

# THE BAY CURRENT

Vol. II, Issue III

The Official Newspaper of The Bay Academy, I.S. 98

Spring 2019

## The Sweet Taste of Victory

### Mascioli eats humble pie in shocking loss at Pi Day 2019

by Emily Louie

Pi Day was a blast and this year was as memorable as ever. On March 14th, Bay Academy participated in their annual celebration to raise money for a worthy cause. Students cheered on as teachers competed in a pie eating contest, and took sweet revenge on their favorite teachers with the always hilarious pie toss. The winners from the pie eating contest this year were Mr. Auriti for 6th grade, Mr. Charchalis for 7th grade, and Mr. O'Neill for 8th grade. Pi Day is not only the most delicious day of the year because of all the pies, but also because the entire feast of funds raised goes to the St. Jude's charity. This year, we raised \$1,424, which is by far the most successful charitable event of the 2018-2019 school year.

A lot of this has to do with the mastermind behind it all: Ms. Cuoco. She and her team even added two new events: the Digit Competition and Spot a Pi Contest. Ms. Cuoco said, "It was nice seeing everyone so excited for Pi Day. Congratulations to the winners of the Digit Contest, Katie Lai for 6th grade, Elizabeth Segal for 7th grade, and Kaylin Hom for 8th grade."

However, not everything went off without a hitch. Tensions have been high for months as Mr. Mascioli's "dynasty" as 7th grade champion came to a stunning end. According to the new champ, Mr. Charchalis, his dream came true. "Ever since I was a little boy, I knew I wanted to win the Pi Day challenge here at Bay. I'd trained for months how to eat pie faster and I picked up a few secret strategies that I felt pushed me over the edge." A lot of shade is being thrown from Mascioli and his students who believe Charchalis cheated by eating a dif-

ferent type of pie. Mr. Mascioli claims it was an unfair contest. "The number one rule in a competition is that the contestants must play by the same rules." We found out that Charchalis' pie contained blueberry, a small fruit which, theoretically, easily slides down the gullet. Mascioli ate apple, which has larger chunks that must be chewed more carefully.

Nevertheless, the loss was damaging to Mr. Mascioli's confidence. "My life is now in total shambles, living on the streets, drawing thousands of pictures of my previous victories... while weeping." And I'm sure walking into school dressed as a king with Mr. Vernikov's band behind him was even more embarrassing than it sounds. But, you may be shocked to know that while Mr. Mascioli expected to lose eventually, he just wasn't quite ready yet. "I always envisioned losing twenty years down the line to some young gun... but I feel cheated this year. If I lost in a completely fair situation, I wouldn't be this upset." Mr. Mascioli claims he will win Pi Day 2020 when it's a fair contest. "I will rise like a phoenix from the ashes and triumph," he added. When I asked Mr. Charchalis to respond to Mascioli's bold prediction, he simply stated, "Let him try."

Unfortunately, this is the 8th graders' last time enjoying Pi Day, but it will always be one of the fonder memories of their beloved Bay Academy. From Mr. Kropa being cooler-than-you as he walks, Mr. O'Neil hyping the crowd as a real American hero, or Mr. Lilly strolling down his Country Road, I guess we'll have to wait until next year to see who will surprise us next!



Left, teachers prepare for the pie toss. Above, Mr. Charchalis gets ready to dominate the pie eating contest.

## Bay Academy Shows Respect For All

by Gabriel Makovoz and Iris Chan

As bullying and intolerance continue to be hot-button issues across the country, the New York City Department of Education has been taking matters into their own hands. It may seem like a while ago, but I'd like to briefly talk about one of Bay Academy's most important traditions: Respect For All Week.

To kick things off on Monday, our esteemed assistant principal and director of the occasion, Mrs. D'Agosta, turned that fateful Monday into Crazy Sock Day. Students and staff wore different colored or patterned socks to promote the diversity of our school.

On Tuesday, students and staff wore rainbow-colored clothing to promote tolerance of the wide variety of religions, cultures, and personalities here at Bay. Some students took it a step further and wore clothing relating to their religion; others even dyed their hair!

In order to avoid further acts of bullying, Mrs. D'Agosta thought it was vital to include a day that promoted tolerance and acceptance. Drama Talent, under the direction of Ms. Comas and Mr. Caiati, performed a theatrical assembly on bullying. I found Mr. Caiati's wisdom enlightening, as he talked about ways to identify bullying and how to become an "upstander" instead of a "bystander" while witnessing an event

of bullying. On Thursday, all of Bay Academy was asked to wear red to show compassion.

On Friday, students celebrated with cultural hats that represent our school's wide array of diverse cultures and backgrounds. A student from the Bay Academy then shared out multiple poems that set a somber mood in the whole auditorium and spurred many new thoughts about bullying throughout the audience, at least for this reporter.

Overall, Respect For All Week helped raise awareness against bullying and was a great way for students to reveal their culture, ideals, and personalities without being judged or discriminated against. Hopefully it serves as an important reminder that everyone can feel safe at I.S. 98 Bay Academy.



Mr. Goldberg and Mr. Caiati show respect for all in their multi-colored clothing.

## Senior Trip Excitement Reaches Critical Mass on trip to Boston



Students explore the Boston Museum of Science on the senior trip to Massachusetts.

by Iris Chan

The senior class of Bay Academy began sleepily gathering during the early morning of March 6 with luggage and plenty of caffeine in tow. As the excitement and bus assignments began to settle in, anxiety faded and the trip to Boston began (the rowdy nature of adolescence seemingly magnified by the enclosed spaces of the tour buses). After a few hours, students happily arrived at Quincy Market. Students purchased Bostonian novelty items and pulled their coats tighter on the bone chilling walk to New England Aquarium. But things warmed up quickly as the evening kick-off party approached.

Many considered the first day the highlight of the trip. I spoke with Paola Valentin from class 852 and she said, "I loved the first day of the trip, especially the aquarium and getting to see all of the different fish and sea creatures! The party was also great because I got to spend time with my friends and make a ton of new memories."

The second day began with exhaustion and much like the day before, we headed through the cold to the Museum of Science where there was plenty to be explored. Time flew and before we knew it we were headed to the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate. Students explored the responsibilities of a U.S. Senator and debated the issue of inflated pharmaceutical drug pricing. Ending with fun again, we went to Dave & Buster's before heading back to the hotel.

On the third day, our last stop was the historic Fenway Park which was rich with history and particularly bone chilling, but the cold never froze our spirits!

Upon reflection on the road home, the trip was definitely a memory to cherish and an important part of 8th grade for us. We thank the deans, principals, teachers, and well-behaved students for making this trip a fond memory for all!

# To Be Honest...

Opinions are the columnists' own and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Bay Current or The Bay Academy.



## The Wall

As President Trump's master plan to build a wall at the border of the US and Mexico draws nearer to fruition, of course, there is still a ton of opposition. A few months ago, Democrats in the House of Representatives did not back the plan and refused to set aside funds in their annual budget which ultimately led to the longest shutdown in the history of the US government, lasting for 35 days between December and January. Trump requested \$5.7 billion for the construction of the wall, but what exactly is the wall and why is it such a priority? He claims that illegal immigration and drug smugglers are ripping apart our country from the inside out, but there are many problems that the wall won't fix, or may in fact cause.

By Malika Nasriddinova

No one really knows the true cost. During the election, Trump proposed to build a concrete wall, but early into his presidency, he changed his statement. Now he wants a steel wall. A concrete wall would've cost less. BBC news says, "A number of widely different estimates for a concrete wall have been put forward by official and unofficial bodies - ranging from \$12 billion to \$70 billion. Mr Trump's initial price tag of between \$8 billion and \$12 billion for a wall covering half the length of the border was widely disputed." President Trump wants \$5.7 billion in addition to the \$1.7 billion already allocated for homeland security, most of which has been designated for new and replacement barriers. Congress has approved an additional \$1.4 billion for 55 miles (88 km) of new barrier for the financial year to September 2019, but this is far short of what the president has asked for. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) previously estimated a wall spanning half the border would cost up to \$25 billion, but it has now said it is still looking at options to determine the price tag. US Customs and Border Protection (CPB) says that, on average, it costs approximately \$6.5 million per mile to construct a new border wall or replace existing legacy fence.

Let's make no mistake, drug cartels can outsmart checkpoints and walls. President Trump has claimed that 90% of heroin comes across the southern border and that a wall would help the fight against this trafficking. But that's simply not true. Sure, borders are highly regulated and policed, but they are also very predictable. Cartels and traffickers carefully study how security operates at every checkpoint, which means they could easily observe and respond to weaknesses. They know when the inspectors are relaxed in order to speed up the through-flow of traffic and they know when a corrupt inspector with a willing blind eye comes on duty. Cartels are clever and tactical.

A lot of people call the border racist. I understand why they may do this. However, even former president Obama has suggested that many Americans aren't wrong for being weary of unlimited immigration. He recently called for a "humane, intelligent, thoughtful, orderly immigration process that is grounded in our better selves. He emphasized that the job of "reducing fear on the part of people who are already there ... requires some levels of adaptation from the people who are coming in." In other words, Americans don't like when people come into this country and exploit it. It's hard to feel like you aren't being used when thousands of people are coming into the United States, not learning the language, and sending large amounts of untaxed money to their homelands. Obama admits, "The truth of the matter is that if you're going to have a coherent, cohesive society then everybody has to have some agreed upon rules, and there's gonna have to be some accommodations that everybody makes, and that includes the people who are newcomers. The question is, are those fair? Should we want to encourage newcomers to learn the language of the country they're moving to? Of course. Does that mean they can never use their own language. No. Of course it doesn't mean that, but it's not racist to say if you're gonna be here then you should learn the language of the country you just arrived at, because we need to have some sort of common language in which all of us can work and learn and understand each other."

In my opinion, the wall is a symbol of separation, isolation, and intolerance of others, whether we intend it or not. America stands for freedom from oppression. America, at its best, is a symbol of hope. The wall makes millions of asylum seekers feel hopeless and millions of residents feel scared that they'll be rounded up and sent back to the war-torn places they came from. It's not crazy to suggest that we can be fair on immigration and economically savvy without sacrificing our American ideals.



## I Smell A Scandal

College Access For All? More like, College Access for the Rich and Famous! Recently, college admissions scandals have rocked the country, affecting many well-to-do families and colleges. The most well known of the group was Lori Loughlin (and her daughter), who became famous after acting in the hit sitcom, Full House. Because the scandal's reach has crept its way into ivy league schools like Harvard and Yale, the drama has officially been spilled into our public consciousness. I feel shocked that something like this could happen in our very aware society.

By Elizabeth Goldengur

To put it simply, multi-millionaire parents were accused of paying their children's way into top colleges. Allegedly, they paid SAT proctors to give their children answers, paid tutors to take the tests, and even paid coaches to photoshop or take pictures with their kids in athletic situations. Some of these parents spent millions of dollars. A key person of interest in this case was William "Rick" Singer, who ran a college prep school in California. He used this school to coordinate the cheating of students on their standardized tests and facilitated lots of the bribery that went on himself.

Of course, I believe that this whole thing was an embarrassment; cheating is not the way that things should be done. It is so much more rewarding to actually accomplish something yourself than have it handed to you by shady means. Parents do donate millions of dollars to colleges, earning buildings or wings in their honor, and usually earn generations of family members preferential treatment at top schools. This is still not fair, right? Not so fast. These donated dollars help both the college and its students so much! An alumni donation will buy computers and cutting-edge technology. This donation will pay for bigger and brighter classrooms. This donation will enhance the college in ways that it never could have been enhanced without it. On the other hand, when a person gets into a college by outright cheating, no one benefits except for the single student. Paying someone off is not the same thing at all.

Advocates for students with disabilities are also rightfully upset about this scandal because, according to NPR, when the wealthy students were taking their ACTs and SATs, they used accommodations on the tests meant for students with disabilities. Parents and their kids shamefully were using these advantages to give their children extra time because they knew if their child had extended time, they would do better on the tests.

Some people can and do buy happiness, and that's fine. But are we going to stand around while others buy absurdly unfair advantages in their kids' college educations? College is meant to be the great equalizer. It's supposed to put all of us on the same level. Here in the United States, anyone from anywhere can eventually claw their way to a top college with hard work and determination. But let's remember, for every one student who cheats their way into a college, there's another student who missed the cut.

## Bay Back When

### Curb Your Enthusiasm For This Sheepshead Bay Star

Did you know that Seinfeld and Curb Your Enthusiasm writer, creator, and actor Larry David is from Sheepshead Bay? When The New Yorker asked him about South Brooklyn life in the 1950s, Larry said, "This was my little world. Four identical red brick buildings framed the winter sky. When you wanted your friends to come out, you'd just scream at their windows."

For those of you who are from this neighborhood, you may remember Neptune Lanes, a popular bowling spot on Neptune Avenue. Larry's bowling team called themselves the Desperadoes. A desperado is a reckless person, and when Larry's first television show hit the air, his writing style was indeed as reckless as anything that had come before. David's shows typically break all the rules. Seinfeld was famously claimed to be "a show about nothing," but it was really a show about the everyday adventures and annoyances that we all experience, like being lost in a parking garage or waiting forever for a table at a restaurant. The show was hardly a mind-blowing concept, but it really was wildly different than anything else on TV. In fact, a slew of similarly themed shows like Friends and Big Bang Theory were created shortly after its incredible success.

We're very glad that our humble little neighborhood had something to do with inspiring so much joy and laughter into this world. Thanks, Larry!



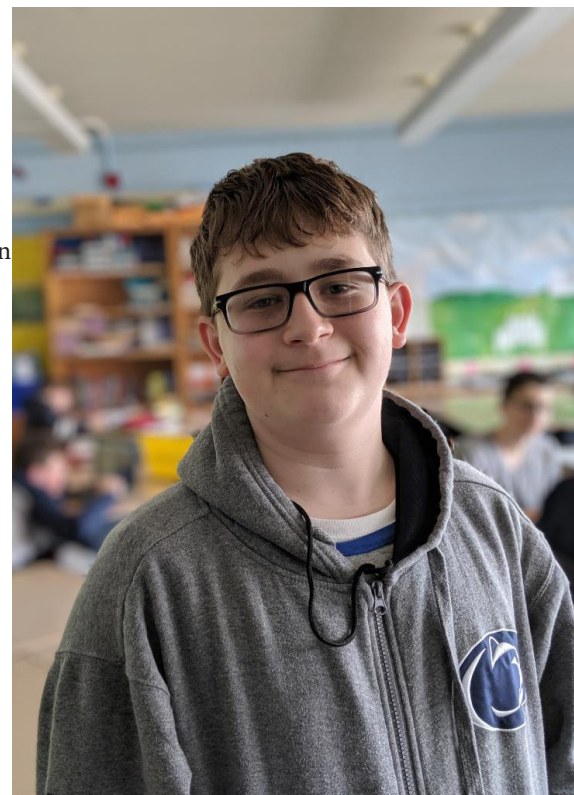
## Humans of Bay

By Michelle Li

Some say he's the kindest student. Others say he's the most helpful. Regardless, Samuel Reingold has definitely made his mark here at the Bay Academy. Sam, from class 831, is a senior Science Talent student. He is very active and involved in this school, taking part in No One Eats Alone, participating in the Future City competition, monitoring every chance he gets, and even winning two New York City poetry contests! For this year's Future City entry, Samuel (along with some of his friends) designed a city using SMARTgrid based on the principle that if one grid shuts down, the other grids aren't affected as well. Samuel wishes that future cities will become more energy efficient, more technology efficient, and will run on fusion energy.

In addition to this work, Sam is an ambassador for No One Eats Alone (NOEA). "When [the school] gave out the notices, I wasn't sure if I wanted to join, but what motivated me was the idea of helping people who want to engage with others, but may need an extra push." Samuel truly enjoys being a part of No One Eats Alone and has grown a lot. According to Sam, "Not everyone is going to be good and kind all the time... but kindness always pays off."

Other than taking part in these extracurriculars, in his free time Samuel likes to draw, play video games, and read books. No matter what difficulties may come his way, you can bet he'll always manage to keep a smile on his face and put a smile on everyone around him too!



# LAB NOTES



## Phobias: They're In Your Genes

By Jessica Mindel

Have you ever met someone who has an abnormal fear? The fear of small spaces? The fear of heights? The fear of bathing? How about fear of the color yellow? These are far from the weirdest phobias out there, because phobias are far more weird and interesting than you may have ever thought.

A phobia is an intense and unreasonable fear of a specific object or situation. We all know that phobias can be formed by a negative event in your past that makes you want to avoid something for the rest of your life. They cause psychological and physical distress that can make you feel extremely unsafe. However, research shows that first-degree relatives of someone suffering from a phobia are approximately three times more likely to develop that same phobia. So, could it be genetic?

Women are more likely to develop a phobia than men are (specifically, at a 2:1 ratio). A recent theory about the development of phobias suggests that a certain percentage of people have genetic predispositions that actually could cause a certain fear. However, most people who do have that genetic predisposition never develop this fear/disorder because their environment never brought it out of them. In other words, the disorder may only occur after a triggering event. This triggering event can be anything, but it is most likely an incident of heightened emotions. Phobias are often linked to the amygdala, which is behind the pituitary gland in the brain. The amygdala can trigger the release of "fight-or-flight" hormones when a person is faced with physical or emotional stress. These are facts. However, the experimental theory here is that a person could be genetically inclined to develop a fear based on their ancestors' experiences. In that sense, this theory suggests that a person's memories are, in a way, encoded and passed down from generation to generation. Much more testing must be done to come to any of these

sorts of conclusions with any degree of certainty. One such study was performed on mice. These mice were exposed to the smell of cherry blossoms and simultaneously shocked with electricity. This caused the mice to associate the smell of cherry blossoms with something terrible or painful, instead of something neutral or pleasant. Then, the mice were allowed to live and breed as they would have normally. To the researchers surprise, generations of mice showed a fearful response to the smell of cherry blossoms despite never having been exposed to them before! The experiences were somehow transferred from the brain into the genome, allowing them to be passed on to later offspring. Hopefully, studies like this one on mice will lead to further investigation into whether or not the same process occurs in humans.

One of the most common phobias is social phobia, which, as you can probably tell, is the fear of meeting other people, situations when you may be observed or looked at, or a situation when the individual performs in front of others. For those of you with this fear, could you have had an ancient ancestor in Mesopotamia who was a social outcast themselves? What about Aerophobia, the fear of flying? Could you have had a mother or grandfather who hit turbulence and were scared before you were born? Or Arachnophobia, the fear of spiders and other arachnids? Did you have an ancestor in the Congo who was bit and nearly died? What about acrophobia, the fear of heights? Trypanophobia, the fear of injections? And my personal favorite, Trypophobia, the fear of small holes (it's a meme, people). Do you think any of your ancestors could have experienced one of these traumatic experiences themselves?

There are thousands, maybe even hundreds of thousands of phobias out there (like hippopotomonstrosesquippedaliophobia, the fear of long words). Now, think about all the phobias you have yourself. I now give you permission to go home and blame your family for being responsible. You're welcome.

# ASK A SENIOR

## Advice from your peers

*I didn't get into the high school I wanted and I'm devastated. Is there anything I could do?*

First of all, just know that everything is going to be okay! Don't panic. Just because you didn't get into your preferred high school doesn't mean you should give up entirely. The school you go to shouldn't define who you are.

No matter what high school you get into, make no mistake, you will still have a nice time there making new friends and enjoying your new environment. It wouldn't really help to go into the school with a negative mind set. Negative beliefs create negative worlds. Open up and see what the school is really about. You will gain some new friends that will at the very least, make your high school years become more tolerable. And chances are there's a certain club or program there and only there that you'll enjoy more than anything you would have at that "dream" high school.

If you work hard enough, study hard enough, and persist through the adversity, you will nearly always come out on top. Reach for the moon and land among the stars! Each and every school will offer something unique, so don't lose hope.

I wish you the best of luck on your high school journey!

*I study for tests but I still don't do as well as I want to. What am I doing wrong?*

I've definitely been there! Studying and getting lower than what you expected is quite disappointing. However, here are some possible ways of combating this:

Relax. You can study as hard as possible for any test, but if you feel so nervous that your mind goes blank, all that studying will go down the drain. So, try to loosen up and calm down on the day of the test.

Another reason why you might not be getting the grade you want is that you aren't studying in a way that actually helps. For example, you may not be studying the material early enough, you're studying the wrong material, or you aren't studying in a way that actually helps you to understand and remember something. Everyone is different. Some of us learn visually, kinesthetically, or by listening and speaking to others, so you need to find the style that's right for you and use it to your advantage. You'll find that your results improve dramatically if you keep experimenting until you find your happy place.

And it's always worth speaking with your teachers. They may have insight on your work habits or past test results that can point you in the right direction. Good luck!

If you have a question for our advice columnists, leave your question in our drop-boxes, outside room 244 or the second floor student bathrooms.

And always talk with a trusted adult if you need serious and immediate help or advice. Our guidance counselors are a great place to start. See Mr. Caiati or Ms. Carlino in room 118.

## Spring Shows Highlight Performing Talents at Bay Academy



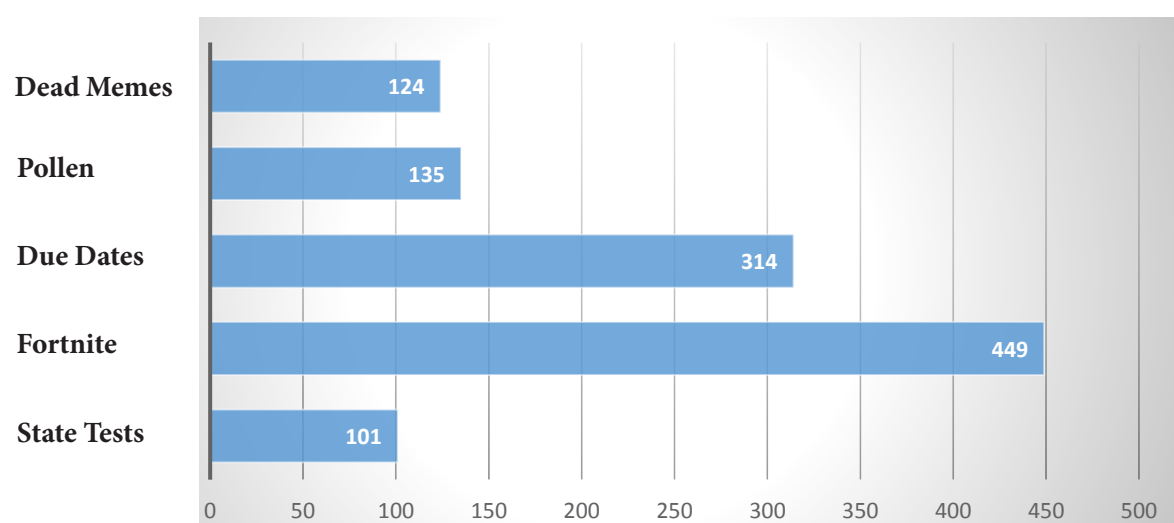
Dance, Vocal, Winds, Strings and Drama Talent students performed a series of spectacular shows, showcasing their hard work throughout the year. Dance students, above, choreographed their own dances in their performance, "Dancing Through the Decades." Musicians



impressed in their annual Spring Concert featuring plenty of surprises, while seventh and eighth grade Drama Talent entertained with "Hoodie" and "Willie Wonka Jr." Congratulations to their wonderful teachers, Ms. Kasbar, Ms. Comas and Mr. Vernikov.

## We asked 1123 students:

### What Are You Allergic To?



Eighth grade Drama Talent students put on a hilarious performance of Willy Wonka Jr. under the direction of Ms. Comas. Above, the Oompa-Loompas catch Augustus Gloop in the chocolate river.

Scan the QR code to connect to Bay Academy's website. Find, dates, news and events happening now at Bay Academy.



# REVIEWS IN THE NEWS Books To Check Out

## “Paper Hearts” by Meg Wiviott

Reviewed by Rowan Walters

In this beautifully written book of narrative poetry, we follow the story of 2 teenage girls as they endure Auschwitz. Fania is sweet and quiet, always doing what she is told, even leaving her entire family behind when she gets captured. Zlatka is outspoken and intelligent, and arrives with her little sister, Necha. As we read from the perspective of both girls, we see how the death and heartache affect them, but surviving always was the best revenge.

I absolutely adored this work of historical fiction from Meg Wiviott. It shows the vulnerability of mortality and how strong friendship can be. If you were fascinated by other Holocaust based novels, this would be a perfect example. And if you like reading about friendship conquering all odds, you would probably find this just as enjoyable.

## “Flowers for Algernon” by Daniel Keyes

Reviewed by Iris Chan

Flowers for Algernon by Daniel Keyes is a work of science fiction. It's a heartbreakingly beautiful classic about a mentally deficient man named Charlie. He receives a life changing opportunity to increase his IQ through a brain operation. Charlie quickly becomes aware of the people around him and the type of world that he exists in. Above all he realizes he needs a reason to live: love. Yet he cannot move on with his life because he's haunted by his past self and the knowledge that he may regress.

This is a story that evokes a vast range of emotions while exploring hope, truth, perseverance and humanity.

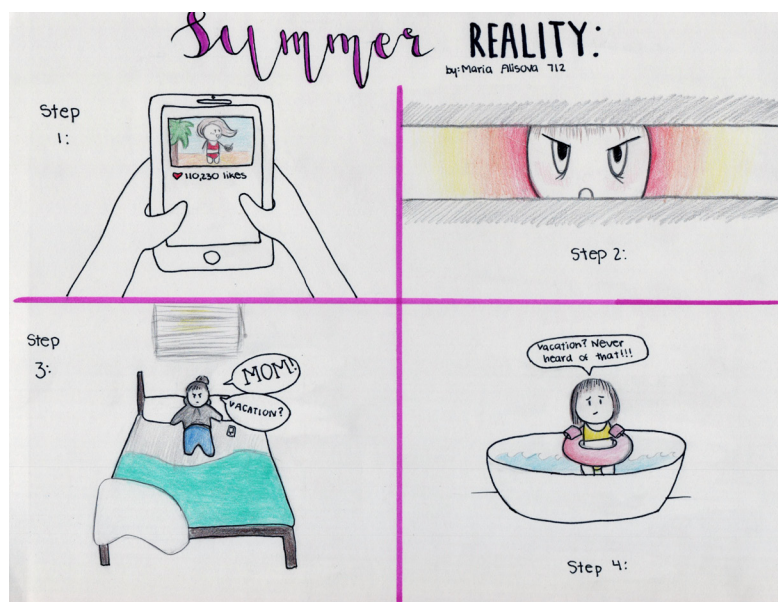
## “Animal Farm” by George Orwell

Reviewed by Victoria Solodkova

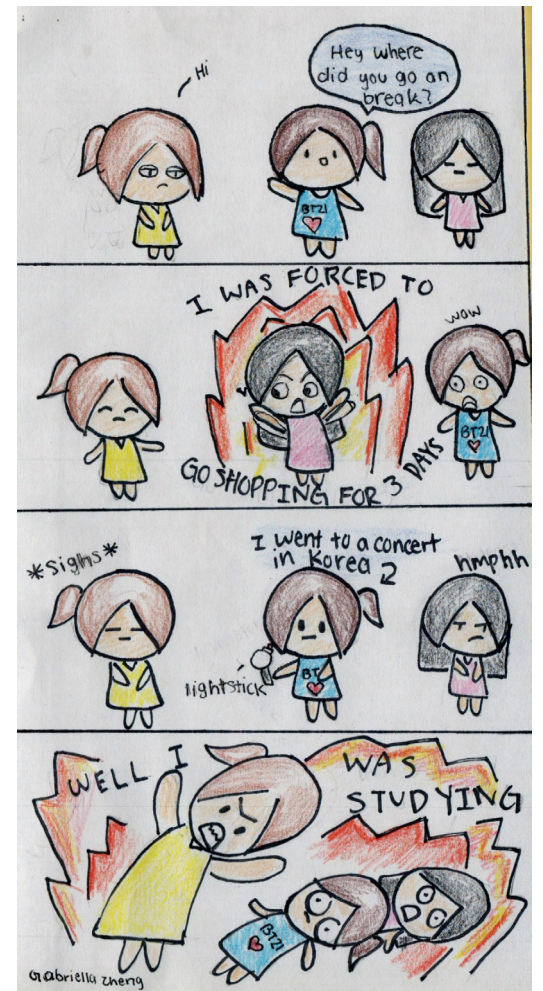
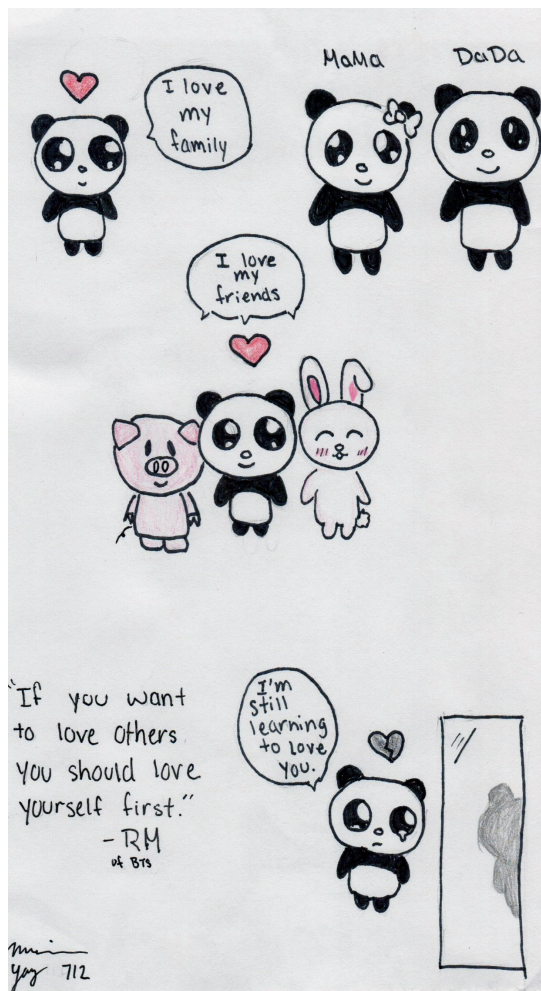
Animal Farm follows a group of animals who overthrow their farmer and seize the land. They create a system where they are able to live by eating and selling the crops of their newly acquired land. However, soon, the pigs begin to take larger shares of food, justifying their larger portions any way they can. As the book progresses the pigs turn against each other until only one remains as the leader. Through the spread of lies and propaganda, what was supposed to be the animals' paradise turns into a world of tyranny and injustice.

This book is a classic and a very interesting read. It is a quick read and easy to understand at the surface but has many layers to digest. Fast-paced, with well-developed characters, this novel is great for anyone.

# DRAWN TOGETHER



Top left, Kamilla Avezova  
Top right, Maria Alisova  
Bottom left, Marcia Yang  
Bottom middle, Michelle Zhong  
Bottom right, Gabriella Zheng



## WHAT WE'RE LISTENING TO...

### K.A.A.N.

Living in a world of racism and hatred, the Maryland rap star Brandon Perry (K.A.A.N) uses his unique talent of “non-stop rap” to generate mind-blowing records that address problems in today's society.

### KACEY MUSGRAVES

With a winning streak of 6 grammy awards, 4 country music association awards, and an academy of country music award, the internationally prominent Kacey Musgraves continues to present herself as an attention-worthy singer/songwriter through her new album “Golden Hour” that promotes country music and hip-hop.

### TALES OF US

After living in Berlin on the top floor of a small apartment building, DJ and producers Carmine Conte and Matteo Milleri, otherwise known as Tales of Us, rose to the top of the underground electronic dance scene and recently released a new album called Fabric 97. It's enthralling and awe-inspiring sounds continue to excite, growing into a new form of Krautrock music.