

MAR 1, 2024

ISSUE THREE

PANTHER PRINTS

Superhero Films Just Don't Feel
Essential Anymore

**Superhero Movies Are
Dying. Does Hollywood
Have Any Idea What to
Replace Them With?**

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END OF SUPERHERO ERA:
WANING PUBLIC INTEREST
IN MARVEL, DC

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LETTERS FROM THE EDITORS

I'd like to dedicate this issue to all of the people that helped me and allowed me to interview them; this issue wouldn't be here without your cooperation. Despite some minor setbacks, this issue started off with a bang, ringing in the new year. As always, thank you to all of our readers for their consistent support of what we do. I hope you all have a great spring break and we hope you love, yet another issue.

This nine weeks has been the busiest and craziest one I've ever had. I'd like to thank the newspaper staff for working so diligently and for showing so much growth this year. I'm so proud of the writers they've become and I've loved working with them. To all the students, enjoy a well deserved spring break and enjoy our third issue.

This issue I would like all of our reporters to know how proud we are of them. I am so happy to see you growing into yourselves as writers. To our loyal readers, thank you for taking the time to read this, without y'all there would be no paper. As we finish the third quarter I want to remind all seniors to finish the year strong, we're almost there and to juniors, don't be so hard on yourselves, take time to stop and enjoy high school before its over. I can't wait for you see all of our hard work.

MISSION STATEMENT

At Panther Prints, our mission is to serve as a connection between the Plano East student body and surrounding communities. Through inspiration and high-quality content, panther Prints offers diverse coverage, passionate writing, relatable stories and a unique point of view. Our credible sources allow an in-depth experience that appeals to both the public and the individual. Our publication offers an informative and distinctive outlook on current interests.

DIGITAL MEDIA POLICY

We, at the Panther Prints, commit to responsibly utilize all of our media platforms to unite and inform the student body. We strive to create original content and attribute credit to all sources. We require our staff to uphold these values and to accurately report the news to the student body and community

All student polls were conducted through Google Forms and shared through social media

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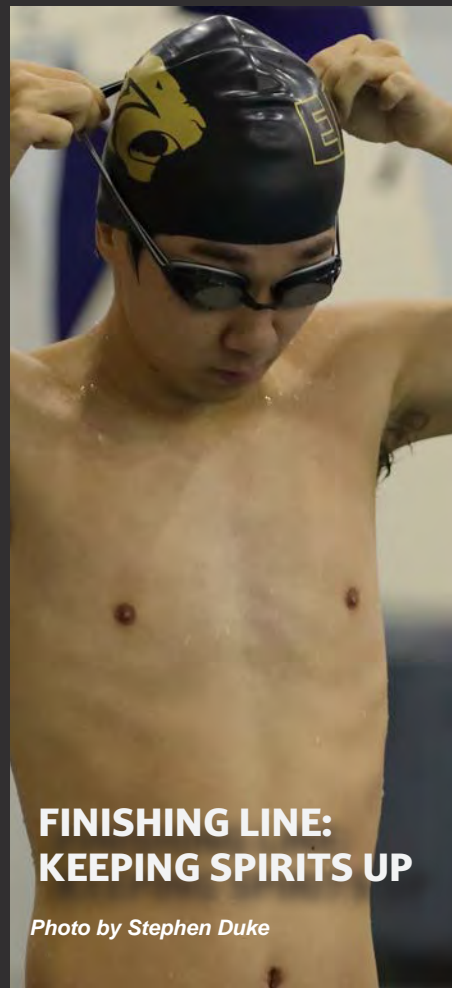


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Photo from Unsplash



HOMeward BOUND: ROAD WORK AHEAD



FINISHING LINE: KEEPING SPIRITS UP

Photo by Stephen Duke



Photo from CBS News

NEPOTISM'S ROLE IN POLITICS



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION: SENIOR LILLY SLAGLE TAKES HER BOW

Photo by Ainsley Freidrichs



Photo from Unsplash

FANS STUCK IN RESELLING FRENZY

TWITTER
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Puzzled Panther

By Megan Glass

How many graduation tickets am I allowed?

Each graduate gets eight tickets. Students must show a photo ID and sign to receive their tickets. Those with incomplete requirements can check the “not clear list” on pisd.edu under Graduation Details. Access needs a PISD account login. Tickets are only given after meeting all requirements. To check the status, use Control + F with an ID number. The list updates daily and finalizes May 21 at midnight. Review on May 22 to ensure ticket eligibility.

What are the exemption rules for semester exams?

Students in AP/IB courses for the second semester of the school year may be exempt from final exams if they meet specific criteria: maintaining a minimum 80 average and grade in the final grading period, taking the national exam in May, limited absences (max 9) and tardies (max 5) per class, and no major infractions. Also, no outstanding fines or fees for school property/services. Fulfilling these conditions grants eligibility for exam exemption in applicable classes.

How can I find the AP exam schedule?

A full list of dates and times will appear by going to the college board website and clicking on Home > Exam Ordering, Administration & Scores > Exam Dates. The 2024 AP Exams will be administered in schools over two weeks in May: May 6–10 and May 13–17. The exam will either begin at 8:00 am or 12:00 pm.

Truth Behind Electric Vehicles

By Aveesa Bhayani

Tesla has been a hot topic in the news lately as a series of publicity stunts, bad decisions and political remarks have led CEO Elon Musk down a spiral of destruction. Starting with his seemingly impulsive purchase of the app X - formerly known as Twitter - where he fired over 80% of the company's staff along with top executives, his rash decisions have led to widespread consumer distrust. In January, Tesla received less than expected revenue when the Q4 earnings for 2023 were released, reporting a difference of more than \$70 million. Musk hopes the release of the new Cybertruck will increase Tesla's popularity, however many consumers disagree. “The 2023 Cybertruck was an abysmal failure,” junior Redding VanSickel said. “It has absolutely no place on a road or off one. Cars are made to crumple on impact to transfer momentum through the car, limiting stuff like whiplash to the driver. If you've watched a crash test of the Cybertruck, some are stating that its rock-solid steadiness is a plus; it is, in fact, not.” The CyberTruck is not the only Tesla vehicle that has received criticism in recent months as winter storms have put all electrical vehicles to the test. The Lithium-ion batteries that run most advanced technology systems are prone to succumb to cold weather turning car charging stations into “Tesla graveyards” during the winter months. The company has since responded to customer concerns by updating systems to show more accurate driving ranges adjusted to outside temperatures. “The battery drained a bit faster during the night in the cold weather but other than that everything seemed pretty functional,” senior and Tesla owner Eve Yang said. “Usually if you leave it overnight at 30%, it would go to 28% but [during the

storm] it would drain from 30% to 20%.” Problems with Tesla do not stop there as the company recalls 2.2 million vehicles, nearly every Tesla sold in the U.S, following an announcement made National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The 2012 through 2023 Model S, the 2016 through 2023 Model X, the 2017 through 2023 Model 3, the 2019 through 2024 Model Y and the 2024 Cybertruck will now require a software update because the Administration states the warning lights on the instrument panel are too small. “The Tesla recall in itself is just a tad bit inflated in the media by what it means for Tesla owners,” VanSickel said. “The numbers can be jarring to someone reading a headline, which I think has become a hot topic of discussion. The reality is that it's being recalled for a font size issue on the dash. I do not, however, undermine the potential safety issues that are presented with this issue, and that the recall is necessary.” The advantage of electric vehicles, however, is their reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, which Tesla reported to be around 5.0 million metric tons in 2020. What Tesla fails to take into account is the 30.7 million tons emitted in the production process of the electric vehicle, reported in their 2022 impact report. Electrical vehicles are a step in the right direction but the benefits are yet to outweigh the costs. “I am all for EVs, it's the future of the car industry,” VanSickel said. “But, if companies cannot pull it together and stop contradicting not just themselves, but the environment - because really, that's what's at stake here - the reality is; we're still going in the same direction as every other company that is doing damage to our planet, which, quite frankly, is every company in the world—minus a few.”



Charged Lemonade Causes Controversy

By Muhammad Abdullah Farid

Three lawsuits have been filed against Panera Bread after two deaths and other reported health issues caused by their famous Charged Lemonades. A 46-year-old Florida man, Dennis Brown and a 21-year-old college student Sarah Katz, died while a 28-year-old woman, Lauren Skeritt, suffered permanent heart issues, the lawsuits stated. The fast-food restaurant denies the allegations that the deaths were caused by these drinks. “The charged lemonades are highly caffeinated lemonade energy drinks containing up to 200 mg of caffeine in our new recipe,” senior and Panera Bread employee Megan Ferenczhalmy said. “We did change the content after lawsuits in October and November of 2023, by changing the recipe; we just added more ice, so the water diluted.”

The wrongful-death lawsuit filed by the families of the deceased stated that Brown died of cardiac arrest while walking home after having three lemonades. He had high blood pressure and chromosomal deficiency. Katz also experienced cardiac arrest after drinking the lemonade while she was in the restaurant and suffered another cardiac arrest while being transported to the hospital. When she was five years old she was diagnosed with LQTS, Long QT syndrome, a heart signaling disorder that can cause fast and chaotic heartbeats. She had been limiting caffeine consumption due to her health condition. Skeritt, had no prior health issues, she now suffers heart palpitation, body shakes and difficulty in thinking, which requires her to take regular medication. “They should have informed people with warning signs on the charged lemonade that it contains so much caffeine,” junior Luci Mukherjee said. “Before the whole issue, it just said ‘Charged Lemonade.’” The lemonade comes in two sizes, regular and large, and they contain 157-236 mg of caffeine as per the Panera Breads official website. According to the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), healthy adults can have up to 400 mg of caffeine per day, however it depends on an individual’s health conditions.



“It is definitely too much caffeine to have open access to, so we moved them behind the counters so that we are controlling the refills,” Ferenczhalmy said. “That was part of the issue people were having unlimited access to, it’s an addictive stimulant caffeine substance and people were getting unlimited refills.” Low or normal doses of caffeine might improve performance or make a person feel refreshed; but it can cause nervousness, anxiety and other health issues. Despite these facts, caffeine’s reaction also depends upon several other factors such as age, or consumed dose. “They thought it was just lemonade and people would give it to their kids without even realizing it,” Ferenczhalmy said. “So I always had to warn the parents like ‘just want to let you know

that it’s a highly caffeinated drink.” There is not enough research to determine the amount of caffeine children can consume, but according to a report by Columbia University Irving medical center, caffeine not only interrupts the regular development of a child but also has long-term health issues if they have prior health conditions. After the Lawsuits Panera bread now advertises the charged lemonade on the online menu now as “Naturally flavored, plant-based. Contains caffeine. Use in moderation. NOT RECOMMENDED FOR children, people sensitive to caffeine, pregnant or nursing women.” “I have actually noticed a decline in some of the sales because people don’t want to ask me to get it; they think we got rid of it since it’s not up front,” Ferenczhalmy said. “Some people are really realizing that caffeine is not good for them. It is a really terrible and unfortunate situation that all that happened.”


69.8% of students do not drink Panera Bread’s charged lemonade

11.1% of students sometimes drink Panera Bread’s charged lemonade

12.3% of students do drink Panera Bread’s charged lemonade

6.8% of students chose not to comment

***out of 325 students polled**



Hunter Biden at a House Oversight Committee meeting on Jan. 10 with Kevin Morris (left) and Abbe Lowell (right).

Nepotism's Role in Politics

By Celine Tan

Photo from CBS News

According to an article from *TIME* magazine, 53% of people believed nepotism was a very common practice in politics. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary definition of nepotism is favoritism based on kinship in professional contexts. In politics, nepotism ordinarily exists in the form of promoting relatives to important jobs. Many people believe this deep rooted practice can undermine the fundamental principle of equality that the country was built upon, especially if unqualified candidates receive important jobs. “When you have one person [appointing] people they know to top government positions, they’re not really representing the opinions of the people, which defeats the purpose of democracy,” senior Garima Gupta said. “[It] puts national security at risk and influences a lot of decisions.” Throughout history, nepotism played a prominent role politically. It first started to become a problem in the Jacksonian era through the Spoils System, where former President Andrew Jackson filled his office with party supporters and others loyal to him. This led to widespread bribery and government corruption.

The Spoils System continued to be a problem throughout historical events such as former President James Garfield’s assassination. In 1883, Congress enacted the Pendleton Civil Service Act to direct the government towards providing jobs based on merit. “Nepotism is unavoidable, to some degree,” AP U.S. Government teacher David South said. “We’ve taken important steps in our country to try and do away with that, like certain degrees you have to have or certain exams you have to pass, so there are elements that guard against that, but there is still that favoritism.” Nepotism commonly manifests itself in dynastic families such as the Bushes. After George W. Bush took office in 1981, his son George H.W. Bush entered his presidency in 1989. George H.W. Bush’s brother, Jeb Bush, then served as the governor of Florida from 1999-2007, and Jeb Bush’s eldest son George P. Bush served as the Texas Land Commissioner from 2015-2023. According to the Texas Tribune, George P. Bush left American politics after running an unsuccessful campaign for Texas Attorney General, which many regard as the end of the Bush family political dynasty.

“I think Americans can be unnecessarily upset about nepotism because we support our kids growing up and doing what we do,” South said. “When people use it to their advantage, that’s when people have an issue.” Last year, a federal grand jury charged Hunter Biden with evading millions of dollars in taxes from foreign business deals with China and Ukraine. Republicans flamed President Biden on grounds of nepotism for allegedly changing policies to favor China at that time. According to CNN, Biden claimed he was not associated with his son’s business dealings. Amidst this investigation, Hunter Biden was also indicted on felony gun charges for illegally purchasing a gun while using illicit drugs. His trial is expected to be in June. “I think there’s going to be a lot in that trial that affects Joe Biden,” South said. “Whether Hunter Biden is guilty or not, the Court will decide, but the public will try to use that as a reflection on Joe Biden as well, for better or worse. It’s impossible to detach Hunter Biden from his father, but it’s unfortunate that we as humans try to place the blame somewhere else.”

Flu Season Rises Again

By Varsha Jhanak

According to Fox News, children's flu cases increased by 40 percent. Flu season typically starts in early October and ends in mid-May. According to MedStar Health, flu spreads more easily during the winter months due to the dry air, which allows the virus to travel more easily. Furthermore, colder temperatures may impair immune system function because, when the body is cooler, virus-attacking cells inside may not function as well as they should, making a person more susceptible to illness. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the flu causes a variety of symptoms such as fever, cough, runny nose, and more. "Personally, having the flu just drained my energy the first and second days," junior

and clinical student Ananya Chundari said. "Then, I was just getting my strength back for the next two to three days." Earlier this year, Children's Health reported that vaccination rates were down by about 5%. Although there is no guarantee that you will not get sick, there are numerous preventative measures you can take. According to the CDC, washing your hands, avoiding contact with your face, and avoiding close contact with sick people are all preventative measures to take. "I wash my hands before I eat," Chundari said. "[I also] make sure to apply hand sanitizer before touching my face." According to Hopkins Medicine, most children recover from the flu in about a week. However, they may continue to feel tired for 3 to 4 weeks. In accordance, ac-

cording to Superdrug Health Clinics, even after recovering from the most severe flu symptoms, symptoms such as a dry cough, fatigue, and weakness may persist. "[Students] getting sick affects their attendance by making them too fatigued to be at school and be attentive in class," Chundari said. "It also affects their workload making up assignments." Since students must miss school while sick, attendance may become irregular during the flu season. "With my workload, it was just really too tough to stay on track while being sick because I was so tired from the symptoms," Chundari said. "So it took me like a week and a half to catch up and make up the work that I missed."



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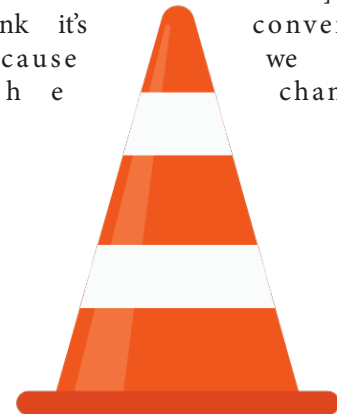
By Liliana Aguilar

Over the past year, Plano continues to undergo construction on very busy roads. The school district offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) program and the Health Science Academy (HSA) program, both of which feel the impact on transportation routes. With students coming from as far as West Plano and teachers who come from all around the DFW metroplex, construction is a consistent issue. “The earlier I leave the better chance I have of getting here without a bunch of traffic,” statistics teacher Lys Rose said. “I love where I live and I love where I work, so the commute most days doesn’t matter.” According to the City of Plano, Los Rios Boulevard up to K Avenue is expected to also undergo construction within the next two months and will not be complete until the spring of 2025. With students arriving at school between 7:30 a.m. and 9 a.m., the expected construction can force students to change their school routes to arrive at school on time. “I think that for me personally I don’t think about construction, but for someone who doesn’t have easy access to Spring Creek or Parker Road it would be much more inconvenient,” junior Eleanor Ashford said.

Rose wakes up bright and early at

5:30 A.M. to arrive at school on time with extra time to prep her classroom. She takes Spring Creek all the way to school because there are fewer traffic lights which makes for a shorter time. It is expected for Spring Creek to start on its road construction within the next two months and is estimated to be finished by May of 2024. Parker Road started its construction in May of 2023 and the estimated completion is yet to be determined. If Rose planned to change her route to Parker Road, the road would still be under construction and slow down her routine. “I’ve been in the DFW area long enough to know how to get around it so it’ll usually take me about 45 minutes,” Rose said. “[Now], in the afternoon it’ll [take] me about an hour or an hour and ten minutes.” Ashford is a student in the IB program who lives on the West side. She wakes up at six in the morning to arrive at school on time for zero hour. When Ashford first started driving last year, her everyday route to school was along Parker Road. The new construction added time to her old route and now adds more time to her new route on Spring Creek. “On Spring Creek there is one annoying intersection where they took away a turn lane where everyone turns so

it tends to back up traffic, but after I switched from Parker it’s definitely an improvement,” Ashford said. “I do wish whoever was behind all this would be more transparent about why they’re doing all this construction.” Sara McDonald, parent of two Plano ISD athletes, also is affected by the new and upcoming construction. As a parent of two athletes, she drives all around Plano for practices and games. The construction becomes very noticeable for her and other drivers. It takes her around seven to ten minutes to get to work after dropping off her two children. She tends to change her routes because of the constant change in construction. “We have to go different routes when I know I’m going during traffic time or I’ll go around the neighborhoods,” McDonald said. “I do [think construction is inconvenient] but I think it’s convenient because we need the changes.”



39.4% of students believe the construction in Plano does affect their daily schedule sometimes

32.3% of students believe the construction in Plano does affect their daily schedule all the time

23.1% of students believe the construction in Plano does not affect their daily schedule

5.2% of students chose not to respond

***out of 325 students polled**

Fans Stuck in Reselling Frenzy

By Megan Glass

As eager fans jump to secure tickets for their favorite artists' concerts such as Taylor Swift, Steve Lacy or Drake, a complex system of resellers hoard the tickets only to sell them for double their original value. This leaves fans distraught and venues sold out within minutes of release. Ticket reselling is the process of buying a ticket for an event at a low price and reselling it to someone else for a much higher price to make a profit. Unless a person is quick and lucky enough to purchase a ticket immediately after it goes on sale, they may end up missing the event all in all or paying more than double the starting price of the ticket. "I think [ticket reselling] has been getting worse and worse," senior Melina Linscheer said. "It's frustrating because you have to try to get tickets as quickly as you can, so as soon as I know that tickets are going on sale, I stop what I'm doing and I try to get tickets. If I don't, and they sell out, most of the time I don't end up going because the prices are so high. It definitely takes away from fans who can't afford the resale prices." On the ticket-selling app, Gametime, demand for tickets to Adele's Las Vegas residency

heavily increased prices, making them less affordable. According to Forbes, these tickets reached \$1,011 per ticket, marking the highest prices on the app throughout the year. This large influx in prices happens to popular artists frequently. "I remember one concert, Steve Lacy,"

the local laws of those states rather than on a federal level. Despite the efforts to prohibit extreme ticket reselling, some people aren't aware of the problem in the first place. "A lot of people are probably not aware because tickets sell out so fast that by the time people look, they're probably seeing the resale prices and on sites," Linscheer said. "Especially on Ticketmaster, it's unclear if the tickets are the original price or the resale price." The economic strain ticket reselling takes on teenagers and young adults can stretch their finances thin if they want to attend a concert. Factoring in additional costs such as ticket taxes, food, drinks, parking and transportation, a three-hour concert can quickly turn into a week's worth of wages. Not only are ticket prices increasing from additional fees and taxes, but merch prices have

also gone up in value. This leaves fans who desire concert souvenirs with a heavier financial burden. "It becomes more of a cooperation scam to rack up as much money as these venues and artists can get instead of the fans' personal experience," senior Kailee Forte said. This makes you feel worse when you go to concerts because you know that the price you initially paid for the ticket is nowhere close to what you're going to end up paying by the end of the night."

50.5% of students believe there should be more awareness of ticket-reselling to educate the public on issues

20.3% of students believe the current level of awareness on ticket-reselling is sufficient

29.2% of students chose not to comment

***out of 325 students polled**

Linscheer said. "I really wanted to see him, and he was at a small venue and I knew tickets would sell out fast. I tried presale and regular sale and I couldn't get either of them. I heard the original prices were around \$35, after that they were all \$300+" Many young adults and teens have less disposable income to spend on expensive tickets, causing them to turn to third-party platforms or utilize pre-sale options. While some states like New York and New Jersey prohibit extreme ticket reselling, others like Texas and Ohio lack such restrictions. As stated in LegalMatch, it comes down to



End of Superhero Era: Waning Public Interest in Marvel, DC

By Camille Wright, Celine Tan, and Varsha Jhanak

With intense action scenes, fantastical powers and close team bonds, the classic idea of superheroes reflects the freedom and expression of American culture. Through superheroes such as Superman and Iron Man, film studios such as Marvel and DC shot to popularity for filmgoers and remains a classic to many. In 2025, Marvel will bring in new changes to the Marvel Cinematic Universe on Feb. 14 with “Captain America: Brave New World,” which will be the first “Captain America” film to star Anthony Mackie as the protagonist. While many are eager to watch the film, others feel less inclined to do so on the grounds of a growing superhero fatigue seen throughout the last year. Reddit users claim 2023 was the year of bad superhero movies, citing box-office bombs such as ‘The Marvels,’ ‘The Flash’ and ‘Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom.’ “From the Batman movies I grew up with, I feel like [those] were a bit more thought out physically,” junior Ryleigh Peterson said. “The

cinematography, the perspective, [and] the way everything works together was a lot more artistic than current films [are]. Now, it just feels a bit more [like] pandering to a general audience.”

Rise of Superheroes: Comics to Film

According to Britannica, a superhero is a fictional hero whose extraordinary or “super-human” powers are used to fight crime and assorted villains. With the rise of the superhero comic in the 1930s, the idea of a superhero gained popularity in the “Golden Age” of comics from 1938 to 1950. As superhero comics became more popular, they became more geared towards science fiction and even became more socially and politically relevant. “I guess [the appeal of superheroes] is the supernatural composition of them that makes them so unique or extraordinary,” IB Math Analysis and Precalculus teacher Ryan

Buehrer said. “I think that we look up to them like they’re so powerful. [That] would be the thing that I guess attracts us to them and makes us idolize them in a way.” For many people, superheroes play a large role in their childhood. According to Gobookmart Media Private Limited, superheroes depict characters overcoming and facing adversity, empowering children, and helping them learn about facing challenges. In addition, many children idolize and view superheroes as role models as many feature ideal qualities. Although Marvel and DC both aim their projects at teens and adults, for many, their movies played an integral in their childhood. “I think the DC Tim Burton



Batman movies were a really big part [of my childhood]," Peterson said. "Those were like Christmas movies. They occurred near Christmas, so we'd watch them at Christmas. Especially the ones with female leads, like Uma Thurman as Poison Ivy and Halle Berry as Catwoman. I loved watching those as a kid." Comic book publishers DC and Marvel were popular before the establishment of their cinematic universes. However, the establishment of their cinematic universes brought a new audience and skyrocketed their popularity. In 2008, Marvel released its first movie of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), 'Iron Man.' After the release and success, Marvel released additional films with interconnecting characters and storylines from comics, thus building the MCU. DC followed a similar rise; however, their films began releasing much earlier, in the 1950s. DC continued releasing films, establishing their Justice League of superheroes. Many Marvel and DC movies went on to become box-office hits, gaining popularity for their plotlines, cinematography, and overall aesthetic appeal. "I feel less [interested] about the superheroes really and more about the aesthetic of the films," Peterson said. "Looking at everything beyond the superheroes and the superheroes was just a really cool part of that. But, if I were to say, the villains drew me in a little bit more than the superheroes." According to PIT Journal, superheroes serve as a coping mech-

anism during difficult times. Watching fictional heroes defeat enemies inspired by reality can provide comfort in the face of real-world threats, adding to the reasons why they are so popular. In addition, according to Morning Coach, superheroes provide an escape from reality and allow

[easier] to deal with."

Decline in Box-Office Statistics

According to Variety Magazine, 'The Marvels,' which came out in November of last year, is officially the lowest-grossing installment in the history of the Marvel Cinematic Universe. After four weeks of being shown in theaters, the film grossed \$80 million in North America and \$197 million globally. "I'm satisfied [with the new movies], in a sense," Peterson said. "The artistic side of me does not quite appreciate the cinematography, CGI, and the almost lazy story-telling. But, I can appreciate, as a superhero fan, the superheroes and the cool ideas they're playing with." Many people felt unsatisfied with Marvel's Phase Five movies when compared to major box-office successes from Phase Four such as 'Spiderman: No Way Home.' According to Box Office Mojo, 'Spiderman: No Way Home' grossed \$260 million on its opening weekend. Many viewers dubbed Phase Five as Marvel's transition phase, hoping it will set the stage for more highly anticipated films in the next few years. "For the Marvel movies, my kids would always take me to go see the Marvel movies on my birthday and it was fun," American Studies Teacher Caryn Rooke said. "Not that we don't

"I'm satisfied [with the new movies], in a sense. The artistic side of me does not quite appreciate the cinematography, CGI, and the almost lazy story-telling. But, I can appreciate, as a superhero fan, the superheroes and the cool ideas they're playing with."

- junior Ryleigh Peterson

viewers to see bits of themselves in them. Lastly, superheroes possess many ideal qualities, causing people to want to be more like them and view them as somewhat of a role model. "It's because human beings are always trying to figure stuff out," IH English teacher Nora Perez said. "We can't fly, we can't disappear, we can't manipulate anybody else's emotions. But, if our gods and goddesses can, then we can live vicariously through them. It's the same thing with superhero worship. We live vicariously through them, and we can realize our goals and our dreams and our hopes and fears through them, and it makes life a little bit

want to go do that now, but some of them aren't that good. Some of them are great so we might wait for them to come out. The excitement just isn't there." The Disney+ shows could be a contributing factor to the growing superhero fatigue. Shows such as 'Loki' received mixed reviews, with many viewers failing to understand how it connects to the growing complexity of the MCU. Because Marvel released so many new movies and installments last year, some people believe that they are receiving too much exposure to the characters. The influx of new content possibly created an overall loss of interest in the Marvel world. "I feel like it just starts with Disney and Warner Brothers trying to push out fast and easy-to-make movies because they think slapping Chris Hemsworth or Robert Downey Jr. on a poster will get people into [movie theaters]," senior Michael Marsden said. "It's all the same formula so it's not interesting." According to Forbes Magazine, Disney CEO Bob Iger stated that Marvel previously diluted focus and attention through the creation of so many Disney+ shows. This year, Disney will start to reduce the amount of Marvel movies produced and shift to

focus on sequels and franchises. They hope to bring in audiences through franchises that are already familiar to viewers, such as 'Deadpool and Wolverine,' which comes out in July. "I feel like the [movies and the TV shows] kind of contradict each other. The movies had a good ending, like Endgame," Marsden said. "But then they tried to go on with the shows and try to push Disney+, and it just didn't work because they didn't have a focus."

According to Marvel, their 2019 film "Avengers: Endgame" debuted with \$1.2 billion, becoming the first movie to surpass the \$1 billion threshold in its opening weekend. It became the world's second-highest-grossing film. Critics argue that Marvel's biggest obstacle is itself since its previous films broke multiple world records and established high expectations that are difficult to compete with. "I wouldn't say I agree [that movies are lacking] but I can see where the critics are coming from," Buehrer said. "It's not like there's been a complete loss of creativity. I think it just varies from one new production to the next as far as whether or not it's up to my standards or anyone's standards."



Representation Recovery: Increased Diversity Regains Public Interest

Marvel Studios 'Black Panther,' 'Captain Marvel,' 'Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings' and 'Eternals.' all made history within the MCU for pushing diversity and representation in superhero films to the next level. Although the original six Avengers were all white and mostly men, Marvel made efforts in recent years to include the perspectives of different groups. Audience members generally perceived the inclusion of heroes and heroines of different ethnicities, sexualities, and abilities in the MCU positively, but some criticized this element as well. "I think any representation is an improvement from the previous lack of diversification," Peterson said. "But, I do agree that some of it does feel a little bit rushed. I haven't seen the new

44.6% of students are not sure if they will see a new superhero movie this year

21.2% of students want to watch some of the new superhero movies this year

18.2% of students will not watch any new superhero movies this year

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'Ms. Marvel' but, I think [it's] cool and amazing that they're pushing diversity like that." Not only did 'Black Panther' (2018) make history as the first Marvel movie to star a person of color, but it was also the first in the MCU with a Black director and a mainly Black cast. Until this point, movies such as 'Iron Man' and 'Thor' featured characters of color but were only cast in supporting roles like Samuel L. Jackson's Nick Fury and Don Cheadle's James Rhodes. 2021's 'Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings' had a similar impact as it is considered to be the first Asian superhero film with a large scale budget. Filmmaker Destin Daniel Cretton and screenwriter David Callahan worked to update the comic version of the character to create an authentic story about Asian identity. Some moviegoers believe diversity in superhero films should reflect the diversity of the viewing audience. "We need to be able to see ourselves," Perez said. "People of color, women, people on the spec-



The success of female-led movies such as 'Wonder Woman' and 'Captain Marvel' paved the way for the future of female superheroes. These types of films portray women as more than damsels in distress but as confident people capable of the same things as any other male. Women in prominent roles not only serve as models for young girls but also influence women of all ages. Although only four current MCU movies star female heroes, fans can look forward to new series such as 'Iron Heart,' which will take up the mantle. "Wonder Woman got me into superheroes because she's amazing," Rooke said. "Girl power, very much factored into that because it [made] things possible. She's inspired me to make a difference and make a change." The film 'Eternals' featured Marvel's most diverse cast, starring a Latina woman, a deaf woman, a Black gay man, an Indian man, an Asian man and an Asian woman. Though critics praised the film for its diversity, some argued that the sheer number and variety of characters caused the story to be underdeveloped and poorly written. This is a recurring opinion on Marvel's recent attempts to increase representation. A moment during the big fight sequence in Endgame, which fans have affectionately called

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virtually every female hero in the MCU up to that point, even producers worried that fans would perceive the scene as pandering. "They shouldn't do it just for the sake of diversity," junior Shreya Gajakosh said. "It should fit the story if they're doing it. [Marvel] should get better writers because those stories are good stories, they're just not writing them as well as [they] could be. Superhero films influence how the culture defines heroism so diverse representation can promote an inclusive definition. Research by UCLA reveals that diverse films do better in the box office because they attract larger and more diverse audiences. "But at the same time, It's good that they're doing that because I feel more people need to be represented in superhero movies," Gajakosh said. "It felt good when I watched Ms. Marvel because I was like, yeah, she's like me."

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9.5% of students want to watch most or all new superhero movies this year

6.5% of students chose not to comment

***out of 325 students polled**

PANTHER PROFILE

Lights, Camera, Action: Senior Lilly Slagle Takes Her Bow

By Shar Kiefer

As the curtains roll back, behind the scenes head stage manager Lilly Slagle keeps the shows running. With 12 shows under her belt, Slagle is behind the scenes enacting everything to run smoothly. Spending most of her time in fine arts, she has collaborated with multiple programs within the district and at school. “[Theater] has grown a community for me because it takes up a large part of my life,” Slagle said.

On top of stage management, she does freelance technical jobs for community theaters and middle school productions. She plans on continuing her freelancing business while enrolled in college, for the thrill of working with the actors drives her to keep working harder and persisting. “What I admire most about Lilly is not only her hard work, but her compassion for others,” theater director Brian Grunkowski said. “She has so much compassion and gives everyone so much grace.” Every day, she comes in ready to work. Slagle was last seen as the stage man-

ager and lighting designer for “The Last Mary”, a Scottish period piece about grief and coming to terms with death. Slagle manipulated lighting to convey emotion and depth within the piece.

“She’s very easy to communicate with,” Grunkowski said. “She knows exactly who I am as a director and she knows all of the ins and outs about me. She knows me sometimes more than I know myself.” Her ability to work with others makes her a great stage manager. As a stage manager, she is expected to keep everyone in line accordingly. She manages the actors and the technical crew helping them with any problems they may have such as issues with other actors or personal struggles. “I love stage managing,” Slagle said. “It allows me to interact with all parts of tech, it allows me to help with lights, it allows me to help with sound and props, it allows me to interact with the actors. It makes me feel like I put my part in every part of the ship.” A job that most would shy away from she takes great delight in. Slagle puts her best foot forward and does her job no matter

what. One of her favorite jobs is the light-board where she is able to control spotlights, color flashes, and convey emotion. “[Lilly] will take on everything she can and even try to take on things she can’t,” senior Ainsley Friedrichs said. “She is super protective of her work, so she protects the light board. She’s one of the only few that truly touches the light board.” Each show, she must balance with another, but as usual, she preserves because of how much she enjoys theater. She creates and communicates with the director and actors. Her role as stage manager gives her a sense of community within the actors and other tech crew members. The role allows Slagle a fast-paced environment and the ability to think quickly in times of hardships. “[Lilly] is very quick on her feet,” Friedrichs said. “She will think of something in the moment and it’s not kind of until everything is done and settled that she truly freaks out.” Slagle’s work ethic makes her reliable and agreeable. She remains determined with a smile on her face as she works, often conversing with the actors and other crew members. “She’s gotten a lot better at overcoming obstacles,” Grunkowski said. “I think she kind of slows down and thinks through them methodically.” When encountering an obstacle, she must weigh her options and think of the best way to work through a problem using critical thinking and logical reasoning. It is important for her to approach the problem with an open mind and optimistic outlook, but through this her passion truly drives her to keep going. “Even when she’s not in the most energetic mood,” Friedrichs said, “She makes sure that she’s not bringing others down and she’s just a very fun, happy person.”



Senior Lilly Slagle working as stage manager and lighting technician

Photo by Ainsley Friedrichs

Inspired by Cameras: Audio Visual Tackles Student Body

By Sydnie Grayson

The lights come up and Audio Visual (AV) teacher Octavio Oropeza counts down to start the East Side Update (ESU), the announcements for the school. With several cameras on the news anchors, the AV class works like a well-oiled machine in order to do one-take six-minute videos for the announcements. “AV II is a good opportunity to get a lot of hands-on experience and allows them to explore and go more in depth in the world of video production,” Oropeza said. “The last five or six years, the students have been running the cameras and the equipment in the control rooms, which some of them don’t get to do [that] until they’re in that class. It also allows them to work more in that class in that they get assigned projects and it’s their responsibility to help delegate and get their project done.” The AV classes specialize in videography and photography, working with Adobe Creative Suite. They cover all sports, including football, basketball, softball and soccer. When covering

al projects that they work on throughout the year. “The AV II class is more of a practicum class where it’s not curriculum-driven, it’s more project-based,” Oropeza said. “It just depends on what the needs are for the students. We provide video support for athletics, creating content for the football team, like the videos that get played on the scoreboard. We are also responsible for the senior life video that gets

It’s really special, especially at the theater or the basketball games, you get in for free. It always feels cool because you get to go to all the school events, so you get a taste of everything.” Many students join this class in an effort to help them with their future endeavors; one of these students is Haynes, who headlines the ESU. Haynes has loved videography since he was very young and joined the class to see if he wants to study AV in the future.

“[AV] is something I’ve always been good at,” Haynes said. “Timing audio with the things on the screen is something I’ve been doing for a while. In third grade, I started working on these stop motion projects at my house, which is why I’ve just continued doing this.” Oropeza invests his time into this class by providing networking for his students. Along with teaching at the school, he also directs sporting events

“It allows me to stay connected with what’s new in the industry to bounce off to other students. I love video production and being able to get those projects and give them pointers on how to make things a little better. It’s just a lot of fun because I enjoy the process of video production.”

- Audio Visual teacher Octavio Oropeza

played at graduation and just any other projects that come up throughout the year that the school might need.” One thing the AV class specializes in is the ESU. These videos are released every Friday, updating the student body about upcoming events and past accomplishments for different student groups around campus. For these, they have a set up of four cameras, as well as five computers and seven monitors along with a Ross Graphite system. “I volunteered for [the ESU] and I was supposed to just be the part-time editor for it, but slowly, I became the main editor for it,” senior Andrew Haynes said. “I really like how involved it is.

at Southern Methodist University (SMU) for their ESPN Broadcast and in-house shows. He translates the methods they use on their campus and brings it over to the school to enhance the class’s understanding and experience in the AV world. “It allows me to stay connected with what’s new in the industry to pass off to other students,” Oropeza said. “I love video production and being able to get those projects and give them pointers on how to make things a little better. It’s just a lot of fun because I enjoy the process of video production.”



Building Memories with Individuality

By Sydnie Grayson

After a long week at school, captain Evan Gewinner prepares for his tournament on the weekend. While golf is an individual sport, the players work together before the tournaments to help each other to better their swing and work towards getting an 'ace,' a hole-in-one. "I just want to have a good time and win a couple of tournaments," Gewinner said. "I'm preparing, just by practicing everyday on the course, three hours a day usually. I just practice when I need to, every single day and gauge what I need. I really just want to enjoy it and enjoy the moments and memories that I'll have this year." Throughout the year, golf has seven tournaments per semester, three varsity and three junior varsity, and finally, districts. Districts occur in late March; for this, the team prepares by practicing outside of their school scheduled practices. In this case, many players, including junior varsity member Henry Pittman, use this to their advantage in preparing for tournaments. "Depending on where the tournament is held, I'll go out and play the course a day or two beforehand to get a feel for the course, so nothing takes me by surprise," Pittman said. "Most of the team goes out on Saturdays and they get private lessons to help manage their



Photo by George Gewinner

Senior Evan Gewinner takes a swing as he practices for the upcoming tournament.

swing." Compared to other sports, golf playing fields are always different. According to a survey by the National Federation of State High School Associations, golf was the most popular sport to show an increase in interest and participation. "High school golf has gotten dramatically more competitive than it used to be," coach Jon Engelking said. "20 years ago, the amount of players that could shoot in the 70s was, maybe, 10% and now it's 80%. There's a lot more really good high school players now than there were 20 years ago." Engelking has coached at Plano East for more than 20 years, creating a successful golf team. In the most recent tournament at the Indian Creek Golf Club, they had two placings in second and third with Gewinner and sophomore varsity player Carter Cox. "That's what makes high school and college golf different because it is individual, but it's also team," Engelking said. "The players have the pressure of playing

for an individual title, but they're also playing for a team title as well. It adds a different kind of pressure than when they're just playing individual tournaments." So far, the team has competed in several tournaments between the two seasons: fall and spring. In an effort to make it to districts, the team is planning on practicing more and more and using everything to their advantage; this year, the team is doing better than in past years with new and returning players. "It is an individual sport, but you also create a bond with these guys when you're out there with them every single day," Gewinner said. "If you're coaching your fellow players or helping each other out, there's some teamwork in that where you have the seniors helping the freshman on the team with swings and normal course knowledge. You're able to create friendships that will probably last forever."



Finish Line: Keeping Spirits Up

By Muhammad Abdullah Farid

Every weekday morning, as the swimmers dive into the water, they can hear the cheers and chatter of their fellow teammates. The swim team comes together at the Oak Point recreation center before school, not only with their personal goals but the common goal of improving and achieving more. The team consists of young, passionate athletes who strive to practice more and prepare themselves for the upcoming competitions. The swimmers are competitive, they improved this year and aim to go regional and even state. “I feel like we have done better than last year,” varsity swimmer Loren Mediana said. “For most of the meets this year, we have either one [teammate] placed really well.” The swim season is usually relatively long, the team starts practicing in August for the season. Most recently they had their district meet on Jan. 27 and participated in the region-

als in February, Presley Jiang made a new team team record and qualified for the states. She swam in the 100 breaststroke for the state championship and finished in the top 20. Keeping up everyone’s motivation on the team can be a big challenge throughout this period of time. “Sometimes during the year, when I see someone’s motivation dropping off, I have to challenge them and remind them of their goal and they have responded well,” head coach Adam Bull said. “I think that’s why the team has come together in a positive way because they have good leadership.” The varsity team holds practice in the morning which allows them to participate in after-school activities. Being together for months at a time has not only brought them closer but also strengthened their support system. “All of the PESH varsity girls are really close to each other and I see ourselves as sisters,” Mediana said. “I

feel like they give me motivation and they are really funny to talk to after the practices. We had Friendsgiving, and there was this one this time last year where most of the team members went out to volunteer as a group and that was really fun to do with everyone. I would say my motivation is like literally everyone on the team.” During practices and meets, the teammates can be found supporting each other from the stands. “I want to support my team because there are a lot of swimmers that are really fast and can go regional and maybe even state,” junior varsity captain Nathan Foo said. The school offers the International Baccalaureate (IB) program; the students who study this program attend the school for all four years. Some of the IB students have been on the team for more than three or four years. For the meet on January 11, they held a senior night where they recognized seniors who have contributed to the team. “Just seeing them happy and seeing them grow and knowing that they are gonna be off to even better things after this, it’s a good feeling,” Bull said. Being on the team not only impacted the student athletes but the coaches also described this as an enriching experience for them as they also get to meet new people and learn from their athletes. “Being a coach has also impacted me as a person and helped me,” Bull said. “Because in life, sometimes there are hard conversations with people to try to bring them over to resolve conflicts, so being a coach helps me get those skills because it’s important in life.”

Photo by Stephen Duke



Varsity swimmer Loren Mediana adjusting her stance on the starting block before a race.

Wrestling: Resilience Meets Strength

By Varsha Jhanak

Throughout the year, the wrestling team trains to improve their athletic abilities. Wrestling season is throughout the year, meaning athletes train during all times of the year. Training is different for each athlete. Wrestling training has an emphasis on conditioning, running and weight lifting. In addition, athletes wrestle with their teammates in order to gain more practice. Once the season is over, the team takes a couple weeks off and move into free-style and Greco, which is Olympic style wrestling, to prepare for a state tournament. “It’s like education; every student is different and every athlete is different,” wrestling coach Noel Peterson said. “You have to focus on their best abilities and hide their worst: there’s not really a set training. We start off as a class, as athletics.” In wrestling, athletes are categorized into weight classes, which allows athletes to

compete with other athletes around the same weight as them. The weight cut starts off in the beginning of the year. The goal of the weight cut is to reach a low weight, low body fat percentage and become healthy. To achieve this, athletes follow a diet to maximize their health. Once an athlete weighs in, athletes get a weight certification and are placed in a weight class. During the season, athletes must maintain their weight in order to stay in their weight class. “It’s definitely very stressful to have to make weight so you can wrestle,” senior Logan Atchley said. “You really have

to force yourself stick to a diet even if you don’t like the foods. [The weight cut] builds so much character. Just dieting, eating healthy and doing it because you love the sport, it means a lot.” Not only does wrestling require physical strength, but the sport also requires mental strength. “[Wrestling is] so much more mental than you really think,” Atchley said. “If you’re not there fully, mentally, you’re

break down. I can do hard things and it helps me fix my mindset to more of a growth mindset than a fixed one.” The team is very connected through their love of the sport. Boyd said that wrestling had the perfect balance between individualism and team camaraderie. “My favorite part about wrestling is the connections you build,” Atchley said. “Even though it’s mostly an individual sport, you can only really control what goes on in your match. Everyone does [wrestling] for different reasons and you accept that. You get so tight with your teammates because you’re putting your body on the line and you all respect one another for doing so.” The tight-knit team of athletes admire and respect each other as athletes and people. With athletes of all grade levels, the team inspires each other and each one of them learn from their fellow teammates. “I respect everything about everyone that wants to wrestle,” Hatchley said. “It really shows and builds character. You go out there and you’re fighting someone. It’s not something you usually choose to

do and those people who choose to do it for fun, they really inspire me.” In addition to athletes admiring their fellow teammates, their coach admires their resilience and willingness to learn. “My favorite part [of wrestling] is working with the athletes, that’s the most enjoyable part of it,” Peterson said. “Plano East has some amazing kids and they’re just fun to work with and they are really talented and eager to learn, so that makes my job really easy. They’re willing to learn and grow, so there’s always an opportunity for me to show them how to be better athletes and better people too.”

“My favorite part [of wrestling] is working with the athletes, that’s the most enjoyable part of it. Plano East has some amazing kids and they’re just fun to work with and they are really talented and eager to learn, so that makes my job really easy. They’re willing to learn and grow, so there’s always an opportunity for me to show them how to be better athletes and better people too.”

- wrestling coach Noel Peterson

going to struggle. You have to really be strong mentally and listen to your teammates and coach. You’ll see success if you just give 100% effort everyday.” Athletes say that wrestling improved their mindsets, not only in wrestling, but in life. Wrestling built their resilience, helping them grow their mindset and become better people. “Through wrestling, I feel like I’ve really improved on how I handle conflict and how I handle my own self when I’m facing hardships,” senior Mary Boyd said. “I feel like I’ve grown so I’m less likely to



Serving Friendship: Tennis' Unbreakable Bond

Sophomore Clementine Allouard goes up for a serve.

Photo by Immaan Patel

By Shar Kiefer

Every day bright and early the varsity tennis team meets at the courts, located behind the school. They start conditioning by running a mile before starting warm-ups. They then work together and engage in matches, conversing with each other and laughing. While off the court the team considers themselves good friends. Practicing together every morning creates their inseparable bond and fosters their success on the court and off. With this, the team is able to understand each other during competition. "Even the people that I'm not as close to I can definitely still go to them," sophomore Clementine Allouard said. "They're [my teammates]; my best friends. They are the people that I go to with my problems if I need their help because they just get it." Each team member is included in every aspect regardless of their grade or abilities. While not playing, teammates support their friends and teammates, coming together as a team. "Either at practice or during matches we usually stay by the court and cheer as they [a teammate] plays," junior Noah Ryu said "We give them advice when they're losing or when they're winning."

Each member motivates the others to keep playing even when times are tough or they might not be in the best headspace. Their encouragement towards each other provides a safe space within the team. They are able to trust each other with their problems and contribute as a team rather than an individual. "I [try to] find an environment where everyone is able to contribute," girl's varsity captain Neela Raman said. "Whether that be by voting on a Google form on where we want to get breakfast or just organizing fun activities." As the tennis team continues with their victory, their long-lasting bond helps them flourish in competition with each other by their side. By meeting each other off the court, they begin to understand each other and connect at different levels. The trust within the team provides a sense of community as they talk often and remain on good terms with each other. "I could have a conversation with anybody on the team," Ryu said "We could all hold [a conversation] for a while, we have things to talk about." With almost every player taking AP classes or enrolled in the IB program, the team often guides each

other through their struggles by tutoring each other and studying together. From cheering each other on and going out together, the community the team has created contributes to their successes off the court. "When I was a younger student on the team, I would always go to the captain just for encouragement and support," Raman said. "I'm glad that I can give back to the team this way by being captain this year." This type of leadership provides a sense of trust within the team as they carry on through their problems together. Whether that means spending time together or just talking, the team appreciates each other on a personal level. Each member feels as if their voice matters and that they can be trusted with information about other teammates. As they practice together, they begin to understand each other in ways they never thought were possible. "We spend a lot of time with each other from seven-hour tournaments to seven-hour practices after school," Raman said. "It's [the team is] more of a family than a friendship because we're all supportive of each other and all there for each other"

Entertainment Ethics: Animals Used For Amusement

Staff Editorial

From tourism giants like SeaWorld to popular movies like “Life of Pi” to famous horse races to holiday traditions like riding in a horse-drawn carriage, animals in the entertainment industry are exploited in many ways. World Animal Protection estimates that 550,000 wild animals suffer worldwide at the hands of the entertainment industry. Trainers teach elephants to sway their heads back and forth, small enclosures force dolphins to swim in small circles, and big cats perform tricks at the behest of the ringmaster. Despite claims of conservation and educational opportunities, using animals in the entertainment industry is wrong and is an overall negative experience for the animals involved. Zoos, aquariums, and other entertainment groups often justify the captivity of animals under the guise of conservationist efforts. A prime example is the white tiger, whose snowy coat, according to Wild Welfare, is often sought out by zoos due to the enormous success of attractions featuring these animals. Although typically considered an endangered species of tiger, which zoos often emphasize to keep them captive, the white tiger is actually the result of a genetic mutation called leucism. Breeders use captive breeding to restimulate animal populations that are near extinction, and it is a legitimate method when done correctly. However, in an article written for Wellbeing International Studies, Dr. John W. Grandy argues that the use of captive breeding creates more problems than solutions. Zoos commonly capitalize on the birth of new offspring as newborn animals tend to bring them more money. Surplus animals take up resources and are frequently sent to exotic animal breeders or, much worse, euthanized, an act that is the ex-

act opposite of population conservation. Even zoos that commit to conservation still struggle to meet expectations. Animals displayed in zoos, circuses, movies and other means of entertainment are often subjected to inhumane treatment. The Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) states handlers commonly deprive animals of food, water and bedding during transportation from one location to the next. Being under a mother’s care is a critical

47.4% of students believe animals should not be part of the entertainment industry

32.9% of students believe animals should be apart of the entertainment industry

19.7% of students chose not to comment

**out of 325 students polled*

component of animal development in the animal kingdom. However, when selected to participate in the entertainment industry, animals are often separated from their parents and families. SeaWorld San Diego’s prized orca, Corky, is a victim of such separation. According to People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Corky was violently separated from her mother and sold into captivity. Also a victim of captive inbreeding, Corky is currently the longest-held captive orca, and PETA is calling for her release. The inhumane treatment animals face in the entertainment industry causes them trauma and pain that they otherwise shouldn’t have experienced. The infamous case of Harambe, the gorilla shot and killed at the Cincinnati Zoo,

serves as a cautionary tale about the danger caged animals pose to humans and the sad ending that those animals often face. The Cincinnati Enquirer reported that an emergency response team killed the animal star to protect a 3-year-old boy who fell into his exhibit. Understandably, the entertainment industry’s use of wild animals can be problematic because of their natural and wild instincts, but some argue that there is no harm in using domesticated animals. PETA investigated Hollywood’s leading animal supplier and found that its staff treated domesticated animals poorly. Pigs didn’t receive the necessary veterinary care, staff didn’t give cats enough food, and dogs were left outside to face sub-40 temperatures in concrete kennels. According to Animal Place, petting zoos are exempt from the Animal Welfare Act, which regulates the treatment of animals in exhibitions and other locations. Petting zoo animals are confined in small spaces only to be touched by random people, and larger animals like cows and pigs also risk being sent to slaughter once the “cuteness factor” wears off.

The use of animals in entertainment in all its forms is problematic and morally unacceptable. Their traumatic experiences can result in severe consequences for the animals involved, such as injury, stress or sickness. Although some groups claim to house animals to conserve the population, this isn’t a valid enough reason to force animals to do tricks or stand in cages. The inhumane treatment animals face, and its effect raises further concern about the ethics behind animals on display.

**The Panther Prints staff voted 6-3, with majority opinion believing that animals should not be used in the entertainment industry*

Unpacking Stereotypes: Athleticism Between Races

In a school with an almost 75% minority population according to US World News, it is unsurprising to see people of color (POC), predominantly black athletes dominate the varsity rosters. Stereotypes claiming that athletes of color are stronger and faster than white athletes lead to a perceived unfair advantage that has little to no merit. This largely originates from the claim that black athletes won the biological lottery when it comes to a more natural build for sports. Additionally, the tendency of the media to highlight differing aspects of a white or POC athlete further feeds into harmful stereotypes that have been linked to a deterioration of mental health within minority athletes over time. According to the Crimson White, official newspaper for the University of Alabama, 86% of athletes in the NCAA come from below the poverty line. For many economically disadvantaged students, a large portion of whom are POC students, participation in athletics is a straight shot to a funded college education. A majority of these students have stated family motivations as a main factor in their initial participation in the sport. Seen as an opportunity to afford and attend better colleges, a lot of these families see their respective sports as more than just a game, but a path to success. In a study done by the University of Missouri, professor Cynthia Frisby identifies that 66.7% of stories done on black athletes centered around crime compared to the 22.9% of stories

done on white athletes. When reporting on training, work ethic and dedication, 42.9% were done on white athletes and almost 36% for black athletes. A 2013 study quoted in her works claimed that many viewers of American sports believe black athletes to be criminals, most likely largely due to their portrayal in modern TV and films. For many, perception of people of color is made entirely by media consumption as a direct result of a lack of diversity in certain areas of the United States. The study also states if a white student from a rural area were to base their opinions off black people based on the music they listen to, rap for example, that opinion translates directly to their view of African Americans on the screen, whether that be fictional television or televised sports. When assessing the topic of athleticism it is important to point out that there are no real statistics that can clearly dictate a difference between white and black athletes. However, when looking at American sports as a whole it is impossible to not notice the domination of certain non-European races in specific sports. Hispanics tend to make up a majority of participants in professional boxing while black players are seen on basketball courts and football fields. To say these athletes gravitate towards these sports as a result of genetics is the equivalent of the claim that South Asians are computer engineers because they are brown or East Asians are doctors because of 'superior intellectual

genetics.' While it may be true that a majority of black athletes have a stronger build, it is not a determining factor in their success in their chosen fields but rather a reflection of their upbringing and their perceived notion of success. Often it can be said that stereotypes are assigned as a result of common trends and practices. POC athletes follow a trend that can often be misconstrued as a result of media portrayal, turning stereotypes into harmful stigmas. Factors of success in athletics are not a product of race but a product of circumstance. To feed into common misconceptions is to put fuel on a fire that has raged for decades. To move forward, it is important for viewers to debunk misconceptions and understand that race plays no real role in the performance of athletes overall.



genetics.' While it may be true that a majority of black athletes have a stronger build, it is not a determining fac-

46.2% of students have noticed a stereotype around POC athletes and have noticed certain races participating in certain sports

13.8% of students have noticed a stereotype around POC athletes but believe stereotypes exist for a reason

11.4% of students have noticed a stereotype around POC athletes and think POC athletes are more athletic

9.2% of students believe there is not a stereotype around POC athletes

19.4% of students chose not to comment

***out of 325 students polled**

Drink Up, Life is Sweet

By Liliana Aguilar

The rush of cold refreshing beverages hit the taste buds in many different variations: sodas, fruity mixtures, teas and more. Drinks come in all shapes and sizes, sweet or sour, hot or cold, the choice is open to everyone. Swig, Dutch Bros and 151 Coffee fit right into this selection. These three drink shops bring fun and unique items to the menu.



Photo from 151 Coffee



Swig is a drive-thru drink shop that recently opened in Murphy. There are two other locations that are close to home: McKinney and Fairview. It is most popularly known for its “dirty sodas” that contain different syrups, creme and fruit puree flavorings. Swig’s menu also offers revivers, which are energy drinks, refreshers and hot chocolate, all of which can be personally customized. ‘Spring Fling,’ one of the more popular “dirty sodas,” consists of Dr. Pepper, vanilla, strawberry puree, and coconut creme. The Dr. Pepper in the ‘Spring Fling’ overpowers the taste, right off the bat the strawberry and vanilla flavors are very noticeable, and the coconut adds a very subtle taste. ‘Spring Fling’ was both savory and sweet, its ingredients mixed together to create a delightful flavor and taste. Overall, Swig meets its expectations of tasty “dirty sodas.”



Photo from Restaurant Business Magazine



Photo from CBS Austin



151 Coffee is not the stereotypical coffee location. The shop is decorated with prominent celebrity photos such as Bob Marley, The Rolling Stones, James Dean and even Justin Bieber. The coffee place is known for its best-tasting coffee and blended energy drinks. ‘Starry Night,’ one of the most popular blended energy drinks at 151 Coffee, consists of red raspberry and blue raspberry flavoring. The Monster energy drink overpowers the red and blue raspberry flavoring. It contains a highly carbonated sensation with small hints of raspberry in its flavor. 151 Coffee also offers green or black teas. The most popular tea is the Georgia Peach which holds strawberry and peach flavoring with the choice of either green or black tea. The ‘Georgia Peach’ with green tea didn’t embody the flavors that were listed. It lacked both strawberry and peach flavors, only the green tea was noticeable. Overall, the aesthetic vibe of 151 Coffee makes up for the lack of flavor that is promised.

Dutch Bros became very popular over the past three years. They are best known for their flavorful drink combinations. The Dutch Bros menu includes coffees, lemonades, iced teas, chai lattes, shakes and smoothies. The most loved item on the menu from Dutch Bros is their ‘Golden Eagle’ coffee: a combination of vanilla and caramel breve with caramel drizzle with the substitution of oat milk. It embodies everything it is meant to. The ‘Golden Eagle’ carries the right amount of every ingredient, the vanilla and caramel breve instantly takes over your taste buds, and the caramel drizzle follows right alongside it. Its popularity on the coffee menu significantly owns up to its expectations and even exceeds them. In other words, Dutch Bros deserves the recognition that it is receiving.

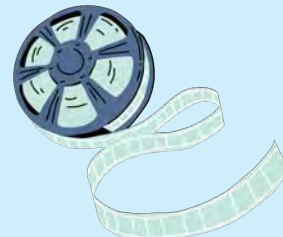
Spring Break Staycation

By Megan Glass

It is common to feel like spring break at home is less exciting than going on a trip. To combat this feeling, here are some affordable activities to do at home or near a neighborhood to keep a group entertained and active during the break. Spring break does not have to break the bank, so let us dive into some fun ideas to do with friends.

Cinema Night In: Popcorn, Film, Drama

Escape the hassle of overpriced movie tickets, loud theaters and expensive snacks and opt for an at-home cinema night. The at-home cinema experience is a great alternative, offering the freedom to pause the movie to chat with friends or fetch extra snacks, genuinely enhancing the experience. Enjoy the luxury of creating a cinematic experience from the comfort of your own home.



Board Games: Pick a Card, Roll the Dice

From strategic challenges to friendly competition, board games are a great way to bond with family and friends to create lasting memories. Gather some popular fun games, invite friends or family and let the board game marathon begin. Whether this is a game of Go-fish, Monopoly or Jenga, game night at home is a fantastic and cost-effective way to host a fun night and make spring break more lively.

Picnic: Backyard Escape

Grab a red and white blanket, gather some snacks and drinks, and prepare for a memorable picnic adventure with friends. Skip the long walk to find the perfect spot in the park and host a backyard picnic instead! Contrary to popular belief, visiting the store is not essential for a successful picnic; the contents of one's pantry can effortlessly elevate the experience.



Field Day Frenzy: Hosting Outdoor Sporting

Fuel this day of sports with refreshing drinks, healthy snacks, and good music to keep energy levels high. Whether someone is a sports enthusiast or just looking for a way to stay active during the break, having an outdoor sports event is a great way to do it! The only steps a group needs to take are establishing a location, deciding what activities they will do, and deciding who will provide refreshments. This is an excellent way to spark some friendly competition with friends and score team victories.

Baking Bonanza: Sweets, Treats, Delights!

Skip the pricey cafes and pastry shops and bake sweet treats at home. With additional hands in the kitchen, swiftly whip up a batch of cookies, a dozen cupcakes or a tray of brownies. Baking with friends adds a personal touch to a spring break at home, making the memories everlasting. Flour-covered aprons and frosting on noses become the distinguishing factor of a day well spent.



Scan this QR Code for suggested games and recipes!

PROM INFO

A NIGHT IN THE CITY

TICKETS



Scan here to buy tickets

EVENT DETAILS

Theme: A Night in the City

Location: Plano Event Center
2000 E Spring Creek PKWY, Plano, 75074

Date: April 13, 2024

Time: 8-11 P.M.

Cost: \$45 a person
\$55 a person at the door

Guest Rules:

- Each student is allowed to bring ONE guest
- Guests cannot be over the age of 20
- Names of the guest must be provided when purchasing a ticket for them
- Guests are not allowed to bring large bags or purses to the dance; Only small clutch purses no larger than 4.5 x 6.5 inches will be allowed at the entrance

