

# SPARK

MAY, 2023 | VOLUME 6, ISSUE 4

## SUMMER ESCAPE

Student Life Page 9

**PINE VIEW SCHOOL**  
1 Python Path, Osprey 34229

## Spark Table of Contents



**Rock-Climbing Star**  
Nathan Jackson recounts his experiences as a rock climber [p. 8]



**Goodbye Eighth-Graders**  
A spotlight showcasing the rising high school freshmen [p. 22-23]

### News

- [p. 3] Preserving the Past with Pine View's Archives Club
- [p. 4] Train Derailments, Red Tide? Or maybe not.

### Sci-Tech

- [p. 5] Playing God: Genetic Revival
- [p. 6] Synthetic Foods
- [p. 7] Super Algae, Spark Tries: Impossible Burger

### Student Life

- [p. 8] Climbing High
- [p. 9] Summer

### Health and Fitness

- [p. 10] Summer Sports
- [p. 11] Breaking Records

### Entertainment

- [p. 12] Phone Addiction
- [p. 13] TikTok The Clock Might Stop
- [p. 14] Summer Screenings

### Humor

- [p. 15] What Student are You?
- [p. 16] Becoming Gigi
- [p. 17] Nerd in Disguise

### Opinion

- [p. 18] Saying "Bye" to Pine View
- [p. 19] Schoology vs. Blackboard
- [p. 20] Fields, Should Schools Use Grading System?

### Features

- [p. 21] Spark Staff Tribute
- [p. 22-23] Farewell Class of 2027!

*Cover Photo provided by Ava Lenerz*

## The Spark Staff

**Advisor** Christopher Lenerz  
**Editor-in-Chief** Isabella Kulawik  
**Asst. Editor-in-Chief** Ava Lenerz  
**Principal** Dr. Stephen Covert  
**Co News Editors** Jakob Roche and Benjamin Jiang  
**Student Life Editor** Rugan Suresh  
**Asst. Student Life Editor** Faith Downie

**Health and Fitness Editor** Michael Tagle  
**Humor Editor** Kepler Hanzivasilis  
**Asst. Humor Editor** Julian Regar  
**Opinion Editor** Athena Erbe  
**Asst. Opinion Editor** Andrew Fera Taga  
**Co Entertainment Editors** Maya Nowakowski and Ingrid Cushman  
**Asst. Entertainment Editor** Sora Fancher

**Co Sci-Tech Editors** Felix Ratner and Yash Kakkad  
**Co Features Editors** Madelyn Bailey and Timothy Nesanelis  
**Asst. Features Editor** Adam Elshimy  
**Cover Editor** Athena Erbe  
**Staffers** Eighth-grade Journalism Class  
Seventh-grade Journalism Class

The Spark covers topics, issues, events and opinions of relevance to students grades six through eight. The Spark is published four times a year by Pine View School and maintains membership in the Florida Scholastic Press Association. Press run is 650 copies. Copies are provided free of charge to students, faculty and staff. All content is subject to prior approval by administration.

**Reader Input.** Submit story ideas, comments and questions to the editor of the publication. Address general comments and questions to the Spark Editor-in-Chief at [isabella.kulawik@pineviewtorch.com](mailto:isabella.kulawik@pineviewtorch.com).

**Sponsorships and Subscriptions.** To become a sponsor or purchase a subscription, email [sanya.patel@pineviewtorch.com](mailto:sanya.patel@pineviewtorch.com).

# News

## Preserving the Past with Pine View's Archives Club

By Jakob Roche



The Members of the Archives Club (from Left to Right) President Cyrus Khun (11), Lillian Martin (10), Morgan Gustafson (10), Christian Batista (10), and Remy Bluiner (10) hold part of Pine View's old Batman Bench. The bench was originally part of the old campus, then refurbished and enlarged after the move to the new campus in 1994. Photo By Faith Downie.

The clocks were the only thing that tenth grader Morgan Gustafson remembers about that Wednesday at the Archives Club when eight of them were anonymously delivered to the club. One thought went through her mind: "What?"

Gustafson has been attending the club which runs Building 17's Archives Room every Wednesday. Normally, they organize and catalog objects that are donated to them from various sources, mainly Pine View alumni, or sometimes from teachers' old rooms. "We spend a lot of time switching out the [contents of the] display cases and getting things categorized and organized," Club president Cyrus Khun says.

Usually, the display cases reflect a certain event that is going on at Pine View, one prominent example being Cobalt, the high school formal. Long before the actual event, the club members gathered together to plan what Cobalt-related items would be featured in the display cases.

However, as tenth grader Lillian Martin makes it clear, donations aren't always as meaningful as the club would like them to be.

"They send us anything and everything," she said.

Although currently the club tries to save everything they get, Khun

said, "We're getting close to the point where we're going to start throwing away [irrelevant] things."

Then, there's the times where they get donations which don't have any clear usefulness, let alone a reason to be archived. Tenth grader Remy Bluiner said that a lot of the time, they get boxes addressed to Archives with no other identifying details.

"More recently, stuff just appears," Martin said.

"We walked in one day and there were eight clocks," Gustafson said.

Even stranger, they seemed to have little to no importance.

"[They weren't] old clocks, not a piece of the sundial [in the Quad] or anything like that," Bluiner said.

And, as mysteriously as the clocks appeared, they vanished a few days later.

As the club grows, they want to add on to the Archives Room. For example, Bluiner has been talking to the club's sponsor, Jessica Hentges, about adding a TV to the room to play videos they've been given.

They also want to get a website for the club up and running. For now, however, they haven't quite gathered enough meaningful objects so that the items in the display cases can be

completely changed every week. However, they're getting there.

As Bluiner said, "Pop in, ... check out the Archives sometimes."



The scissors that officially opened Building 17 are visible from its entrance in the Archives Room. Building 17, the newest addition to Pine View's campus, was opened in the second semester of the 2021-2022 school year. Photo By Jakob Roche

# Train Derailments and the Environment

By Megan Ma



Members of the West Virginia National Guard prepare to clean up toxic waste from the train derailment in Ohio. Photo By Edwin Wriston

A trail of trains on its side. Smoke rising. Fire burning. Gray clouds infect the sky. The words “INCREASED CANCER RISK” flash across the television screen. Bringing national outcry and concern, the recent train derailment in East Palestine, Ohio, has caused many citizens around the United States to question the safety of trains carrying toxic chemicals.

One of the first in a series of derailments, the train was carrying 100,000 gallons, which is equivalent to 20 semi-trucks, of hazardous chemicals which was headed towards a plant run by the company OxyChem that makes plastic for PVC flooring before the train derailed and burned.

“Spills of various chemicals can have many effects on the environment. It largely depends on what kind of chemical... If toxic, people

might have to be evacuated. If persistent, they might have to be evacuated until cleanup, if it can be cleaned up,” AP Environmental Science teacher Jason Miller said.

More recently, there was another train derailment in Bradenton, bringing more local concern to railroad safety in the area. One of the trains was carrying 30,000 gallons of liquid propane gas, which if had been leaked would lead to environmental destruction and possible evacuation to protect citizens due to increased cancer risk.

The aftermath of such events can be very taxing and difficult, fortunately, the incident in Bradenton was much less severe and did not include any leaks.

On the other hand, the Ohio incident had more serious repercussions.

“Evidence seems to suggest that the Ohio spill has already contaminated soil and water so that a difficult and expensive cleanup is required.,” said Miller. In response to the recent upturn in these disastrous derailments, many have questioned the safety of trains carrying gases around the country.

Why is this happening? Big railroad companies like Amtrak have not been financially stable for many years, especially since the pandemic. In fact, Amtrak has never earned a profit and has used over 50 billion dollars in federal subsidies (benefit given from a government body).

Without the money to improve railroads, the derailments are bound to keep happening. Since Amtrak is a huge transportation company, many are hesitant to get rid of them to stop derailments and railroad activity in general.

## Red Tide? Or maybe not.

By Ana Easter

Daunting headlines are popping up everywhere with news of a giant, rotting mass of seaweed that is coming to destroy our beaches. Should Floridians fear for the future of their beaches? While news titles may be unnecessarily alarming and misleading, this mass of seaweed is real.

Toward the center of the Atlantic Ocean lies a region of water called the Sargasso Sea, a vast patch of ocean filled with a type of free-flowing seaweed called Sargassum. Sargassum seaweed is actually a type of brown microalgae. It also releases hydrogen sulfide gas and ammonia, which can have harmful effects after exposure.

Fed by fertilizers brought in by rainwater, as well as warm waters brought on by climate change, the amount of seaweed brought in by this region of water has increased rapidly this year. This caused its newfound fame. “It’s always out there, it’s a natural

part of the environment, this year is just a bloom year,” says AP Environmental Science and Marine Science teacher Jason Miller.

As this seaweed bloom makes its way toward the coast, it drags along an entire environment filled with organisms that have grown and adapted to the conditions of this seaweed.

“It’s really amazing how it has got an entire ecosystem built around it,” Miller states. “There are organisms that have evolved to survive within the sargassum, there are crab species, various fish species, seahorses that have all evolved to live in this stuff,”

While the seaweed provides a habitat for many marine animals, it can also negatively affect local humans.

The Sargassum can be manageable when it first washes up, but cleaning it up costs a lot of time and money. If the seaweed is left on the beaches, it can repel prospective tourists. Not only does it provide an unpleasant

environment for beach activities, but once left for a certain period, it begins to rot, creating a very unpleasant stench.

Sargassum seaweed provides a habitat for many marine animals, and while its annual drift towards our coast may cause inconvenience, it is all just a part of our ecosystem.



A Sargassum seaweed bloom washes up on a Caribbean shore. Photo By Mark Yokoyama

## Sci-Tech

# Playing God: Genetic Revival

By Felix Ratner

Many creatures have gone extinct due to human activity and climate change. However, scientists all over the world have been working to reverse the deaths of these extinct organisms, and in the next decade, some may come back to life.

The company Colossal Labs has been at the forefront of this work and is closing in on seeing extinct animals truly come back from the dead. The first animal that Colossal has pledged to attempt to bring back is the woolly mammoth.

To resurrect an extinct species, many things must first happen. The remains of the animal must first be found, and in a state preserved enough to reconstruct the DNA of the animal. In DNA, specific genes are found. These genes make an animal special and can be used to reconstruct extinct animals.

First, a near relative of the extinct animal is found. For a mammoth, the Asian elephant. The elephant shares over 99.6% of its DNA with the mammoth. To create a mammoth, scientists inject the DNA of the extinct animal into a reproductive cell of the Asian elephant, using a process called CRISPR. Specific traits of the Asian elephant

are edited into ones of the mammoth. The cells are then tested and inserted into the egg cells of an Asian elephant. Using artificial fertilization, the cells grow into an embryo, which then grows into a hopefully healthy mammoth cub to be birthed by the elephant, with all the traits of its extinct relative. This process can be done with other extinct animals.

Bringing back extinct species is not only for the fun of it, however. In a zoom interview with the marketing director of Colossal Labs, Jillian McCall, she said that reviving extinct animals may have good environmental effects. Many species were killed by humans, and bringing these back could help stabilize fragile ecosystems.

“We want it [De-Extinction] because it’s because of the positive impacts that it’s bringing to ecosystems. Areas that would be reviled wild with these animals are also much, much healthier.”

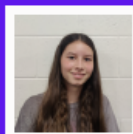
However, reviving extinct species has also been quite controversial. Gene editing and biotech has been at the forefront of ethical dilemmas and more over the past decades. Creating changes in genetic structure has been deemed unethical by many, for many reasons. Bringing back ancient species may have harmful effects on the environment, with them having no natural predators. These animals could multiply, and in theory break a fragile ecosystem very different from what the animal had when they were alive. Animals that live in the current ecosystem could be displaced by these recently brought back animals, harming the environment and our modern-day animals with it.

In the future, people may have a dodo as a pet or see a mammoth in a zoo. This future is approaching at a rapid pace, with estimates of reviving extinct animals by 2029. For the good of the environment, while also reversing human destructiveness, extinct animals will soon be back, created by advances in biotech and gene editing that may help every part of our society.

## Student Opinions



**Aydan Hoffman:**  
I think its cool that we can study animals that went extinct thousands of years ago.



**Madeleine Arsenault:**  
If there was some sort of disease in... the Woolly Mammoth that we weren't immune to, a lot of humans could die.

# Synthetic Food

By Yatharth Kakkad

## Fun Facts!

By Felix Ratner & Yatharth Kakkad

- Multiple studies have shown that men are nearly twice as likely to be open to the idea of consuming artificial meat than women.
- The first lab-grown burger was made in the year 2012, and it cost about \$325,000 to produce.
- Lab-grown and artificial meat has been predicted for many years, and appeared in fiction since the 1930s.
- Scientists can use many different cells from different animals to create new, hybrid meats.
- Sometimes, artificial meat is grown on grass to provide structure to the cells, but also putting grass into the final product, mimicking when cows eat grass.
- Scientists are working on products besides meat that can be grown in labs, such as eggs, milk, and leather.

Facts from:

- <https://www.factretriever.com/artificial-meat-facts>
- <https://edu.gcfglobal.org/en/the-now/what-is-labgrown-meat/1/>

Lab-grown Meat:

From lab to table, synthetic food (specifically lab-grown meat), has shown genuine potential in the past few years. Through synthesizing the process of cultivating meat, scientists are able to reap a multitude of benefits while providing a very similar experience to actual meat.

Starting with the science behind lab-grown meat, the process begins with a small biopsy performed on an animal to extract various cells, such as stem, muscle, and fat cells. These cells are then placed within a bioreactor to develop separately from the animal they came from. After a couple weeks, these growing cells are then extracted and essentially killed to produce tissue that is capable of being turned into meat products. Currently, beef has been one of the major areas of progress when it comes to synthesizing food in this manner.

GCFGlobal reports that “Compared to conventional beef, lab-grown beef requires 45% less energy use, 99% less land use, and produces 96% fewer greenhouse gas emissions”. From this statement, the magnitude of the role that lab-grown meats could play in the near future is massive in regard to our environment. This only furthers the potential that synthesized meat has to offer as serving as an alternative to conventional meat.

On the ethical side, synthesizing meat serves as an appeal to a large group of people (such as those part of religions like Hinduism or Judaism) who want to stop eating meat from live animals due to the current methods used to acquire it. Thus, the ethics behind meat cultivation are looking positive, as the synthesized meat industry is moving towards a future with both humane, and beneficial (compared to current day), methods of harvesting meat.

Plant-based Meat:

The idea behind alternatives to conventional animal products also fits into the concept of plant-based meats, which still serve the same purpose as synthesized meats, but through a different method. Made entirely from compounds coming from plants, plant-based meats are a step even further than synthesized meat when it comes to shifting away from live meat.

For these plant-based products, many people have claimed that there is close to no difference between them and actual meat. Said claims are results of the extensive research and testing performed by the leaders in the industry (i.e., Impossible Foods) to allow for as close to an experience between plant-based and real meat.

On a concluding note, synthetic foods are currently progressing to provide a seamless switch for people familiar with eating actual meat while also providing many benefits on ethical and environmental fronts.

# Super-Algae!

By Maya Nowakowski

Food chains are falling apart, air pollution is drastically increasing, and the world is in need of a solution. One solution is microalgae. However, could an organism so minuscule be the key to saving an entire planet?

Micro means small, and algae are molecules from carbon dioxide and oxygen. Algae are single cellular organisms that live in fresh, salty, and brackish waters. Some algae live in colonies.

Science teacher Marybeth Maiello states, "Anything that is small. Most algae are plants, but there are some algae that are protists. There is an algae called volvox, so individually they are one cell, but they live in a circle, and they make this mucus membrane around them so individually they are microscopic, but you still have to use a microscope to see them." Said Maiello.

Microalgae needs carbon dioxide and sunlight to thrive in their environment. Algae benefits both our planet and us through providing several minerals & vitamins and in industrial rigs. Algae has antioxidants and supplements that help with high blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and protein.

"They sell the crunchy algae and they put salt on it and teriyaki sauce on it. It's really crunchy and it makes you feel like you are getting the carbs without the calories," Maiello said.

In the southwest of the United States, algae farms are being used to create up to 50 times the amount of oil per acre, and these farms utilize carbon dioxide. These farms are also being used to produce natural oils, colorants and dyes, fertilizers, and raw materials.

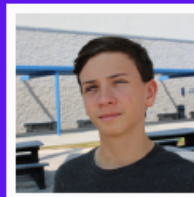


By: Cyanotech Corporation.  
Photo depicting the scale of a microalgae farm's cultivation area

## Spark Tries!

The Impossible Burger is a plant-based burger that is made up of ingredients such as wheat protein and coconut oil, which gives it the texture and juiciness of a traditional burger. It was created by Impossible Foods in 2016 and was created to provide an alternative to meat, and still tasted like real meat.

Many people have even said they cannot tell the difference between an Impossible Burger and a regular beef burger. With all these claims, the students of Spark decided to try these plant-based burgers themselves and judge whether there truly is a difference, and if it has lived up to the hype.



8th grader Julian Regar:  
"I thought that the Impossible Burger tasted basically like a veggie burger. It wasn't bad, but I prefer a regular hamburger."



8th grader Maya Nowakowski:  
"It was really good, it tastes like any other burger, but after you took a few bites into it, you could tell it wasn't real meat, it kind of tasted like beans."

# Climbing High

By Kepler Hanzivasilis

Nathan Jackson has a firm grip on his hobby

For most people, the thought of clinging to the side of a sheer rock face with nothing but their fingertips is terrifying, but for some, like seventh-grader Nathan Jackson, rock climbing is a thrilling and addictive passion that pushes him to his limits.

Jackson has been rock climbing since he was very young. He says that rock climbing has been one of his favorite ac-

tivities since he was a little boy. "I love rock climbing because it is a fun, thrilling activity," he said.

Jackson has won many awards for rock climbing. He has won regionals, divisionals and has been to nationals for climbing.

is performed on small rock formations or artificial rock walls without the use of ropes or harnesses.

Jackson's favorite part about rock climbing is the flow and the general aspect of climbing itself. Nathan's least favorite part of climbing is that sometimes the routes can be "reaching" for him because he is not very tall. His goal is to be on the national team someday.

Last year he was in nationals for speed. This year he is going to try to make all three disciplines: lead, boulder and speed. Lead climbing is a technique in rock climbing where the lead climber clips their rope to the climbing protection as they ascend the climbing route, while their second remains at the base of the route belaying the rope to protect the lead climber in the event that they fall. Bouldering is a form of free climbing that is performed on small rock formations or artificial rock walls without the use of ropes or harnesses.

Jackson's favorite part about rock climbing is the flow and the general aspect of climbing itself. Nathan's least favorite part of climbing is that sometimes the routes can be "reaching" for him because he is not very tall. His goal is to be on the national team.

**I love rock climbing because it is a fun, thrilling activity.**

Last year he was in nationals for speed. This year he is going to try to make all three disciplines: lead, boulder and speed. Lead climbing is a technique in rock climbing where the lead climber clips their rope to the climbing protection as they ascend the climbing route, while their second remains at the base of the route belaying the rope to protect the lead climber in the event that they fall. Bouldering is a form of free climbing that



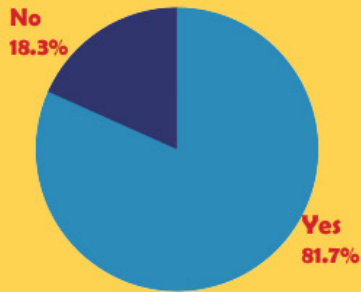
Seventh-grader Nathan Jackson competes in his divisionals in 2022. After this, he moved onto nationals for speed. PHOTO PROVIDED BY NATHAN JACKSON



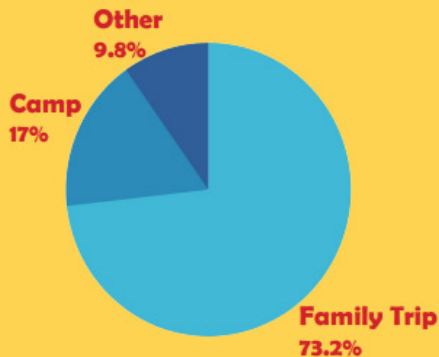
# SUMMER

By Andrew Fera Taga

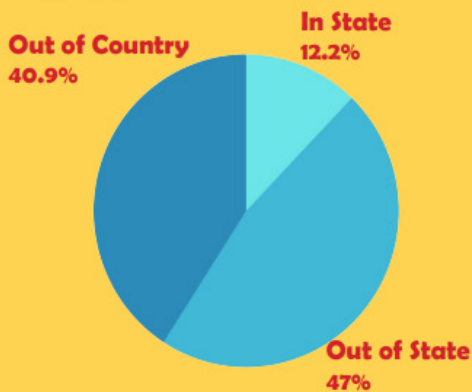
## Are you going anywhere over Summer Break?



## Where are you going?



## How far away are you going?



Along the waters of rural Pennsylvania, three seventh graders have fun. They are here for Camp Seneca Lake, which has been a Jewish summer camp in Honesdale Pennsylvania since 1974. To enter you must be in grades 3-12. This camp has a track, basketball court, tennis court and much more.

Sam Willner stated that “I am looking forward to decorating our cabin.” However, there are many more activities, like banana boating and rock climbing. Leo Schwimmer said, “We will be doing a bunch of activities and hanging out with our friends.” Zachary Heller said that “I am looking forward to meeting my friends that I only get to see once a year.” Zach Heller says that he is most excited to see his special friend and bunkmate Felix Bernstein. Felix Bernstein was born and lives in Maryland.

The camp is organized into two sessions. Each session is 3.5 weeks long. Sam and Leo will only be staying for the first session while Zach will be staying for the whole 7 weeks (about 1 and a half months). Even though they all have fun at the camp, the summer ends and all three of them must come back to school.



Left to Right, Zachary Heller, Sam Willner, and Leo Schwimmer pose for a group photo. This summer, they will all be at Camp Seneca Lake together. PHOTO BY: ANDREW FERA TAGA

122 Students polled in total, grades 6-8

## Health and Fitness

# SUMMER SPORTS

By Ingrid Cushman

Summer break is thought of as a chance for students to lay back and relax, but tireless athletes Summer Botelho and Logan Barcelo, summer is nowhere near a break. It is important that you stay active during the long break.

Exercise has many health benefits that come with it. Along with living longer and getting stronger, exercise makes you feel better. It can take your mind off the stress you're dealing with and puts your mind at ease.

Logan Barcelo is a competitive swimmer for the Sarasota Sharks. Every summer morning except Sunday, Barcelo swims for 3 hours. She does warmups and workouts outside of the water for about 45 minutes and then for the rest Barcelo swims, practicing various techniques and speed/endurance work. Barcelo said, "I'm going to

go to practice and after just continue with my day. I'm going to try to go as much as I can, but you know I still want to do stuff over the summer."



Summer and her fellow dancers show off their talents in competitions.

Barcelo has competitions every month and has a championship in the summer. To make it to the championship meet, Barcelo must keep going to practice and striving to be at her best. She also must attain qualifying times for the meet. Barcelo has her mind set on achieving her goals.

She has grown up with dancing being part of her life, even dancing in the summer. Botelho is on the competition team at Stage Door Studios which ranges from 7th graders to 10th graders which is in the top 3 teams at her studio.

"I do tap, jazz, ballet, acro, contemporary, theater, and lyrical. It's up to the teacher what style they want to do at practice," Botelho said.

Summer practices are usually much more challenging than the regular practice during the school year. She does not stop dancing even during the break!

"During the summer they teach you harder levels to prepare you for the next year," Botelho said.

In the future, they hope to continue their passions and keep striving till the next school year.

## Yoga for the Soul

Some yoga poses to strengthen the mind and body over your break!

10

GRAPHIC BY ATHENA ERBE

### Cobra



Benefits: Cobra opens the chest and strengthens the core body. Cobra aligns the spine and invigorates the kidneys and nervous system.

### Downward Dog



Benefits: Downward facing dog deeply stretches the back, opens the chest, and builds upper body strength. This posture improves memory, concentration, hearing and eyesight.

# BREAKING RECORDS

By: Rugan Suresh

Running like a blur, seventh-grader Owen Boyle zooms across the court. Boyle has been on the Pine View middle school basketball team since 6th grade, being an exceptionally valued member. This year, he has made a scoring record of 30 points. It has not always been easy for Boyle; there has been hard work, perseverance, and discipline needed for him to succeed.

Boyle is not new to basketball; he has been playing it for a long time. "My mom introduced me to it when I was young, and I fell in love with it," Boyle said. Since his childhood, he has continued to play and has developed his talent. Although, he has had to work hard to bring out the

best in him when it comes to this sport. "I practice day and night," Boyle said. He has practiced early in the morning and late at night to help him become better and better.

that Boyle does to stay active and energetic. He plays track & field, representing Pine View, and has performed extremely well in that sport too. Boyle has ran distance, running the 400 meter run this year. He likes to play flag football, and sports of that kind, in his free time as well. When Boyle is not playing sports, he still finds ways to stay fit and be healthy. "It's about just working out on your own and putting that time in," Boyle said. He tries to put as much effort in as he can and pushes himself to the limit.

Of course, Boyle could not have made it all by himself in his journey. His parents have always been there by his side. They have always been proud and inspired him to work harder. His coaches, Marcus Liberty and social studies teacher Scott Wolfinger, have always motivated him to reach his full potential. Wolfinger has coached him on the Pine View middle school basketball team alongside his fellow 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. Boyle hopes to continue his basketball career and be the best he can be.



Boyle goes for the dunk, breaking previous Pine View records.

"I was very proud [of my record]," Boyle said.

Boyle stays healthy in order to excel in his basketball skills. He eats right most of the time and makes sure to work out a lot. He likes to play basketball during his free time as well as when he does it competitively. Playing with his friends gives him self-confidence, impels him to play to the best of his ability, and is just a really fun thing to do in his leisure time.

Basketball is not the only thing



# PHONE ADDICTION

By Madley Bailey

46% of teens are on their phones almost constantly, according to a 2022 survey conducted by Pew Research Center. This number has increased greatly since 2015, when only 24% of teens reported a near-constant phone usage.

Cellphone addiction can cause serious problems in some teens, according to Guidance Counselor Mary Cantillo.

“Students mental and physical health can be impacted by cellphone addiction,” she said.

Symptoms brought on by cellphone addiction include sleep deprivation, anxiety, and depression.

Cell phone addiction starts with dopamine. Dopamine (also known as the feel-good hormone) is a chemical released in the brain as a reward for doing something beneficial. Having (successful) social

interactions is known to release increased levels of dopamine. Over 4 billion people have access to social media, which makes it a nearly endless supply of social stimuli, which leads to an influx of dopamine. Dopamine is seen by the brain as a reward so when social media causes the reward,

“Social media is designed in a way that one starts comparing themselves to other people,” Cantillo said.

An increased use of social media can lead to the fear of missing out, or FOMO for short.

Cell phone addiction is preventable. According to Cantillo, the best way to limit cellphone usage is by being aware.

“Being aware and researching the negative aspects of overusing technology is helpful because knowledge is powerful,” she said.

It is also important to pay attention to your screen time and

set limits for yourself. This can be done by using screen time limiting apps or participating in national unplug day, which happens on the first Friday of March every year. Setting screen time goals can also be very effective in slowly lessening the need for a phone.



**Buzz!** The phone shakes on the table and eighth grade student, Gigi Hilgenberg looks at his phone. Some students and many teens across the world spend many hours a day on their phones.

PHOTO BY INGRID CUSHMAN

the brain encourages an increased use of it, according to a study on Harvard.edu.

Cell phone addiction can also lead to self-esteem issues. Teenagers often scroll through social media for hours at a time, which can set harmful expectations.

# TIKTOK

## THE CLOCK MIGHT STOP

By Navleen Grewal

With over one billion users worldwide, TikTok has rapidly become one of the world's leading sources of trends and entertainment for teenagers. With its diverse content, inclusivity, and algorithm driven feed, TikTok is one of the most popular apps in the world.

In recent months, the potential TikTok ban has become a widely disputed topic in the U.S. Federal officials are insisting TikTok's Chinese owners sell their shares, or they will restrict the app's usage in the U.S. Government authorities have raised apprehensions that the app could be used for spreading misinformation or to spy on Americans who use the app.

This echoes 2020, when the Trump administration pressured TikTok to sell itself to a company based in the US or else it would risk being banned. The Biden administration reversed Trump's request, but instead created another bill that analyzed technology connected to different countries, like China. TikTok CEO Shou Chew said that the Chinese government never actually asked for U.S. user data and that all U.S. user data is controlled by U.S. personnel.

The Chinese government could possibly have influence over

TikTok because China requires certain companies to comply with broad security laws, but the core problem at hand is if China has used its potential influence to steal US data. In the United States, Canada, and United Kingdom TikTok is banned on official government devices, but in India it is completely banned because of the violence that occurred between India and China in their border dispute in 2020 where twenty soldiers were killed.

PHOTO CREDIT TO CANVA



Many high school and middle school students use TikTok as a primary source of entertainment and news every day, and it being banned would cause many students to have to resort to other platforms like Instagram or Twitter, where the limitations on expression are heavier.

"TikTok shouldn't be banned because it's educational for some people and it helps young people share their opinions, and it's not like other platforms that are more restrictive; you aren't able to share your opinions on other platforms,"

Seventh-grader Cecelia Agrawal said.

Agrawal also mentioned that she thinks the government has the right to ban TikTok, but they should not ban it because TikTok is not used for spreading propaganda about different countries at all. In 2020, it was reported that China was considering opening a TikTok account to spread disinformation, but TikTok pushed back and said that such an account would violate their community guidelines.

"TikTok shouldn't be banned because all of the successful creators that are already on the platform would lose something that they have worked hard for, and also you can shop on it now so you can help support smaller businesses," eighth-grader Logan Barcelo said.

TikTok has a unique algorithm that can help drive business and improve connections between small businesses and their audience. Many small businesses rely on social media as their main form of advertising, and with a TikTok ban, many businesses would lose one major platform on which to advertise. All in all, TikTok is an important part of everyday life and the effects of it being banned would have a great impact on many people.

GRAPHIC BY ANA EASTER

**DO YOU  
THINK  
TIKTOK  
SHOULD  
BE  
BANNED?**



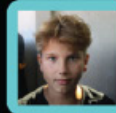
**Charles  
Williams**  
8th grade

"Yes, I think TikTok should be banned because people spend too much time on it."



**Gabiella  
Pina**  
8th grade

"No, I think TikTok should not be banned because many small businesses rely on it for advertising."

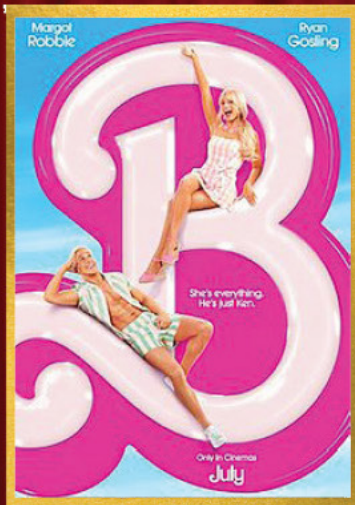


**Kasparas  
Navickis**  
6th grade

"I think TikTok should not be banned because the videos on it are funny and entertaining."

# SUMMER SCREENINGS

BY ADAM ELSHIMY



## Barbie

Set to release July 21, 2023, the release of “Barbie” will surely make headlines, with prestigious actors such as Ryan Gosling (Ken), and Margot Robbie (Barbie) starring in the film. The movie is set to be the first live action film of the series, as in the past they were all animated. The film was announced in September 2009 by Universal Pictures, but production was given to Warner Bros. Pictures in 2018.

The film is directed by Greta Gerwig, who directed the 2019 film, “Little Women”. The premise of the film is that after Barbie has been banished from Barbieland for not being a perfect doll, she ventures into the real world to be happy with who she is.



## Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse

The long-awaited sequel to “Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse” (2018), this is another animated film that is centered around Miles Morales. The film is directed by Joaquim Dos Santos, Kemp Powers, and Justin K. Thompson. Dos Santos has also worked on “Avatar: The Last Airbender” and “The Legend of Korra” in the past.

The film’s initial release date was April 2022 but was delayed to June 3, 2023, due to COVID. After the events of the first film, Morales is told by Gwen Stacy to save the Spider-Verse from the Spot, the main antagonist of the movie. Miles and Gwen travel to meet those who are prepared to fight the Spot, the Spider Society.



## The Flash

Set to be the next DC movie after “Shazam! Fury of the Gods”, which was regarded by many as a flop in the box office, due to its production cost of \$125 million, and only making \$133 million worldwide. The film is set to be released June 16, with production by DC Studios, Double Dream, and The Disco Factory. The film’s production has been delayed multiple times due to multiple director changes. It is to be distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures and is directed by Andy Muschietti.

In the past Muschietti has worked on the 2017 film “It”. Ezra Miller stars as Flash and Sasha Calle as Supergirl. In the film, the Flash travels back in time to save his mother from being killed, but he ends up being trapped in an alternate reality. He acquires the help of Supergirl and Batman to save the reality he is trapped in from General Zod and to return to his own reality.

# Humor

## What Student are YOU?

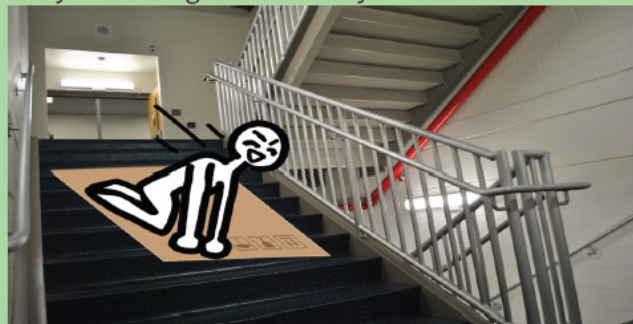
By Faith Downie



Student witnessed throwing all their belongings away a relieving task for many.



Tired student sleeping, semi-peacefully, in the back of the room.



Chaotic student sliding down stairs with a piece of cardboard. [Editor's note: this is highly dangerous and never ok.]



Student on vacation did not show up for photos.

1. Before the last day of school, you mainly feel...

- A) Relieved
- B) Tired
- C) Burnt out
- D) Mischievous

2. During the morning of school on the last day, you...

- A) Talk with your friends
- B) Walk to class early
- C) Aren't at school
- D) Are late to class

3. During summer, you plan on...

- A) Not thinking about school
- B) Sleeping in
- C) Going on vacation
- D) Creating a game by using PowerPoint

4. You get your summer homework, and you...

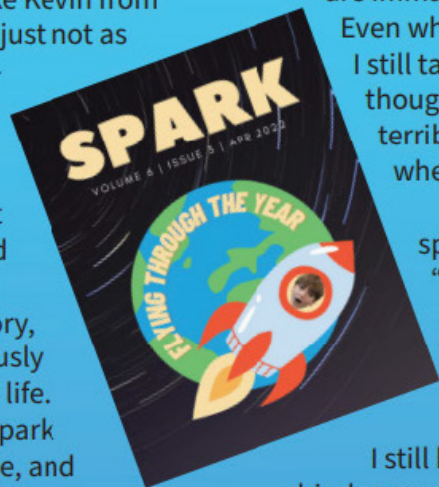
- A) Procrastinate
- B) Stay up late to finish it
- C) Go to the beach
- D) Answer it haphazardly

Mostly As: Throw everything away Mostly Bs: Sleep Mostly Cs: Play games with friends Mostly Ds: Chaotic

# BECOMING GIGI

BY THE ONE AND ONLY GIGI HILGENBERG

The first thing you see on the third issue of Spark is my face. I look like Kevin from Home Alone, just not as scared. I literally flew to the moon for one picture. I ran out of oxygen and died. But this is a happy story, so I miraculously came back to life. I've been in Spark for a long time, and some funny things happened.



The first time I ever appeared in Spark, I was in a picture, and I looked happy: I had won a portable, but also like a monkey (ooh-ooh-ahh-ing) with my hands in the air. It was the best experience ever! I acted like a teacher teaching all my teddy bears how to take over the world. I sadly lost that portable due to unknown reasons. Appearing in the spark is my specialty.

One of the times I appeared in the Spark was recently when I was in the pictures for how to meet a deadline. I don't think writing is my best attribute, it might be my acting skills when I'm in front of a camera. I take the best

pictures when it is for Spark, they are immaculate, the best ever. Even when it's not for Spark I still take amazing pictures, though I pretend like I am terrible at taking pictures when my mom is around.

I once did a cosplay of Kevin from "Home Alone". I dressed up like him and then got a picture of me doing the screaming thing.

I still have the picture in my binder, even though I dislike it very much. When I left my binder out with the picture showing, some kids stopped to stare at

the picture. I just stood and hid because I didn't want them to see me. After they left, I ran to put my binder back into my bag. Thankfully, they never saw me. I wonder what rumors spread, hopefully none.

Even though body building is something I'm interested in, I did have my own blog and diet. It's pretty obvious that I work out 25 hours a day. There were some pictures of me flexing and everyone asked me what gym I go to. Usually, a Florida man would hold an alligator, but for one issue Gigi the great held a giant gator. It was very feisty, but I held on long enough and got a decent picture, the skills of a great actor. Spark was a big part of my middle school journey, so I'm happy to end it on a good note!

**"I once did a cosplay of Kevin from Home Alone."**





# NERD IN DISGUISE

By Kai Deng

With all the things happening in the world, one can barely take in all the drama, the mysteries, the conflicts at once, especially not a student. In the small school of Pine View, another case full of drama and controversy appeared.

Until only two months ago, Professor Puddingbrain was lauded as one of the most truthful teachers at Pine View. Professor Puddingbrain was extremely popular with their students for their down-to-earth personality. Perhaps, a bit too down-to-earth. It was like they knew everything about the pains of homework in classes, the anxiety with tests, and the gossip that goes around in the school. This led a few cautious administrators to suspect and investigate Professor Puddingbrain. After two months of asking students, colleagues, and even the local bakery that Professor Puddingbrain often goes to, the administrators finally uncovered Professor Puddingbrain's dark secret—they are a STUDENT.

The news spread like wildfire, from teacher to teacher, classroom to classroom, student to student. In less than three days, everyone in the school knew the identity of the undercover teacher. 7th grader Ty Tannick said, "I knew something was fishy when he didnt know what the formula for slope was." However, many questioned the motives of Professor Puddingbrain, and their origins. As most only knew the basics- Professor Puddingbrain was a student, and nothing more. So, the administrators dug even deeper into the background of Professor Puddingbrain. However, nobody could expect what they found.

After interviewing the paperboy that always delivers newspapers to Professor Puddingbrain, they found out that they only take the papers if it has a story about chocolate on the front page. Not only that, but the investigators also found pictures from a school in Ohio of a student that looks exactly like Professor Puddingbrain.

This evidence is salient to the investigation because it directly proves the assumption that Professor Puddingbrain is a spy sent from another school to infiltrate Pine View to grasp how such an elite school teaches its students. Fortunately (or not,) Professor Puddingbrain was fired from the job without being sued of any crimes and will be sent back to their old school in Ohio in three days.



## Opinion

# SAYING "BYE"

## TO PINE VIEW

By Sora Fancher



Over the years, Pine View, whether that's been friends and family or administration, has seen many students leave after the eighth-grade year for a different district high school. Eighth-graders leave has been a common occurrence whether it's been wanting a more traditional high school experience to wanting less academic rigor.

On the other hand, many students from Pine View in eighth grade often decide not to leave Pine View for a different high school. One popular reason many students at Pine View stay is because of the academic choice, rigor, and advantage here. Another popular reason students stay is because of friends made at Pine View.

Selena Shen says the reason she is staying at Pine View is that Pine View offers more advanced courses and the Pine View commu-

nity of friendly teachers and friends. She also added that her middle school experience did affect her choice due to interesting learning opportunities and friendly teachers and friends.

Many eighth-graders also seem to be in the middle of their decision at the end of the year. Many eighth graders can be found in the process of their decision, due to uncertainty to such a monumental decision. Torn between a new fresh and daunting high school or friends.

Dashti Patel said she is in the middle of deciding whether leaving Pine View is the best decision for her

or not. One reason she would want to stay at Pine View is because of her community of friends she has already built, but she also is torn because of the more programs that cater to her at Venice High School and because of the closer distance to her home.

Eighth-grader Madalyn McCombie is leaving Pine View for Venice High School for its IB program and a more traditional high school experience, saying her middle school experience affected her decision as she said the rigor just for middle school at Pine View.

## Student Opinions

### Selena Shen



"I am staying at Pine View because Pine View is able to offer a more advanced course than any other school can, and it would be great in preparing my knowledge for what's to come in the future."

### Dashti Patel



"All my friends are here and I don't want to leave them, but Venice also has good programs and it's just more close for me."

### Madalyn McCombie



"The school I want to go to has the IB program and I feel I would get more of a realistic high school experience."



# SCHOOLLOGY VS BLACKBOARD

BY BENJAMIN JIANG

The decision to switch from Blackboard to Schoology has been finalized, but it is still a fairly controversial issue as to whether Schoology will be an improvement from Blackboard. Blackboard and Schoology are both software used to manage a student's courses. Both can be used to send announcements, assign homework, and form quizzes. However, they also have some differences, ranging from minor to extreme.

From the student perspective, the most glaring difference is the difference in the color scheme, even if the general layout of the two websites is similar. While Blackboard mostly uses colors like brown and black for their design, Schoology uses brighter colors like light blue.

Not only will the change have an effect on the students, major differences in the two systems are visible on the teacher's end.

"[In Schoology] You could put stickers [and make] announcements that are just much more vibrant," said seventh-grade Civics teacher Carol Lavalley.

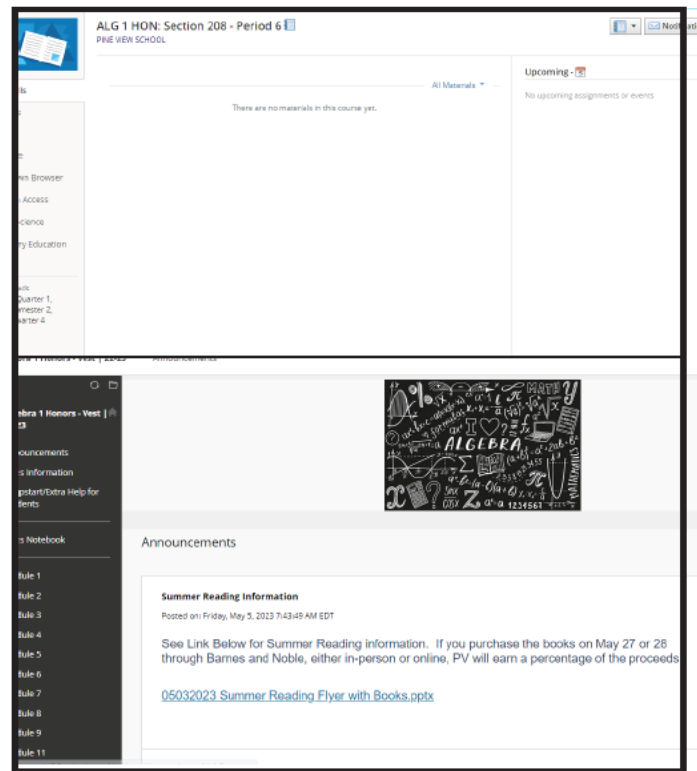
Blackboard is a lot less user-friendly than Schoology for the teacher and requires more training sessions than Schoology. As it is possible to directly upload a Blackboard course to Schoology, adjusting a course from Blackboard to Schoology takes very little time. Also, according to Lavalley, it is slightly harder to make an announcement in Blackboard

"On the teacher's end, Blackboard is very difficult to learn... while Schoology is very similar to other websites," Lavalley said.

Schoology can also be connected to more applications than Blackboard. It can connect with OneDrive, Penda, and the class textbook.

For students, the programs are very similar, but different enough to cause issues for people attempting to switch from one to another.

Seventh-grader Blake Wood prefers Schoology over Blackboard. He said that switching from using Schoology at his previous school to using Blackboard had many difficulties. One problem that he needed to adjust to was that the drop-box was not user friendly because you cannot preview your submission file and might accidentally submit the wrong file on occasion.



**Schoology Top; Blackboard Bottom. Many students and teachers worry that switching to Schoology will take a long time, but other s think that Schoology will be a easier platform to navigate. As you can see from above the two images, the two platforms are relatively similar.**

However, switching to Schoology has downsides, eighth grader Benjamin Lu stated that the money and time used in switching to Schoology could be better spent on the school buildings.

Still, the benefits of Schoology over Blackboard are substantial, and switching to Schoology will be beneficial to teachers and students after they adjust to it. Schoology is more user friendly than Blackboard, especially for teachers in making and managing their courses. An example of this is adding announcements and other assignments.

# Fields

By Alexander Dhanraj

Lunch. The time of day when kids can relax, talk with each other, and play. This period is most kids' favorite because there are so many things to do. You can go to the media center, eat lunch in the quad, go to a teacher's classroom for academic health, or go to the fields. However, there are some things you can't do as well. First, students should not go across campus without a pass. This makes for an organized system. They should also not

go into building 17 unless they are going for academic reasons. These things will help keep everyone organized and will also make for a relaxing fields time.

To go to Fields, students must line up in the Quad at 1:45 PM, and will be escorted to fields. At this time, students have a choice of where to go but must choose only one each day.

If students don't follow this, they will be sent back to the Quad.



## *Should schools use grading systems?*

BY JULIAN REGAR

The letter grading system in America has been a long-standing tradition that has received both criticism and praise. On one hand, the letter grading system provides a standard way of measuring academic performance, encourages competition and helps with college admissions. On the other hand, it has been criticized for creating unnecessary stress, reducing love for learning, and labeling students based on their grades alone.

Using the letter grading system can help measure a student's academic performance. This can help students focus on their areas of strength and their areas of weakness, which can help them learn more efficiently. The grading system also encourages students to learn responsibility for their grades and work and provides a way for parents to better understand how their children are doing in school.

Though, this grading system can also cause a lot of stress for students who may not have good grades. The letter grading system can also disadvantage certain students, such as those with learning disabilities or those who struggle with test-taking. Letter grades may not accurately reflect their true abilities and potential. Furthermore, letter grading can be subjective for some assignments such as writing, and different teachers may grade the same work differently.

Another grading system is the pass or fail grading system. This grading system perceived less stress and showed better feedback than the traditional letter grading system. The pass/fail

grading system works by instead of giving letter grades, the grading system simply gives you credit depending on whether you did satisfactory work in your class

The letter grading system is used by many schools, but is it really effective? Or does it just cause students to feel worse about themselves than they should?



GRAPHICS BY CANVA

# Features

What was your favorite part of being in Spark Journalism?



“I like that I’m able to interact and work with other people.” - Julian Regar

PHOTO BY TIMOTHY NESANELIS



“It’s probably the bonds I made with everybody; it’s like we’re a big family and we became really close.” - Ingrid Cushman

PHOTO BY MADELYN BAILEY



“It has definitely been FSPA [state convention] because being there and meeting new people and participating in contests was really fun!” - Maya Nowakowski

PHOTO BY TIMOTHY NESANELIS

## HOLD ON TO THE MEMORIES



Journalism students at a Florida Scholastic Press Association (FSPA) convention on April 14, 2023. FSPA is a statewide Journalism convention where students learn and compete in Journalism competitions.

PHOTO BY MEGAN MA



Journalism students at the Kobe Steakhouse April 14, 2023. The students went to the Steakhouse for lunch between Journalism workshops at FSPA state convention.

PHOTO BY MAYA NOWAKOWSKI



Journalism students ride Dudley Do-Right’s Ripsaw Falls at Universal. They went to Universal after the FSPA state convention

PHOTO BY MAYA NOWAKOWSKI

# A WRITTEN REVIEW

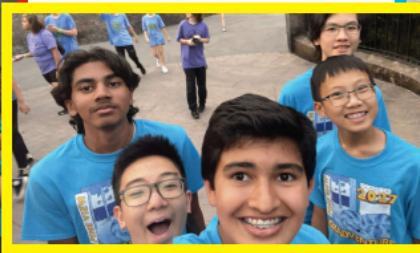
## 8TH GRADE SPOTLIGHT

Here we are! We've officially gotten through three full years of middle school, crazy right? It feels like not too long ago that half of us were transitioning from elementary school into sixth grade with the power of masks and video calls.

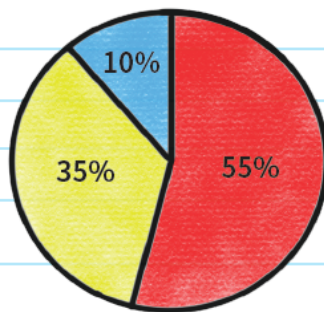
For the past three years, so many changes have occurred, not only in the world, but at Pine View and within ourselves, too. We've been excited, and we've been bored. We've been happy, and we've been angry. We've had tremendous memories and exceedingly difficult times. But we worked together, and we were able to get through it together.

We, the class of 2027, are graduating from middle school and officially becoming high schoolers, and whether you began your Pine View journey in second grade or eighth grade, staying at Pine View for high school or starting a new story elsewhere, you will always have the power to choose your own future.

- Timothy Nesanelis



### WHAT PART OF HIGH SCHOOL DO YOU BELIEVE WILL AFFECT YOU MOST?



● MORE HOMEWORK

● NEW SCHEDULE

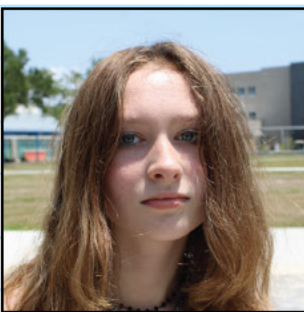
● MORE CLASS CHOICES

Polled 40 students in Eighth Grade



PHOTO CREDITS: TIMOTHY NESANELIS, MAYA NOWAKOWSKI, AUDREY HWANG, CAVIN KELLIHER, ADAM ELSHIMY, OLIVIA PETTINATO, EMMA MORRIS

## WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY FROM MIDDLE SCHOOL AT PINE VIEW?



“My favorite memory was meeting all my friends now. We all match each other’s energy and we all get along really well.” - Clover Murphy



“It was winning MPA with the middle school band. The whole band worked together for months and got straight superiors, the highest rating, which is a pretty big accomplishment.” - Bobby Lifsey



What was **YOUR** favorite memory? Write it in the box!

SPARK

# SPONSORS



Our publication would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors, with a special thanks for the continued support of the Pine View Association!

## PLATINUM

Sage on Palmer Ranch Apartments

---

## GOLD

Valcourt Building Services

---

## BRONZE

Yoder Physical Therapy & Wellness

Lil' Divas and Dudes Salon and Day Spa

The Tagle Family

Print941.com

Qtech Flooring and Remodeling LLC

OurHypnotist.com

Blest Yoga & Sound Baths

---

## FAMILY

Joseph's Pizza & Grill

Clear Thought Neurology

Majorsky Family

Dhanraj Family