



Match Jr.

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A Stroke of Genius

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PHOTO PROVIDED BY MISTY TUCAK

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Thanking our sponsors



Third-grader Libby Bates poses next to an advertisement for "The Nutcracker." Bates herself performed in the show. PHOTO PROVIDED BY SIMON BATES



Third-grader Adalee Waldron holds her pet pig, Bobby, next to the farm. Waldron's family has owned the farm ever since she was a baby. PHOTO PROVIDED BY CHARITY WALDRON

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A Stroke of Genius

by Alex Lieberman

Kickboards, floating devices, strokes — all things involved in learning how to swim. That's exactly what second-grade Pine View students recently had the chance to do as a result of a Sarasota County initiative.

At the start of the school year, second-graders throughout the district went on a field trip every day for a week to receive free swim lessons at the Payne Park pool. According to second-grade teacher Misty Tucak, the primary goal of the project was to keep children safe anytime they swim. In Tucak's opinion, the program was quite successful.

"It was just amazing to see the progress in five days," Tucak said.

At the start of the week, there were some kids who did not want to go in the water at all. However, everyone who participated made a

lot of progress. During the program, the students learned and practiced many skills, some of which were new to them.

"They advanced in stroke. They advanced in breathing techniques. They learned how to float on their back," Tucak said.

The kids were sorted into small groups based on their previous swimming abilities. The students were led by volunteers and coaches to speed up their progress.

"The kids that were in the advanced group, they actually swam an Olympic lane...and some of the kids got up to almost five Olympic lanes by the end of the five days," Tucak said.

Second-grader Scarlett Traverso was one of many who attended the field trip. Her favorite part of the lessons was "learning new things, like new ways to swim."

Most importantly, though, was that improvement was seen in every group. This is quite major, considering that some kids were afraid to step into the water on the first day.

"Every single kid improved 100% so they could all swim," Tucak said.

Because of this huge success, Tucak and the other second-grade teachers highly commend the program, and the second-grade teachers could not be happier with the results of the field trip.

"We were amazed at how many students progressed over the five day period that we went to each and every day to swim lessons."



Second-grade students practice kicking their legs in the water. Teachers hope to make this an annual occurrence for second-grade students. PHOTO PROVIDED BY MISTY TUCAK

GRAPHIC BY TERRY SHEN

Upcoming Event:

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL MOVIE NIGHTS!

Hosted by the Class of 2025

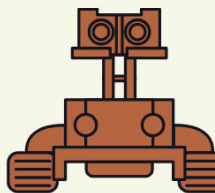
Students attended the previous Elementary and Middle School Movie Night on September 15, 2023. This first event was hosted after school in the auditorium. Students were provided snacks and refreshments during the movie.

Previous movie night: Ratatouille!



Upcoming Date: March 1st - "WALL-E"

Keep an eye out for information about upcoming movie nights through flyers, announcements, and more. Feel free to reach out to the Class of 2025 sponsors (Ms. Higgins and Dr. Bell) for more information.



Coming soon to a screen near you

by **Melissa White**

Grabbing our popcorn and buying candy at the movie theater was certainly a reoccurring event for most of us this year. Many memories have been made, and the big screen never fails to bring many families and friends closer together. Video games are always exciting to play during our free time as well, making us yell and laugh with moments we will remember forever.

The year of 2023 might be coming to an end, but the fun will not! We all know the highly-awaited "The Super Ma-

rio Bros. Movie" was released in April of this year, but did you know that a new Nintendo Switch game, "Mario vs. Donkey Kong," will be available soon in February?

Donkey Kong has stolen Mario's Mini-Mario toys and Mario has to go through a series of obstacles and solve many puzzles to get them back. Will you be able to guide him to success?

However, let's not forget for all of the Princess Peach fans out there, another new Nintendo Switch game, "Princess Peach Showtime!" will also be releasing in March of next year, featuring Princess Peach as the main character. No longer just the

damsel in distress, Peach will transform into different roles to save the day. From sword fighter to pastry chef, she can do it all!

In other news, next year will be filled with new sequels, including "Inside Out 2" being released in June and "Kung Fu Panda 4" in March.

In "Inside Out 2," we will be able to see the main character, Riley, and her emotions all grown up. As a new chapter of her life begins, new characters and feelings will arise, too.

As for charming Po the Panda in "Kung Fu Panda 4," he has also grown up since the last movie, and has maybe even taught

others about the Dragon Warrior role himself! I highly recommend getting caught up on the lovable action-packed kung fu fighting series!

We will also get a chance to see some more familiar faces in Despicable Me 4. It is currently in production and should be set to release in July. The story is not yet known, but it sure is exciting to have the chance to be able to see the mischievous little minions again!

Finally, an exciting character to see on the big screens: Garfield the orange cat, in his own new movie! From cartoon series to

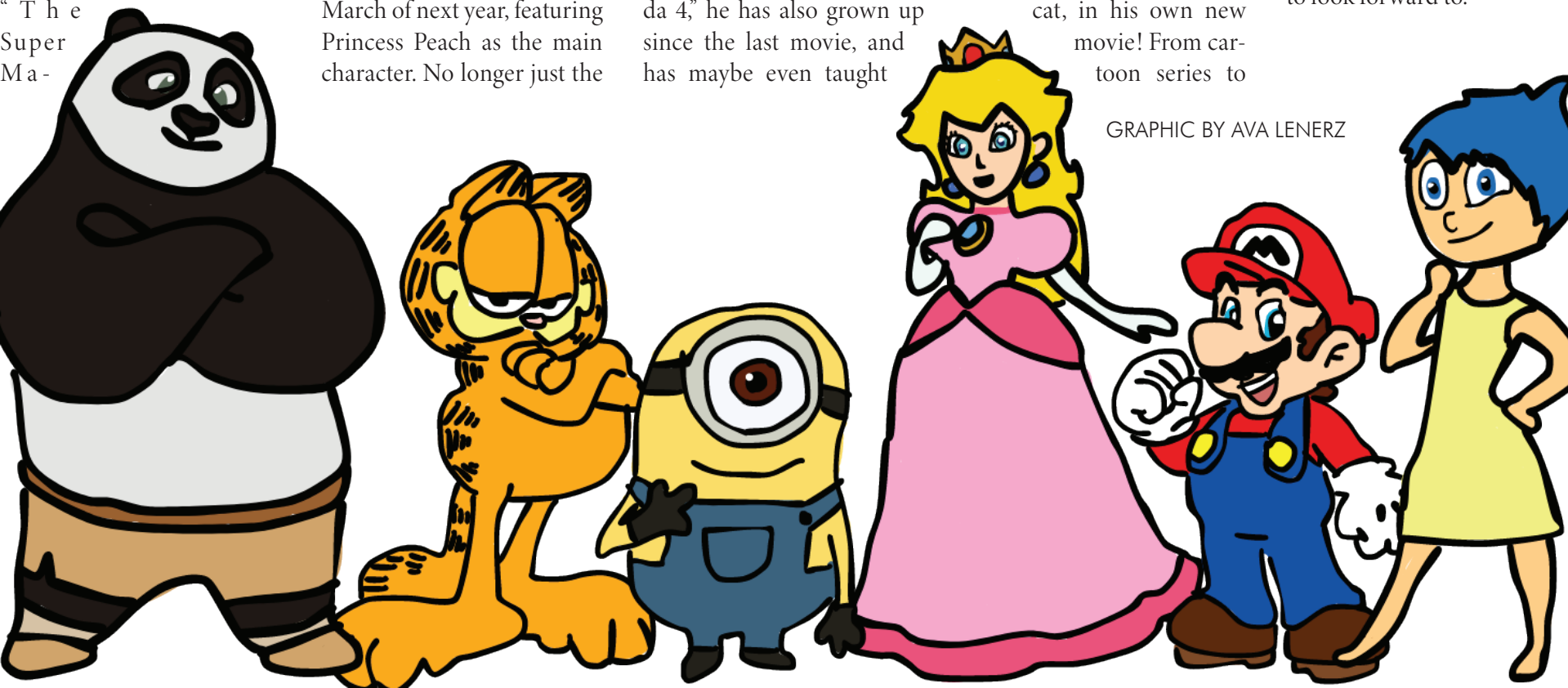


GRAPHIC BY MELISSA WHITE

animated movie, we will get to see the story of the cartoon classic of the timeless lasagna lover in May next year.

Grab your friends and be prepared! The year of 2024 will be a good one, filled with fun and exciting things to look forward to.

GRAPHIC BY AVA LENERZ



Libby in the Limelight

by Allie Chung

Anticipation fills the air as the audience attempts to remain silent after witnessing a production unlike any other. Finally, rows of dancers, including third-grader Libby Bates, emerge from the curtains and a sea of applause bursts throughout the high walls of the opera house. People rise from their seats to throw roses upon the stage and the dancers gracefully bow, acknowledging the great performance they had just delivered.

This has been an annual occurrence for Bates since she was 6 years old. Having just

completed her third year of dancing in “The Nutcracker,” Bates’ relationship with ballet has become stronger each and

I just keep performing...because one day I just might be really good”

*Libby Bates,
Third-grader*

every year.

What started as an interest in gymnastics’ turned into a love for ballet as Bates learned she preferred the dancing as-

pect of acrobatics.

“Libby just preferred the elegance and slow movement of ballet. I guess you could say it just came more natural to her rather than the tumbling and jumping that is associated with gymnastics,” Libby’s father, Simon Bates said.

When Bates was younger, her father read her a book relating to prima ballerinas, who are ballet dancers that have reached the highest rank in their ballet company. Since then, Bates has had goals of one day becoming a prima ballerina.

“The moral of the book was if you try and put your

mind to it, and set your goal and try hard, you can get there through hard practice and hard work,” Simon Bates said.

Bates has taken this important moral to heart and applies it to motivate her throughout long and tiring practices.

“I just keep performing...because one day I just might be really good,” Bates said.

Not only does Bates aspire to become a top ballet dancer, but she also dreams of someday setting up her own ballet studio and teaching kids who are like her right now.

“If they have a dream of being a prima ballerina then

they might come to my studio and make their dream come true,” Bates said.



Libby Bates stands next to “The Nutcracker” poster at the Sarasota Opera House. This was her third year of performing in the annual performance. PHOTO PROVIDED BY SIMON BATES

A World of Music

by Sora Fancher

In a sunlit room with joyful music in the air, second-grader Shannon Harding, with nimble fingers and

a heart full of song, immerses herself in a world of music. As she delicately presses the black and white keys of the piano, each note is a youthful

expression of passion, which fills the air with the sweet resonance of budding talent.

Harding has a deep passion for all things music. Ever since she was a baby, she has always loved things like singing, melody, instruments, etc. Harding has been playing the piano for about two years.

“The reason I bought a piano and wanted to play is because I really wanted to sing. And if you want to sing, you have to know an instrument,” Harding said.

Support is often a key part of the foundation in successfully learning an instrument, or any skill for that

matter. Harding receives that support from her mother, Viktoria Harding, and her teacher. Harding’s teacher has taught her three instruments: piano, ukulele, and guitar.

“We met him in our neighborhood and he suggested to teach Shannon how to play an instrument. He owns multiple instruments at home, so Shannon got a chance to try different instruments and make her choice,” Viktoria Harding said.

At the moment, Harding prioritizes doing things out of enjoyment because it seems best and most productive when something is not forced

upon you. Harding enjoys the instrumental factor when playing music because instruments are a very fascinating topic to her.

Though she does not compete, Harding practices piano twice a week to improve her skills and the six songs she plays. Learning instruments has not just improved one skill, but so many other valuable life lessons, like focus and dedication.

“I love when she plays piano. Her focus and attention to the details are great. I will support her in anyway I can,” Viktoria Harding said.



Second-grader Shannon Harding poses for a photo with her piano. Harding has played piano for the past two years and is currently working on six musical pieces. PHOTO PROVIDED BY VIKTORIA HARDING

REPORTING/GRAPHIC BY AVA LENERZ

UNUSUAL PETS

Students all over Pine View School lead interesting lives. One way to find out about someone is through their pets. The Match interviewed students with out-of-the-ordinary animal companions. A topic The Match hopes that students enjoy learning about.

LORENZO'S TURTLE

While some people wake up every morning to the sound of dogs barking,



third-grader Lorenzo Federico rises to an adorable turtle. His turtle is an 11-year-old Red Eared Slider named Jeffery.

What Federico most enjoys about having a turtle is "feeding him [and] playing with him," he said.

Life with Jeffery can be fun, but it can also be difficult when "he's trying to es-

cape his turtle tank," Federico said, which is something many people with pets can relate to.

Federico helps take care of the turtle by feeding him, a very important part in raising any pet.

Turtles, like Jeffery, can be great pets, but it is crucial to understand the care they will need. That is why

people should always research an animal before getting it as a pet.

Jeffery is a beloved member of the Federico family. They got him 11 years ago from Las Vegas, Nevada. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY SYLVIA FERENCZIK-FEDERICO



HARVEY'S AQUARIUM

When second-grader Harvey Sklar goes to check on his aquarium, he sees more than just fish. Although there are many fish, the tank also includes a crab and snail.

His crab and snail do not have names, but if he were to name the crab, he "would probably call him



Pinchy," Sklar said.

His snail is very helpful to the aquarium since he helps keep the tank clean. This snail "is a bigger one than the tiny ones that climb up on the side..." he said.

He got his pets a few months ago through his dad, who planned the tank out.

"This time my dad actually had a style for it, like a mystical forest...and I'm about to make my own little fish tank and I'm trying to make it a fantasy world," Sklar said.

He also has a Betta fish named Nova, who is currently his favorite animal.

"But, once I get the neons [neon colored fish] it'll probably be them," he said.

Sklar enjoys picking out

the fish and decorating the tank, but he also likes "to watch the fish and see what they do. I try and get the best look at them..." he said.

Before going to get an at-home aquarium, make sure to plan ahead. For beginners, Sklar recommended a small tank.

Harvey Sklar poses with his Betta fish, Nova, and his other tank. Nova must be kept in a separate tank as Bettas can be aggressive. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY ROBYN SKLAR



ADALEE'S FARM

The dream of many people is to live on a farm one day, surrounded by loving animals. It does require a lot of hard work, but for third-grader Adalee Waldron, it pays off.

Waldron has three horses, 11 chickens, one pot-belly pig, three dogs, and three cats: everything needed



for a farm.

She enjoys "spending time with the animals and cuddling with my cats."

Animals like Waldron's really are amazing and love people unconditionally. Her animals really like people, but they do require a lot of work.

Waldron said she helps with the animals a lot.

"Sometimes I groom the horses and I clean their water troughs...I feed the cats and I clean their litterboxes," she said.

She wouldn't recommend living on a farm if

"you don't like work. But if you like to take care of things and you have good responsibility then you are fit to live on a farm," Waldron said.

Waldron hopes to continue living on a farm throughout her life because, she said, "I really like animals and I've always wanted to go into nature."

Adalee Waldron loves farm life. She has a lot of chores, but she said they are worth it. PHOTOS PROVIDED BY CHARITY WALDRON



SHANNON'S BUNNY

In many movies and TV shows, the morning begins with a rooster calling "Cock-a-doodle-doo!" This may not be the case for most people, but for second-grader Shannon Harding, it is a reality.

"I have three hens and one rooster. And he's very beautiful, I have to say," she said.

She has had her chickens for a few months and enjoys that "when I get close to the rooster and the hens, he starts chasing me," Harding said.

She has more pets than

just chickens; she also has a bunny and a dog. Her rabbit, Ash, is only 10 weeks old and has already stolen her heart.

"The thing that I enjoy most that my bunny does is that it's so cute how it keeps on crunching the food and you get to pet him," Harding said.

Ash has a very strict diet of foods that Harding feeds him twice a day. The diet includes hay, green vegetables, and fruits for treats (but not citrus).

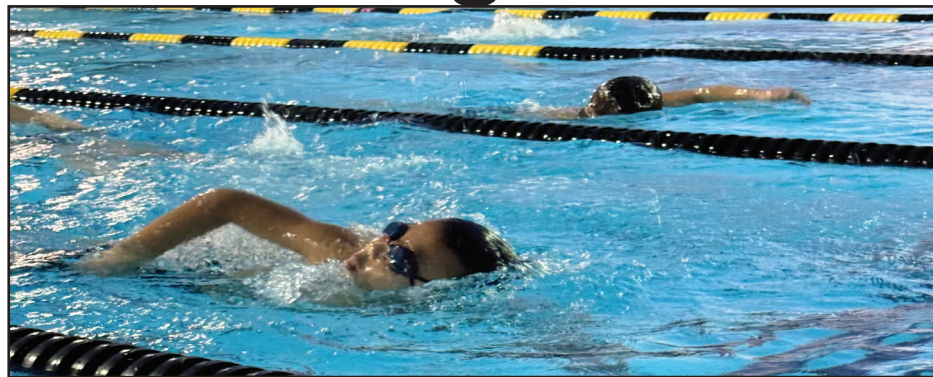
The advice she would give to someone who wants a bun-

ny is to make sure they have a good-sized cage and to leave them in a cool place most of the time, so they don't overheat.

"You can let them roam around outside," Harding said, "but don't [lose] sight of it because one time I almost lost my bunny."



Swimming With Sharks



Working on his technique, third-grader Bolin Deng swims freestyle at swim practice. Deng swims for the Sarasota Sharks and has practices nightly. PHOTO BY ANA EASTER

by Ana Easter

Diving into the ice cold pool, third-grader Bolin Deng holds his breath as the water erupts around him. He smoothly breaks through the water's surface and takes his first stroke. Crowds on the bleachers cheer as he flies through the water. Deng

swims for the Sarasota Sharks and has been swimming for the team since he moved to Florida from Valencia, Spain two years ago.

Deng was inspired to start swimming by his dad, who swam for the Chinese Human Province national swim team when he was younger.

Mata blocks the shots

by Madelyn Bailey

Standing in the hot Florida air, second-grader Liliana Mata sees a soccer ball soar across the field, but she's ready to defend her goal from the other team.

Mata has been playing soccer since she was 4 years old. She currently plays as a goalie on a competitive team at FC Sarasota. She was originally inspired to start playing soccer because of her father and older sister.

"Her dad was her first coach," Mata's mother, Skye Mata, said.

There are many aspects of soccer that Mata enjoys, but her favorite part is that she is never by herself while playing.

"My favorite part is that we are a

team and it's always as a team," Mata said.

Despite all of the enjoyable aspects of soccer, the sport does not come with some hardships.

"The hard thing is when I'm the goalie and it's hard to block the ball because sometimes they have huge kicks, and if I don't block the ball my teammates get a little mad," Mata said.

To overcome the difficulties, Mata puts in a lot of hard work. Along with practices, Mata has soccer games almost every weekend.

"She practices Mondays and Wednesdays from 6:00 to 7:30," Skye Mata said.

Despite the challenges and hard work that comes with being a soccer

"I thought it was cool to swim with him, so I asked him to teach me, and he taught me how to swim some strokes. Then, I joined the Sharks," Deng said.

As a member of the Sharks, Deng has four practices per week for an hour each. In these practices, the team works on different swimming techniques by doing drills and working their muscles both in and out of the water. Both Deng and his mother, Yuping Lin, enjoy the environment of the Sharks team.

"The coaches are all very professional and enthusiastic in teaching so many young swimmers. Bolin's teammates are both competitive and friendly, and everyone gets along very well," Lin said.

Although long practices almost every day along with schoolwork can be hard to manage, swimming has grown

to be Deng's favorite hobby.

"I like swimming because it kind of feels like you're flying when you're underwater, kind of like an airplane," Deng said.

Swimming has benefited Deng in many ways, not only by growing his muscles but also by teaching him useful skills for later in life. In the future, Deng hopes to continue swimming for the Sharks to further improve his techniques.

"Swimming training has indeed made him brighter and more confident, more competitive, with a stronger sense of time and a healthier body," Lin said. "He has made many friends on the swimming team, and they all progressed and grew up together, which is an important thing. I can definitely see him swimming when he's older."

player, the benefits that Mata gets from playing make it worthwhile.

"She has played a lot and she's gotten a lot better," Skye Mata said.



Second-grader Liliana Mata poses in the very center of her soccer team. Mata has played soccer since she was four and has games once a week. PHOTO PROVIDED BY SKYE MATA

BIZARRE BAZAAR

Third-graders and second-graders prepare for the annual tradition, Bizarre Bazaar by creating crafted goods to sell at the festive event. Second-graders in Misty Tucak's class decorated gift bags and cups.



GRAPHIC BY ROBYN SCHOENBERG

Christmas Mad Lib

Ask a friend for a word for each blank based on the kind of word below. For example, ask “give me a verb,” and then write down the word they give you. Don’t let them see the story until the end. That way you will get a very silly final result that might not make much sense. Send a picture of your story to us at match@pineviewtorch.com, so we can read what you wrote!



I heard _____ on the roof and jingle bells ringing. “Ho Ho Ho!” It’s

Verb ending in “-ing”

Santa! I ran down the stairs, and _____ when I saw Santa

Verb ending in -ed

_____ in the _____. He was wearing a(n) _____ suit.

Verb ending in “-ing”

Room in a house

adjective

Under the Christmas tree were piles of _____. He told me he was from

Plural noun

_____ and that during the year he worked as a _____. I called for my

City

Job

family but before they arrived, Santa was gone! I looked out the window and

he was in his _____ pulled by a _____. They flew into the air. His next

Vehicle

Animal

stop was _____’s house!

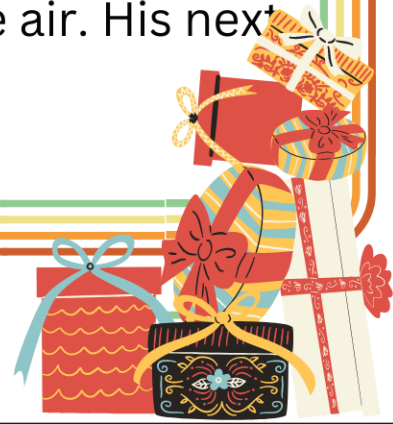
Your friend’s name

Vocabulary

Plural Noun - more than one person, place, or thing

Adjective - a word to name an attribute or describe something

Verb - a word to describe an action



Teachers away, students will play

by Colette Freeman

Once upon a time, something very strange happened in a faraway place called Pine View School.

The sun beat down on a noisy crowd of kids walking into school, ready to start the day. Unexpectedly, something very peculiar happened. On every door, there hung a note titled, "Teachers Out For The Day." The teachers' mysterious disappearance had left the children in charge as teachers for the day.

Excitement buzzed through the air, as students raced to their teachers' desks, battling to see who would be able to lead the class for the day. Suddenly, in every classroom, the loud voice of what seemed to be third-grader Professor McKid boomed.

"Every student must report to the auditorium for the student-teacher voting ceremony," McKid said.

As students gathered in the auditorium, a sea of curious faces filled the seats as they eagerly awaited the ceremony's commencement.

The feedback of a microphone pierced through the large auditorium, and McKid's voice instructed the students to quiet down.

"The council and I have come to the decision that for today, each student will be their very own teacher. Thank you for coming," McKid said.

Students ran across the campus, thrilled to be able to do whatever they

pleased. All around you could see kids playing and doing things they normally couldn't do.

The cafeteria resembled a cooking show, with students participating in cooking and tasting contests. The library was like a winter wonderland, with crisp white pages of books flying in the air, ripped up into shreds. The recent science fair students were adding their very own special touches to the school, like replacing chocolate milk for water in the water fountains and

hanging disco balls around the cafeteria, making a dance floor.

As ninth period rolled around, the day came to a close, and McKid's voice returned to the speakers. The message invited everyone

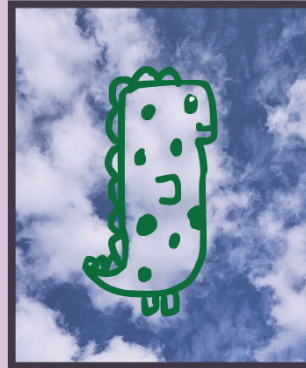
to come to the auditorium once more. There, the student-teacher council thanked everyone for their great work, and reflected on the success throughout the day. As students rolled out of the auditorium, walking home, they chatted excitedly about the day's events, already looking forward to the next time they might have the opportunity to step into their teacher roles once more.

The magical day at Pine View School became a cherished memory and story the students would share with wide-eyed enthusiasm for years to come. All the students waited expectantly for the day that it would happen again.

TEACHERS OUT
FOR THE DAY!

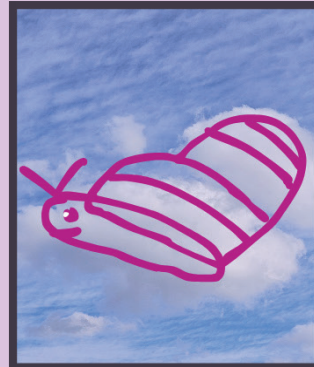
GRAPHIC BY COLETTE FREEMAN

CLOUD CREATURES



STRATUSAURUS

- **Type of Cloud:** Stratus
- **Species:** Air Dinosaur
- **Hobby:** Racing airplanes
- **Classification:** Common, can often be found by using your imagination.



SNAILULUS

- **Name:** Cumulus
- **Species:** Sky Snail
- **Hobby:** Watching people
- **Classification:** Rare, finding the perfect cloud blob can be difficult.



CIREN

- **Name:** Cirrus
- **Species:** Cloud Mermaid
- **Hobby:** Creating Clouds
- **Classification:** Legendary, they are very hard to spot.

HOW MANY CLOUD CREATURES
CAN YOU FIND?

GRAPHIC BY AVA LENERZ

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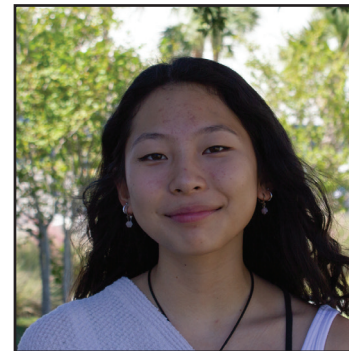
The Majorsky Family

Riva Cleaning Service

The Cirka Family

[a column]

From Match to Flame



Jiayi Zhu,
Match Editor-in-Chief

In 2023, images from NASA's James Webb Space Telescope, the largest telescope in space, showed the formation of new stars in Rho Ophiuchi, a region of space clouds. The world's first whole-eye and partial-face transplant was performed. The Artemis II mission team was picked, setting the stage for the first Black person and first woman on the moon.

If that doesn't tell you possibilities are boundless, then I don't know what will. 2023 saw great things. For 2024? Only time will tell. I encourage you to make your predictions, though. Personally, I'm hoping for a robotic burrito bowl maker in my house.

Nothing is predetermined, including your own progress and advancement. Growth mindset is the idea that with enough hard work and determination, all skills are capable of growth and mastery. In a way, the world is constantly building off of a

growth mindset. No scientific advancement could be made without it. In fact, we would probably still be living like apes and cavemen if our pre-historic ancestors didn't believe the world could be more than sticks and stone.

Even if you have felt yourself struggling with something this year, know that struggle is temporary. With a growth mindset, that struggle can turn into a skill. The most important thing to remember is to never give up. Challenges will only make you a stronger person. Constructive criticism and feedback are merely opportunities for learning.

If you could only make one New Year's resolution, I'd recommend adopting the growth mindset. It can be tempting to spend time doubting yourself, but with confidence you can redirect that energy towards trying new things and learning from the process.

Whether it was nailing the really hard spelling test or scoring that point, recognize your accomplishments this year and be proud of yourself. Drink a little more hot chocolate than you normally would during your break off from school. Embrace all the good things you will do next year. Happy Winter Break and New Year!