialists for middle and high schools were dropped in 2013. According to Sarasota School Board Chair Jane Goodwin and Program Manager of Library Materials & Library Services Rob Manoogian, all workers within Sarasota school libraries are aides without degreed research backgrounds or media certifications. Library aides run daily book circulation and inventory. However, these workers are unequipped in teaching media literacy.

As far as online resources, most high schools don’t have access to a multitude of filtered online databases. For Sarasota schools, students can access WorldBookOnline and GALE. For Pine View, JSTOR is a school-paid online database accessible to students. Lastly, AP students can additionally utilize EBSCO, a database accessed through APClassroom.

Whether these resources meet the need of student research and classroom curriculum is left to question. For instance, students within the AP Capstone program are required to conduct intensive individual and group research. The program has increased its numbers from 12 to 43 total students since 2018. AP Research student twelfth-grader Andrea Brokate Castillo explained her challenges in consolidating digital research.

“My research project is about teachers’ observations of gifted immigrant students’ performance and engagement in class... The [database] they give us is EBSCO, but I don’t use EBSCO because it has absolutely nothing on what I’m doing,” Brokate Castillo said.

Media specialists teach foundational media literacy skills to students of all grade levels, such as distinguishing the reliability of sources or navigating search engines. According to New College of Florida’s Interim Dean and Associate Librarian, Helene Gold, the lack of media specialists and K-12 media literacy curriculum in Sarasota’s schools is concerning.

“It’s hugely problematic, because the fact that you don’t have access to scholarly databases to be able to have a foundation of how to navigate the information landscape at that level — it does put students at a disadvantage because when you arrive at college, you don’t have a foundation. It’s multi-layered. Databases are just one part of the problem; the other part of the problem is do you have a librarian?” Gold said.

In Pinellas County, media specialists are continually funded for K-12 schools. Program Coordinator for Library Media at Pinellas Bronwyn McCarthy explained that teaching media literacy skills are crucial, having worked as a librarian and an English Language Arts (ELA) teacher at Carwise Middle.

“Middle school is the bridge between the skills and the concepts that are taught that are related to library soft skills, like the checking out of books, why we do self-selection, but then it’s also that I have to prepare students for our high school competitive programs,” McCarthy said.

Goodwin said that the decision to drop certified media specialists was the result of an economic recession. Since then, the board hasn’t considered reinstating media specialists.

When it comes to in-school research, Brokate Castillo suggests that the lack of online research accessibility and media specialists may be too big of an issue at large.

“You’re asking who’s to blame. Do we say it’s the school for not having more access to databases? Is it me for picking a niche area? Maybe. Is it the wider field of academia for essentially gatekeeping all these articles and research? I don’t know,” Brokate Castillo said.

Introducing the new paraprofessional PE aide

by Sarah Hassan
Asst. Editor-in-Chief

Sporting bright clothing and a big smile, campus aide Patricia Morgerson has been promoted to the position of Paraprofessional Physical Education aide, a title previously held by Lenny Gross. She first came to Pine View in 2018 as a monitorial aide due to the campus' close proximity to her house, and has stayed with the school since.

Morgerson was born in Hanover, New Jersey, where she lived until moving to Florida her junior year, attending Venice High School. The transition was rough, but during the summer transitioning to senior year, she gained new friends and "never wanted it to end."

After working in banking and with the Florida Power Line for 10 years each, Morgerson expanded her expertise by attending medical transcription classes at Sarasota County Technical Institute (SCT). After graduating the class, she was called back to teach it at night for around a decade.

With this adept skill in medical

transcription, a close friend's husband, Dr. Chris Swain, proposed an idea to her about opening the current medical company known as O.B. Hospitalist Group.

Morgerson recalls the conversation in 2007, when he first offered the idea.

As an executive assistant and medical transcriptionist, Morgerson helped with many sectors of the company, such as working within human resources and scheduling doctors to the hospitals. She worked from her home and traveled to places like Greenville, South Carolina, where she remembers the beautiful scenery and leaves.

Morgerson liked to be reliable for the doctors' part of the group, something she said is similarly needed as a Pine View aide.

Swain eventually retired and Morgerson followed after.



PHOTO BY SARAH HASSAN

After hearing about a job posting at Pine View, Morgerson decided to apply. She started out as a substitute for two months, and became an aide after going through job interviews.

"[Pine View is] very warm and welcoming, even the interview process," Morgerson said.

"I was like, 'I was meant to be here.' I just got a good feeling about this place."

After being hired, monitorial aide Carmen Elliott helped mentor Morgerson. The two developed a strong bond, enjoying the day together by "goofing off," according to Elliott. In contrast to the fun side of the job, Elliott remembers a moment where Morgerson took action during a serious situation.

"A student had a seizure, and she jumped into action right away," Elliott said. "It was a very scary moment. She

helped us with the situation. She was very calm, and it was awesome to see her that way."

With the school community similar to a family, Morgerson described Gross' departure as a shock. The two had a good friendship, and she still misses his presence.

At home, Morgerson loves to listen to music all the time and loves to dance. She has a 15-year-old daughter who keeps her on her feet.

"It's never a dull moment...She wanted to plan a Christmas party, so we got two gingerbread houses and cookies," Morgerson said. "They wanted to make cookies and watch movies and then last minute, it wasn't fruitful, so now I have two gingerbread houses."

Over the course of her three years at Pine View, Morgerson describes the working environment as welcoming.

"The staff are just as nice as can be. Everybody helps each other, and we work as a team," Morgerson said. "That makes a good working environment. That makes everything enjoyable."

Upcoming South County schools aim to reduce overcrowding

by Sarah Catalano
Copy Editor

Twenty years after the opening of Sarasota County's newest high school, North Port High, the county has revealed plans to build three new schools in the next decade, including a high school in Wellen Park and two K-8 schools. These projects aim to ease overcrowding in existing South County schools: Laurel Nokomis, Venice High, and Taylor Ranch Elementary.

How has running over capacity affected local schools, and what could these projects mean for Pine View?

Pine View world language teacher Dean Ball said that during his time at Venice High, some of his classes would average around 30 to 33 students in a classroom designed for 20.

When Ball was at Venice High, some teachers would travel between rooms, taking advantage of available classroom space by teaching in empty classrooms during other teacher's planning periods. Since he began teaching at Pine View in 2020, Venice High has

gained additional portables to help ease the strain.

According to the Herald Tribune, Venice High is running over capacity by nearly 300 students.

In addition to strain on teachers, the crowding has adverse effects on school traffic as parents pile up to drop off students at a single location, and on pedestrian traffic as students travel between classes.

While an alternate option for South County families might relieve overcrowding, the population is rising quickly. In Sarasota County, population rose by 14.4 percent between 2010 and 2020, nearly double the national rate of 7.4 percent growth. In Manatee County, the population increased by 23.8 percent. Wellen Park, the location of two of the new schools, ranked as the fourth best-selling master-planned community in the country this year.

While plans for gifted, IB, or AP programs in the new schools have not yet been announced, the increase in potential high schools could impact

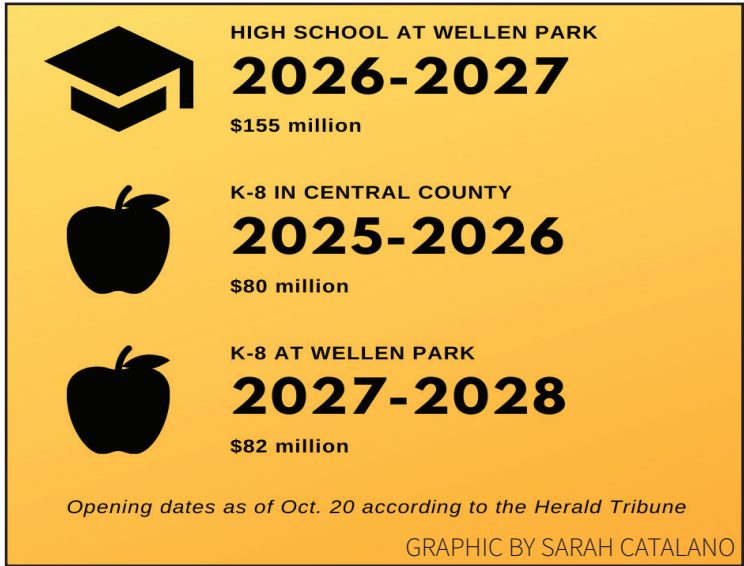
enrollment in Sarasota schools for families living on the outer edges of the county — for Pine View students living in Venice, North Port, and north Sarasota, the drive can majorly affect their schedules.

A survey of 155 high schoolers showed that 70.8 percent of students with a commute time greater than 30 minutes thought their free time was moderately or severely impacted by their commute.

"I don't have any free time at all most days of the week, in between the commute going home and then coming back for rowing practices," twelfth-grader Rithvik Kamarajugadda, who lives in North Port, said.

Having turned 17 in September of this year, Kamarajugadda said his schedule prevented him from having the time to learn how to drive — between school, practices, and summer volunteer work, the hours piled up.

While Kamarajugadda, as a twelfth-grader, is already committed to Pine View, he said that a gifted program closer to home



might have swayed his decision as an eighth-grade student.

"It could open up a lot of doors for having a social life outside of school, and extracurriculars which would probably make things a lot better," he said. "If I was in middle school transitioning to high school and I saw a gifted program closer to me, I probably would have moved to that one."

On the same survey, 75.6 percent of students within 20 minutes of Pine View indicated they were likely to stay enrolled at Pine View even if a closer, quality gifted school had been available during their transition to high school. Students more than 30 minutes away were split 50-50 between a theoretical closer school and Pine View.

Many parents are not able to drive students to school. Pine View parent Linda Wegrzynek identified this issue in 2019 and began sharing her own solution — a 14-seat van that leaves the Wegrzynek house at 6:30 each morning, bussing high school students to Osprey to meet the early Pine View start time.

Linda Wegrzynek's daughter, eleventh-grader Kara Wegrzynek, takes the van service to school and rides the North Port school bus, which leaves Pine View at 1:45, back home.

"It's hard for me to take tests if I miss school, because I don't get the full period," We-

gerzynek said. "I have to ask my sixth period teacher, 'Can I go to this class early?'"

Currently, the van service is slightly below full capacity, with three empty seats. Families pay \$5 daily for their students to ride, the money paying for expenses like gas and the driver's salary. With most of the current riders being juniors or seniors, Wegrzynek said the number of people may not be worth the expense in a few years.

Unlike Sarasota, North Port only has one districted public school. Since there is no gifted program available, Wegrzynek added that "any gifted students are far more likely to come here."

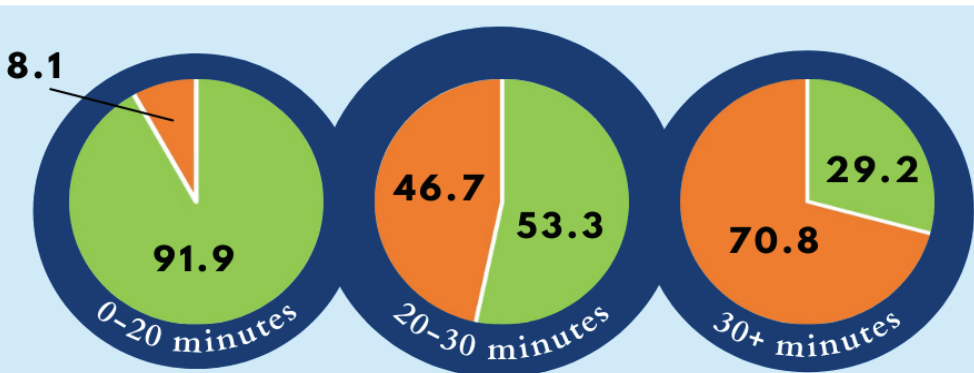
The county is now facing a new challenge as the price of construction materials — in high demand due to the recent increase in residential building — began to rise. Overall building material prices increased 19.4% from August 2020 to August 2021, according to one report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In a November school board briefing, a county operations team estimated that the cost of building the three new schools had increased from the original estimate by \$87 million.

The high school at Wellen Park is set to start construction in summer of 2022.

How much does your commute to school affect your schedule/free time?

Survey of 155 Pine View students grades 9-12

- little to none
- moderately to severely



BY COMMUTE TIME

GRAPHIC BY SARAH CATALANO

Refurbishing the Pine View Garden



LEFT TO RIGHT: Students, Connor Lafo, Laura Gayre, Sahil Agarwal, and parent volunteer Lesley Sachs stand for a group photo in the blossoming Pine View Garden. All four have played a major role in the refurbishing.

PHOTOS BY ISABELLA KULAWIK

by Shelby Brann and Isabella Kulawik

Web Asst. Editor & SciTech Editor

Across the concrete sidewalks and bright blue awnings of Pine View School, lies the beginnings of a lush oasis. Wooden boxes filled with rich soil hold ravishing radish sprouts, and cucumber vines start their climb up long strings as students run with hoses and gardening shears. This is the new emerging Pine View Garden. Under the care of parent volunteer Lesley Sachs and the Garden Club, the PV Garden sees a new light.

Though the Garden has long been a part of Pine View's campus, in the past couple of years it was not well maintained.

"When we came in, and when I came in, in September — after the visitor moratorium was lifted — it was all completely overgrown and there was no organic matter in the soil whatsoever," Sachs, the facilitator of the Garden said.

She went on to explain that much of the gardening done at Pine View has been affected by local soil. The Florida sand drains the soil of nutrients and is easily washed away by rain.

To counteract the problem, the first thing the Garden workers did was solarizing and adding organic matter to the dry soil of the Garden. They put down black tarps and raised the temperature of this area to about 130° F to kill the layer of unhealthy organic matter that was already there. This stack of vegetation and roots was the first step in a long process of building the soil back from practically nothing. Above this layer, wet cardboard compacts the weeds and keeps them from growing back. Then comes peat moss, compost, soil, and renders.

"And so from where we had weeds, we now have four layers of organic materi-

al added to the soil, without adding any chemicals, without pulling any weeds, without using any machinery, at relatively low cost," Sachs said.

The Pine View Garden is open every day of the week for a set number of hours. The Garden enjoys a large variety of caretakers, most of which are students from all different grade levels and backgrounds. When Sachs first came, she put down rules and a specific order of work ethic that has helped replenish the Garden. For each day, there are task



A cucumber grows on a vine in the garden. Many plants are flourishing in the new soil.

lists that tell the students what to do.

"The entire goal is that the students are learning skills. I will guide them, but ultimately it's their garden," Sachs said.

The Garden Club, sponsored by teacher Roma Jagdish, has also had a major impact on the Garden. The presidents, twelfth-graders Sahil Agarwal, Laura Gayre, and Connor Lafo have worked with Sachs and Assistant Principal Melissa Abela to make the Garden what it is today. They were inspired by working in the SCIP program at the FabLab, where they planted microforests at Nathan Benderson Park. These forests can help reduce the affects of climate change and preserve native plants.

"Creative thinking in ecology really fascinates me. How can we preserve beautiful ecosystems? How can we preserve the bald cypress? How can we preserve a ton of things? And, I just, I love all that," Lafo said.

Using science and their prior experience they continue to nourish the Garden and face the challenges every gardener has; rabbits have been a common visitor and structures have been built from wood and chicken wire to keep them away from the plants. By building barricades, the club is still able to maintain one of their main goals, ecological diversity.

"We respect all life in this garden — that's I think Lesley's

third rule — like any bugs that are eating leaves, just leave it be because more harm will be done by adding fertilizers and insect repellant. That'll do more harm than just letting the bug do it's thing," Agarwal said.

The Garden has become a popular place of learning for eighth grade science classes. Activities such as testing the pH levels of the soil and checking for chemicals such as potassium and phosphorous have become commonplace. Students have experienced emotional growth working in the Garden, as well.

"It's hard to understand until you do it, it's hard to explain, but putting something in the ground and really caring for it and watching it come out of the ground . . . it's like your child, like you get so freaked out over the smallest thing. And I think it teaches you so much about just being responsible," Gayre said.

Through the process, a stable foundation has been made for the Garden's future, Sachs has a five-year plan and hopes to eventually introduce agricultural science into Pine View's curriculum. As things continue to change and the Garden expands to where Portable 1 is, the message still remains clear. Everyone is welcome to become a part of the Garden.

"Show an interest, appear, and you're in the club," Agarwal said.



Tenth-grader Addision Stewart works in the Garden. She and other students come to help contribute.

When Pigs Fly — Or Give You Their Kidney

by Lily Quartermaine
Entertainment Editor

In N.Y.U Langone Health, New York City, A group of experienced surgeons make a revolutionary scientific breakthrough. Which could change the course of medical research forever and potentially resolve one of the greatest medical dilemmas. The catalyst?

A pig kidney.

As of now, there are currently over 100,000 Americans on a waiting list for an organ. Twelve of these people die every day. In Europe, a new person is added to the organ waiting list every ten minutes. Long story short, we have a big problem; too many humans and not enough human parts.

Currently, all eyes are on the pig when it comes to xenotransplantation, or "any procedure that involves the transplantation, implantation or infusion into a human recipient of cells, tissues or organs from a nonhuman animal source," as defined by the FDA.

Typically, we see the pig as something gross. It eats trash, grovels in the dirt, and is used for food. We, as humans, are simply not emotionally attached to pigs and rats as much as, say, a dog, which makes it easier to justify using them for science. Plus, pork is the most popular meat eaten in America, as shown by supermarketnews.com.

But there is more to the reason that we use pigs than just a lack of emotional connection. Realistically, there is no way to put a static percentage on just how many genetic traits we share with the pig, although scientists estimate it is a shockingly large number, hence, why they are so often used for medical transplants in humans. The pig, whether you find it creepy or not, is anatomically similar to humans.

That's why, for 54 hours, surgeons studied the effects of using a kidney on a brain-dead patient (who had consented prior) And it worked. While we still have a long way to go in terms of studying the organs of the *Sus Domesticus*, this is the first step in an incredible line of discoveries.

However, with the topic of using animals for medical research, the same ethical dilemma always arises out of the natural human instinct to protect the world around us. This conversation behind using pigs for science is something that has been debated for cen-

turies, ever since Erasistratus used them to investigate breathing in Ancient Greece.

The argument persists that pigs are much more than just a resource. Despite the massive contributions that pigs make to the medical world, such as insulin medication, the mindset persists that they are worth more, mostly due to their high intelligence levels.

"Pigs have the cognitive ability to be quite sophisticated. Even more-so than dogs and certainly three-year olds. Pigs can play video games, and when given the choice, they have indicated temperature preferences in their surroundings," said Dr. Donald Broom, a Cambridge University professor and a former scientific adviser to the Council of Europe in an article published by PETA.

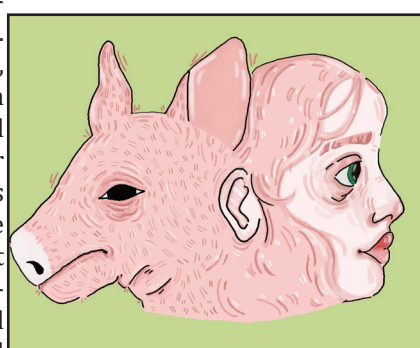
The use of pigs in research not only spans the medical world, but also exists right here on Pine View's campus. During Pine View's Anatomy and Physiology course taught by Dr. Jessica Patella, students undergo a series of dissections on a dead fetal pig. Eleventh grader Lauren Brotherton, an aspiring medical student, shared some insight on the enlightening project.

"I really liked the dissection. It gave me a better understanding of the anatomy we were already learning ... I felt like it was fun because I got to interact with my group members and figure things out on our own because our pig had things that weren't the exact same as the [instruction] video," Brotherton said. "It was a really fun challenge to see it firsthand."

When asked if the actual presence of the pig was useful to the project, Brotherton defended the usage of the animal.

"It was super helpful to have the actual animal and have us actually do [the dissection]. It gave a lot of people, myself included, a better understanding and a better experience, a better visual aid," Brotherton said. "It was better to identify these things on my own."

Despite the many opinions circulating around the usage of the pig for scientific research, it is impossible not to acknowledge the medical benefits that it has given us. For now, however, the dilemma behind the science pig remains just that: a dilemma.



GRAPHIC BY LILY QUARTERMAINE

Eleventh-Grader puts ‘tu’ and ‘tu’ together

by Kai Sprunger
Match Asst. Editor-In-Chief

The theater is nearly filled to capacity with restless people whispering amongst themselves, eager to watch the performance of “The Nutcracker.” A hush falls across the audience as the curtains are slowly drawn, revealing several dancers mimicking snowflakes. The dancers step on the tips of their pointe shoes and spin around gracefully to the light waltz. The stage light focuses on them, illuminating the several shimmering rhinestones that cover their soft silver dresses.

One of these ballet dancers is eleventh-grader Gigi Gregory, who has practiced up to 35 hours per week for this. No one in the admiring audience would ever suspect her humble beginnings in dance — a Jumperoo baby toy.

Gregory has been dancing since she was four. Before joining the Sarasota Cuban Ballet School, Gregory would dance on and off at the YMCA. Eventually, when she turned 11, she joined the ballet school, and has practiced and performed there ever since.

Since Gregory was very young when she started, it was her mother who chose to put her in ballet.

“Apparently, my mom used to say that I would jump around in [the Jumperoo] all the time,

like every day, and she couldn’t get me to get out of it,” Gregory said. “She used to say that I looked really graceful, so she decided to put me into ballet.”

One of the performances the Sarasota Cuban Ballet School puts on is “The Nutcracker,” which they perform annually every December. The show is quite popular, and this year’s tickets for the performances on December 3 and December 4 were sold out a month before opening night. For 2021’s performance of “The Nutcracker,” Gregory performed in the “Waltz of the Snowflakes,” “Arabian Coffee,” “Spanish Chocolate,” and in

“Waltz of the Flowers.” Personally, she found that “Arabian Coffee” was her favorite dance that she performed in.

“It’s just a really interesting dance — it’s not like classical ballet, it’s got more of a twist on it. It’s really interesting. It’s really fun to perform, and I love the music, so that’s probably my favorite,” Gregory said.

In “Arabian Coffee,” her friend Carla Puentes, an eleventh-grader at Braden River, performed along with her, creating many memories and making the performance more fun. During practice, the two would take photos of each other in their costumes. Since Gregory and Puentes are similar in height, they are in many of the same dances together.

“We’re both the tall girls in our level, so we get put together a lot. We’re always doing choreography together, like we’re in ‘Arabian’ together in ‘The Nutcracker,’ and ‘Arabian’ is both of our favorite dances,” Gregory said.

Not only do some of her friends perform in The Nutcracker alongside her, but Gregory’s friends also come

to watch the show. Eleventh-grader Daria Tiubin, one of Gregory’s friends, came to watch the performance when they were both in eighth grade.

“It was really cool to watch — it was professional, definitely, and the place where it was was very fancy,” Tiubin said, remembering the ballet.

The effortless and professional look of “The Nutcracker” is in part due to the expertise of the ballet dancers; however, it takes many hours and lots of effort to perfect it. Gregory goes to ballet class Mondays through

Thursdays from 2:00-8:00 p.m., Fridays 2:00-6:00 p.m., and Saturdays 10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. The long hours of ballet leave her less time to study, to do homework, to sleep and to have free time. As a result, Gregory has learned about the virtue of dedication and organization.

“It’s definitely taught me time management — that’s been a big influence, but also perseverance, too. Just because it’s so physically demanding, and it’s just a lot of hard work, and somehow I’ve managed to deal with all of that,” Gregory said.

Despite the challenges, Gregory feels that ballet is worth the work. She finds that it is very beautiful and relieving when she performs after the long hours of practice leading up to it.

“It’s a really exhilarating experience to be on stage, and finally let it all out,” Gregory said.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF GIGI GREGORY. Gregory practices some staple Ballet moves in preparation for her dance in “The Nutcracker.”

The Vibrant World of Bollywood

by Jada Davidson
Sports Editor

The tables and chairs have been cleared, as a performer enters the cleared floor. The stage is set, and the lights are dim. Tension and suspense are in the air as someone hits a switch, and solemn, slow notes fill the air. The dancer in the middle of the floor, a young and talented dancer none other than ninth-grader Shalini Nair, begins to sway and rhythmically move to the music.

Without warning, the slow and quiet notes turn to fast paced and upbeat tones as Nair makes up her own moves — twisting, turning, and leaping around with the unpredictable changes in the music’s notes and fast pace. The music? Bollywood!

Bollywood — you’ve heard the word and may or may not know what it means. For those that don’t know, Nair has the answer.

“Bollywood started with a unique style of upbeat music, which originated in northeastern India. The actual dancing began in India, as a way to celebrate Diwali. Diwali, the festival of light, is a celebration of the Indian New Year. It happens every spring or winter break. Really, though, Bollywood is seen at Indian festivals and holidays. If you ask anyone that is from India, they’ll be able to tell you what

Bollywood is. It’s an integral part of their culture.”

Nair has been practicing for seven years, since 2014. She says her greatest influence and inspiration to begin Bollywood dancing is her sister, Pine View alumna Meera Nair, who has been attending the University of Florida and is on the school’s Bollywood dance team. The sisters have been dancing together for as long as they can remember and practice whenever they can.

Both sisters began dancing at age six. While their first experiences were to classical music, they share an appreciation of the freedom involved in Bollywood. Nair transitioned from classical to Bollywood at age 10.

“We soon found that Bollywood is much more freestyle and not so strict on dance movement as classical is.

Bollywood dance always tells a story, and each dance usually describes the romance of a guy and a girl,” Nair said. “We mainly used facial expressions to engage with the audience in the dance that we were doing.”

For formal dances, the sisters don a skirt, blouse, and shawl. In more casual settings, they dance in a blouse with tights or leggings.

gings.

When she is not at Pine View, Nair practices for one to two hours each day at home, looking at videos online to try out different ways of the dance; she even choreographs some of her own dances using a mix of the dances in the videos she finds online and her creative mind.

For Nair, Bollywood dancing is a way of entertainment and a source of self-reflection.

“Bollywood dancing is a lot like how you’d dance at a party. It’s upbeat, and it’s easy to learn because it doesn’t have any specific steps and ways of movement,” Nair said. “It’s honestly a freestyle dance, and it’s a lot of fun.”

When Nair is not dancing for the fun of it, she is practicing and improving to present herself at the Pine View Variety Show.

When asked about it, Nair can’t help but smile when she replies with, “It’s so much

fun to dance, and I really enjoy it. It makes me feel really good, and I’ve come a long way from when I first started.”

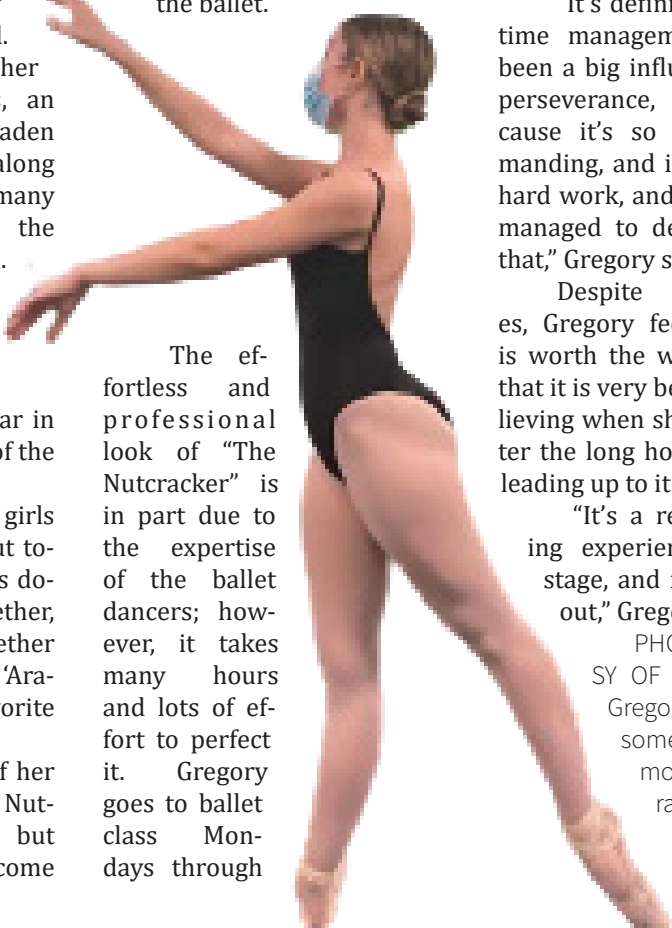
Meera Nair exhales as she recalls watching her sibling dance for the first time.

“The first time I saw Shalini dance, she was performing, and extremely nervous although she practiced a lot beforehand. She knew her steps, and was visibly shaky,” Meera said. “It was clear to me that she wasn’t enjoying performing because she was so focused on the dance, but she grew a lot since then. But, when I first started, I was like that, too. It’s normal for a dancer to be nervous and shaky when they first start.”

Nair’s talent has won her the respect and recognition of her older sister and the Pine View Variety Show judges. Although she doesn’t dance for large audiences, Nair is always improving her dancing abilities and having fun while at it.

Her audience may be small, and she has room to grow, but she has big plans for herself and her future in Bollywood dancing.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHALINI NAIR. Ninth-grader Shalini Nair (right) and her sister, Pine View alumna Meera Nair (left), pose in front of a green screen before performing at Bollywood Night (sponsored by BuildOn) in the fall of 2019.



The Magic Of Studio Ghibli

by Isabella Gaskill
Copy Editor

Founded in 1985, Studio Ghibli spent the last 36 years inviting its viewers into fantastical worlds where boys turn into dragons, witches run delivery services, animals can speak, and so much more.

Headquartered in Tokyo, five of their films have been nominated for Academy Awards, with "Spirited Away" winning in 2003. They've also won the Japan Academy Prize for Animation of the Year four times, in addition to numerous Animage Grand Prix awards.

Ghibli's success has made Hayao Miyazaki, animator and cofounder, one of the most accomplished filmmakers in the history of animation. Almost every film this studio has produced has received massive acclaim, so what has made this small studio so successful?

One of the key characteristics of Ghibli's animation is the attention to detail. To this day, each frame is hand-drawn in a 2D style, and Miyazaki only allows very minimal additions of CGI to his art. His new film, "How Do You Live?" still had three years of animation left as of May 2020, with a team of 60 animators producing around one minute of animation each month. The painstaking work pays off; each frame looks like

a work of art, and Ghibli's style has left a lasting impression on the artists everywhere. It only takes a quick Google search to find heaps of fanart inspired by the films.

Outside of the visual appeal are the stories themselves. Miyazaki's tales are nothing short of fantastical, but he takes the time to ground each story in a realistic and tactile world. For every unbelievable aspect of the story, there is an ordinary one to counteract it. Take, for example, "Howl's Moving Castle." Most of the story is set in a large, mechanical castle that moves across the countryside, fueled by a fire demon named Calcifer. But what makes this setting feel real are the pieces of normal life that are interspersed throughout the film. Scenes of the main characters cleaning the house or visiting the city to buy groceries allow the viewer to believe that this is the world that the characters actually live in.

The characters themselves are masterfully crafted, offering a depth that is rarely seen in other animated movies. The films mostly feature female protagonists, and those with male leads still feature a plethora of strong female characters. The protagonists have strong personalities and their flaws are often clearly conveyed to the viewer, a decision that humanizes the characters and gives them the chance to grow. Chihiro from "Spirited Away" starts as a whiney kid moving to a new city, which makes her transformation into a

true heroine that much more impactful.

"Many of my movies have strong female leads — brave, self-sufficient girls that don't think twice about fighting for what they believe with all their heart. They'll need a friend, or a supporter, but never a savior. Any woman is just as capable of being a hero as any man," Miyazaki once said.

Unlike many movies, Ghibli also rarely focuses on romance as the main type of relationship. Movies like "Kiki's Delivery Service" and "Ponyo" focus heavily on the love between parents and their children, while a film like "Princess Mononoke" features friendships forged in the fires of violence and war. When it comes to character archetypes and relationships, Ghibli has left few unexplored.

Another seemingly minor feature of Ghibli's films is the attention paid to food. There are dozens of videos and websites dedicated to recreating and trying meals from the films. A phrase as sim-

ple as "the ramen from "Ponyo" or "the rice balls from "Spirited Away" conjures a vivid image in any Ghibli fan's head.

There are a lot of small details that make Studio Ghibli one of the most successful animation studios. It all culminates in one overarching theme — the romanticization of the mundane. Miyazaki takes everyday tasks and elevates them to art. These movies portray everyday tasks like cooking and cleaning as intentional and important. After seeing a Ghibli film, it's hard not to imagine yourself as a starry-eyed protagonist, preparing breakfast before setting out on an adventure.

Miyazaki invites each of his viewers into the worlds he creates, with the purpose of showing them the beauty of life: "I would like to make a film to tell children 'it's good to be alive.'"

GRAPHIC BY LILY QUARTERMAINE

For a student's unique perspective on growing up with Studio Ghibli, scan this QR code or visit www.PVTorch.com



Dabbert Art Gallery : A Review

by Joanna Malvas
Managing Editor

Along downtown's Palm Avenue, one can find a multitude of picturesque small businesses, including the iconic Dabbert Gallery. Founded and run by married artists David and Patricia Dabbert, the gallery displays an intriguing collection of fine art and sculpture.

When I came through the doors of this gallery, I was immediately greeted by smooth jazz mood music, marbled floors and studio lights shining upon colorful paintings of all sorts. At the back of the gallery, Pat Dabbert was stationed in a majestic office space designed by her husband, dressed in an elegant beige suit that matched the walls of her space. Before delving into a walkthrough of the gallery, I interviewed Dabbert to hear the gallery's origin story.

The gallery was established 19 years ago, and has featured over 30 artists over the years. While other galleries are often founded by business owners of diverging professions, the Dabbert Gallery was born from authentic passion and expertise, as Pat and David Dabbert both graduated college with degrees in Fine Art. The couple has exhibited their por-

celain art in over 400 art shows, creating wall sculptures and gorgeous, unorthodox vessels.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the biggest



challenges for the Dabberts was having to figure out how to accommodate reopening the gallery.

"We were closed for about three or four months... And we always ask everybody to still wear masks. And we just are very careful. And we have air filters," Pat Dabbert said.

One of the first featured artists that set the gallery on solid footing was Barbara Krupp, a close friend of the Dabberts.

"I started out [painting] when I was 33, and I was an x-ray technician before that. So I decided I just wanted to be an artist, quit my job... And I never went back. So it's been a long journey," Krupp said.

Krupp's work is regularly displayed at the gallery, and for this month, Krupp's 62 by 85 inch canvas of abstract art, entitled "Cursive Small 'a,'" hangs on a crimson red wall, illuminating rich and curly strokes of blue and purple.

"I just kept changing my style. And I still do. So the bright colors — I love bright colors. I'm happy. I basically paint what I'm feeling... As far as wanting to know when to paint, I could paint every hour of every day all day long. So, I never have to be in the mood. I never have to think about it," Krupp said.

Through the Dabberts, Krupp was able to sell over 50 paintings to the University of Tampa to be displayed within the Graduate and Health Studies building.

Pointing at a photo of the building, Pat Dabbert said, "This is a Graduate Health Study building. From then on, they were first just going to do one floor, two floors. And then, pretty soon it turned into all six floors; just a wonderful expe-

rience. Then, Barbara did two great big commissions: 'Breath of Immortality' and 'The Mind of Blue.'"

To Krupp, "Breath of Immortality" was one of the best pieces she had ever painted.

"It's very red and it's all done with the colors of the University of Tampa. It's abstract, but being in the Health building, I put in spines, hearts, kidneys, birth canals, twins," Krupp said.

Other works featured in

interstellar and nebula-themed works of Gustavo Paris, one of the gallery's more recent artists from Venezuela. Sculptures are strategically scattered around the area on podiums, such as George Paxton's "Prelude to a Kiss," an intriguingly balanced statue of a metallic woman on a swing. Seemingly, the Dabberts leave a classy and avant-garde touch with their selection, as they display a wide spectrum of art.

Overall, the gallery's elegant interior design and fascinating array of paintings are definitely worth your time on a Palm Avenue afternoon stroll. The gallery sheds light upon meaningful artistry, leaving each visitor's mind fulfilled as they leave its doors. Perhaps, one of the reasons why the gallery's vibe is so refreshing may be because of the authentic passion for art exuded by its owners.

When Dabbert was asked about the best aspect of running a gallery, she simply answered, "You do something you enjoy. It's not like it's a chore to come every day. We love it."

Rating: 5/5 Torches
PHOTOS BY JOANNA MALVAS
Photos of some of the beautifully crafted pieces featured at the Dabbert Art Gallery.



Best friends reflect on growth and dedication

by Jiayi Zhu
Match Layout Artist

Every year, twelfth-graders Logan Schultz and Ryan Hunek participate in a Venice Theatre classic: “A Christmas Carol.” After years of working alongside each other on theatrical productions, the only acting is in their characters, not their friendship. Having performed in the variety show together twice, the two share a music account on Instagram where they record covers and songs they have written together. In this interview, we asked them to look back on the distance they’ve traveled and forward to the future.

How did you first get involved in theater?

Ryan Hunek: Well, my aunt Melissa Hunek ... was involved in theater and specifically at Venice for a while. She and my grandpa both kind of nudged me to do [“A Christmas Carol”] in second grade, and that was the first show I auditioned for. And since then, I’ve been doing stuff at the theater.

Logan Schultz: My mom actually works at Venice Theater, she’s the publications director. So, I’ve been doing classes there since I can remember. And I was in first grade when I was told to do “Christmas Carol”.

What is the community like at Venice Theatre, and how would you describe your connection with it?

RH: It’s great. Everyone there has always been really, really welcoming. I wouldn’t still be there after so many years if they weren’t. It is a lot like a family. I’m sure it’s more like that with Logan because his mom works there. Like, coming back [after COVID two years later] feels almost like coming home. It’s a really nice feeling.

LS: I essentially grew up there. When I was really young, I’d spend full summers there just in the building running around and stuff ... Their priority is always to make sure that everyone feels welcomed and that everyone’s actively participating. It’s also just extended out because you forge these connections with people that expand far beyond what you do there ... [Ryan and I] both started here in Pine View in sixth grade. He was one of the only people I even knew.

Doing “Christmas Carol” again but moving up on the cast list — what is that like?

RH: It’s a good way to gauge how far we’ve grown, like how much older we are ... There are several of us who could walk on stage and play any role. You told us what role to play, we could just do it.

Do you have any insight to offer on the relationship



Ryan Hunek (left) and Logan Schutz (right) perform a guitar and vocals duet at the Pine View Choir Cabaret in 2020. PHOTO COURTESY OF RYAN HUNEK

between dedication and progress in performing arts?

LS: Try things. We both started really getting into music and just trying out different instruments and things. That’s really important to find... what your niche is. And even within theater itself, sometimes you might be better at singing or dancing. I’m not great at it either. But I still enjoy it ... And I can accept that I’m not the best of these things and find something else in the vein of theater that I enjoy and might even be better at.

How has being in the theater — both performing and being part of the community — affected you and your life?

RH: I think that the specific environment at Venice [Theatre], really encourages you to be open to a wider range of ideas than you would normally be exposed to ... and then being open to new ideas, and also being able to separate your work from your emotions, and also being able to put them together when applicable ... You can’t let the way you feel interfere with how your character feels. You might have grudges on someone offstage, but when you get up there, you have to put all that aside.

LS: [Theater] does encourage you to be more in touch with yourself, your emotions, and your self assessment in general. Because you need to determine for yourself whether you think you’d be willing and able to do certain things.

Similarly, how has being friends/sharing this activity through all those years affected your life?

RH: In all honesty, at the start, we were very bitter with each other ... But I think, like I said earlier, the whole family aspect of everything and how you just feel a pull towards everyone else there ... We have a connection that other people don’t have with us ... And the same goes with any extracurricular activity, but I think the-

ater specifically because it is so welcoming. You never really feel like you’re the odd one out; it just encourages growth of relationships.

LS: The fact that we did theater together for a long time then started doing school and theater together — we have so many more common experiences than most people do ... It was just a level of comfort with people that you don’t often get. It is a lot like family, you know the other person, how they’re feeling sometimes without talking. You know, we have our disagreements — like Ryan has a hard time showing his emotion sometimes. I have a hard time not showing my emotions sometimes. Family mentality. Everyone fights. We’re like an old married couple. There’s no such thing as a perfect relationship, but I’d say it’s definitely better than most.

Knowing what you know now, what advice would you give yourself from 9 years ago?

RH: Be nice to people. Don’t put your problems on other people, ask for help, of course, if you need it. But if you’re struggling with something, and you’re frustrated, and your solution is to make someone else frustrated, as well, you’re getting nowhere. And I think I did that a lot. And now that I’ve noticed that, I feel a lot better about interacting with people.

LS: You’re never the first person to go through what you’re going through. I remember when I was younger, I would look at people that were our age [thinking], “How do they have all their stuff together? ... How are they managing all this?” And I feel like I’m having such a hard time. The odds are people are also struggling, even if you can’t tell. So just keep that in mind, and don’t feel like you are incapable just because you’re having a hard time juggling everything that you’re doing. Just chill out.

FASHION FEVER 'CLUELESS' edition



by Eva-May Elmer
Match Asst. Editor-in-Chief

Hello! It’s me again! I’m back to share my fashion opinions, this time from the movie “Clueless,” which is one of my all-time favorites. The ’90s fashion is another obsession of mine. With over 60 costume changes, Clueless curated the ’90s fashion we all know and love today, turning the decade from grunge to preppy with just one movie of complete fashion perfection.

Alicia Silverstone, the star of the movie, admits that she was initially perplexed by the costume changes in an interview with Vogue (which is totally buggin’ — come on, girl!) “I was just trying to do this job, and I was thinking, ‘Why are these clothes so important?’ But of course, I knew the clothes were important. I mean, the clothes were everything. The clothes are the star of the film,” Silverstone said.

Literally all of Cher’s monochromatic outfits make me swoon. One of these outfits is her Dolce and Gabbana yellow plaid blazer-skirt set that she wears at the beginning of the movie — Oh, D&B, how I miss your fluffy chic influence on the classy, sassy, ’90s.

In this scene, Dionne wears something similar, a black plaid blazer skirt combo with a red vest, so they’re matching in true BFF fashion — it’s fabulous. Plus, they reject some gross boys in this scene; after all, these two are based on Jane Austen characters, they have the right to be stylish and witty.

These looks are modern and timeless, as most of the costumes in the film are.

So many of the outfits are still so wearable,” Mona May, the fashion designer -

signer for the film, said in an ELLE.com interview. “You could go to Saks and Neiman and it’s all still there.”

Um, then, like, let’s go right now!

Moving on, I can’t disagree with Calvin Klein! The grip that this designer had on the ’90s was watertight — Calvin was a staple brand! Cher’s dress for her date with Christian is simple but looks lovely on her and the exchange between her and her father makes it all the

more worthwhile!

“Cher, what are you wearing?” “A dress.” “Says who?” “Calvin Klein.”

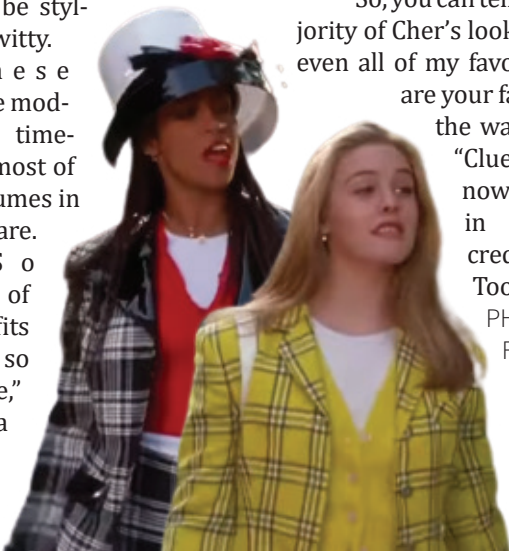
When I tell you that I adore this outfit, I wholeheartedly mean it. The pistachio green situation is to die for; it featured a basic white tee with a pistachio plaid skirt and a pistachio cardigan with fur trim on the sleeves. Cher is a fashion icon, we know this, but this stays on my mind always — this color was typically viewed as something high-end during the ’90s, featured in silk suits and modern fashion, but Cher makes it casual and cute.

This next one has a black and white diamond pattern skirt with a light blue cropped sweater vest. The diamond pattern was such a throwback — what was it with the ’90s and being obsessed with this “geeky-cute” look? Plus, can’t go wrong with long, schoolgirl socks!

So, you can tell I love a majority of Cher’s looks. This isn’t even all of my favorites. What are your favorites? By the way, go watch

“Clueless” right now and relish in Cher’s incredible style. Toodaloo!

PHOTOS FROM ©1995 Paramount Pictures. All Rights Reserved



Torch Tries Ice Skating

by Kai Sprunger
Asst. Match Editor

Vivid disco lights flickered, changing from deep blue to bright pink while music of various pop songs blasted into our ears. Conversations were difficult to understand as it was nearly impossible to hear because of this loud music. Brilliant lights dazzled our eyes and cast a colorful blue and pink hue on the ice and on the people. The Torch staff skated together, enjoying the atmosphere, while narrowly avoiding the clusters of other people ice skating.

Along with the bitter frost and the first fall of snow, ice rinks pop up all across every state where the temperatures routinely drop below freezing. People shiver, decked from head to toe in warm winter coats and fuzzy scarves, while they sip hot chocolate and ice skate together. Even though this is Florida, ice skating is still a popular winter activity. Many students have already gone ice skating this winter, and recently, the curious Torch staff decided to give it a try.

At 8:00 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 4, the Torch staff met up at Ellenton Ice and Sports Complex, excited and anxious to ice skate in the DJ public session from 8:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. In total, there were four people — sports editor Jada Davidson, humor editor Aly Zaleski, and Match Assistant Editors Eva-May Elmer and Kai Sprunger.

The Torch staff arrived at the rink and entered the never-ending line of people snaking around the building. At last, after around 15 minutes, the long line thinned, and we entered the building. Two ladies greeted us and sold us admission tickets at a price of \$15 each. We proceeded to rent ice skates and changed out of our shoes, hiding them in an obscure corner with Zaleski's jacket. We then went to the ice rink, ready to attempt ice skating.

As we stepped onto the

ice, we were met with the shock of bitterly cold air that stung our faces and bit our ankles. Elmer, Zaleski, Davidson, and I clung to the walls, filled with the overwhelming fear of falling. Our fear slowly subsided, and we broke off into pairs to ice skate.

Elmer and Zaleski got the hang of it quite quickly. They joined hands and followed everyone else, who were skating around counterclockwise in a circle. However, the last time Davidson went ice skating was when she was six years old, and I had not gone ice skating for almost three years. When Davidson and I tried to ice skate together, we immediately tripped and fell onto the ice.

Ice skating may seem flawless and perfect from far away, but it is almost impossible to mimic. The elegant figure skaters on television that twirl around, doing graceful spins on the ice rinks at the Olympics make the sport look so easy.

Unlike what is portrayed on television, my experience with ice skating was mainly hanging onto the wall for dear life. It was almost hard to watch the elementary schoolers speeding effortlessly around the ice rink, weaving between groups of people.

We were not the only ones struggling from a lack of ice skating skills — several other people were glued to the walls, too, and shuffled awkwardly on the ice along with us. The number of times Davidson and I fell were too many to count, but this did not stop us from enjoying ice skating.

"I'm kind of surprised I did not face plant [onto the ice], because I did almost fall a couple of times," Zaleski said. "I was not rocking it the whole time, but for the most part, it was an experience. I loved it, to be honest."

As the night went on, we began to get the hang of ice skating. The pattern of pushing off one foot and then



Humor Editor Aly Zaleski and Match Assistant Editor Eva-May Elmer ice skate together during the disco session at the Ellenton Ice and Sports Complex. PHOTO BY KAI SPRUNGER

gliding became clearer. While we were talking together and enjoying the music, the music abruptly halted and the blazing lines turned on, burning our eyes. Staff skated around, warning people to leave the ice rink because of the incoming Zamboni — the vehicle used to clean the ice. The Torch staff left the rink,

ourselves. Thankfully, nobody stole any of our shoes, however, we felt bad for the people who lost their shoes. The Torch staff recommends that anyone who chooses to go ice skating at a public place should not bring their favorite pair of shoes because it is possible it may be stolen.

Our feet were terribly

sore and we were all extremely exhausted; however, we found ice skating to be an enjoyable sport that brings people together. At first, ice skating was daunting and seemed impossible to master, but by the end, it became easy to skate — and even easier with friends there to cheer you on.

“I was not rocking it the whole time, but for the most part, it was an experience. I loved it, to be honest.”

Aly Zaleski,
Humor Editor

and Davidson and I decided to go to the cafeteria to buy a blue slushie and delicious hot chocolate. Afterwards, we met back up with Zaleski and Elmer and went back onto the ice rink.

Eventually it turned 10:00 p.m. and the Torch staff met up on the ice rink to take one last photo together before we left the ice rink. The lights slowly turned back on, and we all skated off the ice rink. The night had seemed to vanish so quickly — it felt as if it was 8:00 p.m. only seconds ago. After getting off the ice, we put our shoes back on and went to return the ice skates when we saw a cluster of people crowded around the shoe return place.

Apparently, while everyone was ice skating, someone stole three pairs of Air Jordans and nobody was able to find the person who stole them nor the shoes them-

GRAPHIC BY KAI SPRUNGER

TIPS FOR ICE SKATING

01 DRESS APPROPRIATELY
Wear comfortable and long socks so that your feet do not blister.

02 WATCH YOUR SURROUNDINGS
Ice skate in the correct direction so that you do not collide with anyone!

03 LACING YOUR ICE SKATES
Make sure to lace your ice skates correctly or else you can get hurt!

04 WEARING ICE SKATES
Know your shoe size before you ice skate so it gives you more time!

05 THE BARRIER
If you are a beginner, stay close to the barrier!



Before leaving Ellenton Ice and Sports Complex, the four Torch staff pose together for a photo on the ice rink. From left to right: Kai Sprunger, Jada Davidson, Eva-May Elmer, and Aly Zaleski.

PHOTO BY ALY ZALESKI

Legacy Trail extension opens



The trail, usually packed with bikers and pedestrians on weekends, experiences a quiet moment at the Sawyer Loop Road crossing. Just north of here, the trail passes the SCAT transit administration and emerges again onto the Ashton Trailhead.

by Sarah Catalano

Copy Editor

“TRAIL ENDS AHEAD,” read once-bold white letters painted on the asphalt track, now worn and weathered almost to the point of illegibility by years of track shoes, skates, and bicycle tires. Fortunately, the letters no longer need to be read — the trail doesn’t end for another three miles, soon to be six.

Last month, the Sarasota Legacy Trail extension north to Bahia Vista street officially opened. The ceremony marked a big step forward in the 65-million-dollar construction project

voted on by Sarasota County citizens in 2018, and the beginning of a series of expansions to the historic trail.

Dotted with tortoise burrows and enclosed in trees, the 19.6-mile trail is a pedestrian-oriented route set to take walkers, runners, bikers and skaters across the entire county. Determined pedestrians can now make the trek from the edges of downtown Sarasota all the way to Venice.

Reaching the historic Venice Train Depot, the south portion of the trail feeds into the Venetian Waterway Park, with two wide parallel sidewalks running

on either side of the Venetian Canal. Following the west side of the track, the park eventually emerges onto Caspersen Beach.

The trail follows former train tracks in the Seminole Gulf Railway Corridor. Staring in the 1910s, the railway went on to support the Venice area for eight decades, with passengers including cadets and faculty of the Kentucky Military Institute, Dr. Albee’s Florida Medical Center, and the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus train. The converted walking trail opened in 2008 after the tracks were purchase by

Sarasota County.

Along Segments 1 and 2, the newest portions of the trail, new features expand the Trail from a simple path to community-focused park: The Clark intersection features a bench made from recycled Tervis Tumbler cups, in keeping with the Friends of the Legacy Trail’s emphasis on eco-friendly enjoyment of the outdoors. Further north, the Ashton Trailhead, which was officially opened to the public Nov. 30, features restrooms, picnic benches, a bike repair station, grills, and playground equipment.

Construction is now underway for an extension from the current trail’s end at Bahia Vista street to Payne Park in 2022. This

portion, known as Segment 3, will end at Fruitville road. Additionally, plans are in place for overpasses at Clark and Bee Ridge Ridge Roads, designed by the Florida Department of Transportation, and for two new trailheads: the Sarasota Springs Trailhead, and the Pompano Trailhead, which will feature a community center and 12 pickleball courts.

With an entrance on Bay Street just a short walk from Pine View, the trail is a valuable resource for students. Whether you’re looking for a workout or just there to enjoy the scenery, the Legacy Trail is a unique feature of Sarasota and the place to be for recreation, fitness, and local wildlife appreciation.



Families enjoy the park at the trailhead on Ashton Road. The trailhead, which opened Nov. 30, features not just this park, but also bathrooms, shaded picnic tables, a bike repair station, and grills. PHOTOS BY SARAH CATALANO

BMI Basics: Not the Perfect Measure of Health

by Grace Johnson

Editor-in-Chief

The Body Mass Index, or BMI, has long been used as a standard measurement of physical health. Whether going to doctor’s appointments or taking a standard physical education class like HOPE, most Sarasota County Schools students and regional residents have their BMI calculated at some point in time.

Someone’s BMI can be calculated by dividing weight (in pounds) by height (in inches squared) and multiplying by a conversion factor of 703. According to the CDC, a BMI less than 18.5 denotes an underweight person, while 18.5-24.9 is regarded as the healthy weight range, 25-29.9 is said to be overweight, and a value of 30 or higher falls into the obese range.

Almost every doctor’s office across the country and world uses the BMI scale to detect unhealthy weight levels. Dr. Sheeba Mesghali, M.D., board certified internist

and pediatrician of Gulf Coast Medical Group explains how the measurement is used in her office.

age of body fat compared with muscle.

“Muscle weighs more than fat. Someone may appear a little bit overweight from the scale, but, in reality, could be more muscular than fat... Someone who is short and muscular might show up as 30, and someone who’s taller but with excessive fat is going to have the same BMI. It’s an unfair judgement,” Mesghali said.

This measurement does not give doctors many options when a patient is designated with an “unhealthy” weight level. After puberty, height remains relatively constant; Mesghali explains that this is why weight loss or gain is the only possible medical suggestion if a patient’s BMI is not in the 18.5-24.9 range.

“If I was looking at a child, and he’s kind of falling in the obese category at eight years old, I know he’s going to grow taller. We usually don’t grow as females after age

thirteen or fourteen — males, maybe into college. You really only measure and try to change the weight; you can’t make someone taller,” she said.

BMI is on the same scale, regardless of genetic differences. This can lead to misrepresentations of patients’ physical health based on ethnicity and gender.

“The BMI was formed in Scandinavian countries which means it has a lot to do with genetics or ethnic backgrounds. Europeans are usually taller and skinnier. You look at their wrist size and can tell that they have a smaller bone frame versus somebody who has thicker bone density, which causes a little excess weight,” Mesghali said. “It’s also very sexist because females tend to carry more weight for pregnancy and otherwise. They have more body fat versus somebody that’s more masculine or male.”

A 2019 study from Mayo Clinic Proceedings, “Comparative Relevance of Physical Fitness and Adiposity on Life Expectancy,” suggests that measuring one’s walking speed could be an adequate way to measure health at home.

“Participants re-

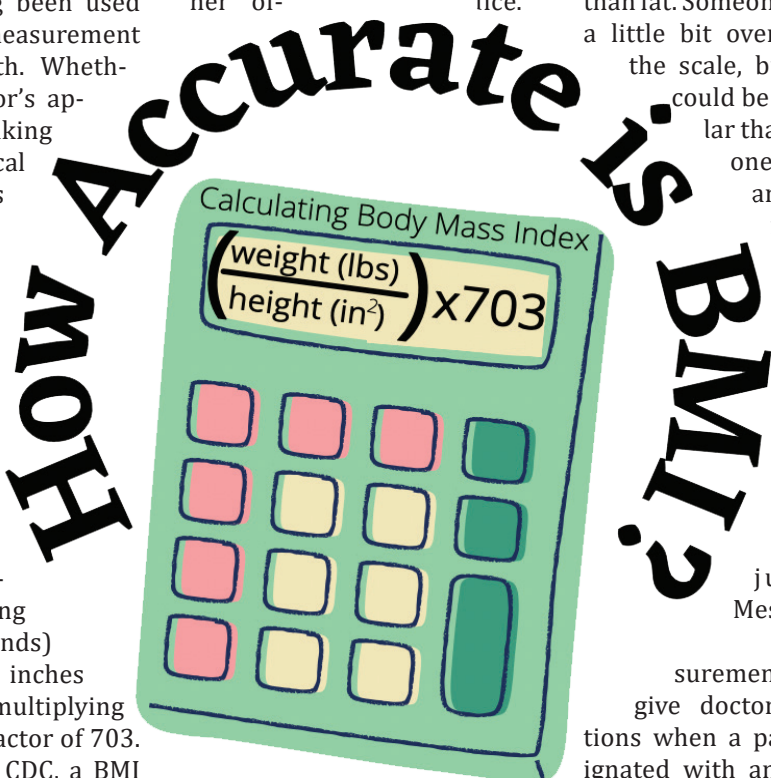
porting brisk walking pace had longer life expectancies across all levels of BMIs.. Conversely, subjects reporting slow walking pace had shorter life expectancies,” the results of the study said.

Mesghali noted that while health can be measured outside the doctor’s office in other ways, like walking speed, BMI is the most efficient and uniform measurement available for doctors.

“In the United States because we’re a melting pot of cultures, backgrounds, and genetics. Soon, they’re going to have to come up with a more accurate scale,” said Mesghali. “We can’t change heights but some sort of other criteria or maybe at the least expanding into a BMI specifically for females in a different category versus males versus children.”

Basing one’s athletic capabilities or any sort of physical value off of BMI is problematic, just like the scale itself. Dr. Mesghali pointed out that even doctors don’t rely solely on the scale; before labeling a patient’s weight as unhealthy, doctors take other labs to ensure that the BMI is guiding them properly. Often times, it isn’t. Living a healthy life style is what’s important.

GRAPHIC BY GRACE JOHNSON



A Twitter Saga



Twilight Bot

@TwilightMilestones · Nov 21, 2021

On this day 13 years ago, Twilight (2008) was released in theaters.

1.1K

21.2K

112.1K

...



daria

@aliceadmirer7 · Nov 21, 2021

13 years later, charlie is the first person to have ever been gaslit, gatekept, and girlbossed, in that order. king behavior

230

1.7K

9.6K

...



ethan

@bellaswanstan1 · Nov 21, 2021

i'm extremely embarrassed for anyone who hasn't cultured themselves by watching this cinematic masterpiece yet. this series = peak of romance, northwestern american cinema, & mythology later explored in knockoffs that fail to touch audiences in the same way. in this essay, i will

186

1.1K

8.4K

...



lily

@itsLaPushBaby · Nov 21, 2021

cough cough enlighten yourself @alysonmiz

1

2

7

...



alyson #NoTwilightZone

@alysonmiz · Nov 21, 2021

i can't believe you're making me fall to these levels, lily...here we go #twilightlivereact

1

1

4

...



alyson is (sadly) watching twilig

@alysonmi · Nov 21, 2021

if i hate this, it's your fault @itsLaPushBaby #twilightlivereact

1

1

1

...



alyson is watching twilight

@alysonmiz · Nov 21, 2021

first movie in and i'm...not hating it? maybe i should live my life with a blue filter and take ap bio next year idk...#twilightlivereact

1

1

1

...



alyson is watching new moon

@alysonmiz · Nov 21, 2021

almost fell asleep during new moon...might have to jump into the italian sunlight idk idk #twilightlivereact

1

1

1

...



alyson is watching eclipse

@alysonmiz · Nov 21, 2021

@aliceadmirer7 didn't lie—someone come save charlie. save me while you're at it because i'm afraid i've fallen down the twilight hater to reluctant fan pipeline...your fault @itsLaPushBaby #twilightlivereact

1

1

1

...



lily

@itsLaPushBaby · Nov 21, 2021

HA and you didn't want to believe me. i'm telling you, it's La Push

1

2

3

...



alyson is watching BD: part 1

@alysonmiz · Nov 22, 2021

watching breaking dawn at 4am while the sun is about to break dawn...and surprisingly not regretting it?? #twilightlivereact

1

1

3

...



alyson is watching BD: par

@itsLaPushBat · Nov 22, 2021

breaking dawn, breaking news, breaking the heart i had 12 hours ago...it's the twilight experience #twilightlivereact

1

2

5

...



alyson is watching BD: part 2

@alysonmiz · Nov 22, 2021

i don't think i'm ready for this to end...wish me luck #twilightlivereact

1

1

3

...



alyson #TwilightZone

@cullenclan · Nov 22, 2021

NO WORDS. christina perri's "a thousand years" has never hit harder #twilightreact

1

1

2

...



alyson #TwilightZone

@cullenclan · Nov 22, 2021

thank you @itsLaPushBaby @aliceadmirer7 @bellaswanstan1 i feel like a changed person. no way to describe this other than embarrassment for the person i was a day ago & disappointment in those who similarly haven't cultured themselves. #dobetter #twilightreact

1

4

27

...

GRAPHIC BY ALYSON MIZANIN

A 212 Love Story

A girl's blossoming one-sided love and a boy's daily annoyance

by Lucy Collins
Social Media Editor

Although I missed gazing at the oranges and blues that danced across the sky each morning, the time change gifted me the opportunity to start each day of class with a little bit of sunshine. This morning felt different. I shake off the strange feeling and stop for a moment to enjoy the view of the quad, the bustling students with bright eyes ready for the day as they laugh with their friends.

Suddenly, a heavy weight slams into my back and my belongings go tumbling everywhere. Stunned, I whipped around to see who the perpetrator was, but was met with a broad chest. I craned my head up and up and up and met a bored expression caressing a quietly beautiful face and bright blue eyes staring back at me.

I was just walking to class, the final peaceful moments before my teachers waste my time with busy work and lectures I will never use again, when this girl just stops in front of me. I acci-

dently bump into her and everything she was holding fell to the ground as she turns to me with death eyes. I will admit, I was confused as to why she stopped and then had the audacity to glare at me like I was the one who took a pit stop in the middle of the sidewalk. My phone fell to the ground, and I prayed my screen wasn't cracked. I go to pick it up.

This tall boy reaches down to what I can only assume a gesture of apology by helping me pick up my stuff that now litters the floor. I watch him go to grab his phone and blurt, "You don't have to do that."

She must think I'm trying to help her! That's too good. I consider myself a nice person, but I will not help this girl who clearly has not grown out of her middle school phase. I stand and look at what she dropped: a Jane

Austen novel, her phone with a horrifically bedazzled case and a large reusable Starbucks cup that is bedazzled as well. Cringe.

He takes one look at my fallen belongings and walks away. What a broody teenager! I wonder what made him like this. Maybe he needs a friend. I saw a glimpse behind that mask when he departed, as though he wanted to say something else but he couldn't. I hope to see him again.

The rest of the day, my mind keeps wandering to the boy with the blue eyes. What class is he in right now? What sort of shampoo makes his hair so silky and shiny? Is he thinking of me as much as I think about him?

The rest of the day is boring. Just as I predicted. I wonder if I should do arms or legs at the gym this afternoon. GRAPHIC BY ALY ZALESKI

Diary of a Teenage-Driving Prodigy

by Lily Quartermaine
Entertainment Editor

Mom, dad, I know the car has a million fines and I have literally no money to help pay for it. But trust me, it wasn't my fault; you're never going to believe what happened today. While I was coming home from school, I encountered the most belligerent group of drivers that have ever managed to achieve a Florida license.

First of all, traffic was horrible. I don't even understand traffic, can't we all just, like, move? So, to give the guy in front of me a little nudge, I drove into the back of his car. He was so angry. I was like "okay, like, go forward then?" I mean, it's not my fault that the traffic was backed up. It's called "stop-and-go" for a reason.

He got out of his car and started screaming at me when I refused to roll down my window. As soon as traffic picked up again, I slammed on the gas to get away from that crazy freak (I was scared for my safety, honestly. I mean, what provokes someone to get angry like that?)

As you guys know, red lights are merely a suggestion, as I'm literally a colorblind minor... I stop for nobody, not even the cops. I mean, like, get over it and get away from me... Like, why are you so obsessed?

Anyways, people were being so difficult today. So many cars swerved out of my way like crazy freaks (as they should)

and I honestly felt pretty powerful, like Moses parting the sea.

I headed to the movies with my friend Tiffany — she loves my driving! She's always screaming at me and holding onto the passenger door like we're at Islands of Adventure.

When we got there, I was too tired to find a parking spot. I mean, like, a parking garage, seriously? 1) it's dirty 2) people always get mad when I drive 50 miles per hour in there. I'm trying to see "House of Gucci," yes, I'm going to speed. It's your fault for not being ready. So instead I just parked in the middle of the road. If you don't want me to park there, put a sign there or something. And make sure it's something easy to understand, like a picture or something, because I'm illiterate.

But when I got back out, I had a freaking ticket??? Like,

you really took the time out of your day to write me a little note? Sounds like you have a little crush on me.

I dropped off Tiffany after the movie. She absolutely sprinted out of my car. I don't blame her, I didn't take a bathroom break during the movie either; I didn't want to miss anything.

Then, my GPS spontaneously stopped working. So, I took a little stop in the middle of Tamiami to fix it. People were honking, but I was only taking up one lane. They're just melodramatic. People always get mad at me for not understanding Sarasota's layout after I've lived here my entire life, but please back off. Do you expect me to remember a map? It's just a bunch of lines and words.

When I got to Publix to pick up that grocery list you sent me, I parked in that fun little striped lane. I think they call it the "fire lane" because it's honestly fire, like it's the best place to park. It's so close to the front; I don't know why more people don't park there. But when I got out, my car was literally GONE. They really took away my car, which is ILLEGAL. That's called stealing, America. Read the constitution. God, the AUDACITY.

When I finally got my car back, I sped home, of course. I mean, I've sped there before, why not speed again, right?

GRAPHIC BY LILY QUARTERMAINE

Horrifying Effects of Recent Outages

by Sarah Catalano
Copy Editor

A darkness settled over Pine View campus last month as Berizon Wi-Fi outages ravaged classrooms campus-wide. In a series of early-morning internet and power blackouts, the usual harmonious and serene atmosphere of learning quickly descended into a horrifying and bleak cacophony of madness.

Initially responding to the crisis, teachers were quick

to provide analog alternatives to their digital teaching methods. Science teacher Dia Graham resourcefully created a substitute teaching tool from spare boxes in her classroom.

“You’ve heard of ActiveBoard,” Graham said, with a manic glint in her eye, “but have you heard of Card-Board?”

She then proceeded to push a stylus around the cardboard surface. After this point, Graham was entirely unresponsive to reporters’ questions. Students watched helplessly as she tapped a poorly drawn spray bottle icon with her index finger and vacantly

murmured “wrong color” to herself.

Meanwhile, English teacher Thomas P. Cast was forming improvised lesson plans of his own.

“We were supposed to be taking the iReady diagnostic test today,” he said, tring to stay calm. “Due to the outages, we can’t access the test. Instead, students are writing a 14-page analysis of religious metaphors in ‘Lord of the Flies’ on typewriters.”

“At first we thought it would be a momentary setback,” twelfth-grader Moe Bulgames said. “But after we realized we wouldn’t be able to join Clash Royale matches for the next hour, everybody lost it.”

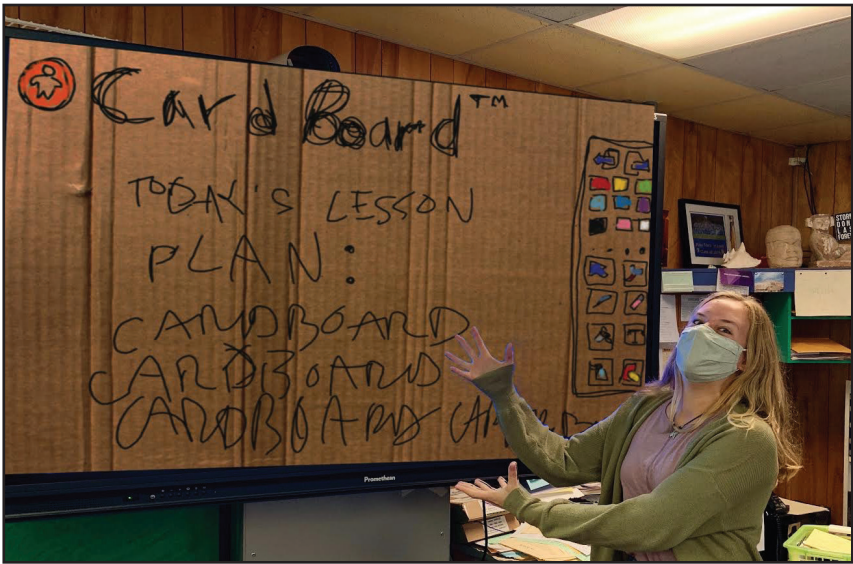
What began as a “Lord of the Flies” analysis in Cast’s class rapidly turned “Lord of the Flies” reenactment. Forced to contemplate Christ figures in literature and deprived of the ability to check Crosspointe every 12 minutes, students re-

sorted to the one thing they knew best: picking up a random object and screaming “I’VE GOT THE CONCH!”

This phase of mayhem lasted approximately 90 seconds, after which the time-honored de-

bate of whether the plot would have gone differently if the characters had been girls was finally settled. It would not have.

“The fire alarms accidentally being set off is what saved us in the end,” tenth-grader Hal P’mi said. “I think if we hadn’t had to flee the portable in a state of mild surprise, things might have gotten rocky.”



Science teacher Dia Graham presents her new cardboard lesson plan. Graham was forced to implament this teaching method after a campus-wide power outage. GRAPHIC BY ISABELLA GASKILL AND SARAH CATALANO

The atmosphere in Cast’s classroom could only be described as thoroughly noisy. As only 10 typewriters were available, the 19 students worked in shifts: 10 writing while the remaining nine participated in miniature Socratic seminars. Beneath the miserable clacking of salvaged typewriters, dark mutterings and frantic whisperings echoed — hints of the storm to come.

Aly’s Average Advice

“How do we get the school to pave the shell lot?!” - Andrei Nesterenko



by Aly Zaleski

Humor Editor

Stop. Before you read this column, know that I CAN-NOT drive (legally). This is not a PSA, this is a threat.

As a freshman with a car and without a license, it’s going to be pretty hard to help you with this issue. You see, I might carpool everyday and still go into the shell lot every morning, but that doesn’t mean I pay attention. Just wait until I can drive.

Clearly, however, this is a BIG issue for license-havers. I really understand the struggle of having to drive on anything but a perfectly paved road. Like, come on, what are our tax payer dollars even going towards? Who really even cares about the environment?

I guess I could elaborate. It is kind of my only job. The school absolutely cannot pave the shell lot because of run off or something. I guess chemi-

cals are bad for trees? Like, just ask the trees to stop dying and they’ll stop. If they don’t stop for you, then you can just stop them. It’s not like they breathe. They can cope.

My next big idea is to just get different wheels. If your car can’t handle some shells, then change it you dummy! Maybe get some funky ones with spikes. Maybe even go crazy and get ones with no bumps at all. I mean, a little bit of hydroplaning never hurt anyone. If you lose enough control of the wheel, you might even knock out a couple more of those trees!

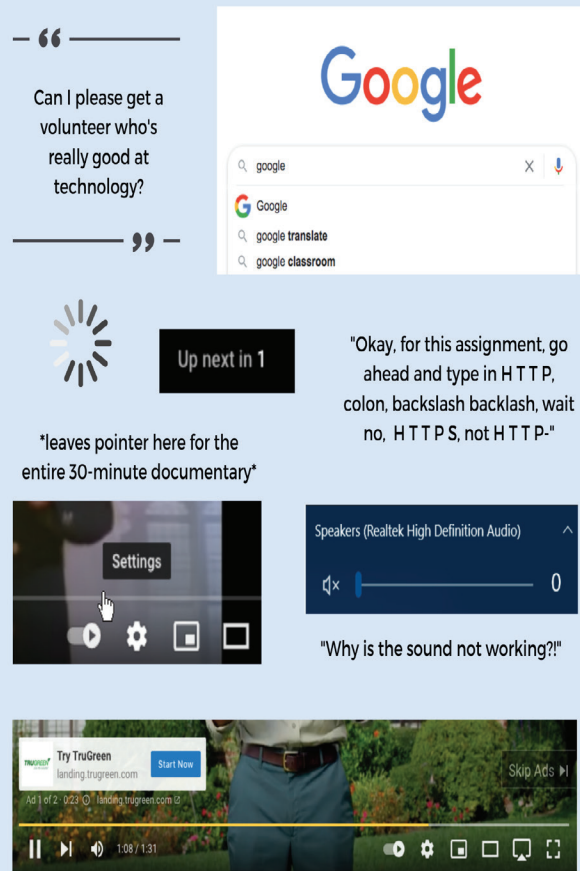
My final and probably most extravagant plan is to go full Victorian era. If cars aren’t good enough for you, then you aren’t good enough for cars. Get a wagon. Get someone to stomp their little horses around so you can get a ride to school in full on luxury. Who needs buses when you have a Cinderella-looking carriage from the 19th century and a “stranger danger” inducing man with two horses maneuvering it?

If none of my grand and ingenious ideas work, then I don’t know what to say. Pave it yourself.

“I actually don’t like thinking. I think people think I like to think a lot. And I don’t. I do not like to think at all.” – Ye, previously known as Kanye West

GRAPHIC BY FELICITY CHANG

PINE VIEW TEACHER STARTER PACKS



the "technology archnemesiis" starter pack



the "STEM teacher who would be working another career but enlightening students is so much more rewarding" starter pack



the "sleep-deprived teacher who spilled coffee at 7:19 a.m. after being locked out of their own classroom" starter pack

Money can't buy happiness... but it can buy Mars!

What billionaires don't want you to know about the space industry

by Terry Shen

Match Layout Artist

The 2020 comedy "Space Force" on Netflix portrays Actor Steve Carell as a general in the space industry. Although "Space Force" is a hilarious show to watch, it fails to accurately depict the giant chunk of the space industry being overtaken by private companies.

In the year 2021, three major companies have claimed to have gone to space. Virgin Galactic, Blue Origin, and SpaceX. These three companies were all founded by billionaires, with the founders being in the 0.01 percent group, 100 times richer than the often discussed one-percent group.

According to Pew Research Center, 72 percent of Americans think it is essential for the United States to stay a world leader in space exploration. Needless to say, the way space is dealt with will greatly affect the future. Space is being privatized too quickly.

First, the space industry is not researched enough. Ev-

ery day there is something new about space being discovered. After all, the first time humans entered space was in 1957 — very recently on a cosmic scale. There is not much known about dark matter, if life exists anywhere else, or even exactly how our own planet works. It is not wise to blindly venture into the unknown, especially when the space industry has so much influence on the future of the world.

Inspiration4, a human space-flight mission, was launched Sept. 16, 2021. Inspiration4 is also known as the

\$ world's first all-civilian mission to orbit. SpaceX launched this mission flying four private citizens into orbit around earth,

\$ with astronauts being chosen and even trained by SpaceX, not the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

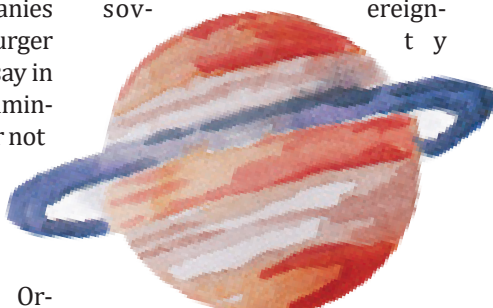
When compared to private companies in other industries, private companies

that travel to space travel have much more power over the laws and rules governing them than their respective counterparts. For example, companies such as McDonald's and Burger King do not have as much say in what the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approves or not when compared to what SpaceX and

Blue Origin can say about rocket building. When the FDA urged restaurants to reduce the salt in food in an attempt to cut Americans' sodium intake by 12%, which would clearly hurt fast food company foods' taste, restaurants were not able to fight back.

Private space companies are also able to modify and make many of the laws regarding space travel. For example, SpaceX states that it will not recognize any international law on Mars. SpaceX will follow a set of "self-governing principles" and in the terms of agreement of Starlink satellite broad-

band services, it states "... the parties recognise Mars as a free planet and that no Earth-based government has authority or sov- ereign- t y



over Martian activities."

Second, space flight is very risky. The death rates are extremely high compared to other transportation. In the entirety of space travel, regardless of the degree to which government programs have control in them, eighteen astronauts have been killed on the job, which is about a 3.2 percent fatality rate. Without the necessary amount of government regulation, the death rate is likely to rise. When compared to the annual risk of dying in a plane crash, which is one in 11 million, according to PBS, 3.2 percent is an alarmingly high number.

By giving companies and billionaires power, we are endangering the lives of astro-

nauts. All other modes of transportation are being regulated by the government. Without the same level of government regulation that transportation such as driving and flying have, companies have much more freedom in deciding what to do with their spaceships and astronauts — which can have catastrophic results.

Finally, space is too important to be controlled by a handful of the world's richest people. The government knows that space is very important and risky. The United States government treats everything to do with rockets as military-grade weapon technology, as well as a state secret.

This is the same reason companies such as SpaceX can only hire Americans. Does it really make sense for a small number of people at the top of the financial ladder to control something important enough to be a state secret?

The United States evidently knows the vitality of being a pioneer in the space industry, so it is inexplicable that a handful of billionaires still grips control over an industry bigger than our entire planet.

GRAPHIC BY TERRY SHEN

In defense of organized religion

The positive truth about spiritualism many refuse to acknowledge

by Lily Quartermaine

Entertainment Editor

As someone who is religious, I can say it's easy to dislike organized religion.

It's easy to resent it, to find it unfair, fanatical. It's easy to believe stereotypes, to harbor anger. It is, and in many cases, it's justifiable, especially if you grew up in an environment where it was forced upon you.

However, keeping an open mind is key when it comes to such complex, personal, topics. Understanding deeply-rooted historical concepts like religion takes time, research and genuine interest in the topic. It's more than just reading an atheist news article and stopping your opinion there.

Many of the people who are ignorant of various organized religions often associate them with their worst stereotypes.

What many fail to realize is that people use organized religion as a coping mechanism, a way in which they find peace in reality. For many struggling with unpredictable and unfortunate circumstances, a routine can be comforting. A set of rules, a specific time each day to pray or attend their place of worship, an all-forgiving God (or Gods) that unabashedly accept them for who they are — it's an in-

credible thing to find solace in.

Not only that, but you are instantly provided with community. Organized religion is so interesting in the way that you can go from completely isolated to surrounded by community in the blink of an eye.

"Religion gives

people something to believe in, provides a sense of structure and typically offers a group of people to connect with over similar beliefs. These facets can have a large positive impact on mental health—research suggests that religiosity reduces suicide

rates, alcoholism and drug use," Luna Greenstein, author for the National Alliance on Mental Illness said in an article for Nami.org.



Nicole F. Roberts, a writer for Forbes.com, wrote about the connection between religion and positive thinking in the article "Science Says: Religion Is Good For Your Health."

"Words that are often as-

sociated with religious beliefs include connectedness, hope, optimism, trust and purpose. All of which have been shown to boost mental health." Roberts wrote. "Compassion, forgiveness and gratefulness are also qualities that are strongly associated with individuals who are spiritual and religious. Practicing these qualities is thought to be associated with decreased stress and increased resiliency."

As someone who was raised

Catholic and is now Catholic of my own volition, I have had a fair share of negative and positive experiences in the church. Some of my fondest memories are of celebrations in the

church; connecting with family friends at mass, praying at Easter Mass, they're all experiences that I can remember fondly. However, as a Christian, it is also my responsibility to acknowledge that not everything has been happy-go-lucky.

I've experienced first-hand religiously-motivated hate online and in-person because of my family's relatively liberal practice of Christianity. There are still those who stand by the original, centuries old values of orthodox religion; they have every right to do so, but is it really in good spirit to bring down others for their lifestyles?

On one hand, there is a troubling history when it comes to several modern religions' perceived ties with homophobia, racism and sexism, which makes it easy for some to write religion off as just another discriminatory practice; on the other hand, we must recognize the good that religion can do for someone in need.

In the end, I encourage you to keep an open mind. Whether you're reading from the point of view of a no-nonsense atheist, or perhaps a devout follower, remember that everyone has their own story and, therefore, their own motivations.

GRAPHIC BY LILY QUARTERMAINE

The unintended consequences of using older actors to portray teens

GRAPHIC BY LILY QUARTERMAINE



The decisions in Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeir changed student journalism forever

The Pine View Torch is proud to be a part of this school and its mission to “provide a qualitatively different learning environment that nurtures a passion for intellectual curiosity; encourages risk taking, and independence.” Journalism requires all of these traits: to explore curiosities in pursuing articles and interviews, taking risks in exploring viewpoints other than the school’s, and nurturing independence through peer-reviewed content. It is for this reason that we are choosing to stand against censorship, and stand with the ideals that make Pine View so great. To find out more about the New Voices legislation and further action you can take, visit splc.org/new-voices/.

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Caption Contest

Submit a caption on pvtorch.com! Our favorite submission will be published in the next issue.

PHOTO BY FELICITY CHANG



Congratulations to last issue's winner, ninth-grader Terry Shen!

"Margaret Higgins struggles to stop Chinese textbook from flying by holding and staring it down."



PHOTO BY SHELBY BRANN

Good talk with Grace

A Real Break



by Grace Johnson
Editor-in-Chief

As Winter Break approaches, I find myself worrying that our time off from school won't actually be a break. Whether it's a hefty workload or the days left before school starts that plagues my mind, it always seems like my breaks hold just as much stress as the rest of the school year.

As I've advanced through high school, I've grown tired of each break repeating this same cycle. So, I have 3 strategies for addressing this annoyance.

1. Stop procrastinating and just get everything done

the first couple days of break. What's nice about this strategy is that there's zero sources of stress after you finish your work. The drawback, though, is that most of us are exhausted after midterms and the craziness of first semester; you might not be in the right headspace to do everything right away.

2. When the dread kicks in, take 30 minutes to make a list of what you need to accomplish over break, and assign minimal tasks to sporadic days when you'll have some time to work. This way, the last day before school starts won't require an impossible workload.

3. Compartmentalize and breathe. Sometimes it is okay to procrastinate, especially if you know you can get through the amount of work you're saving up. Remind yourself you'll be fine when you get to your work and then put your to-do list out of your mind. I know it might sound silly, but focusing on taking slow, deep breaths allows you to stay in the present. Enjoy spending time with friends and family. That's what this break is for!

Happy Holidays, Pine View! See you in 2022.

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