

Exclusive interview with elusive leprechaun! pg.19

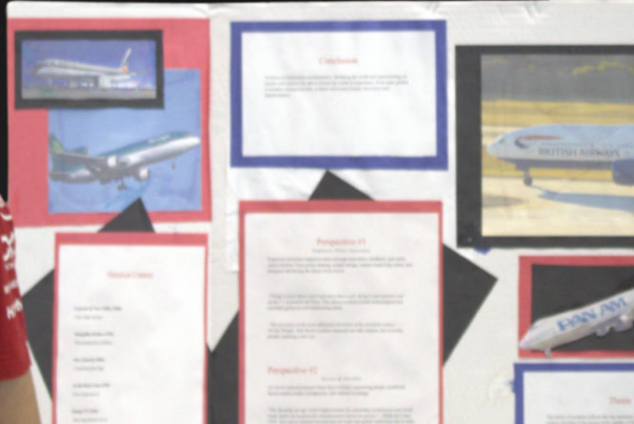
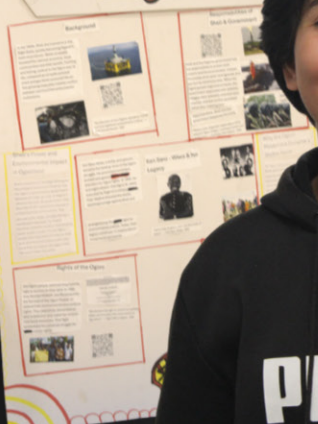


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NJHS Community Service

Supporting her local community, eighth grader Alania Lee shares her skills through two volunteer organizations. [p.7]



Uh oh-

Exploring the aftermath of a hurricane, Emma discovers stray cats and a talking alligator. [p.18]

IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY

BY ANNIE NGUYEN AND ELI EASTER

Bubbles fizz up to the top of refreshments as seventh grader Emma Uttaro helps invent new creations for a drink menu at the Blue Door Spa + Salon. Blue Door Spa + Salon is a business that has been around for over 20 years in the Bradenton area. While being like a regular spa with massages, facials, manicures, and pedicures, it also specializes in areas such as wellness. Some of these aspects include IV therapy and cosmetics, all of which can benefit customers.

Uttaro assisted at Blue Door by working over the summer from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM, four days a week.

"I will be guaranteed a job when I'm older, and it helps me

with marketing opportunities," Uttaro said.

Through helping out at the spa, Uttaro was able to learn many new skills.

"I learned how to communicate more with people and some technology because I worked with it a lot," Uttaro said.

Her mother and co-owner of Blue Door Spa + Salon, Elena Uttaro, has been working there for around a year. She became a business partner with the pre-

vious owners of the spa Blue Door after buying the location. The two business entrepreneurs merged their ideas of a medical spa and salon, which became the current shop.

"Emma had been an excellent help in the business and came up with the

idea of offering mocktails at one of the locations, instead of alcohol," Elena Uttaro said.

While the Uttaros may be newer to business ownership, popular restaurant Mattisons Forty-One has been in the Mattison family for two decades.

Eighth grader Eric Mattisons father, Paul Mattison started the now bustling location from the bottom to work its way to the top. Mattisons has been around since the early 2000's, and Eric

has been working there for around eight months with no plans to leave anytime soon.

One of Eric's coworkers Jude Kelly, who has been working at Mattisons as a busser and food runner for around a year and a half working around 20 hours a week and enjoys what he does. Mattison shares his love for food with his co-worker Jude Kelly. Mattison has learned many new and important skills from his time working.

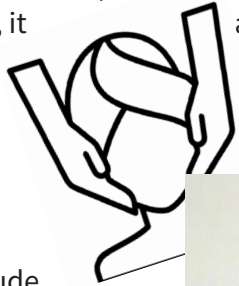
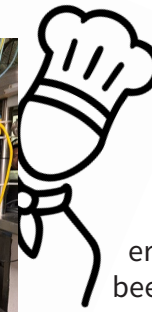
"I'd say checking on and delivering the food to customers has really helped me build quick thinking and problem-solving skills," Mattison said.

Overall, both businesses contribute to the community, as family-owned businesses can give you a clear insight on the hardworking aspects of what goes on in the industry.



Above Mattison is working at his fathers restaurant Mattisons Forty-One.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY ERIC MATTISON



Above Uttaro poses with her mother in front of the Blue Door Spa + Salon.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY ELENA UTTARO



What's on the Menu Chef Python?

Created by Nidarshana Jayendran, Suzy Mata, and Elora Jones



New food Dietary guidelines: 2025-2030 Dietary Guidelines for America

Every five years, The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Agriculture (USDA) jointly release the Dietary Guidelines for Americans encompassing five years. Targeting more whole food consumption and limited processed ingredients, the main intention of the new change in foods outlined is to prolong health, and increase our overall physical capability, however, with the intent of a more healthier lifestyle, this new regulation changes 5 years of routine for students across the United States.



Old Food Pyramid



New Food Pyramid

Schools now have to limit processed foods, including salty or sugary packaged foods and drinks, while still focusing on fruits and vegetables. They also are required to have fewer whole grains than before.

Breaking barriers, Building legacies

by Greta Boscarello



It's August 18, 1920, and the 19th Amendment has been recently added to the American Constitution. Millions of activists and citizens alike celebrate that women finally have the right to vote after over a decade of battle, and it appears that women are taking their first big step towards equality. Although a major milestone, women across the globe continue the fight to gain full economic, social, and legal personhood.

This year, Women's History Month is dedicated to support women shaping a sustainable future, and the month of March serves as a time to examine historical progress and the status of women worldwide. Although many advances have been made, global studies indicate that on average women have about 60~75% of the legal rights compared to men, and no country has yet achieved complete



gender equality.

Students also share the perspective of equality, as seventh grader Charlotte Allen urges for awareness of social injustice.

"Misogyny should be pointed out...Women and Men should be equal and as a gender and society women shouldn't be put down for heavy labor jobs or men for appearing 'feminine,'" Allen said.

Seventh grader Leah Nyvoll shared a similar viewpoint with Allen, and agreed that "women should have the same rights as men, we should be equal," also emphasizing how vital equal treatment is.

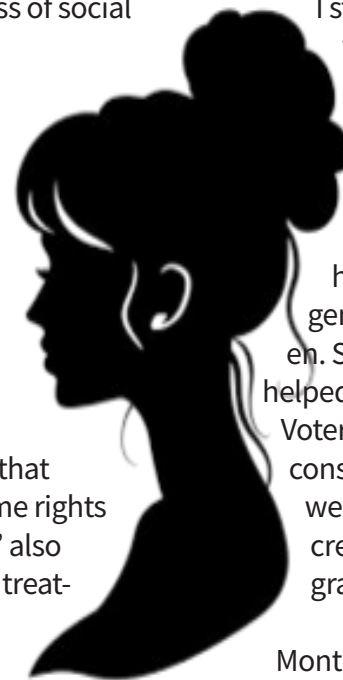
Teachers observe changes over time as well. Seventh-grade civics teacher Caroline Gannon observed that more women have

been involved throughout her career.

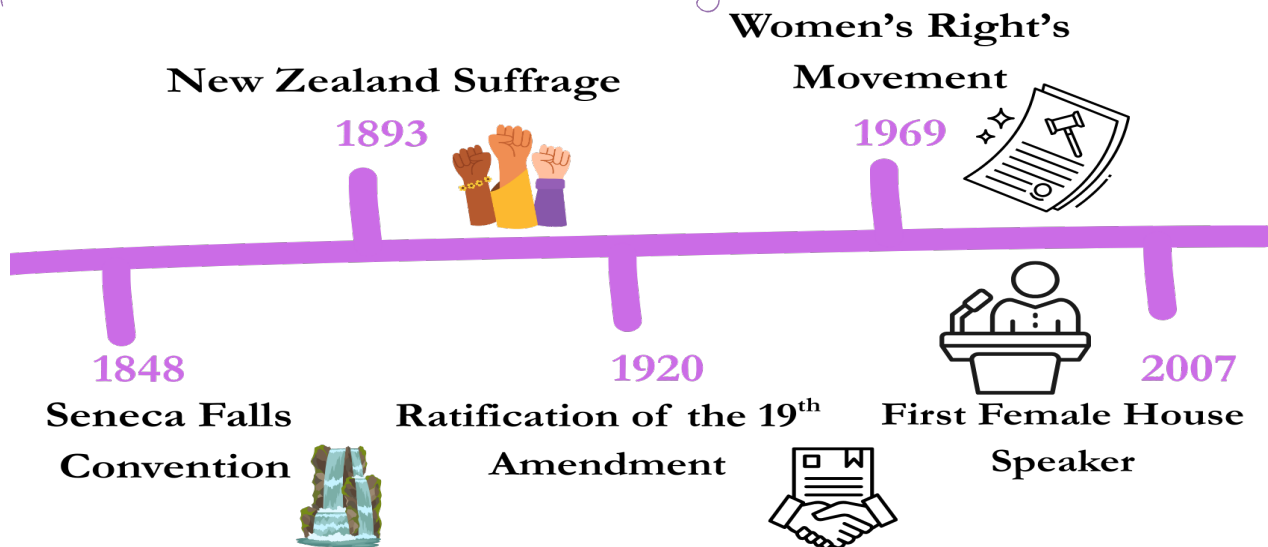
Gannon said, "I have seen women take more leadership roles over the years. When I started teaching, the first school I taught at, the principal was a woman, and so was the superintendent ...I saw women having leadership roles, I was encouraged to do so myself."

Gannon also described a family history of attending college for five generations straight, including women. She shared that her grandmother helped establish a local League of Women Voters chapter in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, guided what is now an animal welfare society, and contributed to the creation of the city's hot lunch program.

As Women's History Month is celebrated each year, discussions about representation, leadership, and equal rights continue in classrooms and communities. Many at Pine View use this time of year to discuss and raise awareness of history.



Significant Events in Women's History:



GRAPHIC BY ELORA JONES



REVOLUTION, REACTION, REFORM

BY MILES CUFF

Bright posters, detailed research boards, and confident presentations filled the room as students gathered for this year's History Fair, an event that allowed students to explore the past while building important research skills. Among the many participants were eighth graders Mantra Bhatt and Alex Infanti, who shared their experiences working on their projects.

Bhatt explained that inspiration can come from anywhere. He said he had a unique way of choosing his topic and why it stood out to him.

"I chose it because I saw it on a YouTube short and it really caught my attention," Bhatt said.

He shared that the project took time and effort, explaining that it took him one day to build the board and about two weeks to do the research. Most of his work was done outside of school, and he explained how it was easier and more efficient to work at home.

Even though he does not think he will move onto districts, Bhatt still earned an honorable mention and is very proud of it.

"You learn how to research effectively," He said.

Bhatt said he enjoyed the experience and highly recommends it, especially because it helped him improve his research and time management skills.

Infanti also enjoyed working on his History Fair project. He chose his topic because of his interest in American history.

"I liked the argument about the national bank, and I've always liked Alexander Hamilton," Infanti said.

He shared that completing his project took dedication, explaining that it took him around two weeks to complete it. While he did some work at school, he said most of it was done in his own time at home.

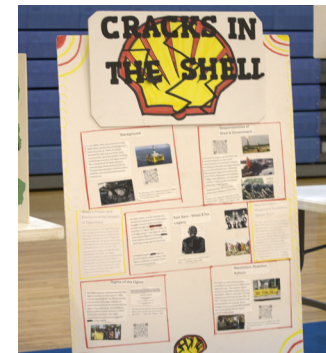
Infanti feels confident about his project and believes he will move on past districts because he feels that his project is very good and well suited to this year's National History Day theme.



Eighth grader
Alex Infanti

Eighth grader
Mantra Bhatt

PHOTOS
TAKEN
BY
MILES
CUFF



Cracks in the Shell was created by Mantra Bhatt. It was inspired by a Youtube Short he saw.

PHOTO TAKEN BY
ROMAN SHLEYZER



By Faith Grajalez and Roman Shleyzer

Finding a club that you like at Pine View can be difficult for middle schoolers and especially seventh graders, as they only have a few options to choose from. This was the problem that seventh grader Eva Savchuk faced, so she decided to start her own club.

Philosophy club was the first idea that came to mind.

"I wanted to join an interesting club like philosophy, so I created one because I couldn't find one," Savchuk said.

Philosophy itself is derived from ancient Greek and is a systematic study of general and fundamental questions concerning many topics such as knowledge, reason, mind, and value. a variety of things that they are interested in. This club is a great way to meet new people and hang out with friends during lunch.

"I personally think it gives you something to learn something new every time you come and you get to meet new friends." Savchuk said.

The club is a very good way to learn about people's interests and hobbies that they like doing.



Seventh grader Eva Savchuk sits in a circle for one of the first Philosophy Club meetings.

PHOTO BY FAITH GRAJALEZ

The club also looks good on college applications, which is another reason as to why Savchuk wanted to create

Philosophy club in the first place.

Philosophy club meets every Tuesday in Social Studies teacher Jenna Molinaro's room and is a great choice for middle schoolers who want to talk about a variety of things that they are interested in and meet new people and hang out with friends during lunch. "I personally think it gives you something to...learn something new every time you come and you get to meet new friends," Savchuk said.

The club is a very good way to learn about people's interests and hobbies that they like doing. The club also looks good on college applications, which is another reason as to why Savchuk wanted to create Philosophy club in the first place.

Around the World in 10 Days

By Zoe Batton

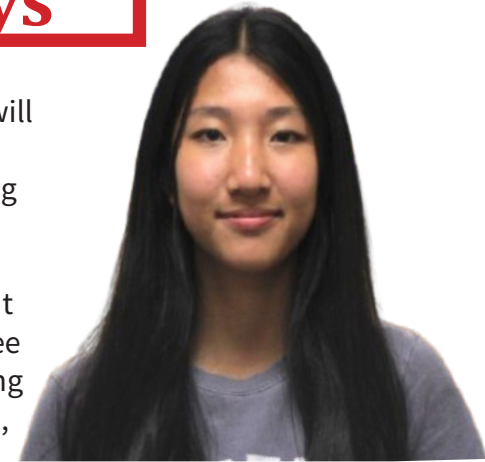
The plane hits the landing strip as eighth grader Kayleigh Liu finally arrives in Japan. The distance is over 7,300 miles; however, the extensive time spent in the air makes up for the memories about to be made. Over spring break, Liu will be spending around two to three weeks in cities such as Osa-

ka, Kyoto, and smaller nearby cities.

“I went a lot when I was younger. The last time was probably around 3 years ago.” Liu said.

When there is that much of a gap between visits, new stores, sights, trends, and more are bound to pop up. These new environments are

exactly what Liu’s trip plans will follow, as her family intends to walk around while checking out the area, eat some local food, and go with the flow of the break. An additional event she will have the chance to see while in Japan is the beginning of the cherry blossom season, as it is planned to start late March and peak in early April.



PHOTOS BY ZOE BATTON



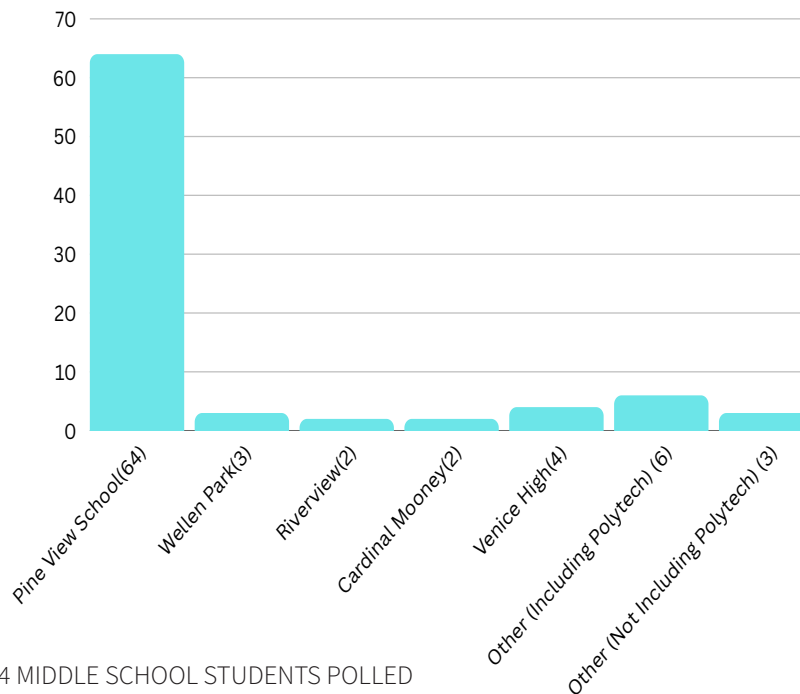
Seventh grader, Elodie Lecoeuche is heading north.

Lecoeuche will be spending her time up in Big Sky, Montana with her family for a week for skiing activities. She has been skiing since she was five years old, as she lived in Seattle originally and learned it

as a hobby to go with the cold weather. The weather from Florida to Montana is a large shift, so Lecoeuche will be sure to pack warmer clothes such as ski pants, snow boots, gloves, and thick jackets.

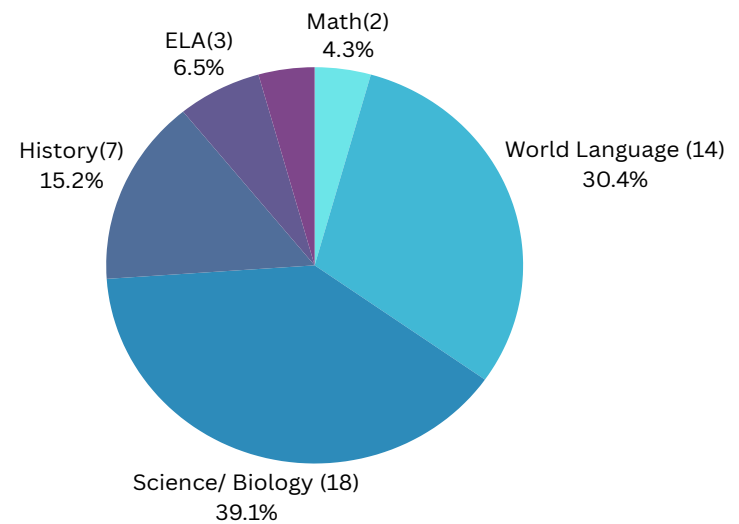
Where are you going for high school?

By Emma Belyavsky



What is the hardest subject?

By Nate Mains



44 MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS POLLED

84 MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS POLLED

What do you do during fields?

by Pierce Padgett



Ethan Clemons

Eighth Grade

“I go to fields to play either volleyball or basketball depending on how I feel.”



Jai Shalev

Seventh Grade

“I normally go to fields and play basketball with my friends at the small court.”



Haoyang Huang

Eighth Grade

“I go to media to finish my homework and study for any tests.”

NJHS Community Service

by Natalie Oliveri

While most students are just focused on getting through the school week, one eighth grader spends her free time giving back to her community. From packing essential school supplies for kids in need, to attending local food drives, eighth grader Alaina Lee proves that volunteering isn't just getting the hours; it's making them count. Volunteering has helped her connect with her community and improve leadership skills as well.

She participates in the National Junior Honor Society and volunteers for National Charity League (NCL) to gain hours while, at the same time, contributing to her community. Lee explained that NCL is “a mother, daughter organization whose purpose is to teach young women crucial leadership skills while also giving them the chance to help out in their community.”

The members of this organization support the community by volunteering at food drives and other charitable events to help people in need. Lee was first introduced to NCL during a previous volunteering experience.

“I met one of their members at a volunteering event called Backpack Bri-

gade, which was packing backpacks with supplies for less fortunate kids who may not be able to afford their own supplies,” Lee said.

Meeting every month on a Sunday, she has been consistently attending the group's gatherings for about two years now.

Lee said she enjoys participating in the program because it allows her to be a part of her community and meet new people with similar interests.

“It's overall, a very good experience to have. Everyone is very kind and friendly there,” Lee said.

Posing for a photo, eighth grader Alaina Lee and her mom proudly wear their National Charity League shirts. Lee and her mom have been volunteering there since last year.



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ALAINA LEE WITH PERMISSION

Teacher's Favorite

BOOKS

By: Fayth Liu



Voices in the Spotlight

By Calvin Coleman

had been practicing the song since the 3rd grade, where she first began her vocal journey. Being part of the mezzo-soprano voice group, Wolfgang was fit for the role of Ariel, and she spent years practicing getting where she was.

In an email interview, Wolfgang said, "As soon as I got on stage and saw all of my drama club friends supporting me, screaming my name, I remembered this is nothing," and that finishing her performance was "honestly one of the best feelings in the world".

Wolfgang encourages everyone to try something for the show: "You can do anything that you're good at or inspires you in the Variety Show, and it's a great opportunity for everyone!"

Seventh grader Clare Wolfgang (left) and eighth grader Liam

Tweeton (right) display their talents at this year's Variety Show.

As the stage lights dim, the Variety Show begins, bringing dozens of talented youth performers to the stage to present for the school. This year, many talented students participated in the show, whether it was for practice, fame, or personal achievement.

The experience of the Variety Show is truly unique, whether you're watching or performing, and sometimes has a deeper meaning behind it. 8th grader Liam Tweeton, singing "My Way" by Frank Sinatra, first decided to perform the song after hearing it during the funeral of a close family friend. He practiced for six months and when he finally presented at the show, he felt incredibly fulfilled by the experience.

"In the recording of the show" Tweeton said, "you could see I ended with a deep breath, a sense of satisfaction".

While some performers based their acts on serious events, others spent years practicing their presentation. Seventh grader Claire Wolfgang, who sang "Part of Your World" from The Little Mermaid,



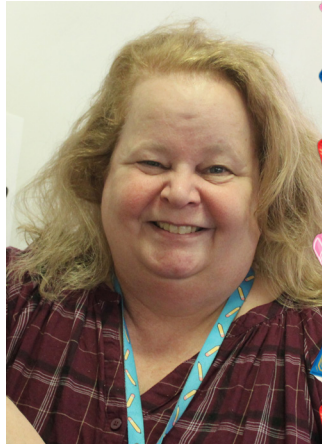
PHOTOS BY MADELYN BAILEY

What is your favorite book to read?
 "My usual go to is 'Harry Potter', but I recently read a book called The Measure and that's my current favorite."

Is there a part of 'The Measure' that sticks to you emotionally?

"How everyone has a string that defines how long you live...I don't know if I really want to know how long I would live. It is also suspenseful."

What is your favorite genre of books?
 "Definitely fantasy fiction...especially with dragons and magic."



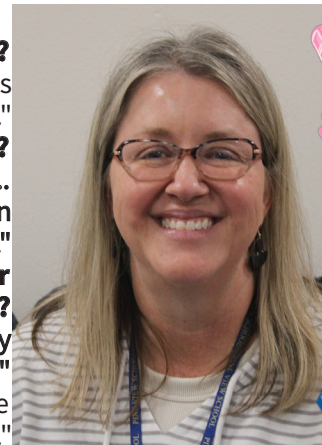
Freda Kmak
 6th Grade ELA Teacher

What is your favorite book to read?
 "'To Kill a Mockingbird'...I like how it approaches difficult topics through the eyes of kids."

What is your favorite genre of books?
 "I like realistic fiction and books about families...and history books about World War II...Dystopian books are also very hot genres."

What book would you most recommend for middle school students to read?

"I think historical fiction especially anything by Alan Gratz, 'The Giver', and 'Legend' for dystopia." "For mystery, I think 'Inheritance Games' and 'The Body in the Woods'."



Susy Grandusky
 7th Grade ELA Teacher

What is your favorite book to read?
 "'The Day the Crayons Quit' because it is very fun to read out loud to kids with different voices for each color...it's really fun and clever."

What is your favorite genre of books?
 "I really enjoy imaginative and creative books where there are many heartwarming life lessons."

What genre would you most recommend for middle school students to read?

"Dystopian novels and any of the Tolkien books like 'The Hobbit'."



Jenna Molinaro
 6th Grade World History

PHOTO COURTESY OF MOMA.ORG

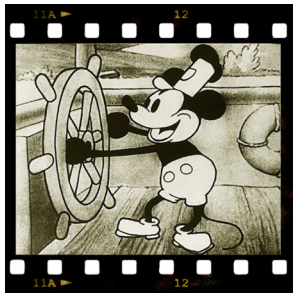
**Steamboat Willie**

PHOTO COURTESY OF D23.COM

**Alice's Wonderland**

PHOTO COURTESY OF HOLLYWOODREPORTER.COM

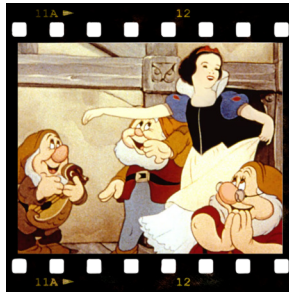
**Snow White and the Seven Dwarves**

PHOTO COURTESY OF FANDOM.COM

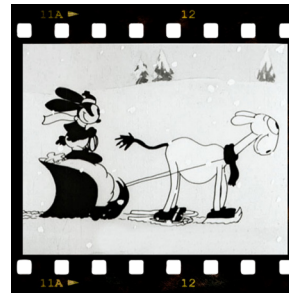
**Empty Socks**

PHOTO COURTESY OF DISNEY.COM

**Zootopia 2**

How would you feel if you came home after a long day and had no colorful movies to watch, only low quality, boring black-and-white cartoons? For recent generations, that world is almost impossible to imagine.

We all know Mickey Mouse. His first appearance in 1928 marked the start of an era in animation. "Steamboat Willie", the first publicly produced film where the world met Mickey for the very first time, is widely considered to be the first animation by Walt Disney.

However, what only a smaller number of people know is that this short film wasn't Disney's first attempt at animation; "Alice in Wonderland" and "Oswald the Lucky Rabbit" were produced just a few years before.

Nonetheless, "Steamboat Willie", featuring Mickey whistling on a steamboat, was the first cartoon with synchro-

nized sound and was what helped launch Disney into fame. Fast forward a decade, in 1937, Walt Disney produced "Snow White and the Seven Dwarves". Before "Snow White", cartoons were all short films, so it hugely impacted the animation industry as the first full-length animated feature.

Disney

ANIMATION

THROUGHOUT THE YEARS

BY: KAYLEIGH LIU

Animations began as an experiment that used simple moving drawings to attract audiences. When technology started to develop further, many studios pushed animations toward full storytelling. Today, the latest modern films

like "Zootopia 2", released in late 2025, show just how far animation has come.

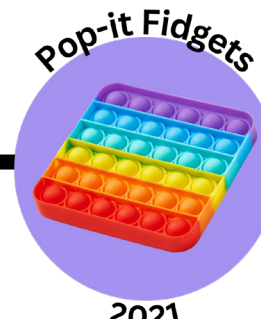
In addition, The Walt Disney Company partners with and owns many studios including Pixar, Marvel, and 20th Century Studios. While they have released hundreds of movies including animation, live-action, and short films with partner studios, fewer than 70 are animated feature films and cartoons produced explicitly by Walt Disney Animation Studios.

Animation has evolved drastically from its early days of black-and-white films. Disney grew to create hundreds of cartoons and characters that shaped the art form we know today, and who knows what the future might hold?

Childhood Trends

GRAPHIC BY NATALIE OLIVERI AND SUZY MATA

Since before we were born, trends have been following us. Here are some of the biggest trends that you might remember from your childhood.



Pine View by Suzy Mata

Elementary school brings many amazing memories. Valentines Day Post Office, field trips, class parties, and Biz Town. Each one brought new experiences and fun memories. An important part of fifth grade was JA Biz Town. Biz Town taught fifth graders how to handle finances, be flexible with work, and how to manage businesses. It had students operating banks, restaurants, shops, radio stations, and even the government. This nostalgic day brings many memories to many middle schoolers including sixth grader, Gia Davis.

“We learned about taxes, and it was really cool,” Davis said. Davis shared how she was a CEO of the bank and how it taught her many important lessons about management. She also added how she found the tests doctors did were really cool. Davis has so many fond

memories of elementary school, including third grade when she made lots of her friends who she is still close with now. Elementary school was very fun with field trips, fun Fridays, and making lots of new friends. However, Davis said she finds middle school to be amazing as well. “There is a wider selection in middle school,” Davis said.

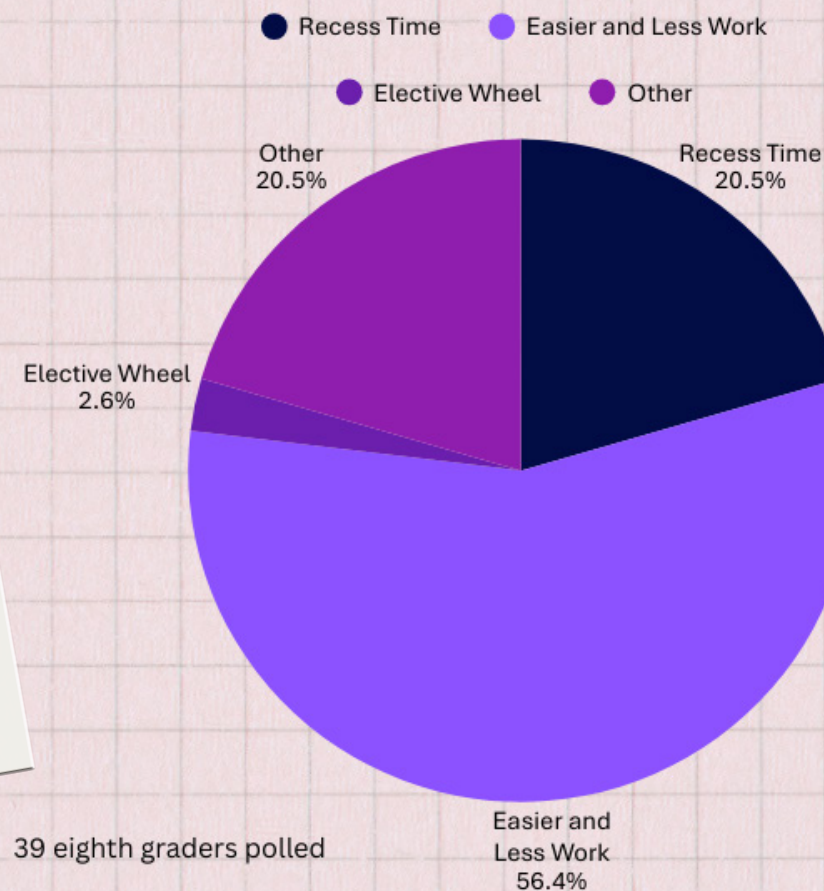
This includes the ability to join clubs and try out for sports teams. Davis really enjoys the freedoms that middle school brings, but she also misses all of the amazing elements that elementary school holds.



Sixth grader Gia Davis
PHOTO BY SUZY MATA

Blast to the past!

What was the best part of elementary school?



39 eighth graders polled

GRAPHIC BY FAYTH LIU
POLL BY LOUIS CHEN

Other Schools by Clare Wang

As students spend time in Pine View, they start to make new exciting memories. However, this also means there are things that new Pine View students start to miss about their old school. This could range from reminiscing about school events to even missing certain teachers or students. One of these students includes Elaina Albury.

Albury said, “I like that middle school has fields and gives us a lot of freedom.” She also said that she misses her old friends and teachers from her elementary friends.

Another sixth grader, Chaya Carney says “I like how there is a lot

less drama and everyone has their own group of friends.” Carney also does not miss anything about her previous school.

Sixth grader, Maggie Thomas said, “I miss how there was little homework.” Thomas likes all the other students and the freedom you have at Pine View.

Though there are things that students will miss about their elementary school, you will always make new memories that might replace the old ones.



Elaina Albury in elementary school with her twin sister Olivia Albury.
PHOTO COURTESY OF ELAINA ALBURY

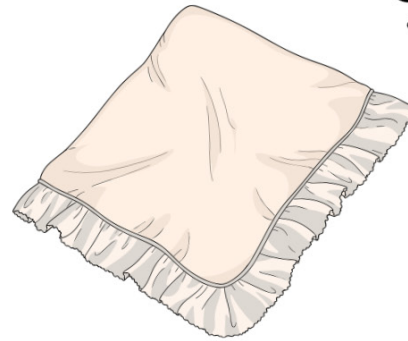


Fifth grader Maggie Thomas
PHOTO COURTESY OF MAGGIE THOMAS



How to Stop the Bleed

1. Apply pressure to the wound with a cloth to slow and stop the blood flow.

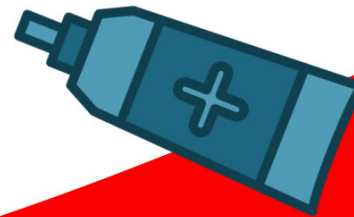


4. Bandage the wound tightly by wrapping it multiple times.



2. Wash and clean the wound with water for 5 to 10 minutes.

3. Apply antibiotic ointment to the wound.



5. Change bandage once a day to prevent infection.

GRAPHIC BY ISLA OUTERBRIDGE

The Paralympic Winter Games were from March 6 to March 15, 2026.

Milano Cortina was the venue for this year's Paralympic Winter Games.

The Paralympics focus more on physical disabilities.

Sport was introduced as a key part of rehabilitation in 1948.

Winter Paralympics



There are six sports in the Paralympic Winter Games; Para Alpine Skiing, Para Biathlon, Para Cross Country Skiing, Para Ice Hockey, Para Snowboarding, and Wheelchair Curling.

The newest winter sport is Para Snowboarding

The first Paralympic Winter Games were held in Ornskoldsvik, Sweden, in 1976.

GRAPHIC BY ANN RHEA LIJOY

by Noah Thomas

Dust kicks up as two racers approach the finish, then one surges across the finish line; that person is eighth grader Christopher Lander. This isn't his first race, and it won't be his last race either, for the past two years 8th grader Christopher Lander has been running the track for Pine View Middle School.

"I plan on running for a track team in the future," Lander said.

He also says that he would recommend joining track for anyone who thinks they may enjoy it. Track doesn't require much equipment either, as it only really requires a pair of running shoes which most

people already own. He said the community is also a major benefit of participating on the track team.

"It creates a friendly and competitive environment that overall makes track a worthwhile experience that even promotes complimenting the competition," Lander said.

There are many different events for anyone of any physique,

PERFECTION

TOWARDS

A STEP

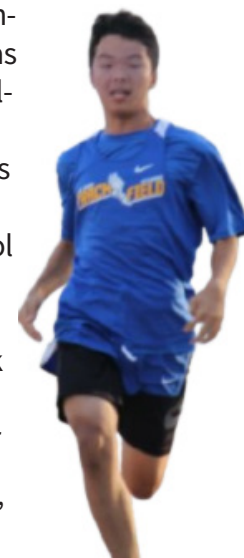
making track an even easier sport to access.

Some events include relay, long jump, shotput, discus, and normal running. Christopher specializes in the 100m and 200m dashes, which are sprints of... that's right, 100 meters and 200 meters.

However, track is also a very physical sport that brings a lot of strain after a race.

"Usually after a race, I'm exhausted, which is a definite downside of track. But I also appreciate the strain, it makes

me feel like I'm pushing myself," Lander said. "Track is a big commitment and it's important to be ready to make that commitment, as track usually lasts for a few hours directly after school so getting all your homework and tests studied for is a bit of a challenge."



Track star Christopher Lander runs the 100 meter dash during the February 26 track meet at Pine View School. He strives to beat his personal record of 12.19

PHOTO BY ROMAN SHLEYZER

RACKET ON THE track

by Rani Grewal

Flying down the track, reigning over the courts, sixth grader Cameron Cuff balances her life between academics, track, and tennis. With her speed and strength, she has won not one, not two, but three Peramathon trophies over the years.

"I really enjoy running, I really enjoy it and look forward to it, and this coming track season," said Cuff, with a smile on her face.

Cuff runs with confidence and determination, but running isn't her only skill.

From track to tennis, Cuff has a natural talent for sports; and she uses it to her advantage. She enjoys sports such as tennis and track not for the competition, but for the feeling she gets with every ball hit and every step taken.

"She is quite a dedicated runner, she doesn't go halfway with anything," said Haley Brown, a track coach and art teacher.

Cameron brings the same determined mindset to

all her sports.

"I enjoy tennis because it's really fun, it gets you moving around; such as track or swimming would, and when you start off you can get better naturally", Cuff said.

She has a trial-and-error mindset and she said she always tries her best to improve.

Sixth grader Cameron Cuff strikes the ball as she practices on the weekends. She has been playing tennis and track for years and is trying to improve in both.

GRAPHICS BY ANNIE NGUYEN



PHOTO PROVIDED BY SILKE CUFF

TURNING CODE INTO

CARE BY SHAI SACHS

Six hundred hours of work, a presentation at the Capitol, and one app that will change the world for dementia patients. Seventh grader Connor Craig and his brother tenth grader Corbin Craig, worked together to build a care app for people affected by dementia.

“We decided to do it because we wanted to start a website that starts a change,” wtrewwCorbin said.

The brothers came up

with the idea about a year ago. Corbin did most of the coding using Java, Python, SQL, and C++, while Connor handled their presentation and research.

Their website uses cognitive checks, mobility and activity tracking, behavioral tracking, and other tools to help dementia patients function.

“One of the challenges was making the website easy enough for people to understand,” Connor said.

‘The cause was extra special for the boys because of their grandma who is affected by dementia.’

“Dementia claims 1.8 million lives globally each year,” Connor said.

Because of the personal connection, they pushed harder on

the project.

“It started as a passion project, but then we realized this app could help so many people,” Corbin said.

The two entered their project into a variety of app challenges and won the Congressional App Challenge.

Moving forward, the two will be presenting their project at the Mote Marine Laboratory and even as far as the capital in Washington, D.C. “We want to change the game in the caretaker area,” Corbin said.

The brothers hope their work will make life easier

for families and others facing dementia and inspire others to act on the same cause.

Proudly presenting their awards, seventh grader Connor Craig and sophomore Corbin Craig pose for a Photo in front of their project, and receiving the Invention Convention Award.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ALISA CRAIG

The game monitor beeps rapidly as bold red words flash on the computer screen. “HACKED” “HACKED”. The gamer panics as they repeatedly tap at the keyboard, trying to fix their one and only computer. More buttons are pushed. Soon, they give up in defeat. Their security has been breached.

The internet poses many threats to users across the globe. Eighth grader Annakeh Michael decided to learn how to protect herself from these dangers posed online by achieving a cybersecurity certification.

A cybersecurity certification is an official recognized credential issued to individuals with knowledge, skills, and proficiency in protecting computer systems, networks, and data from digital attacks. by taking multiple steps and passing the final mastery test, Michael became certified at cybersecurity.

“Getting through certain practice tests and modules in order to move on,” said Michael regarding hardships that she faced before getting her certification. Despite this, she still passed the final test and gained knowledge and skills to defend herself online.

“[I have] always enjoyed technology because it’s constantly growing, especially with our evolving population and artificial intelligence,” said Michael. She emphasizes how it also looks good when applying to colleges, especially in the technological field.

TECH TREK

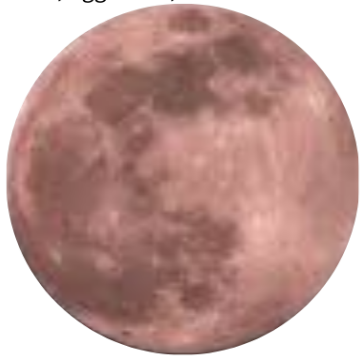
BY: ELORA JONES

ONCE IN A BLUE MOON...

By Raphael Ducrey and Andy Zhang

Pink Moon

This Year many Celestial Events will occur during March, April, and May 2026, like on April, the Full Pink Moon will occur as it is April's full Moon, traditionally known as the Snow Moon in many Northern Hemisphere cultures. Named after the pink flowers that bloom in spring also, called Breaking Ice Moon, Budding Moon, Awakening Moon, Egg Moon, and Paschal Moon.



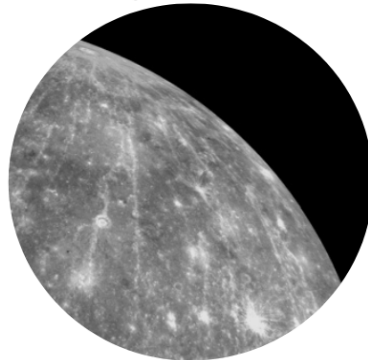
Meteor Shower

The Lyrid Meteor Shower, which peaks every year around April 22-23, is generally not one of the biggest but in terms of the Moon's brightness, the Lyrids is one of the better meteor showers coming up in 2026.



Mercury Elongation

A couple days later the 3rd of April brings the Greatest Elongation of Mercury West. This is one of the best chances to spot Mercury in the evening sky, as it appears farthest from the Sun in the morning sky.



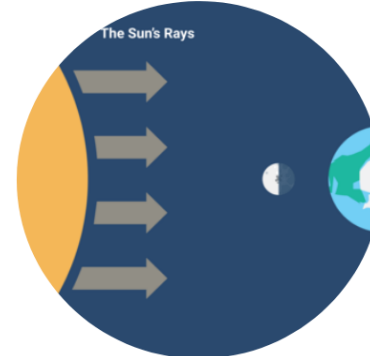
Flower Moon

Now comes May on the first of May, the Flower Moon, May's full Moon, traditionally called the Flower Moon, after all the flowers that bloom around this time in the Northern Hemisphere.



New Moon

On the 17th of April a New Moon brings darker skies; they are often the best time to view other celestial objects like planets, meteor showers, and deep sky objects. A New Moon is when the Sun and Moon are aligned, with the Sun and Earth on opposite sides of the Moon.



Meteor Shower

The Eta Aquarids Meteor Shower peaks on May 5-6, and is in the sky emerging from the constellation of Aquarius. The shower is named after Eta Aquarii, one of the stars within the constellation. The Eta Aquarids is one of the two meteor showers created by debris from the Comet Halley's.



Four Day School Weeks

By Eitan Katz

Are four day school weeks for the better?

The four-day school week isn't a new concept. As early as the 1930's, it's been popular amongst rural districts as a tool to attract teachers; recently, the idea has spread to certain urban districts as well and has gradually been gaining traction.

However, is it really worth it overall? First, let's dive into the pros and cons for teachers and students alike.

With less days in the week, students have more time to themselves for extra-curriculars and other activities, as well as studying. Kai Smith, an 8th grader, takes note of this. He is in favor of the switch because he

believes it would reduce his stress levels.

"It will allow me to spend time with my family, practice sports and guitar and complete all my homework", he said.

For teachers, the switch could mean more time for lesson planning. Carol Pelletier, 8th grade teacher of ELA advanced, said an extra day would give teachers longer planning blocks, allowing for deeper focus of time. Teachers would have more time to put lessons together, as well as time to themselves and their families, boosting morale amongst the staff.

"This would allow for

project-based learning and interdisciplinary units", Pelletier added. Other improvements that have been claimed to arise include increased attendance, with an extra day free for scheduling appointments and extracurriculars, though little to no evidence exists to support this. Less time in class could also be detrimental.

Mrs. Pelletier has also stated that teachers would have to "streamline the curriculum," which she feels could be a struggle for some kids due to the faster pace of instruction and lack of time for in-depth coverage.

Though this may not be an issue for kids who grasp

topics faster, it could cause slight decreases in student achievement. But the evidence that supports this is mixed, and schools scheduled with less than 32 hours per week were the ones primarily affected.

Meanwhile, having an extra day off could pose a challenge for parents, whose work hours retain a five-day schedule. Parents would need to find a way to keep their kids entertained and provide child-care for them on the extra day off, creating extra cost issues for parents with younger children.

Are Group Projects Better?

By Louie Goncalves

Group Projects can be hectic. Lazy members, tight deadlines, and difficult material can all get in the way of a good grade, but what do middle schoolers think of this?



Jackson Lizotte (8) shared his opinion. "I like group projects more than tests, because they are usually easier" This can be true, group projects allow for kids to share the workload, thus making the assignment easier.



Bella McDougall (8) said, "Group projects are more creative, and is a better learning strategy in general." Bella has a point here, sharing a project lets kids show their creativity, and makes it easier to soak up more material and learn.



Clark McEwen-Haworth (8), has opposing views on the topic surrounding group projects. "Group projects can be bad if one person doesn't do their work." This predicament is awfully common, if a single student doesn't contribute to the project, then it derails the whole operation.

Best Type of Notes

By Rayna Shah

Take note of the best note taking styles, so you can ace your next test



Bullet Point Notes

Bullet notes are really easy to learn and give a good brief summary. But writing bullet notes can be hard and takes a lot of time. Kristiana Bunn (7) said, "I like to do bullet notes, especially when I'm studying for a really hard test." Bullet notes are really good to do when you have trouble understanding something.

Freestyle Notes

Freestyle notes are good for a quick, easy summary. Freestyle notes can be helpful, but require you to read through all the information. Hunter Sobrino (7) said, "I like the freeness of freestyle notes."

Two Column Notes

Two-Column Notes have all the information in the columns. This really helps you study quickly when you're in a hurry. Two-Column notes also take a lot of time and effort like bullet notes. Akshara Amoes (7) said, "I like the organization of these types of notes." These notes are good for easy, quick studying.

Doodle Notes

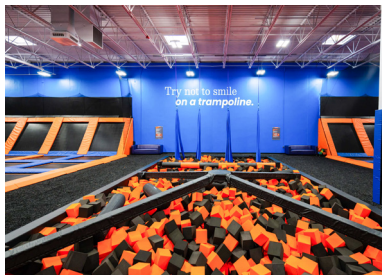
Doodle notes help visual learners the best. Some people might not like to draw, so this might be a big con for some people. Rylah King (7) said, "I am a visual learner, so this really helps me." If you love doodling, then these notes are the best type of notes for you.

Sky Zone vs. Urban Air

By Alyson Fernandez

The battle between two trampoline parks! Which one should you go to next?

Trampolines stretch out for miles in front of you... or so it seems. This is the comparison between two trampoline parks. Urban Air which recently opened September 27, 2025. Sky zone has been thriving for a while but is it the best?



This is Sky Zone's Foam Zone. This pit contains over 10,000 foam cubes. PHOTO PROVIDED BY SKY-ZONE.COM

Sky zone gets a 3.5 out of 5 star review. The kids that are there tend to be in the age

range of 5 to 10, so fairly young. On the trampolines there can be a lot of traffic with younger kids running around. There are trampolines, a slide, and other activities. Socks have to be purchased before you enter the play area. Tickets cost \$30 for a 90 minute session. For Birthday parties, there is a room booked ahead of time with your freedom on decorat-

ing. Urban Air is getting a 4.2 out of 5 star review. They have a large range of activities from trampolines, to slides, a zipline, and rock wall climbing. The price per ticket is 40 dollars for all the activities. Not including the mandatory purchase of socks. Tickets don't have a specific time, so you can be there for however



Urban Air's Rope Course provides an obstacle course in the air.

long they want. This park is very good for a range of ages. There are numerous fun activities for middle schoolers such as the intense climbing walls. Younger siblings also have activities such as climbing tunnels. All in all, both parks are very fun. Next time you need a place to go to think about going to either of these places. Both offer a fun range for middle school students.

Extreme April Fools Rivalry!!

by Phineas Zhang

Two eighth graders, Tommy and Liam, compete in an April Fools competition to see who can have the best April Fools prank. Unfortunately they both had really stupid pranks. This was just sad, even for eighth graders. They promised to “try as hard as possible” and gave minimal effort. Maybe next year guys...

Tommy



While casually walking during lunch, Liam Tweeton is approached by Tommy Hu. “Your shoe’s untied” Tommy says, and Liam looks down. “Wha- no it’s not!” Liam, confused, bends down to make sure. “April Fools! I was just kidding.” Tommy says, laughing while walking away.

Are we in third grade?

Liam



Liam spots Tommy reading ahead in “To Kill A Mockingbird” and gets an idea to get him back for tricking him. He casually walks up to Tommy and looks interested in the book, while slowly raising his hand and putting a fake bug on Tommy’s shoulder.

So lame!



PHOTO ART BY OLIVIA REISINGER

Uh oh-

by Olivia Reisinger

Emma is looking around her hurricane destroyed town

“What happened?!”

She looks to her left and sees a variety of soaking, traumatized cats. Some are still falling down into the flooded neighborhood from the aftermath of the storm. She looks to her right, and sees dogs in trees, dogs swimming in the water, and even more dogs on top of houses.

All of a sudden, she suddenly hears a gush of wind. In a blink of an eye an alligator sneaks up behind her and screams; “I’M COMING TO EAT YOU!!!!” in a heavy British accent.

The alligator (aka water puppy) didn’t scare Emma. Floridians know how to deal with those. What did scare her was the cold front coming through the next day, DROPPING TEMPERATURES TO A FRIGID 70!

There's a luscious green field with gently rolling hills. The grass has the remnants of morning dew reflecting in the sun. A sparkling rainbow arches above the clouds, drawing attention from multiple eyes in the crowd. Just as the people were about to lose interest in the rainbow, a tiny green figure catches the corner of their eye. A miniature red-headed leprechaun was happily hopping away across the colorful shimmers. Eighth grader Noah Thomas the leprechaun was the spotlight on the rainbow. PV Spark managed to get an interview with him:

Q: How does it feel carrying a heavy pot of gold while jumping over rainbows?

A: "Aye its very light aye!"

Q: What is it like always having to avoid leprechaun traps?

A: "Very difficult, very difficult indeed."



Q: What is sliding down a rainbow like?

A: "So magical, like a water slide."

Q: Have you ever found a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow? If so, what was it like?

A: "It's my pot of gold!"

Q: What's the biggest prank you've ever played on someone?

A: "One time, I changed all the food in someone's house to lucky charms."

Q: What was their reaction?

A: "Surprised aye."

Coins of Truth: Q & A with a Leprechaun

By Andrea Wang

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