



The Billie Bulletin

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The Firefighters Come to Town

By Alea and Abigail Blatch

The Cedar Creek fire had burned its way to our east when folks in Oakridge had to evacuate their homes. Firefighters were all that stood between saving Oakridge or losing it to the fire. The Billie Bulletin interviewed two firefighters who had worked on this fire: Tyee Williams and Joe Jolley.

"What were the hardest things about being a Firefighter?" Joe Jolley said "The day-to-day work of firefighting can be difficult and tiring but the hardest part of the job for me is being away from home for long periods of time. It can become very isolating to leave home for that length of time, over and over throughout the summer, and it can put a real strain on relationships with friends, family, and partners."



of that whenever I'm driving a vehicle. The conditions we work under can be pretty difficult, for sure. Shifts are long, and a lot of the work we do is obviously very physical and tiring. You can tell by the end of a run that people are starting to get worn thin by exertion and lack of sleep, and that sort of fatigue presents obvious safety issues. It's also a very dirty job

of course, and while I'm no expert it's hard to imagine breathing in as much ash and smoke as we do doesn't present some real long-term health concerns."

Williams said "The pay can vary quite a bit for firefighters depending on experience, what role you're in, and how busy the fire season is. This year because of the new executive order from the Biden admin the minimum wage for a wildland firefighter is \$15 an hour, but the base wages don't really tell the full story, because oftentimes we work 85-110 hour weeks, so we really make most of our money from overtime hours where folks could be making \$25-35 an hour. We often describe the job as "glorified landscaping", because most days it's just long days of digging, cutting brush or trees, and hauling hoses and there just so happens to be some fire to spice it up a little bit. The Cedar Creek fire was notable because most of it was in pretty inaccessible terrain to actually try to fight up close (what we call "going direct") so we instead had to try to create a "big box" of indirect fireline where we prepared the roads that we wanted to use as firebreaks. On the Cedar Creek fire we spent weeks cutting brush along the roadways in order to prep them for backfiring. This fire did have a few days of some of the heaviest smoke I've ever seen and plenty of ashfall was happening. On the days where the fire was really blowing up we had to wear headlamps by midafternoon because the smoke had almost completely blacked out the sun.

What's your role when you are in action being a firefighter?

Jolley said "The daily work of firefighting



!Glory Days!

The Volleyball team has leapt into the stratosphere of success in its 18-3 season at the top of the standings for 3A while Adrian Arellano earned immortality with his 85th goal, setting the State record for soccer career goals. Photo by STories Photography.



85!

varies a lot depending on what type of resource you're working on and what the conditions on a particular fire are -- the job of an engine crew looks a lot different from a hand crew, or a helicopter pilot or bulldozer operator, and will vary depending on what's needed on your part of the fire at a given time. We also do a lot of preparing fireline -- usually this involves going along a road or other established fire break that the fire management team has designated as a containment line for the fire and removing all or much of the fine fuels from the "black" side of the line (the side of the fire break closer to the fire) and moving it to the "green" side (the side farther from the fire) -- first by cutting material out with chainsaws, then dragging cut fuel to the other side of the line by hand. The end result is a swath of ground -- anywhere from 10 to 60 feet wide or more -- where all the undergrowth and small fuel has been removed. The effect of this is to slow the fire down as it approaches the line, or serve as a point where a controlled burn can be established with minimal risk of threatening the line. And if there's no road or natural

feature like a stream to use as a line we may need to dig the fireline ourselves -- the whole crew will stretch out into a single file line, everyone with a tool, and start digging a line, clearing out all the organic, burnable material on the ground until only bare mineral soil remains."

The last question we asked was "Why did you choose to be a firefighter?"

Jolley said that he had "a close friend who had been doing the job on-and-off for a few years and heard a lot of interesting stories about what the work was like. It was also on my mind a lot after the summer of 2020 especially. There's also a lot of other things I've grown to love about the job: It's really amazing to get paid to travel to and work in extremely beautiful natural areas. Fire took me to New Mexico for the first time early this summer, and I spent most of September working around really impressive old growth trees along the Willamette river on the Cedar Creek Fire. I've also gotten to meet a lot of great people doing this work, from a whole variety of backgrounds -- I always enjoy hearing the various winding life stories that have led people to working with fire. It can be a taxing work at times for sure, but it's taught me more about the world and myself than any other job I've had, and it's the first work I've done that I keep wanting to come back to -- to see more, to learn more, to keep getting better at. Williams said "I started fighting fires because I wanted to get a job outdoors, and it was a good way to make money in the summers between going to school. I love the camaraderie that comes from working really hard alongside people for weeks at a time. On a good day it's adult summer camp, on a bad day it can be truly miserable, but it's hard not to love playing with fire."



MS Principal Caleb Salmond, Assistant Principal Kyle McClain, Counselor Shawn Swick and Principal Garth Gerot lead PHILL into a new era.

Starting out with a bang

By Jack Perini

POPO! Did you hear that?

That was the sound of our high school administration being thrown into the deep end. If you didn't know, last year all of our administration left. Mr. Fisher, Mr. Hoberg, Ms. Ruiz, all gone.

Even our superintendent Mr. Linenburger left.

Of course those positions were filled before school started. Currently we have Mr. Gerot as our High School Principal, Mr. McClain as our High School Vice-Principal and Athletic Director, Mr. Salmond as our Middle School Vice-Principal, and Mr. Swick as our new Counselor. Additionally, as of October first, our new interim superintendent is Mr. Crist.

If one thing is for sure, it's that our new administration wants to be here and wants to help. They are making a point to be visible, involved, and accessible. I have been fortunate enough to meet most of them and they are all genuinely nice people who want to be here and want to help us. One of their goals is to create a sense of community. Right off the bat, Mr. Gerot organized a fun activity for the entire high school before school even started.



First week of school assembly got the entire student body racing around competing in team building games.



New Middle School Principal : It's "Salmond" not salmon

By Josalynn Bathe

Mr. Salmond is the vice principal of our school. His job is supporting students and their safety, supporting teachers, and keeping things smooth in the office

What he likes about his job is helping students and family through challenges. Mr. Salmond likes the support that this school offers teachers. He also likes the middle through high school program.

One of the reasons he was inspired to be a vice principal, is that he struggled in school. He is passionate in helping others. He wants others to open windows for jobs once students leave high school. Mr. Salmond said, "I guess I always knew I would be vice principal. I guess the fact I struggled in school helped me pursue that goal." When I asked him if his job was easy he told me it varies from laid back to not easy (his tone of voice said Chaos).

He also gets along with the staff very well. the entire staff floated white water rafting trip. Rumors of Mr. Salmond getting "hosed" by a staff member were neither confirmed nor denied. "It was very fun," he said, "good times."

If not a vice principal, Mr. Salmond would've been a different office helper. The hardest question for him was 'if you could change your job what would it be? He is content with his job and wouldn't change anything about it other than getting to know people more, know the staff, families, and the students.



Mr. Caleb Salmond competes against Mr. Gerot in a competition to grab the solo cup first as a team building activity. Ms. Jampolsky eventually was crowned winner of the all staff competition.

Mr. McClain has big plans

by Emily Krauss

There are a lot of new things happening this year at Pleasant Hill. A lot of new faces, new rules, including an all new administration team.

One member of this team is Mr. Kyle McClain, our new athletic director. He is very excited about the upcoming school year and seems to have many inventive ideas that are meant to help all of us. Before coming to Pleasant Hill, Mr. McClain taught at North Douglas as a PE teacher, wrestling coach, athletic director, and dean of students. Previous to that, he also worked at Hamlin Middle School, and was the head wrestling coach at Springfield High School for 3 years. He got his administration license last spring through Concordia University of Chicago.

Something you might not know about him, he's a huge fan of The Office! "I love the Office, I've seen the series about—I want to say 50 times. It's like white noise, it's just comforting after a long day at work. You just come home and sit on the couch and watch The Office." Mr. McClain is also married and has a dog, Navy, who he calls his 'fur-baby'.

Mr. McClain acknowledges that he might be younger and less experienced than some of the other staff members in the building however, he said that "maintaining professionalism and being willing to learn from staff is really important. And building that trust." He also thinks that "leadership is being side by side with your colleagues and moving towards a single objective, a single vision. I think that starts with trust. I think that starts with being able to listen and really striving to build positive, meaningful authentic relationships. Really being intentional in creating these relationships".



How is it going Mr. Gerot?

By Bella Malekzadeh

It is Mr. Garth Gerot's first year here and already he is making many positive changes and really getting to know the school.

Mr. Gerot said "I love the Pleasant Hill students and the community!" Mr. Gerot originally came from Siuslaw Highschool and has moved to Pleasant Hill. He said "A big part of why I came here was the small community and how it's the type of school where you know everyone."

In Mr. Gerot's previous school he had a big impact. He created many programs during his time there. One of the programs which he is most proud of is: Sources of Strength. This program was intended to help with suicide prevention. He says, "I loved this program because it helped me engage with kids and get to know our community better."

Mr. Gerot is passionate about teaching because he wanted to make the biggest difference he could with children. He said "I love when I can watch kids learn and improve, when they find out what they want to do, and get their hearts pumping."

Mr. Gerot has a few kids of his own at home as well: Avalene, Reed, and Campbell. He loves hanging out with his family, and aside from the lovely community here, being closer to his kids and spending more time with them was an amazing plus to being principal at Pleasant Hill.

Outside of school, Mr. Gerot loves hiking, bike riding, playing guitar, hanging out with family and friends, cooking and music. He also likes to find new food dishes and figure out how to make them.



Girls soccer has scorched all their opponents except for two ties with Sisters and one loss and one tie with Central Linn. This ranks them #9 in the State with a sterling 9-1-3 record. Their balanced attack has been part of an exceptional run for this team for several years. Coach Chris Hammond leads the team into State with enthusiasm and a sense of fun.

New rules lead to complaints

By Lena Daniel

The 2022/23 school year has just begun and with the new year comes new rules, new administrators, and new teachers.

Some of these new rules include things like forbidding students to sit in their car at lunch or during any down time, no cell phone use in class whatsoever, and requiring parking passes to be allowed to park at the school. Because of all the change, we wanted to get some kids' opinions on these rules, as well as some teachers.

Some students don't seem to care that there are more rules, while others say they are "dumb and stupid." Senior Jennah Kopperud said, "I just bought a new car and now I am not even allowed to sit in it, in my parking spot that I paid for."

I think part of the reason there is such a push back on the rules is simply because people aren't used to it. Last year, these rules were not enforced much at all. Another student said that, "I don't like the rules but I see why they are necessary." Although these rules seem annoying and unnecessary to some students, it ensures the safety and security of the school.

Mr. Gerot and the other administrators also just want us to be happy to come to school, not feel the need to leave at any opportunity, and build a stronger community after a strange couple of years. One thing we can do to build back that sense of community is attending school events such as sporting games, concerts, and dances. These changes may be difficult to adjust to at first as we learn the new administrator's expectations, but by respecting the rules and expectations, we will have a fun year.



New Interim Superintendent Jim Crist comes from Springfield School District.

What students want in a new Superintendent

By Andrew Taylor

What do the students want and expect from a Superintendent?

Many of the students want someone who listens to them and moves the school district in that direction. Some students want an accepting superintendent for queer people, most especially trans students. Most of the students I talked to said they wanted a Superintendent who isn't so strict. A lot of the students are unhappy about new policies and feel that these policies are overbearing.

I had to tell a lot of the people what a superintendent does. Some of the students feel that we should be more clear about what the superintendent does and they feel that they should be a more integral part of the actual school. At the moment the Superintendent feels like this very far out thing. When I searched for the contact information for the superintendent, I found it but also I found that the superintendent has two assistants, including the board secretary.

A good amount of the people I interviewed felt that he was just some military guy that came by once in a while. When I was in grade school, I saw him once when the seniors were graduating.

To come back to the first question, the students of Pleasant Hill want a superintendent who actually talks to the students instead of being this very distant person.

New MS math and PE teacher, Ms. Huff, loves THE OUTDOORS

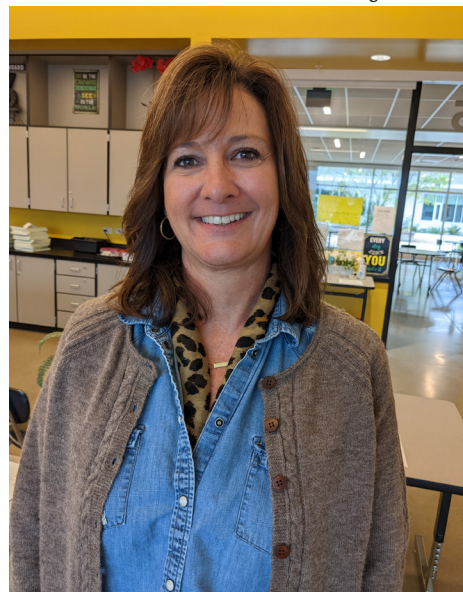
By Rosie Paredis-Calva

Mrs. Deedra Huff is our new Middle School teacher of math and PE.

Some people may not know about her, so I will tell you a little bit about her.

There were many teachers in Mrs. Huff's family—which may not have been the main reason she became a teacher. Her mom always taught her to think critically, challenge herself and always be the best she can be.

There are many memories she



has, but the one she loves the most is when she was in 3rd grade her teacher, Mrs. Snodgrass,

said she was "a social butterfly" (in a good way of course) whose energy she enjoyed

Some people might share with her an amazing memory of sports. She always wanted to be in a gym or on a field.

And that's why she wants to encourage kids to move.

Social Media is decadent and depraved

By Hunter Giles

I don't use social media. It never seemed interesting to me, and it just feels like an utter waste of time.

But for many people around the world, social media has become an important part of life. Sites like Facebook, Instagram or Twitter make up a large part of people's social connection to others, ranging from conversations with complete strangers to chats with friends and family.

According to recent studies from July of this year, about 59% of the world population uses social media, with an average daily online time of two hours and twenty-nine minutes.

That seems like a lot of time out of the day, doesn't it? How much time do you spend on social media?

What else could you be doing with all that time?

So, I wonder, what are the benefits of NOT using social media?

To some people, it may seem like an odd idea to not use social media, either by abstaining, or simply not being allowed to use it in the first place.

Recent studies done on the pros and cons of social media use show that frequent use of social media can cause sleep loss, increased stress and anxiety, as well as feelings of depression and loneliness.

Comparing countries with the highest amounts of depression and countries with the most social media use shows a definite overlap. Nations like India, Japan and the USA have the greatest social media use worldwide, and are also undergoing a severe mental health crisis among users.

Studies like this suggest that regular use of social media can increase feelings of loneliness, and can worsen pre-existing issues concerning mental health. Social media by design is addictive and can be directly harmful to people already vulnerable to anxiety and low self-esteem.

However, there can also be some positives to social media, such as connecting with family or friends, meeting new people (safely, of course), or educating yourself on current events with the help of reliable and trustworthy sources.

There are also benefits of using social media for only limited periods of time, 30 minutes or less each day of time on social media reduces the aforementioned risks of social media use.

Children should stay away from social media platforms or have restricted usage due to threats like cyberbullying or online grooming. The negative effects of social media are also often more prominent in younger people.

For these reasons, many social media platforms include parental controls and restrictions, to prevent younger users from accessing adult content, or from uncontrolled access to strangers online.

I asked a member of the 9th grade class here for their opinion on social media and its effect on their life, and what they had to say was very similar to these studies.

This person started using social media around the 3rd grade, in particular a video sharing platform similar to TikTok.

According to them, users on the platform would regularly leave insulting comments about them and their appearance and target their content on the website, which would negatively impact their self-esteem and cause them to develop worsened social anxiety due to withdrawing from friends.

Another concern they mentioned was the false insecurities pushed by social media on young people, images of extremely edited bodies on popular social media as well as the promotion of unhealthy diets and lifestyles.

Besides those issues, they did mention some positives social media has had on their life. They now use social media significantly less, using it mainly for communicating with friends and keeping up with sports events. They said it makes them feel closer and more connected to the people around them, and that it can be a very positive thing when used responsibly and maturely.

Looking for more insight into young people and social media, I talked to a few other students to see their thoughts on the subject:

"I don't use social media, it's all just people making a big deal out of nothing." - Brandyon Tobey, Freshman

"It's vapid and annoying. It's all just superficial, clothes and stuff. It's all about trying to fit in with others. I've tried to get into Instagram a few times, but I just can't." - Sophia Brock, Junior

"Social media is toxic, and really dangerous for young people. It's super addictive, tons of people can't leave it for long." -Allison Rife, Freshman

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THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT Grove of Titans: Social media vs. the planet

By Wesleigh Harr

There are many places on our planet that have changed dramatically over the years. We have built cities, factories, roads, power lines, and many other technological advancements.

We also have made ways for people to communicate from across the world through social media. Now, you can either view social media in a positive or negative way, that depends on your perspective.

However, some believe that social media does more harm than good.

There is a startling contrast between telling one person about the grove and them having to find it based on descriptions and clues and saying it once online and millions of people reading about it.

One such case involves the changes made to a very special place in the well-known Redwood National and State Parks in California. Specifically discussing the Grove of Titans located in the Jedediah Smith State Park.

The Grove of Titans is in a secluded area in the Redwoods that is very separated from the rest of the world, or at least it was. The Grove of Titans is a place where the trees have been able to grow to massive sizes, so large that they make other redwood trees look tiny in comparison. The reason that the grove was so secluded was because it was very difficult to find.

The first known discovery of the grove was in 1993 by a group of botanists. Richard Preston wrote a book on their discoveries titled The Wild Trees. In the book, he never gave the exact location in order to keep it a secret for the most part. Many people read the book and used the information to try and find the grove.

Another book that provided some information on the location of the Grove of Titans was Van Pelt's Forest Giants on the Pacific Coast. A man I interviewed actually used the vague information from Van Pelt's book to find the Grove.

Dr. Brian St. George is an anesthesiologist who currently works at PeaceHealth in Eugene, and one who spent a few years searching for the grove. When he found it, he chose to not disclose the location of the grove online, instead choosing a select few people who he knew could be trusted to respect the place. He also said in his text "For me, the search became part of the experience like most things worthwhile, the journey getting there is as important as the end result."

During our conversation, Dr. St. George often brought up Van Pelt and his stance on these giants and them staying anonymous in order to keep them safe. He also brought up the idea that if these trees were revealed, then they would be "loved to death", meaning that the constant

Psst, parents, you need advice?

Opinion by Sophia Brock

It's fair to say that most parents have their kids' best interests at heart, even if it doesn't seem like it. The problem is that parents don't always know what's best. Oftentimes, parents will restrict their children from viewing content they deem inappropriate instead of providing needed guidance. All kids are different, and it's difficult to determine when they are ready for certain topics. Children may feel ready before their parents, and seek out information from those around them. The only problem is that they may end up with limited or misinformation.

Parents are allowing their young children more and more access to the internet. Social media alone is full of ideas that can be harmful to impressionable young minds. Alcohol and drugs are made to look cool and mature, but they are dangerous for kids that are desperate to grow up as fast as they can.

On the other hand, some parents restrict all usage of the internet to their children. This usually results in kids either feeling left out from their peers, or they find their way onto social media and the internet, just in secret. The more parents control, the more children rebel. And with little parental guidance, they are at increased risk of developing the wrong ideas.

Children of people who not only talk about, but demonstrate responsibility are more likely to also develop that trait. Leading by example is more important than anything that could be said. There's no such thing as a perfect parent, but the best are those who provide guidance without force or restriction.

cycle of people wanting to see them would eventually kill them.

That is the reason that boardwalks were put in place after the location of the Grove of Titans was posted on social media. Soon after that information was put out, up to sixty people were going in and out every day.

The reason that there was never really an issue before the widespread discovery is because there is a massive difference between one small group every once in a while and many people going in at a constant rate.

While the implementation of the boardwalks is very saddening for anyone who has experienced the amazingly untouched grove from before, it is objectively a good thing because at the end of the day, protecting these trees is more important than the nostalgia of those who sat in those trees.

Part of the uniqueness of the grove was just how natural it was, now what do I mean by that? I mean that there were no trails, no stairs, no railings, signs, gates, anything. You could just climb into some of these trees, walk through rivers, and find many forms of wildlife.

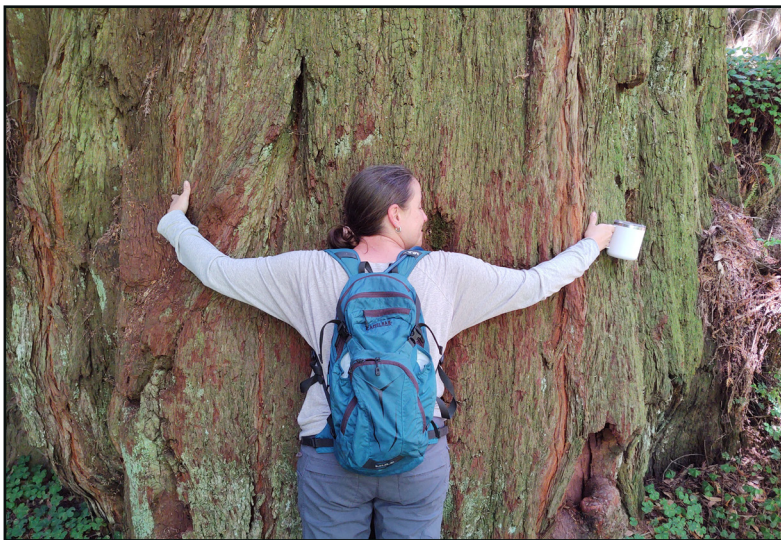
I have many memories of finding banana slugs length of my hand, eating lunch thirty feet in the air, and walking on fallen logs and seeing new mushrooms, ferns, and trees growing out of them.

Part of the "magic" was the fallen tree that you walked through when you got there. Before that point, the ferns would be up to your waist, after you emerged out the other end, they were suddenly three feet taller than you.

A story that was shared during my interview with Dr. St. George helped me understand just how it felt to witness the impact of social media on the Grove of Titans.

"I was at the grove 6 years ago sitting quietly with my tree, the Del Norte Titan and a person approached on his phone. When he got over to me he understood from his phone coordinates that he had arrived. He snapped his picture and left as quickly as he came. I probably stayed there for an hour afterwards, as I knew this would be the last hurrah for the grove as I knew it. The tree paparazzi had arrived."

That story is a perfect example of the effect of social media, it can



completely cloud people's minds and prevent them from enjoying something incredible. Because of people who posted the location, about fifty percent of the experience of enjoying the grove is gone.

The changes made to the grove are unfortunate, but necessary. Finding the balance between protecting nature and allowing people to experience it is up to our generation. What happened to the Grove of Titans has happened all over the world and many of it spawned from social media.

I hope that the grove can

serve as a reminder to not be distracted by the likes, the views, and the popularity. To experience nature and its wonder without being blinded by what can be gained digitally. To see nature, beauty, and life as precious beyond belief.

Caleb Wilson bring competitive spirit

by Jayden Apker

Mr. Caleb Wilson, a new teacher at PHHS, already loves the environment, and the "close knit community" that Pleasant Hill has to offer. This is actually his first year teaching, after being a student teacher at Marist. He teaches intro to Health Science, Speed and Strength, and middle school PE.

Mr. Wilson has always lived in Oregon, and wouldn't want to be anywhere else. He graduated from Thurston High School, and when asked about the school replied, "It was good, but is nowhere near the same level of welcoming and accepting as PHHS."

Some of his interests and hobbies include sports, fishing, being with friends and family, listening to all kinds of music, and going to concerts such as ACDC. Mr. Wilson especially likes basketball, and will be coaching JV 2, and assisting with varsity this year. He's excited to have a great season, and is looking forward to getting to know all of the players and being in the basketball atmosphere. Basketball is actually his favorite sport, having played three years of varsity in high school, and throughout college at Linn-Benton Community College.

We're glad to have Mr. Wilson this year, who's going to, "bring his competitive spirit from the court to the classroom." He's honored to be with us and is looking forward to building relationships, seeing growth, and passing down the wisdom he's learned from teachers before him.

Billies visit Latvia and Guatemala

By Ellie Epperson

Many of us have dreams of traveling the world and seeing sights other than the small town we grow up in. There's something so refreshing about a new culture and traditions different from what we are used to.

Some of Pleasant Hill High School's students have had the opportunity to travel abroad over the summer. I interviewed Vedder Anderson and Zoey Brott.

Vedder Anderson-Guatemala: "I went to Guatemala this summer. I went on a medical mission and I was gone for about a week. For the first few days I worked in dentistry. I did a lot of cleaning all the dental tools and I got to do a few injections and pull a few teeth. And I did some work at clinic and...at Optometry which is just glasses basically. Like [the] eye doctor."

Zoey Brott (11) went to Riga, Latvia for six weeks.

Zoey Brott: "I went on a program with the National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y), this program is run through the State Department. It's a fully-funded scholarship to learn languages of national need. I had 4 hours of language lessons on weekdays, a total of 120 hours of Russian lessons, as well as language practice with general life. I chose to apply for this program to travel and meet new people from other cultures."

Transportation is a big part of starting off a trip the right way. Traveling out of the country can be tricky due to language barriers, time zones and more.

VA: "Getting there was...the Uber's were a little sketch. The hardest part was getting through customs. I actually had a credit card knife in my wallet! It was a little awkward because I didn't speak much Spanish. My dad had to get his bags so I had to go through the airport by myself. I had to show them my passport and fill out all these forms in really bad Spanish and the dude that worked at the desk was trying to talk to me and I had no idea what he was saying. And so he just had to point me where to go, which was funny."

ZB: "Public transportation [In Riga, Latvia] was amazing, it was reliable and you could get pretty much anywhere you wanted to go with it. I lost my phone on the tram, ended up emailing them in Russian and getting a response back, then retrieving my phone with my host mom. That was a very interesting day."

The language barrier can complicate things but many times it provides a learning experience.

Communication is the basic necessity for functioning in any society. When you are thrown into a situation with a new language and limited skill it can be awkward at first.

VA: "Most of the [people in Guatemala] spoke Spanish, in most of the villages at least. There was one we went to that spoke Kaqchikel. It's nothing like Spanish. We just had a little sheet of paper that said just the bare minimum of what we'd need to say and we'd just read straight from that paper. Some of the time they couldn't speak Spanish at all so we'd have people that could speak Spanish and Kaqchikel; they were natives. They'd come and speak Kaqchikel to them and then speak Spanish to us and then we'd translate it to English. So it was a bit of a process."

ZB: "Learning Russian [and] the Cyrillic alphabet was really tough at first and communication definitely became a lot easier after I became more confident in the language. Things you don't really think about [when] communicating with a little kid. I was trying to get my host brother to share a bucket with another boy on the beach and I didn't have the words to tell him that. 'Yes' and 'no' don't

communicate enough about a topic like sharing to help that scenario."

Traveling brings the opportunity to see many amazing views, and places of historical and cultural significance.

VA: "One of the places we went to was really cool. It was [a] town square and we got to go [on] a spiral staircase under [the town] that went to a bathroom in the middle of the town. There was a little gazebo on top. We got to work outside that day and that was in dentistry. That was really cool. Some of the people at the villages would feed us and we had some really good food that day."

ZB: "I did a lot of things but definitely on the top of the list was exploring a Soviet bunker. The Soviet bunker was right underneath an old person physical therapy center (apparently that's what it originally was) and the bunker was built underneath it. It was so jaw dropping to see all the maps, old machineries, communication centers, and the red phone with a line directly to Moscow it was grimly fantastic. The best ten euros I've ever spent in my life was at this place. I got a functioning gas mask!"

Visiting places outside of the country can expose us to traditions and cultures far different from ours. This is a great way to learn about the world around us.

VA: "[Guatemala] is poor. There's not a lot of resources there. Like clean water, that's a big thing. There wasn't any clean water so you couldn't use the sink or tap water to brush your teeth. Or you couldn't drink the shower water. You had to wear shoes in the shower. It was interesting just seeing their houses were just made out of clay and brick and just all sorts of different materials that were just like old everyday items."

ZB: "[I'm] not totally sure if I can speak elegantly about the culture but I can speak about my experiences which may be skewed from my understanding of cultural customs in the US if that makes any sense."

As Latvia was once a part of the Soviet Union there is a lot of Russian influence into the Latvian culture. If you went out in sweatpants or workout clothes you would be looked at funny. [So it was important to] leave the house a little bit nicer than that. Public transport was a really big thing and it was fantastic you could ride a tram from your house to downtown Old Riga. People didn't really jaywalk. There seemed like there was a lot of respect for elderly people as when an older person got on the tram then somebody gave up



Zoey Brott with her host brother in Riga, capital city of Latvia

their seat for them. Everywhere you turned there was a Ukrainian flag and their support was very clearly expressed. It was not uncommon for people to speak two or three or four languages. The language bit was very interesting because when you live in the US you really only have to speak one language: English. When you're surrounded by all these countries that have different languages you end up with a mixture of languages. For example my host mom spoke Latvian, Russian, Georgian, and English."

Food has also seemed to become a major component of travel bucket-lists. Tastes and foods can be a big part of what makes a culture a culture.

VA: "[My favorite food was] a soup with chicken and it had some rice and some tamales and beans and stuff in the soup and corn."

ZB: "I had a lot of soup, a lot of potatoes, and a lot of meat. They love sour cream and cottage cheese. Paninis and these small cottage cheese pancakes were delicious as well as food I can only describe as similar to a gyro."

Participating in traditions of the world can create unity and respect for each other. By learning about them we create a connection with others and to the bigger picture.

VA: "Every year the Guatemala trip overlaps with the Fourth of July so they always do fireworks, which is cool. The locals do it for us. We did some of their stuff with their culture, Like we went to a factory. Well, I guess, it was a factory for them but it wouldn't seem like a factory to us. It's basically like a pottery shop, but that is basically what their factories are. Just little tiny shops that are all connected with little passageways. They all made pottery together. It was legit handmade stuff. It was really cool. We got to watch them paint, which was really cool."

ZB: "Lgo [is a tradition], a holiday we just barely missed but I learned a little bit about it when I first got there. Celebrating the summer solstice, a 24-hour day they go camping and stay up."

Visiting somewhere new, even if it's out of the country, can open your eyes to the world around you. There is so much more to life than what's right in front of you. It can teach you things you didn't know, you can meet new people,

VA: "It was a really cool experience. I think it just made me more grateful for the things I think are bare minimums for here or like running water that I can drink whenever I want and a nice cozy house and clean food that I don't have to worry about because that was one of the big things too, you can't eat [fresh] vegetables there. Just lots of stricts rules on what you can and can't eat from there [for Americans]. It just made me more grateful for advancements that are taken advantage of here."

ZB: "I'm forever changed, I went and I didn't feel like a tourist, it was nothing like a vacation, it was life! I miss my life in Riga, the everyday monotonous tasks were jarring at first but then became my new normal. I'm keeping in contact with my host mom practicing my Russian. I have established a relationship with my host mom and my host brother, they feel like family. I made some awesome friends on the program, and had a lot of eye opening experiences to the world."



New student advocate has a familiar face

By Jennah Kopperud

Ms. Jami Strinz loves pizza. Not the American sort, but the OG Italian pizza. After living in Italy she is very particular about the quality of pizza.

Ms. Strinz is passionate about trying to help young people see what they are capable of and reaching their full potential. She loves to explore different paths of life for students and is not fond of the social construct that you must go to college to be successful. What makes Strinz different from others is that she has a strong sense of rule following but understands the importance of stepping outside of that box and pushing past the comfort zone,.

Her official title is Student Support Advocate, she describes her job here as providing support for students to be successful in school, and providing proper resources for students. Jamie has 25 years of experience working with students and over the years this experience has adequately prepared her for this position.

Strinz went to school here she described it as "awesome and a positive experience." Her dad worked here. Jamie enjoyed school, going to class, the people, and extra curriculars. She says not a lot has changed, the structures and buildings have but, the mission to help each student has stayed the same. Jamie always loved how the adults helped each student come up with a plan and that they had support and guidance no matter what the decision was.

Jamie didn't want to sit at a desk and do the same thing everyday so PHill's diverse position is fulfilling for her. Originally Jamie went to college to be an English teacher, she realized she did not necessarily want to work in the classroom but still wanted to work with young people. This career is fulfilling for Jamie because it is a different experience everyday and she continues to develop more skills and tools for it. Core values are important to Jamie and she tries to instill this into all students, teaching respect and how to hold yourself accountable.

Strinz has coached, led youth organizations, worked in college athletic administrations, did college event management, accounting in school districts, and agriculture.

Strinz leans towards alternative music styles and loves dogs. She loves road trips with no agenda and just going where the road takes her and listening to good music along the way.

She has a daughter who goes to school here, Sari, and, she has her significant other Steve, She is close to the rest of her family including a sister in Texas.

Jamie aspires to find balance between career and personal life and to continue to work with kids.



Pearl Burkeman surveys the assembly shenanigans.

Pleasant Hill Education Foundation patrons:
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Pleasant Hill Boosters Club
Photography
Photos by Amy Joy

Pros and cons of omnipresent parents at PHill

By Sari Strinz

In a small town like Pleasant Hill there is bound to be some overlap between home life and school.

Several students at Pleasant Hill have parents who work at school, and with that there are pros and cons for the students. I interviewed some of the students and asked them, what is it like to have a parent at school?

For the most part students feel positively about having their parents at school. Junior, Savannah White states that she really likes having her mom Mrs. White at school. Some of the things she appreciates include the extra space in Mrs. White's class room to store her things. Savannah also told me that she feels secure and that it's a safe environment having her mom nearby. There are also some little things that were mentioned like traveling with her mom on some of the FFA trips, and getting to hang out with her friend, Madison Michlanski, after school when they don't have volleyball.

Madison Machlanski echoed some of the same positives but also added that she likes being able to see more behind the scenes. Because of her mom's position in the office, she often gets to see many different events that happen at the school. An example of some of the things Madison might get to experience is the set up for different sports/games and or dances.

But there is a downside to having your parents at the school.

Both Savannah and Madison mentioned that sometimes they are held to a higher set of standards and have stricter rules because their parents work there. They also said that sometimes if students and staff dislike their parents it can reflect on them.

Even with the added pressure and the potentially unfair reflections, it is clear that there are many more pros than cons for the students whose parents work at the school.

Beloved vocal teacher comes back for his kids

By Deanna Helvie

"I am a refreshed music teacher who has grown back in love with the development of students and the joy of music," responded Mr. Kyle Ludwig to the question of why he has come back.

"Covid was a big test and that test was whether I wanted to be a teacher anymore and quite frankly I didn't anymore. I think a lot of personal things for me were going on at the time. And on top of that online school for the choir is like, nonexistent. It wasn't what I signed up for but I just cared about the students a lot. I think I had made a choice for myself. It's early on in my teaching career where I hadn't invested ten years of my life yet so for me it was a decision based on if I were to try something else would I have support?

I wanted to see if I really can do anything else. And I went into the sales job for RVs at an RV dealership and I did ok. I wasn't terrible but I wasn't like the top-selling individual there. Which was ok with me. But I think that I realized throughout the year that I took a break that I had such a deep love for seeing people grow. Not that I don't enjoy seeing myself grow but that job was very individualistic and for me I'm just about collaboration, seeing people grow, and taking them from one step to the next.

And quite frankly every day I wake up and I just dreaded it. I didn't wanna go to that job, it didn't excite me to go and sell RVs as much as it excites me to come over here and possibly make something great from people from all different walks of life. I think who I was was a very burnt out tired person, versus now I feel refreshed, I feel excited and I think that's something very special that I know teaching brings for me. That I know a lot of people search for in their professional life."

"Not to say every day is the best but when I



ask myself 'does this bring me joy' the answer is yes." "I think in general music programs especially choirs after covid suffered in numbers, so my biggest short-term goal is to recruit as many people as I can. I would love to have three full classes in five years at the high school level. I want to build relationships with people and show them that singing is fun and it's actually a really hard skill to build."

"When I joined very young I joined because I wanted to meet girls. But I think I ended up really enjoying being with my friends. I really enjoyed the trips more than anything, my middle school years I remember going to Bullwinkle's. I got to share that experience with my friends and for me, that's what I want people to know. It really is a skill that you need to build and that Mr. Ludwig will help you build but it's also fun to be able to have another class with your friends.

We get to go on trips where we share more memories together. I still remember that I graduated in 2011 and I still remember that middle school trip to Bullwinkle's. It's very unique to be able to pick up sheet music and know what it sounds like in my head before I ever sing it." "Give it a chance and see where it takes you."

"I'm gonna change the world one relationship at a time. I think that without a relationship at all it's impossible to influence and make the change. I think everyone has great ideas but I think what I value the most is relationships with people. I think that's how I personally make changes not only in other people's lives but in my own life. Cause I've been alone before and it's obviously lonely.

So having relationships with people, finding common ground somehow, and just building on from that and having shared experiences. I think that is how I'm going to change the world, we can do that through music too."

Pritiken finds a home

By Jacqueline Pineda

This year at Pleasant Hill we have gained new staff members, including Mr. Pritiken who teaches Language Arts. Last year he stepped in as a substitute when one of the English teachers (Mrs. Billings) was on maternity leave.

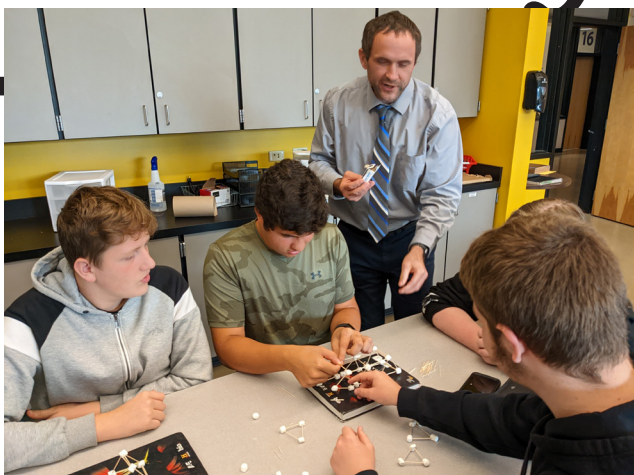
Mr. Pritiken explained what it was like to take over for a popular teacher: "When I started it was rough, Ms. Billings had some very loyal students, solid classroom routines, and [the] respect of her students" "... my goal each day was to connect with the students and try to continue the classroom community that Ms. Billings had already established, I don't know if I achieved that goal but I knew from working at Pleasant Hill that this school and community was a special place to teach, and the community truly valued education" he explained.

After experiencing what Pleasant Hill was like last year, Pritiken decided that he would like to take a permanent job here. "I felt like I wanted to continue teaching here because of the familiarity I had with the staff and students. I subbed at a lot of schools and Pleasant Hill was by far the best place to sub. The students were the ultimate reason that I decided to come back. Students here (for the most part) are driven, involved, and treat each other and their teachers with respect."

Although he is now a proud teacher, teaching was not always the first option. "I saw the workload when I considered [teaching] in college so I abandoned it probably because of laziness, and lack of motivation at the time. I used my speech disorder to justify my laziness, and convinced myself I could never teach with my stutter that I have had my whole life." He then mentioned how he worked in distribution warehouses.

"While working these physically demanding jobs, I realized that my body was starting to break down and I was topped out in my pay. I knew if I continued that line of work I would end up hurting myself, so my wife asked me what I wanted to do instead. I told her that teaching had been in the back of my mind for a while, so she supported my decision to go back to school to get my teaching degree."

Other than teaching, Mr. Pritiken enjoys a variety of things in his free time, "I have a wife and a three year old daughter, that is the reason I wake up and come to work everyday. I like spending my evenings and weekends with my family. During the pandemic I started to teach myself music production with GarageBand, so that is one of my current hobbies. I enjoy going to as many concerts as I can although I go to fewer now that I have a three year old. I like to cook and I considered it at one point for a career" he said.



Heacock settles in for History

By Brennen Bell

When asked why he decided to be a teacher, Mr. Heacock responded with "you know, I think early on in college I started to coach football and really started to like coaching and decided I also wanted to teach the skills I wanted, so, coaching, then teaching. After I graduated, I loved sports and I knew I wanted to coach and stay in the game. I think pretty much out of highschool I knew what I wanted to do.

Heacock continued explaining his twin passions. "My head coach at the time gave me an opportunity to coach with him at the high school and help out. Then I went to college and fell in love with history and decided to get a history major and then get my masters degree in Education and then I jumped right into teaching and coaching."

Regarding teaching history Heacock said "I think with history it's getting the students to understand... there's implications to understanding why things happened and how they impact our lives today. Then using that as a way of teaching students to critically think about their lives and how it can impact others. With economics it's the same thing. [Economics] is just key to understanding the world that we live in so I like teaching those things. History and economics are "all very applicable to what's happening in the world around us." Heacock uses what is called a "skill based approach" as a tactic of teaching which includes getting the students to learn critical thinking skills.

I asked "What do you like to do when you're not coaching or working?" and he responded by saying "when I'm not coaching or working, I love spending time with my wife and kids and hanging out and watching some sports together and doing things as a family. We like to go swimming and be outdoors as much as possible."

Prior to being hired this summer to teach and coach Billies, Heacock had taught at Thurston for several years and began his career in Hermiston, Oregon.

After that question, he was asked if he always wanted to be a coach and a teacher. Mr. Heacock had this to say. "Yeah, I think after I graduated I loved sports and I knew I wanted to coach and stay in the game so yeah. I think pretty much out of highschool I knew what I wanted to do."

Amy Brothers: Librarian Extraordinaire

By Sage Campbell

Mrs. Amy Brothers is our amazing school librarian. She has many skills under her belt. With an extensive knowledge of books, art, photography, and Japanese she is something of a polyglot. She majored in fine arts in college, which helped her passion in art flourish. For years Mrs. Brothers aspired to be a 3D animator. She applied in many different places, including Portland, England and Japan. She has worked very hard to become an amazing photographer, she worked at a photo lab to save up for her camera. She now professionally works as Amy Joy photography.

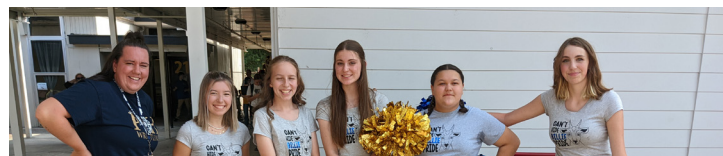
Mrs. Brothers has a good history in teaching. She has worked as an assistant teacher

at a preschool, as well as substitute teaching. She worked as an art teacher at an elementary school, she taught grades kindergarten through 6th grade. She taught a 3rd grade class but decided to quit, she also taught a kindergarten class for 2 months. Her most recent work stint is here at Pleasant Hill, in 2018.



As the Pleasant Hill librarian, Mrs. Brothers enjoys many things about this job. She loves all the books and to be able to recommend books to kids, especially when they love the book. She loves all the interactions and fun conversations with the students. Mrs. Brothers also enjoys tea parties with students.

The Pleasant Hill Education Foundation raised \$51,000 for classroom enrichment from our 30th Anniversary Mardi Gras Celebration August 27th. PHEF's mission is to inspire learning, enhance teaching, and create opportunities for every student.



Cross country revs up



Kendall Carey, known for smiling while running, charges forward at her meet.

By Camille Hicks

Cross country started running early July; since then we have worked on endurance, speed, and hills. This includes running the hill that many athletes know as ‘Morningstar.’ At the beginning of September our racing season began. We started with a less than comfortable flat and fast course up in Salem known as the Ash Creek Festival.

However, our second race, Silver Falls Oktoberfest Invitational, proved to be more memorable. Our team was built for this course—winding trail scenery and a monster hill, (which can’t really be called a hill, as ‘steep upward cliff’ is more fitting). The girls team took home 3rd place overall in our ranking category, and many runners left with personal and season records.

We ran at the Champs Invite race on September 23rd. The middle school girls team placed 2nd overall, with two athletes, Nellie Smith, and Annaleigh Epperson, placing in the top ten. The middle school boys team placed 4th overall, with one athlete, Wyatt Cummings, placing 10th out of 107.

We’re excited for the events to come, and to further our achievements, hopefully making it to state later this fall!

What is the best thing about this new school year?



“Friends” as a common answer, while the new class of Robotics interests others. Above is Raelynn DuBose and Greta Gramzow and below is Jessica Hansen and Aurora Brott



Cheyenne Green skies high to slam the ball across the net.

Volleyball dominates 3A

by Sami Pembleton

When I sat down with volleyball coach, Jessica Rombach I asked her why she became a coach? Mrs. Rombach shared that she became a coach because both of her parents were coaches. Mrs. Rombach was around volleyball her whole life so she thought it would be cool to follow in her parents footsteps.

When Mrs. Rombach graduated high school she coached “club, high school and college.” After coaching for a few years, she got the opportunity to come back and coach at the high school she graduated from. She couldn’t pass up the opportunity to return to Pleasant Hill.

I also got a chance to interview a couple members of the volleyball team. With Kyra Hill said that she plays volleyball because it gets her out of the house so she’s not home all day. She also said “it keeps her active.”

I asked Kyra what she likes about her coach Jessica Rombach and she said that she likes how “strict, helpful and understanding” she is. While I was interviewing player Ruby Jackson, she shared that she plays volleyball because “it is a good outlet for when she is stressed” and she likes how “it’s a good environment” to be around. A memory Ruby likes about a game was the game against Monroe. What she liked about that game “was the energy and how hyped” it was. She liked how all the girls did their handshakes during the game.

Make sure to catch our volleyball team at their next game to join in on the hype! The girls are hot onto a scorching season with a 9-2 record.



Jacob Neely goes wide to get around the Banks defense in a tough game against the state champs.

New football coach brings positive approach

By Jocelyn Heacock

For the last 2 years, the Pleasant Hill Football team had been in a slump. But this year, Pleasant Hill found a fresh start in new head coach Jeremiah Heacock. The football team currently has three wins and one loss under their belt. However, other things besides the football team’s winning streak have changed. According to Dominic Duckett; an offensive lineman, “The culture’s changed a lot. Everyone tries harder at practice and gives effort.”

How has the culture changed? Well Duckett also believes that, “Everyone cares. Last year a lot of guys just didn’t care.”

But he’s not the only one. Receiver and QB Brasen Holliday said, “Everyone is happy, happy about what they are doing.” Braedon Hazel said (regarding the culture) “...Definitely for the better. Kids want to show up and compete. Practices actually make us work and want to work.”

What brought this culture change? The new approaches and tactics of Head Coach, Jeremiah Heacock. JV quarterback, Steven Bounds describes him as, “Helpful, easy to talk to and will help talk you through situations.”

Other players describe him as, “Smart. Smart in the way he coaches and smart in his calls on the field.” or, “Great. Doesn’t yell at you ...and when you get yelled at, you don’t want to work.”

Coach Heacock explains his approach to coaching, “I treat it like teaching. I focus on breaking down the necessary skills that players need to be successful and teach those skills.” Because of this, the Coach has brought changes to the team like, “Focusing on skills, which empowered them to succeed based upon their skills.” It also made the players more confident. Why? “Because they know they have the skills.”

Coach Heacock has brought multiple changes to the team, on and off the field. Changes like challenging kids to always compete and boosting their confidence. According to a player, “We are confident in a good way.” Their confidence has been accelerated by the several wins they now have under their belt.

Before this year, the opposing teams didn’t have a reason to Fear the Goat. But this year they do!

PHill Cheerleaders Comeback

By Allison Rife

Billies cheerleading struggled last year.

The coach prepared the girls for only a few cheers at games. And the coach was unable to get everyone to learn the material.

This season, Caedence Wheaton and Callie Buffan led the charge to make a change for a better season. Their goals included having more people showing up to practice so they could start the season off strong. The girls learned in open gyms, small bits of material for the season. Eventually tryouts had the girls learning specific material to perform. This meant that the team was excited to start the season. The girls got started with fittings and fundraising. This summer the cheer team had a slow start learning routines and cheers.

They had to figure out where they would stand in front of the stands and slowly learn specific cheers. Ultimately everyone was prepped and ready for the season to come when they found out in June their coach had quit. Without a coach or anyone to supervise at practice, everyone was confused if there would even be a season. It was a scary start to an important time.

Luckily the girls persevered. They got a parent volunteer, Michelle Wheaton, who helped at practice. The captains, Caedence and Dakota Johnsen had to make sure everyone was prepared for the season. The first game was only a few months away and everyone was nervous if they would even be able to cheer.

But they kept working with early morning practices and conditioning. Near the end of summer we met Mr. Kyle McClain who understood and continued to help us find a coach. We finally caught a break and found a coach. The team was ecstatic despite not knowing anything about her. The team found out that Chelsi Wallace was kind, bubbly and excited to help out. Wallace went over some of the guidelines and things we would be doing to increase pride. The girls were so excited knowing they would be able to get to do things they weren’t allowed to in prior seasons.

Soon fundraising started with their first fundraiser happening at the Cottage Grove Speedway they did a 50/50 raffle and made over a thousand dollars in the span of less than ten hours.



Andrew Taylor and Nate Curtiss fight for control with a Sisters defender.

Boys soccer on a tear—again

By Jocelyn Heacock

The Boys’ Soccer Team went to state last year, faced off against Central Linn in the league championship (and won), and was victorious in every game except one last year. This year, they plan to go all the way.

So what makes them so successful??

The Goalie/Keeper, or as Hunter Allen puts it, “The guy in green” has an advantage. Allen said that he has a “faster reaction time than some kids” and has “gotten that from playing other sports like baseball. It just becomes second nature.”

We can’t talk about the keeper without talking about one of the Billies’ top defenders, right back Nate Curtis. The Junior points out that he is, “More aggressive” than the other players. Curtis’s favorite memory was last year when they went to the State Championship. “It was the last time we got to play with the seniors.”

Speaking of seniors, Captain Adrian Arellano said that his edge in the game is that “I know more than the others, because I watch soccer.” Arellano loves scoring goals, and claims “it’s in my blood.” Arellano plays striker and mid and is on his way to setting the State record for career goals scored.

Left Wing Landen Melvin said “I’m left-footed, so people don’t expect me to go to the other side.”

The mastermind behind the soccer team, Coach Ryota Sugitani is described by players as “always thinking about the next strategy” and that he “pushes us, but you can come and talk about your feelings.” Coach Sugatani has successfully led the team for 3 years.

With all of their wins so far, the Pleasant Hill Billies Soccer team kicks off their year with a great start!

Why are some pushing to restrict rights?

Opinion by Angel Calva

In the past few years more people have come to respect and support the LGBTQ+ community, but with all the love they've been receiving there has also, of late, come hate. Just this year there were 162 bills introduced in state legislatures targeting LGBTQ+ Americans. Most of the bills target transgender and non binary people with a particular focus on trans youth.

The rise of "anti-trans" bills comes as more people publicly identify as transgender. Publicly coming helps the communities visibility, but it's also fueling intense political reaction. The number of people between 13-17 who identify as trans doubled from an estimated 150,000 in 2017 to about 300,000 in 2022.

Lawmakers have sought to protect teachers who have refused to use a student's preferred pronouns. In Tennessee, a bill would prohibit some schools from requiring teachers to "use a students preferred pronoun when referring to the student if the preferred pronoun is not consistent with the students biological sex." This makes it harder for trans students to focus and feel safe in classes that aren't using their preferred pronouns.

With the rise of anti LGBTQ+ bills and actions, there has been an increase LGBTQ+ youth suicide attempts. The attempted suicide rate in the past year was a total of 712,990 LGBTQ youth between the ages of 13-24. Many of the anti LGBTQ+ actions, rights are being taken away.

The ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) tracks LGBTQ+ legislation by focusing on bills that are specifically attacking or targeting LGBTQ+ people which include measures restricting school curricula that deal with LGBTQ+ issues and religious exemption bills. The group keeps an eye out for legislation barring or criminalizing healthcare for trans youth and restricting access to the use of appropriate facilities like restrooms, and restricting trans youth from being able to participate in school sports and allowing religiously motivated discrimination against trans people or making it difficult for them to get identification documents with their name and gender.

Even among conservative politicians there is concern about this harsh crimping of LGBTQ+ rights. "Rarely has so much fear and anger been directed at so few. I don't understand what they are going through or why they feel the way they do, But I want them to live" Utah Governor Spencer Cox said that studies have shown that the high rates of suicide among trans students can be reduced when they're shown "even a little acceptance and connection."

These anti LGBTQ+ actions aren't protecting children, they're killing LGBTQ+ children.

A person's gender is an innate sense of their own identity.



Pep Band brings the energy

By India Isaacson

Three days every year, band kids of almost every grade come to the school to spend our hours of our summer getting better at playing. A few weeks before school starts, the Pep Band meets up and learns new music to play at the school sports games.

It's one of my favorite things leading up to school that I get to do, I've been in Pep Band for almost four years now!

No matter what instrument you play, you can come over and join us! We learn a couple songs by ear and some with sheet music, but it's always so much fun.

James Hoopman said, "Learning to play Hurricane Season was really fun." Hurricane Season is just one of the few songs you'll learn if you attend pep band camp. You'll probably make new friends or get closer with the friends you already have if they go there. Being in Pep Band has expanded my abilities on what I can play. But I'm not the only one who thinks that Pep Band is a great experience.

"Playing 'get to know you' games with the pep band was awesome," said Ethan Bahen (grade 10).

Pep Band takes from 8th grade all the way to 12th grade kids and we all meet up at the games and play well known songs at games. You get into games for free, and if the teams do really well, we can sometimes go with them to their tournament games and play there.

If you want to have a fun time with your friends who also play instruments, consider joining Pep Band! You won't regret it.



"Oh the places you will go" with Ms. Apker

By Kyra Bebb

This week I got the incredible chance to meet and interview Ms. Sarah Apker. Apker teaches in the Comprehension Learning Center in room 21. This class is kind of like a tutoring center where students work on all skills for those who have more of a difficult time learning them.

Apker was born in Eugene, raised in Pleasant Hill and attended school here K-12. She is a 6th generation Oregonian.

She also recently left her work at Springfield School District and now works here. In high school she got the chance to work with littles and kids like the ones she teaches now. As a kid she grew up playing teacher and knew that, that's what she wanted to be.

Her favorite quote is by Dr. Suess: "OH! THE PLACES YOU'LL GO!; You'll be on your way up!; You'll be seeing great sights!; You'll join the high fliers; who soar to high heights." She said "you never know where you're going to end up".

She got most of her inspiration from her family who "always had a positive outlook on life."

Her favorite food is tacos. She said "Just cause it's good and you can put almost anything in one and it tastes good." She also enjoys seltzer water, "they have good flavors."

Her favorite music genre is reggae ska because "It's fun to dance to and I love the upbeatness from it." She went to Lane Community College for her associates degree then went to U of O for her bachelor and masters degree. As most of us are Duck fans, she also falls into that category as well. Apker enjoys watching Oregon Duck football. She said "I'm a duck so I follow the ducks." The weather she adores is fall and she fancies the clothes. "It's not too hot, not too cold." Although she likes being cold more than hot except when it comes to camping.

When it comes to camping she appreciates it more in the summer. Apker camps all over with a tent, RV, or backpack camping. She values the time she gets to go paddle boarding and fishing.

Her favorite fish to catch is salmon even though she's only ever caught one before.

In the winter she enjoys snowshoeing which is just hiking in the snow with these really big, flat shoes strapped to the bottom of your regular shoes.

Apker is also the Oregon Country Fair Coordinator for entertainment. That means she calls and schedules groups and people to perform. She also sets up where they camp and cleans up afterwards. Her favorite group is called "Chicken Little." They are a stilt walking family.

She loves all animals but she says that the prettiest ones are leopards and zebras.



Billies share their musical faves

By Ellie Thebo

Did you know that most Americans listen to music for up to four hours a day? It makes sense, music is an essential part of most people's lives. Most students listen to music all throughout the day. For example, most students listen to it while driving to school, in class, and even while studying.

Everyone you meet will have their own unique opinion on music, so, I decided to interview 8th graders about their music taste, and why they listen to music.

Ellie Whipple said "My favorite song is You Proof by Morgan Wallen. I LOVE Morgan Wallen, he's my husband. He's like the nicest, best singing person ever. He makes the best music in the world." Braelyn Sharr said, "I like pop and RnB. My favorite song is Good as Hell, by Lizzo. She slays in all her songs."

I noticed that when I asked the students what their favorite genre is, most of them said country, and one of the most popular artists is Taylor Swift.

Everyone has their own reason why they listen to music. Kali West said, "I like listening to music because it helps me relieve built up emotions. Also, I like the creativity people can put into their music."

Like Kali said, music can have a huge effect on

"Listening to music can be a great way to relieve stress, focus, improve your mood, help you sleep, or it can even be a form of escapism for people."

your brain. Listening to music can be a great way to relieve stress, focus, improve your mood, help you sleep, or it can even be a form of escapism for people. Some people say that music keeps your brain young.

Most of the students I interviewed said they listened to music for some of those reasons.

"I like listening to music when I'm alone because I can't focus when it's silent," said Aurora Brott.

"I listen to music because sometimes it gives my story ideas," said Josalynn Bathe "Music can sometimes be a good outlet for me," said Braelyn Sharr.

Music can have a big impact on people. Music isn't just good for your mental health, but it brings people together, and creates friendships.

"There is nothing like music to relive the soul and uplift it." -Mickey Hart

So you're a new kid on the Hill

By Liesel Everett

Starting at a new school isn't the easiest thing ever but it can be an exciting journey. To get more of an insight of what it's like to transfer to Pleasant Hill High School, I interviewed a few students who came to PHill just this year.

I interviewed siblings Josie and Jamon Heacock. Josie is starting her freshman year and Jamon is a sophomore. Before attending Pleasant Hill, Josie and Jamon had been doing homeschool/online school. Their family made the decision to transfer here because her dad got hired as the new football coach at PHill. Josie herself isn't playing any sports or doing any extracurriculars but she does help her dad out with football stuff from time-to-time.

Jamon, on the other hand, is currently playing on the football team and plans to join the basketball team later on. On being asked about the class sizes, Jamon says "I'm enjoying the small classes, it's a lot more engaging." They are both getting settled into the pace of public school and excited to "Get the chance to experience a new community." One thing that Jamon says is a big disappointment for him is that he isn't able to take Calculus this year.

I also conducted an interview with freshman student Jacoby Martin who recently moved to the area from Las Vegas. When asked about how he is enjoying school so far, Jacoby said "It's a good school, just a lot of things to keep track of." He is enjoying his art class though and even said that Ms. Jampolsky is one of his favorite teachers so far! Jacoby's sister Danica also transferred with her brother this year and is attending the school as a Junior.



Brennan Bell focusses on balancing his egg in an early ice breaking game in Publications class. With the administration leading the way, PHill teachers are working on establishing a greater sense of community through a variety of activities that build morale and a sense of belonging.



Ms. Raschio brings experience and energy to PE and Health

by Kelcie Goddard and Tim Meinzen

We have seen many new faces this year with all the new staff who have joined Pleasant Hill. One new face is Ms.Meggan Raschio. Ms. Raschio has come a long way from her childhood growing up in Mapleton, living off the land and constantly keeping busy with work and school because she had to.

Ms. Raschio has been teaching PE, Health and related subjects for 17 years. She went to Western Oregon University and earned a Bachelors of Science with a focus in education, health and a teaching license. She started out with substitute teaching in Vancouver and also Portland. She earned her license at Concordia University with a Masters Degree in curriculum and instruction.

Ms. Raschio was an athlete from the get go and despite growing up in a "paradise" homestead farm along the Siuslaw River she had to grow up fast in a home with an alcoholic father. She is an excellent athlete, especially in swim where she has records all over the place, but still hated it. The nervous adrenaline she experienced for her individual competition was tough on her. She much prefers team sports.

In school she got good grades which put her on the honor roll. Raschio took on leadership roles in Outdoors School and other activities.Befor school and sportss she got up at 5 AM every morning in high school to open up the local pool, then returned to the pool in the evening to lifeguard, teach swimming and water aerobics. To say she kept busy is a giant understatement. For Ms.Raschio, that is what life was all about. In summers she fought fires as a wildland fire fighter which paid her way through college. Her parents message was "whatever you start, you cannot quit." Her family was too poor for club sports, and they put up their own food from the garden, hunted and fished. She still dries and cans food today. "We ate really well for poor folks."

"We didn't go on vacation, we went camping"...at Siltcoos Lake. Her favorite hobbies include backpacking, camping, hiking, and going to the beach to dig for clams. Her parents wanted the kids to grow up with nature as opposed to partaking in typical activities like Easter Egg hunts. Ms.Raschio appreciates that the freedom to explore in her childhood, but much of her adolescence was circumscribed by incessant work, sports and school.

She enrolled at Western Oregon College thinking, that as an athlete who liked to work with people, she would be a trainer. But Western closed that program, so she got into the teaching program. At first she tried elementary, but that proved to "basic" for her so she switched to secondary school teaching. But what she really wants to do is teach at the college level.

After graduation, she subbed in the Portland/Vancouver area before landing a job in Springfield area. But with growing troubles at Springfield High School student body, she wanted to work in her home community, Pleasant Hill. Her daughter goes to school here.

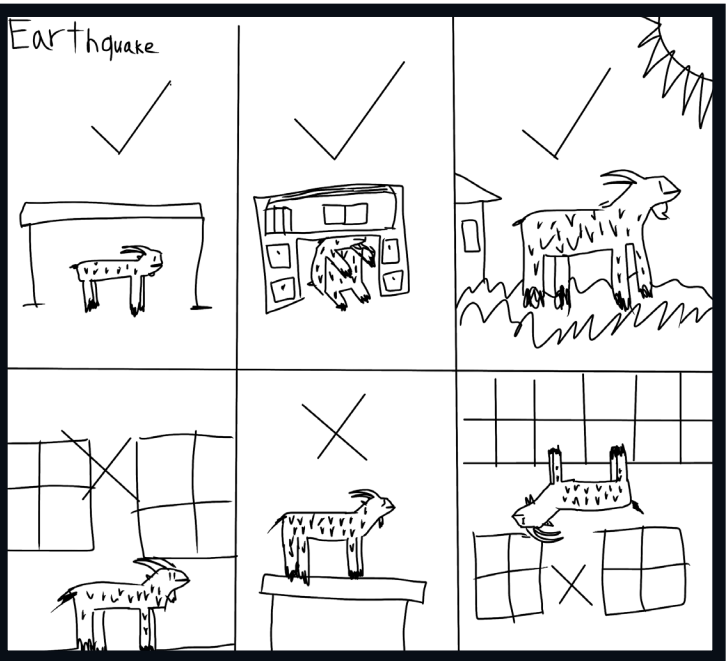
Shifting to our small school has been a challenge since our equipment and technology is much more limited. She also has been working harder than ever to get kids learning basic behaviors and expectations that fit with an intentional Physical Education program.

At home after a demanding day, Ms. Raschio waters her garden, connects with her daughter and answers emails.

Her favorite pasttime now is hiking, especially to alpine lakes where she can camp and savor the solitude of the landscape. She used to measure her hikes with a watch, but now, she admits, she decides that she will get to the lake, when she gets there.

Billies in an earthquake

POORLY DRAWN GOATS -BY TAYLOR STONE



Pet Peeves

By Aurora Brott

Everyone finds something annoying.

Some people might find some of their peers' pet peeves surprising! Kyra Bebb, despises it when people are insolent.

"I really hate it when people demand respect out of the blue." "It's a two-way street, they need to give me respect before they get it back."

I think that most people I have talked to have had bad experiences with things they dislike. Rosie Paredes-Calva finds annoying people irritating. "I don't like people who pester and are just overall annoying."

I asked some teachers about what they find most annoying when they are teaching. Mrs. Hill suggested that "Having to ask the same thing, over and over and over and over, and then the person gets mad at ME for ASKING, making me the bad guy." Ms. Hill wishes that people would listen the first time, thinking that if she's trying to talk, she is trying to tell you something important.

Ms. Castle had a similar response. She loathes it when people ask her the same question when she has already answered it.

Covid changes plans

By Carson Bernardo

Covid hasn't really affected me and my family much during the pandemic, but recently it has taken a toll on our sanity and health.

Last December, parts of my family got Covid due to traveling to Los Angeles, but we still made Christmas at Grandma's possible by the power of Zoom. This fall we planned a trip to New York but it was cut off due to the devil itself. I started feeling off when I came home from school Friday the 9th and just thought it was because of the smoke at the time.

I took an at-home covid test just in case but came back negative. Saturday I felt even worse, took another test, still negative. Sunday same thing. Monday I woke up feeling the worst I have in years, light-headed, vision cutting in and out, nausea, etc.

I took yet another test, and it came back positive. Then we got a PCR-certified test, and also came in positive. This wouldn't have been an issue, but for two things.

We were supposed to leave on Monday, and the cruise line we were traveling with didn't require a negative covid test, but Canada did.

So, we couldn't go. But, we got some of our money back (pending...) and we can reschedule it. All was not lost when I recovered we decided to do a little make-up trip to Vegas, so my break from school wasn't all bad, but this isn't where the hijinks stop.

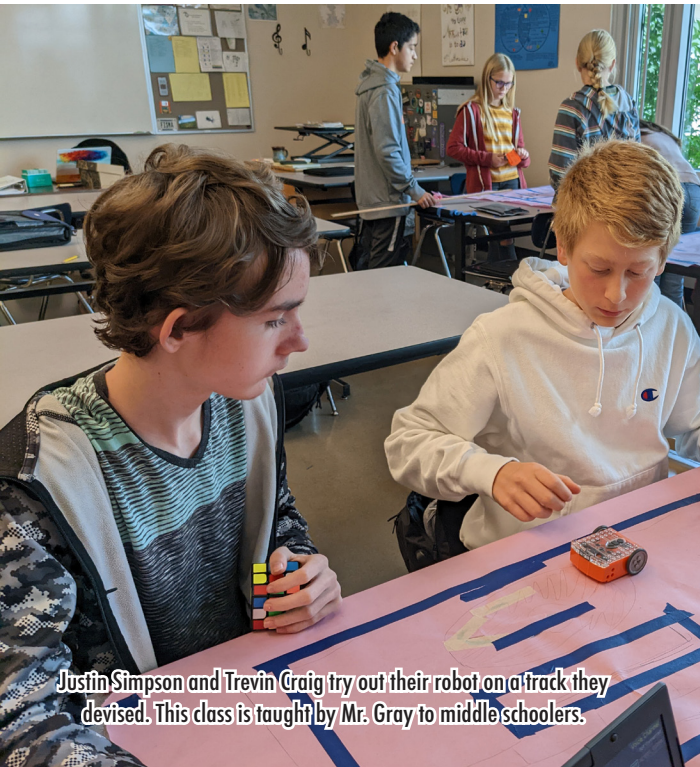
We got our Covid boosters two days before we left for Vegas, and since I just recently had Covid myself, my body hated me for the next three days. So we almost didn't go on our make-up trip as well.

Vegas really isn't a place for everyone. It has a reputation of being for only adults in their 20's going to drink and gamble their problems away, but it is not all that.

There are places where the only thing to see are those 'interesting' types of people (I'm looking at you, Fremont Street...). I will say one thing: if you are sensitive to cigarette smoke, don't even step foot near Las Vegas. Any indoor environment 9/10 will smell like smoke.

But if you look past all of this bad stuff, Vegas is great. Places like Caesars Palace, Excalibur, and The Venetian all have their own charm, with Caesars Palace being self-explanatory, Excalibur built like a medieval castle, and The Venetian built like Venice, Italy, complete with Gondola rides throughout the outside of the resort and through the shopping mall.

So, is there a life lesson here? Perhaps—Don't get Covid.



Justin Simpson and Trevin Craig try out their robot on a track they devised. This class is taught by Mr. Gray to middle schoolers.

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