

SO LONG 2020. YOU WON'T BE MISSED.



The Vantage Point

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How teenagers lives change over quarantine

Teens are forced into isolation after their social lives are put to a halt

Sean Monroe
Staff Reporter



Covid-19 has had an impact on everyone's lives over the past year, whether it's not having family dinners at restaurants or having to see family members over zoom meetings, things have changed. The change for some people hasn't just been the outside world, but their home lives have changed as well. "Covid has definitely made me closer with my family and I think that just being almost forced to spend more time with them has made me realize how much I appreciate them. It has also made me a lot more patient in my day-to-day life," said senior Caden Sieggreen, For some

students the stay at home order hasn't been too bad of a change, but for some students it has only amplified their already present problems at home, " Being forced to stay home and having nowhere to go because everything is closed has not helped me keep my sanity over the last few weeks. It's hard to keep up with school work when I have to

take care of my siblings at the same time while my mom goes to work,"said sophomore Allysa Bravata . While many students find online school an easy and free way to skip class others are struggling to keep up and stay learning. Online learning for many is harder than traditional classroom learning because some people learn better with hands on paper and pencil work and the ability to ask personalized questions which is

not as easy to do when everyone is in the same zoom class. For classes like AP environmental science which utilizes labs and hands on learning, the switch to online has had a major impact on the way students take the class. With the recent shutdown the environmental students have to go out and do the labs on their own then come back to class to ask questions and review the results which can be hard for students with tight schedules, according to senior Katelyn Smith. On the other side it may give students who don't have anything else to do, a reason to go outside and do some school work. Online classes may not be as effective as in person learning but as the covid cases rise it's something that has to be done to ensure the safety of the students.



courtesy of www
Life at home Students stay home during covid-19 shutdowns and resort to social media to contact friends.

Gender norms are moving in a new direction

The revolution of gender standards in 2020 is staying strong in 2021

Alexa Beltz
Staff Reporter



With social reforms changing the way people think in 2020, the normalization of men wearing skirts and nail polish is just a couple of the things that have revolutionized gender norms in current society. Recently, the idea of men wearing traditionally "feminine" clothes and accessories has generated a massive amount of support. Although men expressing their femininity has been seen before from LGBTQ+ members, it has been more accepted and encouraged by people of all genders and all sexual orientations now than in the past. This wave of acceptance

is most widely spread by Gen Z on TikTok, a creative video-sharing platform. During Halloween, several boys began to create videos of themselves dressed in maid costumes, and from there it took off. The trend gained popularity and encouraged men to publicly express their interest in traditionally feminine ideas like wearing dresses, skirts, crop tops, nail polish and

makeup. Not only is this feminine movement being seen on Tiktok, but it also can be seen through a multitude of public figures. Harry Styles poses in a dress for the cover of Vouge. While gender fluidity has gained lots of traction when it comes to public acceptance, it hasn't been easy, as many of

these celebrities have received backlash. Harry Styles was involved in the most recent case of this. In his Vogue photoshoot he wore a dress, which caught the attention of many other public figures who critiqued him for not appearing to dress as a "manly man." Even though many others have also criticism. Harry Styles and many more have calmly responded to the criticism and haven't backed down from their interest in dressing fluid. Other smaller public figures, like creators on Tiktok or Instagrammers, have also experienced the backlash that came with dressing gender fluid as well as people out of the public eye. Gender fluidity can be seen throughout history, but the widespread acceptance is what has made it so revolutionary today.



courtesy of www
Challenging gender norms Harry Styles poses in a dress for the cover of Vouge.

Kelsie Sparks
Columnist

HARK TO
SPARK



This is senior year for some of us. The year without normal football games, homecoming, pep rallies, college tours, maybe prom, and possibly a normal graduation. Instead of having normal traditions, we now have masks, SAT's, and the constant fear of shut down. The class of 2020 was recognized for being the class at home. But what about the students in self-quarantine? What about eagle virtual? What about all of us? 2020 graduates still had half of their senior year, but since the class of 2021 is at home now, will we ever go back? We are missing out on key things that make senior year special. I am missing out on all the original plans I had. Being able to go to the homecoming dance with my friends and coming home feeling gross, being able to dance in a beautiful dress that doesn't fit right at prom, sitting next to all of my peers in a hot event hall listening to graduation speeches, while my parents waive from the crowded stands. These events weren't perfect but they were good enough for me and I took them for granted. I know we won't get any of these memories back. I know there is not much that can be done about it. It's just frustrating. I'm sure my fellow peers can agree with me when I say that Having a shortened junior year and an abnormal senior year has been difficult. Everything that we needed to do last year is crammed into this year. During the summer many seniors did not have the opportunity to tour colleges and many still aren't able to. Applications were pushed back because many schools weren't sure if they were able to open. SAT's were late and shoved into one day. The class of 2020 was known for having the worst senior year. But what about us, What about all the lost opportunities for the class of '21. The good days of high school have almost come and gone. As a tired and confused senior, I speak for all of us when I say we are missing out too.

Opinions? Comments?
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Game show loses lifetime host

Jada Doerr
Staff Editor



Zac Baker
Staff Reporter



On November 8, Jeopardy! host Alex Trebek passed away at 80, after his long battle with Stage IV pancreatic cancer.

Over the 37 different seasons, Trebek hosted over 8,200 episodes of the show Jeopardy! Even though he spent all of these years as a television host, Trebek's success did not come easy. Trebek was initially studying philosophy when he changed his mind and decided he wanted to be a journalist. He then worked as a reporter for a broadcasting corporation for a while. While in his mid 20's, Trebek decided once again to switch his career path; this time to a game show host. He originally started at a show called Reach for the Top, and then he later hosted the game show called Jackpot. In 1984, producer host



courtesy of www Jeopardy! for nearly 8,200 episodes, spanning 37 seasons.

Legendary legacy

Merv Griffin asked him to be the host of Jeopardy!.

Trebek's career as a game show host was historical; he set many records and touched many people's hearts. Trebek earned five daytime Emmy awards for his work as a host. Trebek received a personal achievement when he passed Bob Barker, the host of The Price is Right, as the person to host the most game show episodes. Through all of

this success, Trebek stayed humble, always mentioning that he was enjoying his life, loving his job, loving the show, and having fun getting to know all of the show's participants.

In 2018, Trebek debated retirement, but he ended up signing an extension through 2022. Producers mentioned that he loved the show because of how it tested people's intelligence. Even when Trebek was battling cancer he still showed up to work because of his love for the show. He filmed new episodes up until October 29—just over a

week before he died. The news of Trebek's death broke hearts throughout the nation. Following the death of the beloved host, many celebrities, fans, and contestants (including all three Greatest of All Time tournament contestants) expressed their sadness, love, and thanks for Trebek.

Starting in January 2021, Jeopardy! will have a new season for the first time without Trebek. Instead of hiring a long-term replacement, they will try several interim hosts, starting with Ken Jennings, the most winning player in Jeopardy! history and the winner of the Greatest of All Time tournament. The executive producer mentioned that Trebek wanted the show to keep going, because he believed in it. Beginning on December 21, Jeopardy! will honor Trebek by airing his 10 best episodes.

Over Trebek's 35 years as the host of Jeopardy!, he left a legacy while becoming one of the most cherished figures in American television. Trebek was supported by all of his friends and family, and he is survived by his wife, Jean, and their three children. The show will not ever be the same, but Trebek paved a path for the future hosts of the show.

Raterink reflects on science trip

Baron Davis
Staff Reporter



Senior Tyler Raterink was chosen to join 25 other students to go on one of the most impactful trips of a lifetime— Summer Science. Two weeks out west traveling national parks and other natural wonders, the friendships and memories students made were unlike any other. To qualify for this once in a lifetime opportunity, students are required to take a sufficient number of science courses, be in good physical shape, and have the integrity to prove they are capable of such a trip. In preparing for this experience, Raterink made sure he stayed in shape by running frequently and doing well in his science classes. He then submitted an application and hoped to be accepted.

This year's Summer Science looked a little bit different due to the impacts

of COVID-19, such as shortening the trip to two weeks instead of three weeks, but that didn't stop Raterink from taking full advantage of this opportunity.

Looking back on the experience, Raterink said it was better than he had ever imagined it would be. His favorite part of the two weeks was hiking to Delta Lake in the Teton Mountain Range. Delta lake is a tarn, which is a small mountain lake, located high up in the Tetons. If given the opportunity to go on Summer Science again, he said he would go in a heartbeat. "The relationships that you form, the places you get to visit, and the things you learn about the earth is something I will never forget, and I would drop whatever I was doing to go again," said Raterink.

He recommends this to any student who is interested in learning about the world in a different way, "Learning about science is cool, but learning with real features that you can touch and see with your own eyes is what makes the learning

experience so great," said Raterink.

With an impact that would stay with him forever, Raterink had learned just how small a person's time perspective is compared to the geological time scale. "Everything that we visited was larger than life and extremely beautiful. And the complexity and time that it takes to form them give you a new lens of appreciation and wonder for the mountains. I learned how powerful the mountains are and I left them a better person," said Raterink.

Raterink also shared how he had the opportunity to spend time with people he probably wouldn't have otherwise. "The students that went on the trip were very different in so many ways, and I learned that you can be different from others and still build strong relationships," said Raterink. Now, he can't imagine not being friends with them, showing the everlasting impact this trip has on each and every student that gets the chance to go on it.

New findings after study on Buttermilk Creek

Sean Monroe
Staff Reporter



One of the defining characteristics of the school is Buttermilk Creek that splits the campus in half. The 2nd hour AP Environmental scientists decided to run a few tests on the quality and health of the creek from October 26-30. The purpose was to connect the land use of the area around the creek, to the quality of the water. Knowing the quality of an area's water can tell how the land around the creek and nearby waterways are being used. They went down into the creek and caught many micro invertebrates, such as tadpoles, blue gill, and many other small bugs. There have also been recent sightings of a muskrat in the creek as well. Michigan has quite

the reputation when it comes to weather, which can greatly affect the water quality of waterways such as Buttermilk Creek. When they were testing, the weather was cold and cloudy which is not



Don't drink! The creek between the campuses is foul. courtesy of www

photosynthesising and creating the dissolved oxygen that is vital for aquatic life.

The APES students reviewed their data on the chemical makeup of the school's Buttermilk Creek and found that

compared to other rivers and streams it is ranked 5th out of 10 local rivers and streams nearby for water quality. But the aquatic life of the creek is not ranked as high and is only one step up

from poor. One of the causes of the sub par water quality in Buttermilk Creek is fertilizer runoff from local lawns and farms, reducing the use of fertilizers will increase the water quality in Buttermilk creek. The students are sure that if they do more research then they will find more specimens which would bring its ranking up.

Compared to other rivers and waterways in the area, Buttermilk Creek is ranked on

the lower side of things. When put next to rivers like the Grand River or the Rouge River it doesn't fare as well, but when comparing creeks to rivers one has to take into account the volume and surrounding land, seeing as the runoff from the land goes down the river or creek and gets dispersed and left behind. When comparing Buttermilk to Rush Creek the data is a lot closer, with minor changes due to the location and properties of local runoff.

Buttermilk Creek may not be in the best shape, but that doesn't mean there isn't anything that can be done to help. The school has quite the littering problem during the warmer months, which is never a good thing for the environment. With the help from students in a cleanup effort that problem could be solved.

School bond additions to look forward to

Vienna Putman
Staff Reporter



Many students have heard of the exciting expansion that will begin the Spring of 2021 to the school campus. These plans are still underway and on track to begin despite the interesting events this year has brought.

According to principal Jordan Beel the school was desperately in need of more space for the oncoming wave of students. In 2019, a committee of parents, faculty, and students, led by Superintendent, Dr. Doug VanderJagt, agreed that a bond

was needed for the expansion. The bond passed and plans ensued. "Our current gym holds about 1800-1900 students," said Beel. Within a normal, pandemic free year, the building would have 2,000 plus students in the school. That number will only grow.

Beel stated the construction plan for this expansion will kick off with a new choir room with a predicted completion time of Christmas 2021 as well as a connecting

building that joins the Freshman Campus and Main Campus. This connecting portion will include new classrooms eliminating the often cold journey that most



If you build it, they will come The bridge between the buildings will soon be history. courtesy of www

students currently make each day. This section of the construction is expected to be complete in the Fall of 2023.

Yet another part of this plan is the new sports Field House which will have a sleek, modern design with a wrap-around indoor track, and a fitness room on the top

floor. While on the lower level the basketball court is surrounded by bleachers on all sides, giving the best experience for Hudsonville games. The spacious building will allow many more people to comfortably attend games as well as condition themselves for their sports. As Beel put it, "It's something to be proud of for our whole district!" The Field House is said to be finished in early 2024.

Other plans for the high school include kitchen and cafeteria renovations, Academic Commons renovations, and also converting the existing gym into a wrestling and cheer space. If all goes to plan, the completion of these changes will be ready for all to see mid-2024.

New challenges arise with online schooling

Zac Baker
Staff Reporter



With all of the high school students going online and some primary grades following, teachers and parents worry if their kids or students are receiving the proper education to help them grow.

Michigan is currently facing a very tough situation, they have to make sure all students are receiving the proper education while everyone is required to stay at home. This includes problems like students that do not have internet access at their houses or

even have spotty internet. Some adults with very young elementary students have to go to their job while leaving their kid home with maybe a grandparent who may struggle with how to work a computer to help them stay connected with their teachers. Teachers also were not very prepared to go online as it came as a somewhat surprise when Governor Whitmer announced that it was not safe to go in person with the Coronavirus spreading rapidly. "If I were to have a choice, I would go in person because of online school being awful. I mean the school computer can't even run Netflix on it," said Senior Brett Baine.

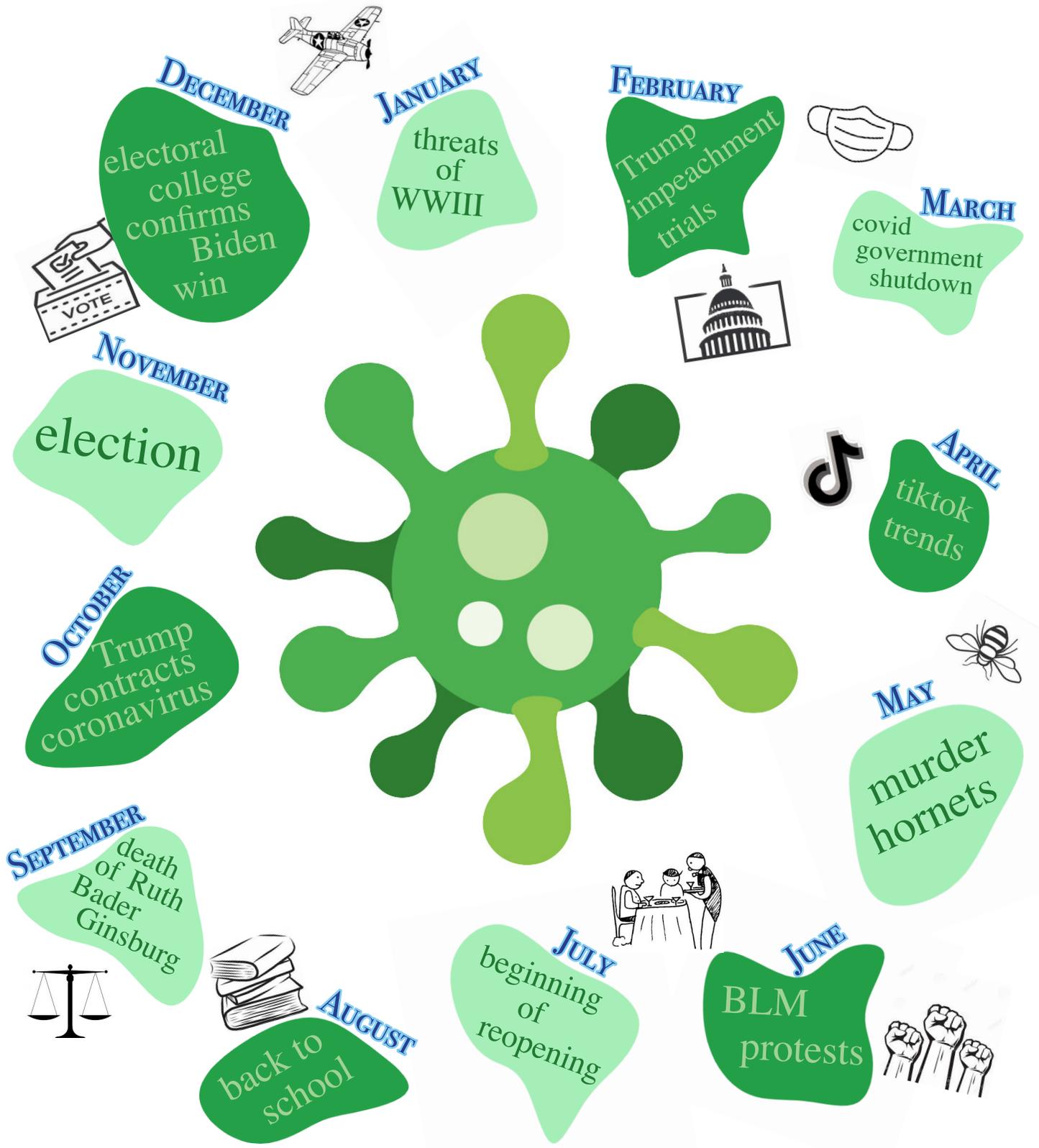
With schools online, teachers are trying their best to stay in touch with their students, even though it may be a struggle. With teachers getting many emails, it is hard to stay caught up and answer all of their questions when they have things to deal with on their own. "Learning online is definitely different, but I think in some ways it prepares us for the future. We are in control of our own learning at home. We don't have teachers looking out for us like we would school. It sucks to be doing it but in some ways we're doing our own things," said senior Andrew Knobloch.

Some schools are

hustling to make a plan for both the possibility of staying online or eventually going back to school in person after the holidays. In March, when Governor Whitmer announced that schools had to go online, all of the schools stayed online the entire rest of the year. Many high school teachers are preparing for the possibility of staying online for an extended period.

With all of the uncertainty going on right now in the world, schools and teachers are trying their best to figure out the proper amount of work to give their students, and figuring out the best way to stay in contact with their students as well.

2020: A YEAR FULL OF SURPRISES



Peacocks search for a new home

Ashley Strick
Staff Editor



A once reserved-for-the-zoo animal has found residency in a southern Florida neighborhood. Coconut Grove in Miami has become a home to nearly 80 peacocks, and some residents of the area are not very thrilled about it.

Complaints from those within the neighborhood have become so great that the city commission has voted to relocate the animals. Residents report hearing squawking until the wee hours of the night, and droppings all over the town. Some have claimed that they feel as though they are being held hostage by the birds in their neighborhood. Records have shown that some of the male peacocks attack dark-colored vehicles because they can not differentiate between their reflection and another male, so they feel threatened.

Before the introduction of the peacocks, Coconut Grove was a peaceful place to live, with

leafy streets and a bohemian feel. Being one of Florida's oldest neighborhoods, Coconut Grove is near the coast, and has plenty of foliage and trees to accompany is chic shops and cafes. For many residents, the peacocks have brought nothing but mass chaos to the once-beautiful town.

Not everyone is against the Coconut Grove peacocks. It has been said by some that the symbolic bird is as much of a staple of the city as coconuts are. Others say they would not be able to imagine the city without the peacocks because they have a sense of elegance that compliments Coconut Grove well. Others are not too concerned with some of the things their neighbors are. A resident of the neighborhood, Karen Hollihan said that she is not bothered by the birds eating her plants out in front of her home unlike some of those who live around her. She does not think the peacocks are doing any harm to anyone or anything by simply taking a bite out of her greenery.

The decision to remove

some of the peacocks in the area was made by a unanimous vote by the city's commission. They said that the process will not be easy, but they will find a way to safely and humanely remove some of the birds from Coconut Grove. Experts in the animal control field say that peacocks are similar to ninjas, as they are nearly impossible to catch. The job will not be simple, and the city is having trouble finding help with moving the peacocks unscathed and happy to a sanctuary where they will eventually reside. It has been said that the removal of animals such as peacocks is far worse than that of insects or rats.

Some residents of Miami's Coconut Grove are looking forward to the day when a lesser amount of peacocks freely roam the streets of their neighborhood. Others have been saddened by the news of these extravagant birds eventual relocation. Nevertheless, the peacocks of Coconut Grove have been a staple piece of the town for many years, and some Floridians will miss their overwhelming presence.

Jada Doerr
Editor/columnist



I'M AN ARIES

People born between August 23 and September 22 are Virgos. They are symbolized with a maiden because of their purity in their intentions. They're represented by the period of life between 35 and 42, so when people are mature and look like they know what they're doing with their life. I think this is accurate because whenever I meet one, they always appear very composed. Virgos are mainly known for their organization; it's not necessarily that they are neat, but they usually have their thoughts organized. Virgos are analytical thinkers which makes it easy for me to rely on these individuals. In my personal experience with Virgos, I've noticed that most of them are always trying to expand their knowledge. Along with the intellectual outlook on life that many Virgos carry, they're very inspired by beauty. They thrive off aesthetics and view how they decorate their room or how they dress themselves as a part of their personality. I've also found that Virgos commonly fall victim to the imposter syndrome—they are very hard on themselves and doubt their accomplishments. Virgos are big on self-criticizing even when their talents are clearly impressive. With this, they are very hard workers which can come off as being a control freak at times. Along with Virgos being quite judgmental to themselves, it is also common for it to seem like they are judgmental towards others. I've noticed that some Virgos have a somewhat traditional outlook on life, and it can seem that when someone does something that is a little unconventional, they just seem confused on why people don't do things the same as them. I have found that this creates some interpersonal conflicts for Virgo's relationships. Some hard-working celebrities that I think encompass a lot of Virgo characteristics are Blake Lively, Jimmy Fallon, Beyoncé, and Zendaya.

Mood rings coming back in style

Ellen Derrer
Staff Editor



With their color-changing appeal, mood rings were once a staple in every kid's look, boys and girls alike.

Created in 1975 by 2 New York investors, Josh Reynolds and Maris Ambats, mood rings were initially priced at \$45 for a silver band and \$250 for a gold band. However,

it wasn't hard to find a cheap one at a gas station or store. Science teacher Christine Webster said, "Mood rings never worked for me because they were based on warmth, and I was always cold and so it never turned

blue or green. This one kid in my class always had extreme warmth so his was always blue, and I was jealous. Also, if you got a cheap one the metal turned your finger a black color." To create the color-changing aspect, the investors bonded liquid crystals with quartz stones. The liquid crystal serves as a thermochromic element, changing color based

on the temperature of the ring wearer's finger. More examples of thermochromism are baby bottles or kettles that change color to indicate the temperature inside; for example, turning red to show its hotness or blue to signal its coolness.

Mood rings are a specialized liquid crystal thermometer: a type of thermometer containing heat-sensitive liquid crystals that change color to indicate different temperatures. This thermometer, however, is unique in that it is worn on a finger. The ring is then embellished with a gemstone made of quartz or glass, which is the clear pocket of thermochromic liquid crystal. Changes in the

color of the crystal or ring are due to changing temperatures of the finger causing the crystal to reflect different wavelengths of light. When the skin's temperature is average, about 93 degrees Fahrenheit, the liquid crystal is set to show a neutral color.

In addition to their cool appearance, the appeal of mood rings lies in their potential to

show the wearer their emotion. The colors vary between black, grey, amber, green, blue, and violet. The warmest temperature is violet, indicating that the wearer is excited, whereas the coolest temperature is black, hinting that the wearer is tense or nervous. Although many abide by their mood ring's ability to tell them exactly how they're feeling, others argue that the rings aren't that accurate. One argument is that the temperature readings aren't consistent because the accuracy lies in the assumption that the crystal is on one's finger. However, there are available mood necklaces. The average temperature of the chest and finger are not the same, so the crystal would reflect different colors than what the wearer might actually be feeling.

Whether someone buys a mood ring for the accuracy or the look, most would agree that they add a bit of fun. "I think there has been a resurgence of vintage and retro styles and especially new popularity in weird but cool things that help people express themselves. I think mood rings are also a fun conversation starter and it definitely tells a lot about a person's personality because it demonstrates that they have style and are cool," said Senior Braden TerHaar.



photo by Ellen Derrer

Moody seniors Seniors Braden TerHaar, Isabella Fabbro, and Jack Chycinski show off their bling by displaying their mood rings.

MSU swim and dive team got cut

Sydney Kline
Staff Reporter



Michigan State University made a recent decision that they will no longer sponsor their men's and women's varsity swimming and diving teams. The Division 1 school has been facing major financial crisis in their college athletics. MSU Athletic Director Bill Beekman said this was not an easy decision for the university. The decision was made for financial reasons and not entirely tied to the pandemic. The president and athletic director said that, as of right now, the school will not have to cut any other of their other sports. All scholarships for student-athletes will be honored beyond this season for any student-athletes who choose to finish their undergraduate degree at MSU.

A sister duo, Erin and Riley Szara, spent years to get to the MSU swim and dive team. So for them, hearing the news is extremely hard since they were not given any sort of warning. The cut affected people so much that an Instagram page has been made to battle the decision of the Olympic sport being cut from the

school; the page has over 4,000 followers. They post about how they are taking action to help swimmers and divers who are effected by the cut. The page also posts about their issues on how MSU is taking action on it. The page is getting so popular that even Olympic swimmers like Katie Ledekey and Summer Sanders are responding to it. The Olympic swimmers were added to an Instagram live done by The Battle for MSU Swim and Dive Instagram page, and they talked about how they heard about the cut and are heart broken because they were swimming at a Division 1 college themselves. They said to imagine the sport being cut from their school would have ruined their future. Ledekey talked about how her heart goes out to the MSU



Repping her colors A swimmer gets ready for her race as she puts her MSU cap on.

swimmers and divers and how she knows how much hard work and dedication they put into the sport, and to see their school cut the sport has to be tough.

Last season, the women's swimming and diving team celebrated their 50th season. In March, the men's team got 10th and women's got 12th place in the BIG 10

championship. The swimming and diving team has produced 48 individual champions since joining the BIG 10 in 1953. They had 38 individual swimmers, 7 relays, and 3 divers. The College Swimming and Diving Coaches Association announced their Scholar All-American teams for the 2019 Spring Semester. Michigan State's men's program took top honors nationally with a 3.72 cumulative GPA, while the women ranked tops in the Big Ten and 16th nationally with a 3.65 GPA.

Bryce Morningstar
Columnist



CHICKEN
SCRATCH

Lacrosse does not get enough recognition, for how hard of a sport it is. It takes both a mentally strong and physically strong person to play it. From constantly running up and down the field, to getting hit in the arms, legs, and anything in between, lacrosse has the same amount of contact as hockey. It also has the same amount of cardio as soccer, and even more running than football.

This sport has been known to be soft, or a rich person sport, but nothing about lacrosse is soft. When it comes to the gear needed to play this sport, one can find sticks and pads that are quite cheap at most sports stores such as Dick's Sporting Goods. A low end lacrosse stick will cost a person 50 dollars, with pads costing a little more.

Lacrosse is also one of the most under-appreciated sports at Hudsonville. The teams have had a lot of talent and success in the past couple of years. They made it to the playoffs the last couple of years, and the credit goes to the head lacrosse coach, Tyler Quinn. He will be going into his third year of coaching varsity lacrosse this upcoming season.

The creation of this game dates all the way back prior to 1630 when Europeans first saw Native Americans playing it. Native Americans played the game, as they thought it would please "the Creator" or their God. It is the longest known sport in the USA, and in Canada they started calling it "The Creator's Game." It was later named lacrosse by Jean de Brébeuf, a European who watched the Huron Indians play it in a field in 1636.

Lacrosse is much harder than people think. People should pick up a lacrosse stick and try to do what lacrosse players do on a day-to-day agenda. Lacrosse deserves more recognition for how hard it is, and how long it dates back.

Opinions? Comments?
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Winter colorguard goes virtual

The band program makes the most of COVID-19

Alexis Coulter
Staff Editor



The Hudsonville band program has always made sure that they had their own winter programs available to students. Hudsonville bands offer two different programs, Winter Percussion and Winter Color Guard. Both programs are competitive sports, students take part in competitions while performing themed shows.

"Once the marching band season ends, I know that

I don't have to worry about not being in band for a while. Because guard always starts up again right after and I love it," said Senior Andy Anderson, a member of the Colorguard. Guard and percussion in the winter give students more opportunities to refine their skills and make sure they stay on top while out of marching, and challenging them while doing so. The Colorguard program places students into three different teams, making sure each student gets the education of the sport and equipment they need while making sure they are challenged

enough in their place.

This year, each program was set to begin rehearsing and getting their shows together in early December. Due to Covid-19, teams would not be able to travel to different schools. Instead, they would hold virtual competitions. Performing their show live to a judge or recording the show and sending it in to be critiqued. Yet due to the shutdown, both programs had to be shut down for the time being. Both programs had already begun to plan for shows and put them together in the background, but everything was put on hold.

No new advances were made in the guard until January 2nd, when the band program announced they would begin practices once again on January 19th. Students were asked to sign up once again as soon as possible. The band program at this point still doesn't know if a season will be happening, or if they will just put a show together and practice just to experience it. Either way, the band program is ecstatic to have the chance to be together.

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The effects of QAnon on the 2020 election

Sarah Cook
Staff Reporter



Throughout the past several months, the media has been saturated with political articles, memes, and videos. Appearing on some platforms is a group named QAnon. QAnon is a sprawling internet conspiracy theory that has gained the support from several of President Trump's supporters.

The followers of QAnon believe that a secret political clique of Satan-worshipping Democrats, Hollywood celebrities, and billionaires run the world. It is also believed they engage in pedophilia, human trafficking, and the harvesting of a supposedly life-extending chemical from the blood of abused children. A popular claim is that Barack

Obama, Hillary Clinton, George Soros, and others are planning a coup against Trump and are involved in an international child sex-trafficking ring. QAnon followers believe that Donald Trump is waging a secret battle against this cabal and its "deep state" collaborators to expose the malefactors and send them all to Guantánamo Bay, in Cuba.

QAnon used to be something most ignored when they saw it on the internet, but in recent months it has gone mainstream. Twitter, Facebook and other social networks have been flooded with QAnon-related false information about Covid-19, the Black Lives Matter protests and the 2020 election. Supporters have also been trying to attach themselves to other activist causes, such as the anti-vaccine and anti-child-trafficking

movements, in an effort to expand their ranks.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) presented documents to Yahoo! News in August 2019, that showed this conspiracy could potentially become a domestic terrorism threat. According to the report, the FBI is concerned about "conspiracy theory-driven domestic extremists," specifically mentioning QAnon and other right-wing conspiracy theories. Newsweek reached out to the FBI for comment, but did not receive a response.

In the offline world, some believers have been charged with violent crimes, including one QAnon follower accused of murdering a mafia boss in New York last year. Another follower was arrested in April and accused of threatening to kill Joe Biden.

The FBI has warned that QAnon poses a potential domestic terror threat.

In the past, the conspiracy theory Pizzagate became viral during the 2016 presidential campaign. The personal email account of John Podesta, Hillary Clinton's campaign manager, was hacked and the emails were posted on WikiLeaks for everyone to see. Proponents of the Pizzagate conspiracy theory falsely claimed the emails contained coded messages that connected several high-ranking Democratic Party officials and U.S. restaurants with an alleged human trafficking and child sex ring. One of the establishments allegedly involved was the Comet Ping Pong pizzeria in Washington, D.C.. This shows that QAnon is not the first, nor the last, baseless conspiracy theory to emerge in recent years.

Trump's overall reaction to election results

Luna Pietrzak
Staff Editor



Throughout the election, it seemed that President Trump had a good chance of being elected for a second term after the first few days of person votes in multiple states. When votes started to come in, it seemed like it was a closer race between the two candidates while many people were anticipating the results. The election as a whole was slower than usual to be called because millions of people mailed in their ballots instead of voting in person due to covid. With many people mailing in their absentee ballots, Biden slowly started to gain more and more votes saying the tides in his favor. One of the biggest reasons the mailed-in ballots

avored Biden over Trump because Trump encouraged his supporters to vote in person instead of mailing in their ballots. Trump took this approach to vote because he claimed there was more room for voter fraud. Finally, on Saturday, November seventh, after Biden won Pennsylvania

pushing him over the 270 electoral votes needed to win, it was called that Biden would most likely become the next president.

After the news broke that Biden got the 270 electoral votes and became the president-elect. Trump's campaign requested that states, such as Arizona, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania recount the ballots

to confirm the winner of those states and that there was not a miscount or voter fraud that happened. Trump went on record to say that Americans were entitled to a fair and honest election and that every vote counted was

legal. After Trump's campaign requested recounts in some of the swing states, many of those states have claimed that Biden still won with a .25%-.50% victory over Trump. Many of the states have also gone on record to state there was very little evidence to suggest that there was voter fraud involved. After the recounts showed that

Biden won the swing states, many lawyers from Trump's campaign, including former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, have tried to overturn Biden's win by launching lawsuits in several key swing states claiming that there was mass voter fraud in those states. A majority of the lawsuits have been filed in Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Since the Election ended, Trump's campaign filed at least forty-six lawsuits, but around twenty of those lawsuits have been denied, dismissed, settled, or withdrawn because there was not enough substantial evidence backing the claims he made. But Trump has tried to spread unproven allegations of electoral fraud in key states, despite repeated pushback from election officials and judges in numerous court cases.



2020 election The race for the presidential office is all over. photo by www.

Territorial wars in China over Taiwan island

Drakke Cecchini
Staff Reporter



The next president may be posed with a new foreign policy challenge, and potentially the greatest one the United States has ever seen. In 2018, China was one of two countries, along with Russia, that was deemed the biggest military threats to the United States. Within the last two years, China has outgrown Russia and sealed the number one spot.

Beijing's rapid modernization program has watched as it's military has risen

to a new level of global power. They can now comfortably project their forces all throughout the Indo-Pacific region and even beyond. Just in this year China has engaged in several border clashing battles with Indian troops. China's military ships have been involved in multiple incidents in the wars of the South China Sea.

Taiwan has always been a self governing island, yet Beijing sees it as an inseparable part of its territory. The Chinese President, Xi Jinping has clear ambitions to reunify the island with the mainland and he has refused to rule out using force. Beijing will continue to apply

military force to the island of Taiwan, regardless of who is in the White House. The Trump administration has immensely supported Taiwan, which is one of the United States most important allies in Asia. Taiwan has been repeatedly visited by high level U.S. government officials and has been sold fighter jets. The current state of play leaves no room for the next president to pull out from supporting Taiwan.

Covid-19 has blown into not only America's economy, but also China's. China has recovered much faster from the economic drain than the U.S. has. China's military took little to no hit when

Covid struck. The speedy recovery by China has resulted in a massive advantage of technological and military advances in the Chinese military. Washington D.C. has been under pressure for years to keep up with the Chinese technology and advancements. China's type 55 destroyers are among the world's best class of warships. Beijing's missiles have made astonishing strides in the direction of survivability and numbers. United States military bases in Guam and Japan are well in full, accurate, and overwhelming range of Chinese missile strikes. China is now more of a threat to the United States than the Soviet Union ever was.

FDA approves drugmaker Pfizer's vaccine candidate

Sarah Cook
Staff Reporter



The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has confirmed the safety and efficacy of Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine candidate. The review also found evidence that the vaccine, which is given in two doses, three weeks apart, began to protect people after the first dose. Britain announced on December 7th that they had begun administering the Pfizer vaccine, becoming the first Western country to begin a mass

effort to inoculate people against the coronavirus. Although there is a development of a successful vaccine, Pfizer has told the Trump administration it cannot provide substantial additional doses of the vaccine until late June or July because other countries have rushed to buy up most of its supply.

Pfizer enrolled approximately 44,000 people in its late-stage clinical study in the United States, Germany, Turkey, South Africa, Brazil, and Argentina. Researchers divided the participants into two groups: One group received

two doses of the vaccine, while the other was given two doses of a placebo shot. To eliminate any unintentional bias toward the results, neither group knew whether they received the vaccine or the placebo. The study began in late July, and participants were exposed to the coronavirus as they went about their normal routines. So far, there have been 170 cases of Covid-19 in people who were not previously infected. Only eight of those cases were among people who received two shots of the vaccine, which indicates a strong signal of efficacy. Of all those

participants who became sick with covid, 10 became seriously ill — all but one in the group that received the placebo shot.

The FDA's career scientists undertook their own thorough analysis of the data over the past few weeks. The Pfizer vaccine showed efficacy of 95% at preventing symptomatic Covid-19 infection, measured starting from seven days after the second dose was administered. The vaccine appeared to be more or less equally protective across age groups and racial and ethnic groups.

Mask introduction increases pollution worldwide

Mia Halm
Staff Reporter



With masks being common in almost every country around the world during the pandemic, many people opt for disposable, single-use masks. These plastic face coverings are seen strung around parks, streets, beaches and are destroying the homes of wildlife throughout the world. These pieces of litter can cause serious harm to wildlife when animals come in contact with masks, either by ingesting them or getting entangled in the ear

loops of masks. Along with the risk of harming wildlife through direct contact, disposable masks contain plastics that contaminate and pollute water.

Since the start of the coronavirus outbreak, according to the AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science), single-use mask production in China reached 116 per day in February, 12 times more than the usual amount. These masks and other PPE's (Personal Protective Equipment) are adding to the already polluted animal habitats, and slowly starting to fill the homes of native animals. Most of the

disposable masks are made of a plastic called polypropylene, which breaks down slowly and releases toxins as it decomposes. As this plastic breaks down into micro-plastic, it's released into the wildlife's food sources, as these toxins are introduced into the food chain, they harm many animals. These masks don't only kill animals through their toxins but also by way of ingestion. When animals try to eat these masks, it may constrict their breathing or stop digestion. Even if animals do not ingest the masks, it may restrict their ability to move around freely.

Although reusable

masks are the more environmentally friendly option, if one is wearing a single-use, disposable face mask, they should be sure to dispose of it safely. After a single-use mask is worn, both ear loops should be cut open with scissors. Although the microplastics and toxins are still a threat to wildlife, this diminishes the risk of an animal getting entangled in the mask. If cutting the ear loops of the mask is not an option, it could be ripped in half. If one isn't required to wear a specific type of face mask, they should opt for cloth, reusable masks to decrease the damage of PPE waste.

President Trump addressed alleged voter fraud

Kadence Weston
Staff Reporter



Donald Trump has not conceded the presidential race. As of now there is no evidence whatsoever of a "stolen" election.

A bitter campaign season marked by extreme ideological disputes and an unprecedented pandemic is over. The Associated Press and other media outlets declared Joe Biden the winner of the 2020 United States Presidential election after four days of electoral uncertainty. And despite Donald Trump's repeated instance to the contrary, there has been no evidence of intentional voter fraud.

The Trump campaign planned to file a lawsuit to challenge 10,000 Nevada mail ballots. The campaign alleges that the ballots were submitted by voters who no longer live in the states as well, so far without

much success. Regardless, with more than 150 million votes counted, there's no evidence of mail vote-related fraud and not on a scale that would change the results of the election. Trump may not be as suspicious of mail voting as he seems. "Early voting and vote-by-mail start today in arizona!" He tweeted at the beginning of October. "We want all eligible voters to vote, and have it counted!"

In his press conference, President Trump laid out two of his core concerns. "They're finding ballots all of a sudden," he said of the Democrats. "Votes are coming in after Election Day. And they had a ruling already (in Georgia) that you have to have the votes in by Election Day ... In Pennsylvania, partisan Democrats have allowed ballots in the state

to be received three days after the election." Counting, auditing, and canvassing always takes time after an election, and each state determines its deadlines for when mail ballots must be postmarked and received. Pennsylvania originally set Election Day as the deadline to receive absentee by-mail ballots but didn't list a deadline.

In October, the state revised the timeline so ballots postmarked through Election Day would be counted if they were received by 5 pm Friday (today) local time. A federal court and the Supreme Court both upheld the change.

Regardless of the specifics in each state, multiple days of processing does not

mean that late absentee ballots are being counted or that states are changing their deadlines on the fly. Pennsylvania in particular was expected to count late into the week, because of a state law that prevented officials from starting to count mail ballots in advance of Election Day.

"There has never been, in modern history, a federal election in the United States where we had official results on Election Day," says Larry Norden, deputy director of the Brennan Center's Democracy Program at New York University School of Law. "It is quite normal for counting to take more than one day. Official tallies in federal elections almost always take several days to weeks, and the reason is simple: We want to make sure the count is accurate." Therefore all of the assumptions regarding the sudden increase in votes for Biden being illegal and the cheating scandal are false. Biden won the election without cheating his way to the presidency.



Making a stand Protestors in Phoenix, Arizona march in the streets demanding every vote to be counted amidst the alleged voter fraud in the 2020 election.

courtesy of www

Certain foods prove to lower anxiety

Jada Doerr
Staff Editor



About 18% of the population, or 40 million American adults, struggle with anxiety disorders—they are the most common mental illnesses in the United States, and with the pandemic, numbers continue to rise. There is currently no cure for anxiety, but there are many therapies, medications and lifestyle changes used to manage the illness. Scientists have stated that an important strategy to help relieve the burden of anxiety is adjusting and improving one's diet.



photo by Jada Doerr
Fueling the body Senior Lyda Gray staying hydrated to stay mentally healthy.

There are many health guidelines like avoiding caffeine and alcohol, eating a balanced diet, and drinking plenty of water that have been said to improve one's mental health. While the relationship between anxiety and what is eaten is still not entirely understood, there are

many other dietary factors that can help relieve anxiety. Studies have shown a positive effect on anxiety symptoms when certain nutrients and habits are altered in a person's lifestyle. For example, mental health experts have said that making sure to keep track of when people eat is important; skipping meals can worsen anxiety because it can result in a drop in blood sugar.

Mood disorders are increasingly being linked to Vitamin D deficiency. Researchers believe that eating foods with Vitamin D can improve mood and positively affect anxiety and depression. There are not many foods that contain Vitamin D, but one simple way to get the nutrient is through fatty fish like salmon. Fatty fish also helps reduce inflammation which promotes healthy

brain function and lowered levels of anxiety. Another food that is high in Vitamin D that can help ease anxiety is egg yolks. Egg yolks contain minerals like zinc and choline which have shown results of lower anxiety. Eggs also are a good source of protein

which helps stabilize blood sugar; avoiding blood sugar crashes or spikes allows the body to pump out certain hormones that can intensify anxiety symptoms.

There is a correlation between having anxiety and having lowered total antioxidant state, so including antioxidant rich foods to diets can relieve some anxiety disorder symptoms. Some foods that are known to be high in antioxidants include beans, fruits (especially berries), nuts and vegetables. Another link found between certain nutrients and anxiety with fermented probiotic foods like yogurt. Yogurt contains healthful bacteria, Lactobacillus and Bifidobacteria, which has a positive effect on brain health. The majority of serotonin receptors are found in the gut, so when these bacteria are ingested, it can help lift a person's mood. Consuming these healthy bacteria increases happiness and has been shown to reduce social anxiety in young people. Other fermented foods with beneficial bacteria include cheese, sauerkraut, kimchi and some soy products. The link between the gut and the brain will continue to be researched, but a couple more foods that have had positive effects on anxiety are avocados, oatmeal and green tea.

Alexis Coulter
Editor/Columnist



I'M NOT SORRY

Mental health has always been a thing people talk about. Whether it's from joking about how bad someone's mental health is, or raising awareness to try and find healthier ways to deal with such. Yet at the same time, it feels as if it's never really talked about. People skirt around the issue, making jokes and simply rubbing it off. That's why I feel like what Hudsonville has been doing with mental health screenings is a good thing.

I'm pretty sure we've all done the screenings. Be it in the middle of seminar or at home during quarantine, we did them. They had standard questions, having you range your feelings and such. People can lie easily and the school won't blink an eye. Lying on these types of things is normal, and that's okay. It's alright to not want to talk about your mental health, especially towards the school. Some people may not be in the best home situation and be afraid that the school could contact. It's important to be able to have people you can lean on when you need it the most. Keeping everything inside your head and just trying to cope with yourself can be extremely harmful. Reaching out for help is something that isn't looked down upon, it's the first step to healing.

Another thing with these screenings is if people are trying to reach out for help, it can be scary to decide if you trust the school to be capable enough to help you with your mental baggage. People may need certain help and the school may not be able to provide the help that they need. Yet sometimes just a little bit of help can be a miracle, even if it's just a talk to get you feeling better about yourself or something, it can really help you in your troubles. So sometimes it's best to trust the school, to trust them that they're just trying to help people that can need it.

Opinions? Comments?
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Importance of music in every day life

Vienna Putman
Staff Reporter



Whether it's in the car, or through the phone music is almost always with people. Perhaps a favorite playlist of songs might set the right mood or mindset, or even just to have something to listen to, and block things out. During stressful times, some people like to find a way to escape the outside world. Music of any kind is at people's fingertips and often a click away making it a hot topic among most people. Listening to music can be a great way to de-stress and focus. Music can be very powerful; not just in the sense that the lyrics of the song have a strong message, but the effect it has on the mind is what makes it all the more powerful.

Music has many effects on the body; According to Johns Hopkins' website, research has shown that listening to music can reduce anxiety, blood pressure, and pain as well as improve

sleep quality, mood, mental alertness, and memory. Most students in high school and college can have large amounts of work and stress, and listening to music can help students process their workloads and be able to get them done. According to a recent poll, more than 300 students at Hudsonville listen to music to help them focus on their studies.

14.8% said that it distracts them from outside noise. Music

also allows people to express themselves. It can also assist in recalling emotional memories that correlate with the song that is being listened to. The emotion in the song can express how the listener is feeling and can help them communicate if they typically have trouble talking to others. In the same poll, 16.4% out of 319 students said that they listen to music to help express

themselves.

Of the students polled, the genre of music listened to most frequently was Pop at 20.9%, and Country at 19.4%. Most students also stated that music made them feel happy

or excited. Music releases a chemical in your brain called dopamine, which improves your mood and reduces your anxiety. This may not come as a big surprise to most people but there is science and research to back up those good feelings.

Music is all around and can affect people differently depending on the situation, stress level, current emotion, atmosphere, or who they are with. If feeling down, and need a boost, or feeling fantastic and need to express it, music is always there. It can be a shoulder to cry on, a study buddy, a prayer, a release of anger, or just background noise in an elevator.



courtesy of www
In focus Students use music to improve their study habits and focus on school.

1 in 5

Michigan children are affected by hunger

8800

Are fed each day thanks to the sack supper program

52

Schools being served now

30

Schools still on the waiting list for help

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Ellen Derrer, Jada Doerr & Jack Chycinski are doing a fundraiser collecting donations of money and food. Some food ideas that you could donate to Mr. Henning's room are:

cheerios, cheese crackers, raisins, pretzels, meat sticks, fruit snacks, quart sized bags, and pudding cups

FUNDRAISER ENDS FEBRUARY 19TH



Kids' Food Basket

How They Help:

- Sack Suppers: A free, well-balanced evening meal full of nutritious food delivered to children so that they can perform their best.
- Kids Helping Kids: Helps students realize their potential through philanthropy, volunteerism, and civic engagement.
- Urban Growing & Experimental Learning: Growing produce for the Sack Suppers and providing education for youth and families.

Scientists observe spiders' hearing abilities

Lily Taylor
Staff Reporter



If spiders are frightening, this might be the nightmare that some would never happen. Spiders do not have ears—generally a prerequisite for hearing right? Not for the ogre spiders. Scientists have figured out that these spiders can actually hear the noises around them. Rather than build a web and wait for their prey, these spiders take a much more active role, says Jay Stafstrom, a sensory ecologist at Cornell University. At a study done by Stafstrom at Cornell University, scientists discovered the small spiders hang upside down from

small plants on a silk line and create a miniweb across their four front legs, which they use as a net to catch their next meal.

The spiders either lunge at bugs wandering below or flip backward to capture flying insects' midair. To see how much eyesight played into this, they placed a tiny blindfold on the spider's eyes and found out that they could not capture bugs on the ground but they could still catch a meal midflight. To confirm their hypothesis, they placed

electrolytes into the brain of an ogre spider and another species, placing them in a soundproof booth to eliminate all other

noises. When they played noises at certain frequencies the spiders began to do backflips which is a sign of hunting and the spiders remained still when played sounds at frequencies that sounded like a bird, which is the spiders protector.

Junior Emily Spencer said she has been afraid of spiders her whole life, traumatized from when one crawled on her when

she was little. "Spiders shouldn't be allowed to hear. That is too creepy," said Spencer. "This made my fear worse because what if they can hear us." Senior Sofia Biriouk on the other hand has a different opinion. "I like spiders because I think they are cute. Knowing they can hear makes me want to become friends with all of them," said Biriouk.

This could mean that other species of spiders may be able to hear too. And if spiders are able to hear other animals, maybe they can hear humans, too. Spiders have always been a genuine fear among others, and now knowing that they can hear is not going to help the Arachnophobia



Discovering the hearing spiders
Scientists have been putting these spiders to test to see what they are capable of doing.

courtesy of www

Hurricanes increasing

Luna Pietrzak
Staff Editor



The 2020 hurricane season was one of the most active seasons that the U.S. has seen since 2005. At the end of the 2020 Atlantic Hurricane Season, which is in December, there have been 30 tropical storms, and thirteen became hurricanes. Even before the 2020 hurricane season started, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicted that the year's hurricane season would be extremely active compared to other years. The NOAA claimed that the severity of the season could have been

linked to 2020 having warmer temperatures. These temperatures lead to the oceans becoming warmer than usual and had some effect on the ocean currents. The NOAA went on to say that the number of hurricanes that the U.S. would see might slowly increase over time because of the rising temperatures.

Since late July, there have been a total of twelve major tropical storms and Thirteen hurricanes, which include six major hurricanes. This year's hurricane season hit both the gulf coast and east coast, leaving little amounts of those areas untouched. This season's last recorded Hurricane, called Iota, starts with the ninth

letter of the Greek alphabet. They did this after they worked through the English alphabet when naming the storms. Meteorologists use the Greek alphabet when the list of names designated for the season is finished. This is the first time that the names: Eta, Theta, and Iota have been used in over ten years. In previous years the National Weather Service (NWS) claims that the U.S. sees around three major hurricanes per year.

In November of 2020, The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) claimed the extremely active hurricane season caused a big economic toll for many parts of the country. The CBO stated that this year's hurricane season had 60 billion dollars worth of damages, and due to the high costs of repairing some of the harder-hit places, it may take a while for them to recover. The amount of damage that some of the places endured leading some people to

predict that the recovery process could last for years to come. In 2019, CBO predicted that the average costs of repairing the damage are expected to increase in the future. They said because of the growing populations living in the areas that are regularly affected by hurricanes each year, the price of repairing the damages could be increasing.



courtesy of www

Hurricane does damage
The result of Hurricane Laura devastated the community.

Fungi linked to trees

Baron Davis
Staff Reporter



Suzanne Simards, a professor of forest ecology at the University of British Columbia, sought out to study the relationship between how trees communicate and cooperate after noticing a patch of homogenous Douglas Fir trees are 10 percent more likely to get sick and die whenever Aspen, Paper Birch, and Cottonwood trees are removed nearby. Even though the newly planted saplings had plenty of space, received more light and water than other trees, they still had a greater chance of harm compared to others. Simard suspects the answer lies beneath the soil.

Underground, trees and fungi form partnerships known as mycorrhizae: Threadlike fungi envelope and fuse with tree roots, helping them extract nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen in exchange for some of the carbon-rich sugars trees make through photosynthesis. Environmental Science teacher Christine Webster says, "It is beneficial because fungi are part of the nutrient cycling process and they break down dead wood as well."

Research demonstrates that mycorrhizae connect plants to each other and these associations might be ecologically important. Simard discovered that fungal threads link nearly every tree in a forest, even trees of different species by analyzing the DNA in root tips and tracing the movement of molecules through underground conduits. Carbon, water, nutrients, alarm signals, and hormones can pass from tree to tree through

these subterranean circuits. Resources tend to flow from the oldest and biggest trees to the youngest and smallest. Chemical alarm signals generated by one tree prepare nearby trees for danger. Seedlings severed from the forests underground lifelines are much more likely to die than their networked counterparts, and if a tree is on the brink of death, it sometimes donates a substantial share of its carbon to its neighboring trees.

Although this is perceived as skeptical to the scientific community, Simard has established herself as one of the most rigorous and innovative scientists studying plant communication and behavior through her work. Other scientists say she pushed the field forward and described her as sophisticated, imaginative, and cutting-edged.

Before Simard revealed the extent and significance of mycorrhizal networks, foresters regarded trees as solitary individuals that competed for space and

resources and were otherwise indifferent to one another. Simards work changes this narrative and suggests that mycorrhizal networks also perfume Prairies, Grasslands, Arctic Tundra, and essentially everywhere life is found on land. Together, these symbiotic



courtesy of www

Fungi grouped together
Fungi communicates with the trees in the forest.

partners connect the soil of Earth into contiguous living networks of unfathomable scale and complexity. "It's just another example of how interconnected nature is. Our understanding of how nature works is paramount to us thriving, not just surviving," Webster said.

Hinch named new Tigers manager

Former MLB catcher steps into open manager position

Ethan Atkins
Staff Reporter



After completing his one-year suspension, AJ Hinch has been hired as the new manager for the Detroit Tigers. Following the Astros' cheating scandal, Hinch was suspended by the MLB, and he was fired from the Houston Astros organization; however, 30 minutes after the suspension was lifted, Tigers General Manager Al Avila had Hinch on the phone and was organizing an interview. Shortly after the interview, the Tigers announced Hinch as their latest hire.

In October 2019, the Houston Astros lost the World Series to the Washington Nationals. 13 days after the conclusion of the 2019 baseball season, an investigation started for the accusation that the Astros had potentially cheated their way to winning the 2017 World Series. The Washington Post reported players, clubhouse staff members, and executives all knew the Astros were cheating. Their devised plan was an open secret, yet had started well before the 2017 season. In an operation called "Codebreaker", Houston had placed a camera in center field,

video monitors near the opposing dugout, and would bang on trash cans to signal certain pitches to their hitters. Following the 2017

World Series, speculation had begun. The final investigation was immense — CBS Sports said the investigation lasted three seasons, and included interviews with 68 witnesses, 23 being current or former Astros players.

The consequences hit Houston hard: Hinch, the team manager at the time, was fired and given a one-year suspension. General Manager Jeff Luhnow was also fired and suspended for one year, as well as fined 5 million dollars and had future draft picks taken away, Houston's former Assistant General Manager, Brandon Taubman, was suspended for one year. The Astros organization lost their first and second-round draft picks for the next two years; however, none of the players on the 2017 Astros roster were fined or suspended, which sparked even

greater controversy.

Even after all the suspension time had been served, Detroit still gave Hinch a look.



courtesy of www
Fresh start Past Astro's GM, AJ Hinch, takes on new role as Detroit Tigers manager

Following the retirement of previous manager, Ron Gardenhire, the Tigers were on the hunt for a new manager. Tigers' GM Al Avila interviewed Hinch on October 29 and he was hired the next day. Reports

say that Hinch may have a tough task ahead of him — the Tigers have not had a winning season since 2016, and have finished last in the American League Central division for four of the last six seasons. Hinch will take the reins of a struggling Tigers team, but he is staying optimistic. Detroit Free Press said Hinch sees a group of talented, young players with a passionate fan base. Hinch said he is confident that the organization is in a position to play winning baseball this upcoming season, and Tigers fans are hoping for the same.

Ashley Strick

Editor/Columnist



STRICKLY FOR FUN

Let me take you back 10 years. Remember yourself as a six, seven, eight-year-old. What was one of the first things you wanted to once the snow started to fall here in Michigan? A common answer and the one you would get from a younger version of myself is simple: sledding.

Now, avid former sledders, I included, know that the very best hill to go sledding down is Charlie's Dump in our neighboring town, Jenison. The big pit allows for a huge number of families to be able to experience the fun of sledding at the same time, while not getting in the way of others. While the pit is used for soccer games in the spring and summer, the real fun comes when the snow starts to fall. Little kids and big kids, like myself, race to Charlie's Dump to take place in the most fun outdoor winter activity.

We all know that Michigan winters tend to bring an abundance of snow, which is sure to lead to the enjoyment of all at sledding hills, but none quite add up to Charlie's Dump in my eyes. I have countless memories throughout my childhood at the sledding hill. From being scared of running into someone at the bottom of the hill, to trudging back up the hill just to immediately sled back down it, and even the one strip of ice that could be slid down without a sled.

The name "Charlie's Dump" is not super intriguing, I know, but the hill has a very interesting backstory. The land belonged to a man named Charlie Montague, and in 1924 the township used it as a gravel pit, which is why there is quite the hole in the ground on the property. Once the town was finished using all of the gravel, Montague was given his land back, but after his death, it quickly became overgrown with weeds and brush. Some even dumped trash there. This was until the county starting revamping the land in 1977 into the park we know today.

A sledding hill with a cool name and a killer backstory seems like a near-perfect trifecta to me, and once the snow starts falling here in West Michigan, catch me having the time of my life at Charlie's Dump.

Opinions? Comments?
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Smith breaks leg during face-off

Colton Hyma
Staff Reporter



Football is full of massive hits and brutal injuries. Recently, there have been a large amount of devastating injuries, but many would say none have been as memorable as Alex Smith's.

On November 18 2018, Alex Smith, who is a quarterback for the Washington Football Team, suffered a grussive leg injury while trying to avoid being sacked by JJ Watt. He was quickly carted off the field and brought to the nearest hospital. Once there, the doctors discovered that he had broken his tibia and fibula in his right leg. However a few days later, the doctors discovered an infection in his leg. This was the most severe part of his injury. Instead of just being able to go home and recover, he had to spend more time in the hospital than the doctors anticipated. Instead of one-off surgery, he instead had to go through an additional 16 surgeries to get rid of the flesh-eating bacteria that had caused the infection.

After the infection was

gone he began a lengthy rehab process. When Washington began reporting to training camp in late July, Smith had actually been

cleared to play by his surgical team. However, the Washington doctors did not think he was ready to begin playing again. In early August, Smith worked out for four consecutive days, which apparently impressed

the training staff in Washington, because less than two weeks after that string of workouts, Smith was given the thumbs-up to return. Considering the injury he sustained, it is very impressive that he is even able to return to the playing field. During his debut game he threw for 9 completions among 17 pass attempts for 37 yards. Even though his stats were not great, just the fact that he was put in the game is enough

of a reason for celebration. Sadly though this is not the first time this kind of injury has happened in an NFL game. On November 18



courtesy of www
Safety first Washington Football Team's Alex Smith was injured following tough hit from the opposing team.

1985, the Washington Redskins were playing the New York Giants when Joe Theismann was sacked by Lawrence Taylor who unfortunately landed on Theismann's leg and broke it. This injury ended Theismann's career due to medical limitations at the time.

Millions of people were watching the game at the time of the injury and millions of more people heard about it later in the week. One such person is Senior Cameron Hardy. "My initial reaction was sort of hopeful that he could return in a couple of weeks, but that was not the case. Glad to see him playing again now," said Hardy.

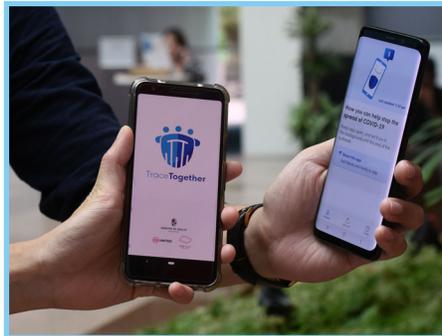
New Apple update tracks COVID-19 cases

Zac Baker
Staff Reporter



Over the summer, Apple added a new coronavirus tracking system in the iOS 13.5 update. If a person has an Apple device someone can easily activate this system to keep track of someone's health. To activate the tracking, the first thing needed is to go to settings, then click on health. Once there, go to the health setting, and click on COVID-19 exposure. The phone explains one will need to purchase an app which is required to activate the feature. Contact tracing on the smartphone is called exposure notifications, and is automatically turned off by default. With the feature on, the app can not tell if people are near someone with the virus unless the

other person has their feature on as well. "I think that it's obvious that nobody wants themselves being tracked. Me for instance I don't want people knowing that I go to knitting class and dance lessons twice a week. Like that kind of stuff is just personal," said Senior Brett Baine.



courtesy of www
Wired in New software can alert cell phone user if they have come within close contact of Coronavirus.

For those who are worried about the iPhone being able to track people, there really is no way that either

the government or anyone is seeing anyone near people with COVID-19. Both the person affected with the virus and the people near the person that has contracted the virus would have to have their features on for this to work. There is not an iPhone or iPhone app that can tell when

someone with the virus is near a person.

Similar to this investigation, earlier in the year,

security researchers discovered that iPhones are tracking where people are, as well as where they have been and keeps that information in a safe file. In the file, it shows the coordinates of latitude and longitude to see where the smart phone has been and some phones save people's locations for nearly a year. While this can help solve certain problems, such as if a phone is stolen or lost, some people say that they don't want somebody tracking where they have been for the last year. As they think that having other people track where they are is an invasion of their privacy.

With this information, there is no way that smartphones can detect coronavirus out of the air, so iPhones are not actually tracking people for COVID unless someone with the virus activates their tracking as well.

Virus brings new wave of misinformation

Ellie Norder
Staff Editor



With vaccines begin to be distributed, the rise in misinformation continues to increase.

As a widely known platform, Facebook has stood up and stated that any posts regarding debunked information from public health experts will be removed from the site to allow users to receive reliable facts and not misguided information. Like other types of misinformation

regarding different vaccines, Facebook has taken it into their perspective to take it down quickly and only leave relevant information. Not only are they taking down false posts related to vaccines, but they are also removing claims about them containing microchips and anything else that is not in the ingredients.

Although Facebook was hesitant to decide what should stay and what should be removed from their platform, Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook's founder, has proven it to be clear that he does not want to decide what is

the truth of what is posted on his site. With that being said, Zuckerberg has put tools in place to inform the public about the dangers of Covid-19, along with reaching out and exchanging conversation with infection disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci. Having those calls via zoom and virtual meetings discussing what can be done to ensure everyone is receiving the information they should rather than uneducated posts.

Since the coronavirus is relatively new, all false claims presented on Facebook are not allowed to be taken off instantly

before the evaluation. In the meantime of this situation, the social media platform continues to send its users to the Covid-19 Information Center where they can find all the new and current information regarding the virus.

Facebook's choice to remove misinformation related to Covid-19 and the vaccine is not the first time they have had to act in this manner. The company has had to remove information linked to polio and measles outbreaks in the past, in efforts to keep everyone updated with the logical and correct information as they are continuing to do today.

Platforms ordered to share customer data

Facebook and Amazon user info to go to Federal Trade Commission

Sean Monroe
Staff Reporter



On December 14th, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) ordered that nine social media companies share their data on what and how they use customers' data. Amazon, TikTok, Discord, Facebook, Reddit, SnapChat, Twitter, WhatsApp and Youtube were all sent the order demanding the details on their advertising practices and data collection methods. With only 45 days to respond the companies must comply quickly. This order isn't anything new however. The FTC has been pushing major social media websites and apps to

respond to the claims of improper uses of consumer information. Not only is the FTC working on protecting people's data they are also working on cracking down on monopolies such as Facebook which owns Instagram, WhatsApp, and Oculus just to name a few. A monopoly is when a specific person or enterprise is the only supplier of a particular commodity. This is a problem because once a company such as Facebook (The parent company not just the Facebook website) owns most of the most popular social media companies then it will have the power to control what you see on those platforms and it will be harder for new social media sites to gain traction. With this new

order, the FTC is requesting how many users each company has, how active each user is and other information each company is collecting, they are also asking each company to share how they process the data they receive and how they use it as well. Also, they are requesting information on how they are using advertising

to engage young and underage users in their advertising practices which in some cases can be illegal



courtesy of www
User Security Facebook owner, Mark Zuckerberg, advocated for consumer privacy.

if the ad is seen as manipulative or suggestive to the youth. Many people worry how their data is being used by these companies so this new investigation by the FTC

may be a turning point in the protection of people's data and privacy online for generations.

People call for change as species go extinct

Olivia Gonzalez
Staff Reporter



Looking back now, scientists say that extinction of animals started back to 450 million years ago. Extinction is state or process of a species/group that has been completely wiped from existence. They have established three main types of extinction. Local extinction is where the species is no longer in a specific area, but can still be found in other locations. Ecological extinction is where the species isn't wiped out completely, but there are so few left that they can not fulfill their role in the ecosystem. Lastly is biological extinction which is described when a species is no

longer in existence anywhere in the world. When a group reaches this level they are forever gone.

In the early 1970's when Richard Nixon was president he declared conservation efforts that protected the process of extinction to all animals. Congress later passed the Endangered Species Act of 1973, also known as ESA. The goal of this act is to protect animals that are threatened and to recover the ecosystems they depend on. A more recent act



Efforts some areas leads to hope As species go extinct some think about what has lead to now.

was taken into action last year in 2019, and is known as the PACT act. It stands for Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture which makes any of the following such as burning, crushing, drowning, or

suffocating animals as a federal crime. In the summer of 2018 Trump Administration proposed an idea to rollback the changes could end providing future "threatened"

species with the same protections endangered species receive. The Republicans also are believing that ESA is ruining businesses specifically mining, drilling, and logging. When asking the question "Do you think rolling back the current laws to protect animals from extinction is a good idea? Why?" Kris Payton responded by saying "It honestly depends on what the law is doing. Im not for animals being extinct, but I understand why some of the lases are in place."

For as long anyone knows extinction has mainly been a result of human actions. Over harvesting is a huge cause because of harvesting of renewable resources. Along with pollution, destruction of habitats, and overhunting.

Deforestation at its peak in the Amazon

Owen Abedoyejo
Staff Reporter



As the deforestation of the rainforest reached a great height of deforestation, the fires still burn, increasing its devastating effect.

With the burning of the Amazonian rainforest starting in 2019, deforestation has reached a 12 year high, the highest it has been since 2008. There have been multiple things that caused this over the years. The main cause for deforestation is agricultural expansion. When population increases there will be a need for basic human things like food. As

such, agricultural products are also part of that list from palm oil to animal feed. Increased demand has caused parts of the rainforest to be converted into farms and ranches.

Another problem that the rainforest faces is the fires. The majority of the fires are caused by human activity, usually things like clearing out the land. Using fire opens the rainforest up to invasive species, alters the water cycle



Fires continue in the Amazon leading new mesures being taken the fires in the amazon leaves ash in its wake.

and destroys the livelihood of the people who live in or near the forest. The fires that were seen last year were caused by those same tactics, and they're still burning today. "The

best solution for stability is for homegrown change with the people who are part of the problem," said science teacher

Christine Webster.

When the fires started a year ago Jair Boloranso, the president of Brazil, did not enjoy the criticism he was receiving from other countries. During his first year of presidency, he vowed to scale back some of Bratili defenses and open the forest up to industry, also cutting funds and staff to weaken the protection of the rainforest. After getting under pressure from European governments, he finally took to action. Some are worried that he is not truly committed to protecting the forest.

With the Jair taking a new stand on protecting the forest there is still a chance for the forest to be saved.

Discovery of water on moon sparks curiosity

Kadence Weston
Staff Reporter



NASA has confirmed the presence of water on the moon's sunlit surface, a breakthrough that suggests the chemical compound that is vital to life on Earth could be distributed across more parts of the lunar surface than the ice that has previously been found in dark and cold areas.

"We don't know yet if we can use it as a resource," NASA Administrator Jim Bridenstine said, but he added that learning more about the water is crucial to U.S. plans to explore the moon. The discovery of the water on the moon was because of the space agency's Stratospheric Observatory

for Infrared Astronomy, or SOFIA, a modified Boeing 747 that can take its large telescope high into Earth's atmosphere, at altitudes up to 45,000 feet. Those heights allow researchers to peer at objects in space with hardly any visual disruptions from water vapor.

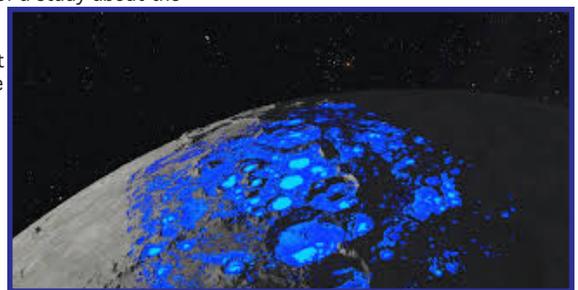
The water molecules are in Clavius crater, a large crater in the moon's southern hemisphere. To detect the molecules, SOFIA used a special infrared camera that can discern between water's specific wavelength of 6.1 microns and that of its close chemical relative hydroxyl. "Data from this location reveal water in concentrations of 100 to 412 parts per million roughly equivalent to a 12-ounce bottle of water trapped in a cubic meter of soil spread across the lunar surface," NASA said in a release

about the discovery.

"This is not puddles of water but instead water molecules that are so spread apart that they do not form ice or liquid water," said Casey Honniball, the lead author of a study about the discovery.

The data confirm what experts have suspected, that water might exist on the moon's sunny surface. But in recent years, researchers had been able to

document only water ice at the moon's poles and other darker and colder areas. Experts are now trying to figure out exactly how it came to form and how it still exists.



NASA's thermal image of the moon NASA finds the water under the surface by using thermal imaging

Amazon job offerings over recent holidays

Bryce Morningstar
Staff Reporter



Amazon, the global giant for online retail, is adding upwards of 100,000 jobs in the United States alone for the upcoming holiday season. Amazon has been hiring all year in the wave of online retail becoming very popular amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

The online retailer will be hiring both full-time and part-time workers for their warehouses and distribution centers across the

US and parts of Canada including the newer Amazon complex near Caledonia. The jobs that will soon be occupied consist of: picking, packing, shipping, and delivering customers carts. That is just in the core of the warehouse, they will also be hiring people in human resources and to operate their packing robots that some of the warehouses use to speed along the shipping process.

This is not the first time this year that a cohort of people have been hired by the Amazon corporation. Amazon added 100,000 more workers

in September for the massive surge in online orders. 33,000 of them were in corporate and tech-involved roles. Amazon is already big in the business world, but it looks like they are going to keep growing. Amazon is very generous to their workers, as they pay a minimum wage of 15 dollars an hour, with full-time employees receiving health, dental, and vision insurance benefits.

Amazon received a wide variety of orders during the holiday season, from toys for younglings, to T-shirts and slow cooking grills for adults. Not only

was Christmas big for the online giant, Black Friday was also mainly online based now more than ever before. Amazon kept their deals rolling in with their annual Prime Day in mid-October. Also with being a mainly online retailer did really well with cyber Monday.

Amazon was hoping to help the economy by adding these jobs, they were trying to help by giving jobs to thousands of Americans. It allowed people to put food on the table while still being able to put presents under the tree during the holiday season.

Economy updates amidst the coronavirus

Kelsie Sparks
Staff Reporter



Due to the COVID-19 virus, millions of Americans have lost their jobs. With the recent surge of cases all over the country, unemployment numbers have increased even more. More people are getting left with less in their pockets, some Americans have stated that they will be spending less on Christmas this year. Despite this, economists say that holiday shopping sales are supposed to increase by 1-1.5% in total. Online shopping is a large chunk of this percentage.

Online shopping sales are forecast to increase, up to a 33% increase generating around 189 billion dollars in sales. Since

the pandemic arrived in the United States Amazon's profits have doubled. Profit during the shutdown was 5.2 billion dollars alone in the months April, May, and June. High demand items were essentials such as food, masks, and cleaning supplies.

Amazon's sales are expected to continue to grow with the shift from in-store shopping to online. To improve the economy throughout the pandemic the government has released stimulus checks to encourage spending in families for essential items to stimulate the economy. The requirements for a stimulus check are based on your age, income, and employment status. The stimulus checks cost the government around 290 billion dollars. The benefits of the check

differ for each family. When

people spend stimulus money shortly after receiving it, the money is put back into the economy directly. Some people however saved their money and are using the money sparsely which has less of an impact on the

economy. Many people have saved

checks to use for holiday spending. The government can issue another stimulus check before Christmas this could further affect American's holiday spending tendencies. During this time of the coronavirus pandemic, the economy is always changing and it will stay changing.

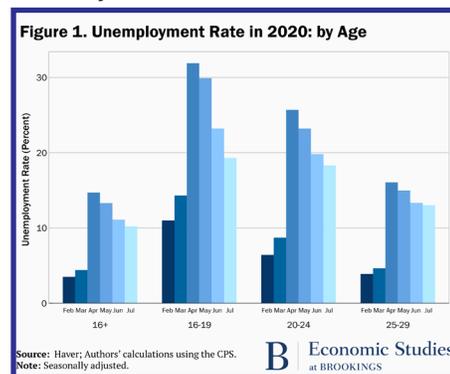


Figure 1. Unemployment Rate in 2020: by Age
Sources: Haver; Authors' calculations using the CPS.
Note: Seasonally adjusted.

Unemployment rates skyrocket A graph of American unemployment rates in 2020 alone, ranked by age.

The steady fall and rise of the U.S. economy

Baron Davis
Staff Reporter



The American economy is continuing its slow recovery, stranding millions who have yet to find a job after being thrown out of work due to COVID-19. Employers have added 245,000 jobs in November, the fifth month in a row that the pace of hiring has tapered off. The unemployment rate in November was 6.7 percent, down from the previous month's rate of 6.9 percent. However, this does not fully capture the extent of the joblessness because it does not include people who have dropped out of the labor force and are not actively searching for work. Economics teacher Brett Sandee said, "As things begin to improve, these people who pulled themselves from the labor force

may jump back in all at once which would leave us with too many workers chasing too few jobs." November's job totals were also dragged down in part by the loss of 93,000 temporary census workers who are no longer needed now that the official counting has wound down.

More than half of those who lost their job early on in the pandemic have been rehired, but there are still roughly 10 million fewer jobs than there were in February. Many people in that group are weeks away from losing unemployment benefits, as these will expire at the end of the year. Tough months are ahead of this pandemic and a lot of recovery needs to take place before the economy reaches pre-pandemic levels.

Further delaying the recovery of the U.S. economy are the recent restrictions that shut down many restaurants and

limited shopping and commerce. Schools are partly or completely shutting down leaving children at home, resulting in the disproportionate unemployment of prime-working-age-women, which are classified as those aged 25-54. Additionally, in much of the country, winter is bringing cold weather that will eliminate the outdoor dining aspect that many restaurants largely depend on.

Seasonal hiring is taking place, but the composition is different than in previous years. Instead of adding in-store retail staff to work cash registers, sales floors, and call centers, employers are scooping up people to work in warehouses and to handle customer service calls from home. While the trend in job postings has continued to pick up, the pace of improvement is slower than it was. The trend in postings is about 12 percent lower where it was a year ago, which is much

better than where it was at the lowest point of the pandemic, but labor demand is still not anywhere near the levels it should be.

While stimulus checks issued earlier in the year helped with unemployment rates, something else might need to be done. "I think a better program would be for the government to make a massive investment in instant testing kits and get them to Americans.

This could address the root cause of the high unemployment rates. This would hopefully give Americans the knowledge they need to quarantine themselves if they test positive which would help solve the underlying problem," said Sandee. As the economy continues to limp ahead in its recovery, jobs will need to be added to decrease unemployment and the pandemic will have to be kept under control.

The nation's first flying car is now in Florida

Ashley Strick
Staff Editor



Flying cars are no longer a thing of the future. The nation's very first flying cars are being produced in Central Florida in hopes of being available to the public in the next five years.

Lake Nona, a community already centered around medical and research facilities, is going to soon be the home for these futuristic vehicles. The facility is said to be like the Jetsons, a cartoon from the 1960s revolving around a family from the far away future.

The Tavistock Development Corporation is taking the lead on building the port for these cars and were the ones to reveal their inspiration in the Jetsons. A German-based aviation company called Lilium will

be responsible for the majority of manufacturing. Their "jets" can hold up to five passengers and travel upwards of 185 miles on a single, one-hour charge.

One of the goals this project hopes to achieve is to take away some of the stress of traffic jams and airport hassle. These flying cars offer point-to-point travel, which is different from the typical air travel that appears in planes and helicopters.

As for cost, it will start out similar to that of first-class airfare, but is likely to decrease as this type of

travel becomes more popular.

While still in the developmental stages, the state of Florida has offered over \$800,000 in potential tax rebates to Lilium to continue working on their vehicles. They are seemingly



Flying overhead In hopes of creating less of a hassle on airports, corporations are working to finalize the first flying car.

photo by www

taking a chance on a project that is fairly new, but with the hope that once completed, it will help decongest some of Florida's traffic.

Orlando's mayor, Buddy Dyer said that he wants this new technology to be able to transform what he calls

the transportation ecosystem, and wants to see how the long term benefits will affect residents

of his city. He also said that the main focus at first was to find the perfect partners to lead advanced air mobility worldwide.

People will be able to access this service in a way similar to that of apps like Uber and Lyft. These ride-share companies have found great success in their work on land, and the Lake Nona facility plans to take it into the air. Prospective passengers will be able to request a ride, and be notified with a time for that ride. Up to four people can ride at once, with the exception of the pilot being the fifth.

The city of Orlando hopes to harness this groundbreaking technology and use it to transform the community for the better. By 2025, the city is looking to offer flying cars as an alternate form of transportation in attempt to help clear up the streets.

Cyber attacks increase Police tech updated

Alexa Beltz
Staff Reporter



Worldwide cyberattacks have posed a threat to scientists, with the ability to infiltrate computers and create dangerous toxins or synthetic viruses. Recently, a new form of cyberattack has been developed and targeted at the biological research sector, tricking scientists into unknowingly creating dangerous, tampered synthetic DNA.

This new form of cyberattack, discovered this past November, is part of a series of cyberattacks that increased in numbers from 2019 to the first half of 2020. Software designed to

cause damage to a computer, client, computer network, or server, called Malware, is used to replace a substring in the DNA sequencing on a biologist's computer. These cyberattacks are able to look at online orders of synthetic DNA and inject tampered, pathogenic DNA, or DNA that is able to cause disease, which is delivered to the target. While this synthetic DNA is usually screened for harmful



Danger is ahead for scientists as people are tricking them into synthetic DNA.

photo by www

productions, the computers that do the screening are compromised and therefore do not detect the harmful DNA. This creates an easy way for hackers to dupe scientists into synthesizing toxic material, synthetic viruses, and other dangerous substances without knowing. Cyberattacks have intensified especially since the introduction of COVID-19 targeting healthcare and medical organizations. One cyberattack, targeted at U.S drugmaker Pfizer and its partner BioNTech, was even able to access documents

involving the development of their COVID-19 vaccine. The research team at BGU in Israel authored a paper, "Cyberbiosecurity: Remote DNA Injection Threat in Synthetic Biology." The paper was published in an academic journal, Nature Biotechnology, in which Rami Puzis, head of the BGU

Complex Networks Analysis Lab, described how a hacker could infiltrate a biologist's computer and get past DNA screening. Puzis also mentioned how these dangerous cyberattacks led his team to propose an improvised screening algorithm, compared to previous screening guidelines that were not adapted to protect against newer developments in synthetic biology and cyberware.

The officials' next chapter is electronic

Olivia Gonzalez
Staff Reporter



Police have continued to have a general goal to be ahead of the game when it came to catching criminals. Within the past few years, police have gained new technology that has completely changed their game. In 1933 the first two-way radio used by police was invented and is now in common use around the nation, along with radar detectors were later invented to capture the speeds of vehicles. As technology continues to be invented, police are finding new ways to use them to their advantage.

One of the most unexpected contributors to police work is social media. It is used by law enforcement agencies, crime analysts, probation and community control officers. There have been many cases where the media has helped solve many crimes. North Carolina's police departments have used social media to look for clues on people who are arrested, along with posting the information about unsolved crimes around the area. It has been proven to be effective due to most not expecting it to be used.

Another new technology item that has become fairly common in many cities in a

body-worn camera. Though there have been those who view such technology as an infringement on public privacy, it has been an important tool for showing different perspectives on crimes. These cameras can record audio much clearer and hold high resistance against extreme weather. They are made in different sizes, making it possible to even get recordings of the inside of a moving car. This has given the police force a huge advantage by seeing and having proof of what happens in intense or questionable situations.

Authorities have also been dabbling with the idea of the use of drones. A drone is a flying robot that can be controlled autonomously through software embedded in their systems. Also known as UAVs (unmanned aerial vehicle), these devices give police aerial vantage points for crime scene work, search and rescue efforts, accident reconstruction, and crowd monitoring. Some models also have thermal imaging and 3D mapping. This new technology has been helping keep the public safe.

The future holds many new opportunities, and new technologies for the police force. From driverless police cars, to smart uniforms that detect stress levels and surrounding conditions. These technologies could bring unsolved crimes to an all time low.

Pet scams increase from Covid-19

Ellen Derrer
Editor/Columnist

Drakke Cecchini
Staff Reporter



Pet scams spiked immensely over the pandemic. Pet scams are when a person goes to buy a pet, in most cases from an online breeder, just to get scammed out of their money and not get the pets they expect in return. They have been on a rise since 2017, but 2020 had led to a massive increase. During the pandemic, the number of pet scams that were reported doubled, said the Better Business Bureau. In the past 12 months, a projected \$3 million was lost by victims of pet scams. This amount is more than six times greater than the total losses reported just three years ago.

Carolyn Barg, a 62-year-old Chappaqua, New York resident was ready to welcome two kittens into her home, yet they never came. She

immediately knew something was wrong, and now she is out \$2,500. She is just one of the thousands of victims that have been affected by the pet scams. Carolyn and her husband, Steven, planned on getting two more cats after her previous 18-year-old

Himiilayan cat had passed away. Barg talked about how she was just so desperate in these times to get the animals due to her loneliness, and that this winter is only going to get more lonely and dark since everyone is stuck inside their houses. They had sent in the money in October to an online breeder. After the kittens did not show up, Carolyn did some research on the company for more information. She found a facebook group with other people who said that they have all been scammed

by the same breeder.

Within a few short months of the pandemic, many states were experiencing gigantic surges in adoption applications. Sarah Brasky, the executive director and



courtesy of www
Pet Scams Warning messages for people wanting to buy pets.

founder of Foster Dogs Inc. said that back in March that the demand was totally unprecedented. Shelters started to empty out so naturally, people started to look online. Covid-19 has been such an uncertain and long year that a “quarantine puppy” or other pets have been proven to comfort many people. At the same time it has also created a massive fertile ground for fraudsters.



NO DERRER

Like so many families over quarantine this summer, I got a dog. His name is Winston, named after MSU basketball player Cassius Winston, and he’s a Goldendoodle. Apart from barking at leaves flying through the air or someone walking down the stairs, one of the things I wonder most about him is what he dreams about. In humans, most dreaming happens during REM, or Rapid Eye Movement, sleep. During this time our muscles are usually paralyzed, which keeps us from acting out our dreams. In the 1960’s we first began experimenting with the idea that animals could dream. Scientists discovered that in cats if they removed cells from the pons, which is part of the brainstem, they could prevent the cats from becoming paralyzed during REM sleep. When the cats slept next, they were observed walking around, moving their heads as if they were hunting prey, and even chasing invisible mice, all while fast asleep. This showed that the cats were seeing images and acting out activities that they would do while they were awake. Although we will never really know what animals dream about, we can evaluate and make scientific assumptions about what goes on inside their brain while they are asleep. Interestingly enough, dreams are also a gateway into understanding why certain events get replayed in animal’s minds and why some don’t, allowing us to recognize that animals can relive moments after they have already happened. Researchers say that if you want to know what your dog is dreaming about, you can observe them during REM sleep, which happens about 20 minutes into sleep, and try to notice any recognizable behaviors from their awake time like moving their legs as if chasing something. I know I will be watching Winston to see if he is moving his legs, and from that, I will assume he is chasing flying leaves in his dream.

Hunting trend stands test of time

Colton Hyma
Staff Reporter



Hunting has been around for almost as long as the human race has been around, which is about three million years.

Hunting has many pros that have been major benefits to humans. Probably the biggest pro is that it provides people with a sustainable food source. Meat is one of the best sources of protein. In a typical pound of ground deer meat there are 712 calories, 58% of which is protein. When most want a good source of protein they tend to go straight for meat. Meat is juicy, tender, and tends to satisfy the taste buds.

Another big pro of

hunting is the fun factor. While some people hunt for the food, some people hunt for the thrill and the fun of the hunt. Hunting is not only an enjoyment for some people just because of the hunt, but also for the preparation and the work that must be put in. Before the hunting season, most people do some preparation like setting out food plots and cameras to monitor deer before and during the hunting season. Usually the more preparation that



courtesy of www
Deer Season Deer hunter hunts down his deer.

is put in, the better the chances are of seeing a deer. People also hunt for the thrill of it. Most hunters will tell you that the feeling of seeing a deer drop dead is an unbelievably good feeling.

Another pro of hunting is herd management. Herd

Management is trying to keep animal populations in an area steady and healthy. Every year in the U.S. there are about one million deer crashes and about 200 people killed from deer collisions. Most of the time deer crashes happen in areas with a large population of deer. A big reason people hunt is to keep herd numbers low in populated areas, but high in wooded areas. Without a healthy deer population availability of venison would be much lower, there would be less animals available to hunt, and there would be less food available to other animals in the environment.

Millions of people across the country hunt deer. One such person is senior Hunter Meekhof. “Hunting helps keep animal populations in check with one another so the environment can support the species. The DNR uses money to help research and protect our resources,” said Meekhof.



SUPERMAN & LOIS

premieres Feb. 23

on the CW

Opinions? Comments?
Contact Ellen Derrer at
ederrer@hpsstudents.net

COVID changes college

Ellie Norder
Staff Editor



As COVID-19 continues to linger, seniors in high school are left to make questionable decisions regarding their upcoming future.

The current situation the country has been in the past year has had an impact on the way students can visit and learn more about colleges they

may be interested in going to. Meaning the intention to make a decision may be harder than many had expected. Because of this disadvantage, some colleges have stepped outside of their usual routine and opened up to the idea of virtual visits of their campuses from home. Students are granted the opportunity from colleges to sign up for an online visit at the given times they are hosted and are able to join a live zoom meeting where they can ask various questions or concerns they may have. Although it is not the same as visiting the college in person, virtual visits still allow students to somewhat explore what colleges have to offer.

Along with not having the opportunity to decide where they want to receive their education, students in some situations are unable to shadow others in the occupations they are interested in due to COVID-19. Causing them to grow more

stressed and confused about what steps they should take for their future. "Not being able to job shadow has caused me to not be able to explore and experience the career path I want to go into," said senior Lydia Gray.

Since the school shut down last spring, students were unable to take the SAT or ACT at the given time they had been scheduled for and had to be taken in late October instead. With this occurrence, colleges had taken into consideration that this year's application process would be far different than years before. Along with the expectancy of college enrollment to be down this year with an increase of students thinking of a gap year as an option.

Both incoming and current college students now face the uncertainty of what could happen when it comes to the various outcomes of COVID-19. As well as having a difficult time wondering if their learning will continue to take place online rather than in the classroom. In the events that colleges stay online for their learning, some students are beginning to raise questions about the value they are receiving through online courses and if they are missing out on key factors needed for their education. "Not knowing what is going to happen once I get to college makes me worried about my education for the future," said senior Lauren Randall.



courtesy of www. **Sight of the past** Colleges are going to have to add distance to keep students and staff safe.

Gap year more popular

Vienna Putman
Staff Reporter



Many students look forward to college after high school, but is it always right for every high school senior that desires to go to college to head off immediately after their graduating year? In today's world, going to college is highly encouraged, and young people are told that finding a career without a college degree is much more difficult. Many may not know what they want to pursue or might be exhausted from the rigors of high school. Some may be going to college to get a degree to have one but find it is not truly what they desire. There is pressure to get into a good college and earn substantial money when some are just too young to know what they might truly want to do. The cost of college is often overwhelming to many as well causing debt at a very early age. Many of these things could be reduced if high school students were encouraged to take a gap year between high school and college.

According to CNBC, AGA research shows that 90% of students who take a gap year are more likely to graduate on time with a higher GPA. Students who take a gap year can take time to find themselves and relax from a stressful 4 years of high school. Danny Ruderman, a Los Angeles-based college counselor, says that students who take a gap year results in the student being more academically focused when they return.

Some schools also encourage students to take time off. Barnard College's dean Avis Hinkson stated that gap years allow students to take a year to follow a passion before attending school. The Ivy League school Princeton also encourages students to take gap years by offering a 9-month tuition-free "bridge year" for incoming freshmen who want to volunteer abroad.

Although taking a gap year can have many benefits, it can have few downsides to it as well. According to USA Today, people can lose up to \$90,000 in income from taking a gap year. Studies show that on average proceeding with a job after college is about \$43,000 a year. A gap year graduate would start earning that income a year later and never quite catch up with those who didn't take a gap year.

Some people chose to enter a gap year because they are wanting to follow a passion or to be able to get a job and earn money to put towards their degree. Taking time off from school can allow students to take on a full-time job to help them financially when they finally get to college.

Students who take a gap year can find that they can focus more on their studies and can support themselves, and are more prepared to enter college instead of going straight into it after graduating high school. Taking a gap year can be effective in the long run for incoming freshmen and should be recommended more often.

The Office to leave Netflix at start of 2021

The iconic show will have to find a new home for its beloved fans to stream

Lily Taylor
Staff Reporter



For many years, Netflix has been threatening to take "The Office" off of its streaming service. After 2 years of swirling rumors, Netflix has made the removal of the hit show "The Office" official. On January 1, numerous fans were saddened by the news that "The Office" has been removed from Netflix. The sitcom — starring Steve Carell as Michael Scott, an office manager for the Scranton, Pennsylvania, branch of the Dunder Mifflin Paper Company — was streamed

for more than 52 billion minutes in 2018 alone, according to NBC. The network also said that in April 2019, "The Office" was streamed for nearly twice as long as the next most-viewed show, but did not specify the runner-up. Netflix suffered a great financial loss between taking off "The Office" and also the hit show "Friends". Many people are unhappy with the fact that all their favorite shows are being taken off.

Although there is loss,

"The Office" lovers will still have a chance to watch the show. The show will be moved to NBC's major streaming service Peacock which can be purchased for \$4.99 per month. It is a case of streaming wars because Netflix did not own the show, NBC does.

"I am really sad because it was one of my favorite shows to watch at any time of the day," said Freshman Kendall Barr. "I don't want to have to pay for another streaming service just to be able to watch

the show. Netflix is taking off all the good shows now. It almost makes me not want to watch Netflix anymore." said Barr.

It is sad to know people will not be able to get laughs from Michael Scott and other show members. It's a mystery what hit show will be taken off next. First Friends, then Gossip Girl and now the Office. There is even some questioning on if owning the Netflix streaming system is even worth it anymore. In the words of the one and only "The Office" employee Kelly Kapoor, "I have a lot of questions. Number one, how dare you."



courtesy of www. **Crossing for frustration** People are angry at Netflix as they are going to take "The Office" out of its library.

Japan gathers with a party barrel

Vienna Putman
Staff Reporter



Most people living in the United States know about good old Santa Claus coming around on Christmas night to deliver

presents to the good children and coal for the bad. Not all countries celebrate Christmas in the same way. Some

countries have interesting and unique traditions many may not be aware of.

Christmas is not heavily celebrated in Japan, but when they do celebrate it, they love to get together with their families

and share a large bucket of none other than Kentucky Fried Chicken. This tradition may seem odd to individuals that grew up in Western Michigan, but in Japan, it is considered a symbol of gathering together and enjoying time with their family.



courtesy of www

Kentucky Christmas The highly demanded KFC barrel is advertised all over Japan. Barrels must be ordered weeks in advance.

In 1970, the manager of the first KFC in Japan, Takeshi Okawara, woke up one night and wrote down an idea that came to him in a dream, the

“Party Barrel” which was to be sold on Christmas. The idea came to him when he overheard a group of foreigners talking about how they missed having turkey on Christmas. Okawara thought fried chicken would be a perfect

substitute. This dream kicked off the production of the Party Barrel as a way to celebrate the holiday.

KFC made the idea a national marketing plan in 1974 and began calling it Kurisumasu ni wa Kentakkii, or Kentucky for Christmas. The idea became incredibly popular nationwide and shot Okawara to the top as he became CEO of KFC Japan 10 years later.

Families all over the Japanese nation surround a bucket of fried chicken, cake, and even wine as traditionally as those in the United States might gather around turkey or ham for the holidays. Since the meal is not something prepared in the home, the bucket of fried goodness must be ordered weeks in advance because of its demand. Those that wait until Christmas Day have to persevere in line for hours at a time.

This tradition is not necessarily about the chicken itself, but instead, it is about the gathering of families and sharing with one another.

Ellen Derrer
Editor/Columnist



NO DERRER

Almost everyone associates the colors red and green with the holiday season, especially Christmas, but have you ever wondered why? When I think of the holidays, I associate that time with winter and snow, so it would make sense to me that the colors of the holiday season might be blue and white, for example. As well as the holidays, I often wonder why orange and black are associated with Halloween and why pink and red are associated with Valentine’s Day. However, those holidays make more sense because pumpkins are orange and hearts are red.

In the Victorian era, the late 1800s, Christmas cards could be found decorated in a variety of colors including red and green, red and blue, blue and green, and blue and white. You could also find Santa in blue, green or red robes. Then in 1931, Coca-Cola hired artist Haddon Sundblom to create a Santa Claus that incorporated the brand. The Santa that was designed closely resembles the image that we associate with Santa Claus today: he was fat and smiling, compared to his image before as thin and elf-like, and he had red robes that matched the color of Coca-Cola.

So now we know where the red of Christmas came from, but what about the green? The green color comes from something more obvious: Christmas trees, or fir trees, and holly. But the green color didn’t necessarily come from the celebration of the holidays or Christmas, but from the celebration of the winter solstice at the end of the year. Ancient Celtic people and other cultures decorated with red and green holly plants for the winter solstice and believed holly would keep the Earth appealing and pretty during the winter season that is associated with death. They also believed the holly would bring protection and good fortune to their families in the next year.

Opinions? Comments?
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Peanuts leave their home on ABC

Kelsie Sparks
Staff Reporter



The Charlie Brown holiday specials were scheduled to be moved from their home on ABC/Freeform to a new home on Apple TV exclusively after Apple’s partnership with the Peanuts.

After an outburst of upset people, Apple announced on Wednesday that they are to be aired on PBS as well. The Christmas special will be shown ad-free on December 13.

The holiday specials star the lovable peanuts Characters created by Charles Shultz in the ‘50s. They have been featured in newspaper comics, books, and a few

movies. The specials have been aired every year since they first premiered in the ‘60s until ABC acquired the rights 20 years ago.

Apple received tons of backlash on Twitter after announcing the change on October 19. Since the announcement a change.org petition titled “Bring the Peanuts specials back to broadcast TV!” has gained over 300,000 signatures. The Peanuts

have been a holiday staple for many families for decades and the change has angered many. Some people on Twitter claim that even the creator of Peanuts, Charles Shultz, would be disappointed by the decision.

“I don’t think that the creator of the show would be too happy

at all as he made these specials for everyone to enjoy.” Stated a student in a survey from Hudsonville High School. The survey concluded that 63.1% of students watched the holiday

specials at some point. A majority of the responses stated that people had traditions surrounding the specials and they are upset that the traditions are taken away because the show is not available



courtesy of www

It’s the great change Charlie Brown Fans cried out after news broke that the Charlie Brown holiday specials moved to Apple TV.

to everyone. Giselle Balivet, a sophomore HHS stated “It is frustrating and frankly very insulting that such a cultural icon is removed from public viewing, despite how many people have enjoyed it and formed traditions around it over the years.” For now, the holiday specials will remain on television for the general public but this is all subject to change in years to come.

“It is frustrating, and frankly, insulting...”

Giselle Balivet
sophomore



courtesy of www

It’s a classic Charlie Brown The specials have been a staple for many families around the holidays throughout the years.

Covid changing cinemas' normal

Universal Pictures will release movies to platforms early

Ethan Atkins
Staff Reporter



Universal Pictures has recently come to two deals with large cinema chains — one being Cinemark Theatres, the third-largest cinema chain in the US, the other being Cineplex, a major theater chain in Canada. These deals are distantly following the similar agreement made in July between Universal and AMC. According to FOX Business, the deal will extend further than just Cinemark, with some of the profits going to AMC.

The Washington Post stated that the main purpose for the AMC deal in July was to enable Universal to shorten the time period before the newly released movies could move from the theater to digital platforms, and the new deals are serving a very similar purpose. ABC

News reported that the films will have at least three weeks in theaters before going premium on streaming services. Additionally, any movie that makes around \$50 million or more in the opening weekend will be in theaters for at least five weeks. Ordinarily, \$50 million for an opening weekend is not hard to attain for big movie franchises, but because of the pandemic and theaters shutting down or limiting capacity, hitting the threshold may be more difficult to achieve. According to Los Angeles Times, Universal can release them on digital platforms after the movies

theatrical window, according to ABC News; however, with the effects of COVID-19, many movie businesses have had to compromise the time frame because of limited crowd sizes. As much as the deal is attempting to move the movies to digital platforms, Universal is still trying to give their audiences the big-screen experience.

Theaters have feared the change of movie-window timing, one of their worries being that releases to the new streaming services would have an effect on the box-office sales. According to FOX Business, letting movies go to streaming services early would make it easier for studios to release their movies in theaters, especially in the tough business for theaters due to the pandemic. Los Angeles Times reported that Mark Zoradi, Cinemark Chief Executive, said that discussions with studios had been taking place before COVID-19 shut down theaters. As theaters still aren't yet to reach full capacity, discussions for early movie releases have increased as a result. Along with the moviegoers that want to be able to visit theaters, large studio businesses like Universal want the same.



courtesy of www

DIY movie night Following Universal's recent deals with various theatre chains, new movies may be shifting from the big screen to at-home theatres quicker than normal.

have left theaters, and similar to the AMC deal, Cinemark will get a share of the revenue from the on-demand movies. Before the deal was put into effect, theaters would have a 90-day

Jada Doerr
Editor/Columnist



I'M AN ARIES

Libras are born between September 23 and October 22. Symbolized by the scales, Libras are known for harmony and relationships. They love balance and are always looking to settle tension in order to reach an equilibrium. Libras tend to have the ability to see both sides of arguments because they are great listeners, and they can recognize that both sides are valid and true. This becomes irritating to people, but I think that it's important to appreciate Libra's natural mediation abilities. Something that I associate with Libras a lot is their aesthetic talents. Their artistic and beauty qualities have to do with their desire for harmony; they find the perfect songs, the best food, good clothes, and good scenery to feel at ease. Other's feelings are important to Libras because they want the people they care about to be happy. Libras do, however, tend to overthink because they always want the best experience, and they do what they can to create ideal situations by using logical and critical thinking. Libras' yearning for harmony make them incredibly indecisive. It is difficult for them to form strong opinions because they always can see the opposing views. Another struggle Libras deal with because of their diplomatic tendencies is that they can end up not being completely honest with people in order to avoid confrontation. Libras are ruled by Venus which is the planet of love and relationships, so it controls things like beauty. Because of this, things that Libras love to self-indulge. Although they often think of others, they do really like to go shopping for themselves. Honestly, most Libras I know are big trendsetters. Some famous Libra celebrities that I think showcase the Libran qualities are Kim Kardashian, Donald Glover, Snoop Dogg, Zac Efron, and Judge Judy.

Local farm's cider found unsafe

Caden Lemmen
Staff Reporter



A Michigan farmer was ordered by the government to stop making apple cider due to unsanitary conditions. Michigan farmers are now taking steps to ensure their farms are sanitary. During these times of Covid and flu season, Michigan farmers do everything they can to assure their food is sanitary. According to WoodTV8 MDARD says its inspection found food and mold residue on cider processing equipment and that the farm wasn't using food-grade containers at some parts of the cider-making process. It said the farm also wasn't making sure all equipment was properly cleaned to prevent problems with allergies and contamination. The main concern prompted by the problems is E. coli contamination. If you drank Pica's cider and you get sick, call your doctor. Grandview Orchards of Hudsonville

does everything they can to keep their food sanitary. Linda, Owner of Grandview Orchards stated, "Every single apple is sent through a washer and shorter and from there into bags and ready for sale, we have been around for almost 30 years and no one has ever gotten sick from our foods".

Some farmers are using too many chemicals on apples causing serious health problems. According to CNN, Fruits and vegetables do get washed before they hit the shelves -- for example, with bleach solutions. But some researchers have wondered whether that wash was enough. "We want to see whether or not the factory level (of washing) is already effective at removing pesticides," said Lili He, a food scientist at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. On October 25, He published a study comparing bleach, tap water and baking soda in removing two pesticide residues: phosmet and thiabendazole. In the new study,

baking soda came out on top. The authors say this is because the pesticides degrade faster in baking soda, making them easier to physically remove by washing. According to Linda, said, "We have chemical licenses to make sure we are being safe with our produce and that card is renewed every 2 years we also stop spraying chemicals 30 days before harvest to ensure the produce is clean and safe."

A Michigan farm was recently shut down due to unsanitary conditions. According to Mlive, a farm was ordered to shut down due to unsanitary conditions making any food from that farm dangerous to eat. What would you do if someone got sick from your food? Linda said, "Like I said we have been around for almost 30 years and we have never received a call saying someone got sick from one of our foods and I hope to never get one of those calls because we do everything we can to ensure our food is safe."

Opinions? Comments?
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