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Happy Valentines Day
Mountain View! Thanks for
coming back for the next edition
of the *Mountain View Journal*.
If you have any questions or
comments, please email [Alyssa](#),
[Natalie](#), or [Mya](#). If you've been
enjoying reading the journal,
and want to join, talk to Mrs.
DeMarco or Mrs. Faulkner
about being added to our
Schology course. Have a great
Valentine's Day and happy
reading!

-The editorial staff

The Day of Love

Natalie Deschane

Petals of roses
Tickle our noses
Chocolatey aromas
The day of love approaches!

Birds singing up above
Words light like a dove

Care and compassion
Shown in a beautiful fashion

A day of faith
A day of favor
A day of fun
A day of family
A day of fulfillment
A day of forgiveness
A day of LOVE!



<https://pixabay.com/it/photos/palloncini-cuori-amore-romanza-693707/>

History of Valentine's Day

Yukta Pathak

Valentine's day is a day when people express their love through gifts and candy around the world. The holiday is celebrated on February 14. It's popular in many countries, including the United States, Britain, Canada, Australia, Argentina, France, Mexico, and South Korea. But how did it all begin?

Valentine's day began as a Christian/Catholic feast, honoring early Saint Valentine.

Who was Saint Valentine?

Two stories are recounted, and both are similar, but not quite the same. One tale states that Valentine was supposedly a Roman priest that performed secret weddings during the 3rd century. When imprisoned in a home, he healed his captor's daughter, who was diagnosed with blindness. It caused the entire house to conform to Christianity, and Saint Valentine was tortured and decapitated on February 14th. But before he was killed, he had sent his girl a note signed, 'Your Valentine.'

On another account, everyone follows a Saint whose name, like the other story, was Valentine. Similarly he performed Christian wedding during the reign of the Roman empire. In this version, he never meets the other family, and dies of old age on February 14th.

But Valentine's Day doesn't have to be religious. There are many romantic ways to celebrate Valentine's day. One way you can show your love is by buying a Candy gram at school for a friend. Happy Valentine's Day!

Survivor

Brenna Forti and Mae Hayes

I dropped my backpack next to me and sat down comfortably on my favorite log in all of the woods that surrounded our small town. I let out a deep breath.

School seemed to have lasted forever. It was far worse than any other day. I was asked to solve exactly two math problems, answer six questions throughout the day, dissect a frog in science, and I had gym. That was just my school day though.

On my walk home, two of the most known bullies in our small town came up to me. They stole the locket that my sister, Bailey, gave to me before she was gone. She was my best friend in the world and I couldn't lose that locket. I knew I couldn't face these bullies but...when I was in the moment it felt like I could and *would* do anything to get the locket back. My mind was swirling and I couldn't think straight so I ran away, away to somewhere I could calm down. Plus, I knew the woods better than they did and I lost them almost instantly.

Ever since Bailey died I've had this strange energy boiling in me, I was mad at myself, I was mad at everyone, and I was really mad at that dumb cancer Bailey got. Bailey used to say "Anger is a dangerous thing to play with, Sammie. You have to control it and it can be your greatest tool."

I couldn't control it though, at least not on my own. I needed the woods; that dirty smell in the air, those deer tracks that led deeper into the trees, and the beautiful nature of the woods. This is where my happy place is, I belong here. When I get out of school I always head straight for the woods, but for some reason today the forest wasn't as calm, it didn't have that same earthy, dirty smell. The deer tracks led too far into the dark; past all of the best feeding spots. I felt *something* was off.

The air had a slight burned smell to it, overtaking the strong smell of pine. I got up and walked to the smell, and as I went it was continually getting stronger. I saw deer dash toward me instead of into the smelly woods. *Strange*, I thought, *the deer usually never run near me...*

I couldn't keep my mind off the smell; I was sure it was the smell of something burning, but at this hour? I was attracted to it like a moth is to light.

Suddenly I felt a heat wash up to me, I felt a huge gust of wind blow into me and I saw it, or rather, *heard* it. It was a roar, and dozens of trees caught ablaze. I stumbled back, my heart racing.

A fire.

A forest fire.

Flinging my feet upright I ran as fast as possible, which wasn't fast enough after my gym class. I could have outrun the bullies easily because of my knowledge of the forest but the fire just tore down everything in its way. I couldn't hide from it.

I jumped over logs as I heard the ringing of fire trucks in the distance. It was a burning heat with a toxic smell; I imagined it was like being inside a toaster oven. The fire jumped onto trees around me cutting off my path. I was trapped in a circle of flames.

It didn't seem like the fire was approaching me but there was a terrible cracking sound near me. A tree fell next to me flinging fire and embers all around. A few stray embers leaped onto my arms, causing a scream of agony. I tried to run, but I was grounded. Another branch fell, and this

Survivor (Continued)

time the embers sparked onto my knee, lighting my jeans. What should I do? Stop, drop, and roll? That was impossible, the fire was all around me. The smoke was clouded around me, stinging my eyes and filling my lungs. I looked around with tears in my eyes; there had to be a way out.

A cave with a small opening proved to be my only way to escape, even with all the risks, I knew rocks didn't burn. I would have to run through fire to escape but...did I have any other choice?

Embers fell all around me, a few falling on my arms which I had to brush off quickly burning my hands. There was no more time to think, I sprinted to the cave and passed through the raging fire in front of it. My clothes caught on fire so I performed a Stop, Drop, and Roll into the safe cave.

The inside of the cave was cold once I went farther in despite the burning fire outside. A couple of embers flew by the entrance making a tree go up in flames. I felt the heat rising, and I thought the fire *had* to go out soon.

I thought wrong. A huge fire tornado formed in a blink of an eye jumping from treetop to treetop, burning everything in its sight. The fire tornado caught a tree near me on fire, and it fell making a terrible *ripping* sound. Flames flew up coming for the cave entrance causing me to back into a corner of the cave. I sat on the ground, breathing hard, now that the adrenaline from the fire was gone I noticed how painful my arms, hands, and legs were.

My arms were covered in burns and my hands had many blisters. My leg was aching causing me to look at my ankle. I saw my sock covered in deep red blood, my ankle throbbing uncontrollably. I took off my shoe—my hands gave slight protest—to give it space and it revealed an extended cut running down the side of my foot and going down the bottom. I didn't have anything on me to cover it up and couldn't find anything helpful in the cave. My hands were swollen and I couldn't take one look at that bloody ankle. I sat in the cold cave, smoke was still lingering in it making it impossible to see without my eyes burning. I wanted to go home, for Bailey to hug me and Mom and Dad to say that everything was alright. But Bailey was gone now and I felt like I was too.

Water splashed out of the sky putting out the fire finally, I thought that it must be some firefighters so I attempted to look out of the cave, maybe I would be saved.

I should *not* have done that because my ankle burst out in pain forcing hot tears to form in my eyes. I crawled my way to the cave entrance, though the journey made my ankle shoot pain up my leg.

Survivor (Continued)

I looked out the entrance, I found nothing green outside, it was all lost in the fire. The forest was so unfamiliar, and I'd never even seen this cave before, I must have run far. I looked away. Soon I felt a deep sadness within me and I was suddenly aware that losing Bailey had made me change, and I felt more alone than ever sitting in that cold cave dwelling on what I lost that day.

A memory emerged from my mind, it was when Bailey's doctors thought the cancer was fading...almost gone. She looked at me with those hopeful eyes, those eyes gave me a sense of hope too, she said in her soft voice, "This is hope. This is *my* hope. Sammie, I need you to have hope for me." I did hope, I hoped until I could give no more hope, but it worsened again and then that was the last time...

No, I *knew* I couldn't hope for someone to find me in this cave, or for my leg to magically heal but a part of me desperately prayed that someone would come. At least look for me.

I needed a plan quickly because unlike hoping, plans can help, at least they can help me in my situation. I needed to find something to work as a makeshift splint and some kind of food which would be the easiest, I had memorized the uses of some plants and knew what was edible. I also needed to find help, I desperately needed help. I grabbed a rock and started to write out my plan on the wall.

For some reason, drawing my thoughts on the wall calmed me—even though my heartbeat was still very high—and soon enough I was lying down on the floor thinking. Thinking about that day Bailey found out she had cancer. Thinking about the smell of that day. A deep doctor smell. Thinking about the words.

Cancer...Deadly... I couldn't forget it. It was stuck in my mind as if someone had seared it into me, I wanted to forget but I couldn't.

Every once in while tugging at my heart images from before would present themselves to me and then remind me of what I lost. This time I saw a picture of Bailey in the woods, with trees all around her. Green, yellow, red, and orange. All Bailey's favorite colors. The picture ripped to shreds and fell into a black hole.

The image shook me and I sat up in a flash, much to the annoyance of my ankle which throbbed painfully. I needed to do something to get my mind off Bailey...

I limped to the cave entrance, which did not shoot pain up my leg so I continued limping out of the cave and deeper into the forest. The trees were charred and many had fallen so I had to shift my route a lot.

Soon I walked far enough into the forest that I found the end of the fire and some promising green bushes. When I got closer to the bushes I found some blackberries growing on them—I snatched enough to make me a small dinner and hopefully a breakfast. I got some twigs and leaves for a splint.

I made my way back to the cave, made the splint—it worked pretty well—and went to bed on the cold hard floor. I had what I had once hoped for but...I felt something was wrong...

Grabbing a rock I drew a long line near the corner of the wall. I put my hand on the line, it was cold and lonely like me.

It was strange how much I could relate to a cold line, but I hoped that was the only line that would have to see on this wall. This, I hoped was my last day here.

As I drifted off to sleep I saw myself running toward Bailey, Mom, and Dad. Bailey reached out to hug me, but when she touched me she disappeared...

To Be Continued

Travels Around The World

Nadia Abel

As the students in our school are preparing for the musical, *Descendants*, it brings me so many memories of one of the most beautiful towns in Europe. Salzburg is known for the musical, *Sound of Music*.

The *Sound of Music* is a movie musical from 1965, filmed in Salzburg. More than 30,000 *Sound of Music* fans, including myself, visit this city each year to experience the footsteps of the Von Trapp family at the original filming locations in and around the town. My parents took me to Mirabell Gardens and Palace where the Von Trapp family children and their nanny, Maria (played by Julie Andrews), sang and danced around all the flowers and stone unicorns. I followed in their footsteps and did the same. There are so many sites you can visit around town where the movie was filmed, even better with their delicious ice cream in hand.

Salzburg is also the city of Mozart. Mozart was born in Salzburg in 1756 in a historical building at Getreidegasse #9 near the Marketplatz. Mozart's house is currently a museum that I visited where you can learn facts about his house, his life in the town, and his music.

I would also recommend that you follow the marked Mozart City Walk. It starts at Mozart's birthplace and continues across a river to the Mozart Foundation, the museum that serves as the guardian of Mozart's musical heritage. The walk also passes by many of the sites he would go to in Salzburg, along with the cemetery where his father and widow are buried (he himself is in Vienna). At the end of the walk, you can stop by Cafe Tomaselli and get some almond milk (Mozart's favorite drink).

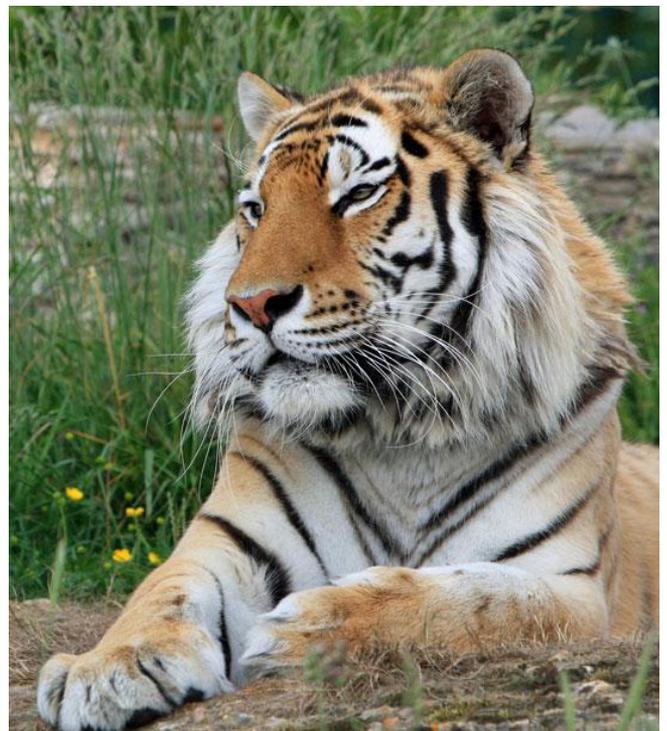
Animal Of The Month

Aubree Thompson

This month's animal is a tiger.

Fun Facts About Tigers:

- ★ The tiger is the animal of the month from February 4th to March 5th
- ★ Tigers are often impulsive and playful
- ★ The Chinese name for the tiger is "Yin"
- ★ Tigers' skin isn't actually orange; simply their fur is pigmented
- ★ One of the Chinese Zodiac signs was the tiger. 2022, 2010, and 1998 were some of the Years of the Tiger.



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GIVING BACK

JAYNA PATEL

Over Christmas break, I took a memorable and life-changing trip to India. The months leading up to this trip were quite remarkable. I raised almost \$5,000 for an orphanage, made bracelets for people who donated, and then gave a matching one to a child at the orphanage. It was lots of work, but I was determined to help the kids in the best way I knew how. Finally, after all the hard work we left for India and I was excited.

When the day came to go meet the kids at the orphanage, I just fell in love with all of them. They all had huge smiles on their faces and were so welcoming. It was their first time seeing Americans, and that day I was able to see how the money I raised was spent. It went towards a room called a smart room, where the kids would have access to the internet and computers for the first time, as well as Gmail accounts. The desks in the smart room were handmade by local carpenters near the orphanage. It was just mindblowing to see the excited smiles on their faces when they saw the room I helped to create. When I gave out the bracelet to the girls, their faces lit up with joy. On the third day, we went back to the orphanage, and most girls wore my bracelets. I knew they would keep them forever, like a little memory of me.

There is a special girl at the orphanage named Kavya that struck my heart. Kavya's mom died during Covid and her dad and siblings are all blind, which leaves her to be the only person in her family who can see.

This has inspired her to become an eye doctor because she wants to go home and help them. She has such a unique and inspiring story.

The kids at the orphanage don't complain about anything and they all got along so well. We complain if the water is too cold or too hot when we shower, but the kids at the orphanage take showers with buckets no matter the temperature.

The first weekend we got back from India we got to video call the kids. They were so happy to see us. My brother and I couldn't communicate much because they pretty much only speak Gujarati (the native language of the area) but my mom helped translate what they are saying. However, some of the kids spoke little bits and pieces of English.

This goes to show what privileges we have here in America compared to the hard lives that other people have to go through in different countries or in different situations. There are stories all around you like this. Some could even be your classmates or the people you play with on your sports team. I learned from this trip to be kind to everyone and give back whenever you have a chance. You could change lives and touch people's hearts with the smallest and biggest things.



Get To Know The Descendants Cast

Alyssa Wenger and Natalie Deschane

Mal, Evie, Jay, and Carlos. The descendants of the worst villains on the Isle of the Lost. Also, two eighth graders, a seventh grader, and a sixth grader. In the last issue of *Mountain View Journal*, you read about *Descendants: The Musical*. This time, we're giving you a backstage pass to meet five of the main characters! Actors Greyson Mayberry (Carlos), Atticus Piscioneri (Jay), Josh Huntington (Ben), Alyssa Wenger (Mal), and Natalie Deschane (Evie) were interviewed to give you some more information about them.

Meet Mal. She is the evil daughter of the infamous Mistress of Evil, Maleficent, and will be brought to life by Alyssa Wenger, a student on 8 Ocean. Alyssa went to Sporting Hill Elementary, and her previous show experience includes playing Annie in *Annie KIDS*, Mayzie La Bird in *Seussical Jr.*, and Madame de la Grande Bouche in *Beauty and the Beast Jr.* In addition to this year's musical, she participates in Band, Jazz Band, Chorus, and Bel Canto. She was motivated to audition for the show because of a couple of things: one, she loves the *Descendants* story. And two, she wanted to make sure that her final year of middle school was memorable, and what better way to do that than theater? Singing is also one of her favorite activities, as is dancing. She initially auditioned for the role of Mal, which she got and is very excited about. Alyssa dislikes that her character, Mal, has to act as if she cares about nothing for the entire first half of the show, which, for Alyssa, is a challenge. The positives that Alyssa sees in her role are that purple is Mal's favorite color. Purple is her favorite color as well, so she is especially excited about costuming! She also enjoys that Mal is a lead and gets to participate in lots of scenes and songs. This does mean lots of lines and harmonies to memorize, but Alyssa says it is worth it!

Jay: the troublemaking son of Jafar, the vicious villain from *Aladdin*. Jay is a tough and loyal character and will be played by Atticus Piscioneri, a 7th-grade Knights student. He went to Sporting Hill Elementary school, and his previous show experience includes playing Rooster in *Annie KIDS*, the Cat in the Hat in *Seussical Jr.*, and Cogsworth in *Beauty and the Beast Jr.* He chose to audition for this year's musical because he was confident in his ability to get an important part, and he trusted that it would be a fun and enjoyable experience. He originally auditioned for the role of Jay or Carlos, but he was leaning more toward the role of Carlos. However, he is having a lot of fun playing Jay, and would not trade his role. Even though Atticus likes playing his character he doesn't like that when he is not on the tourney field, he feels as though he is not doing much. Atticus's favorite aspect of Jay is his stupidity.

Carlos; son of Cruella de Vil, scaredy cat, and tourney star. Greyson Mayberry is portraying Carlos in this year's production of *Descendants: The Musical*. Greyson went to Sporting Hill Elementary and is currently on the 6 Hurricanes team. His previous show experience includes playing Simba in *Lion King KIDS* last year at Sporting Hill.

Get To Know The Descendants Cast

(Continued)

That role helped Greyson decide that he wanted to audition for the show this year. He said that because he enjoyed doing the show with Mr. Seylar at Sporting Hill and he got a good part there (not to mention he enjoys singing and acting) he would take the risk and audition for the middle school show. This risk paid off for him in the long run. Greyson was originally auditioning for the role of Ben, but he is still super excited that he got a named role at all. He feels like it is an accomplishment for any sixth grader to get a lead role in such a big school with so many older kids. Greyson's favorite part about playing Carlos is simply that he's a main character and he gets a lot of stage time. On the other side of things, his least favorite part about Carlos is that he has to pretend to be afraid of dogs. He felt dogs are so snuggly and cute, so how could you be afraid of them? Overall, Greyson is thrilled with how the casting played out.

Evie; daughter of Evil Queen Grimhilde, fashionista, and secret brainiac. Natalie Deschane will be mirroring the character of Evie for Mountain View this year. Natalie is on the 8 Ocean team this year and went to Shaull Elementary. Her previous show experience includes *Beauty and the Beast Jr* as a Silly Girl (one of Gaston's fan girls). Natalie decided to audition for the show again this year because she loves all of the *Descendants* movies and enjoyed her theater experience last year. She also really enjoyed getting to act for the first time last year and is excited to expand on that with her more significant role this year. Natalie, unlike Greyson, did get the role she initially wanted and is extremely excited. One of her favorite parts about her role is that she gets to sing one of her favorite songs, "Space Between" with one of her best friends, Alyssa. However, one of Natalie's less-favorite parts about Evie is that she is shown as absolutely boy-crazy early on, and thinking that she's not allowed to be intelligent or independent. If you remember from the last issue, she has quite a few crushes and previous characters who've either broken her heart or whose hearts she has broken. These include Smitten Kid 1 (Alexa Steltzer-8), Smitten Kid 2 (Lena Siha-8), Chad (Logan Lichty-7), Doug (Truman Billow-6), and a brief proposal to Ben. Natalie also plays cello in the MV Orchestra and sings alto in both the Chorus and Bel Canto. Naturally, Natalie cannot wait to put on the show.

Prince Ben; son of Queen Belle and Beast, regal and royal, and the soon-to-be king. Eighth-grader Josh Huntington, who is also on the 8 Ocean team, is depicting the character of Prince Ben this year. He also went to Sporting Hill, where he performed as Oliver Warbucks in *Annie KIDS* and Jojo in *Seussical Jr*. Josh auditioned for the show this year because he enjoys music and has enjoyed doing shows in the past. Josh originally auditioned for Ben, and he is excited that he got the part he wanted. Josh is also excited that he gets so much stage time this year and that this show is a step up from a JR show. Some of his favorite parts about playing Prince Ben are that he gets to sing a lot, including his upbeat love song, "Did I Mention" and that he gets a lot of lines to memorize. He, unlike many others would, is not dreading the idea of singing a love song in front of an audience, but is quite excited and believes it adds a challenge and pushes his acting skills. On the other hand, Josh is not necessarily looking forward to all of the other things he has to do while in character. There are some awkward moments in the show for him, like roaring during an argument. Josh also plays trumpet in both the Band and Jazz band, as well as sings in the Chorus and Bel Canto. Ultimately, Josh is looking forward to his role in the show this year.

Why Plastic Should Be Banned

Adamyia Gupta

Plastic is everywhere. We see it all the time, even in our school buildings. You also often see places that have special plastic recycling bins. However, plastic is a non-biodegradable item, which means a piece of plastic can stay on Earth for a long time, and this pollutes the Earth immensely. Plastic will destroy our earth if action is not taken immediately.

Another reason that plastic should be banned is that it causes drainage issues, especially in places where drainage systems are poor. A plastic bag can get clogged in the drainage system and cause floods.

Third, plastic can be harmful to children and animals. The phrase “suffocation warning” is sometimes stated on plastic bags, meaning children can suffocate, and guess what? The same applies to animals! Another way this can affect animals is that they might mistake plastic items for food, especially marine animals. Then these animals can choke on this horrible stuff.

While it is true that plastic bags are highly useful and people use them for various purposes, they are still harmful. There are alternatives we can use instead of plastic bags. One alternative is bags made of cloth like cotton. These bags are good to use because they come from cotton, and these bags are also reusable.

Some states and countries have already taken action to ban plastic bags or apply a tax on them, meaning that businesses can charge customers for plastic bags. This problem hasn't yet been solved because the impact is low, and more impact will be required to reduce or remove this problem completely.

Holidays Around The World

Charlotte Chang

When people think of February, they might think of Cupid, hearts, Valentine's Day, or even the Superbowl. Although, for some people, tater tots might come to mind, or maybe even groundhogs. Everyone celebrates February differently, and it's essential to know how they celebrate.

A fun holiday in early February happens to be National Tater Tot Day. National Tater Tot Day takes place on February 2nd. You might be wondering who created this salty, savory food. In 1953, F. Nephi Grigg found a way to recycle french fry shavings. Originally, the shavings were sold as livestock food, but then Tater Tots originated in Ontario, Oregon. To make tater tots you grate some potatoes, if you want you can add spices and seasonings (the most common spice that people use on tater tots is salt), then you roll them and deep fry the potato shavings in oil until it develops a crispy layer on the outside.

Another holiday people don't think about is Groundhog Day. This holiday is also celebrated on the 2nd of February. It started with people thinking that, when a groundhog emerges from his burrow, he will see its shadow. If the groundhog sees its shadow, spring will be on time. But if the groundhog doesn't see its shadow, there will be 6 more weeks of winter. Now, this isn't scientifically true, but it's fun to think about nonetheless! People celebrate this holiday by watching Punxsutawney Phil (the groundhog), come out of his cage and see his shadow or not see his shadow. But not only is there Punxsutawney Phil (the Pennsylvania groundhog) there is also Staten Island Chuck from New York, Pierre C. Shadeaux from Louisiana, and Thistle the Whistle-pig from Ohio.

In conclusion, the February holidays are about spending time with your loved ones. Even if you celebrate a different holiday, you should still make it a priority to learn about others. Learning about others' cultures is very important when trying to get to know someone.

Student Council Corner

Student Council is a student-led group that does all they can to make our school better. After coming to the realization that Mountain View is the only school in the district that does not raise money for THON, our outgoing group of student leaders has decided to do something about this and make yet another positive change in our school.

Student Council has been very busy the past month preparing for the Candy Gram sale where all proceeds go to the High School's THON program. Students have the ability to purchase a candy gram for \$1.00 and can write a message to whoever they want to send it to. They simply have to provide information on the gram like names, teams, and homerooms, (if they know them). Student Council representatives sort the grams into homerooms and will deliver these fun, sweet treats to each homeroom on Tuesday, February 14th as a way to paint some rosey red smiles onto the faces of the student body.

This is not all Student Council is working on, though, as they are also planning the Valentine's Social for the 6th grade students of Mountain View on Friday, February 17. Student Council members plan the event, reach out to vendors, and communicate with volunteers to help the students have a seemingly effortless and fun time! They are planning to have games, concessions, facepaint, and temporary tattoos! They never disappoint with their elaborate decorations in an effort to make the experience as enjoyable as possible. The tickets are priced at \$5.00 and the event is sure to be one that no 6th grader wants to miss!

Later in the month, the Student Council is hosting their first ever THON spirit week. Each day will have a unique theme and a goal to raise money for THON's "For The Kids" fundraiser. The week will be from the 27th of February to the 3rd of March. The first day will rein in the school spirit with a "wear blue" day. The next day will be crazy hat day with the donation of \$1.00. Wednesday will be "stall day." Students bring in their coins and give it to the teacher of their choice. That teacher then is not allowed to start class until they count all of the change brought in, so it is sure to be a student favorite. Wednesday and Thursday will be our very own "Family Night Out." All families are invited for a night out at Chili's, so make sure to tell your parents of the occasion! Friday is another expected student favorite, seeing as if their FLEX class collectively brings in \$60, then they can have a free FLEX to do whatever they want! THON week is new to Mountain View, and the Student Council can't wait to provide students with this new opportunity to provide for their community!

Clearly, this group of outgoing students is doing all they can to give the students the opportunity to reach out into the community. These three major events coming up are great for a boost in school spirit, and is undoubtedly going to be an exciting time to be a Mountain View student.

Valentines Day

F K H S W F E B R U A R Y M D R M
X J L K J T A L S N O O L L A B G
O K D K W O R R A Q U D X Y R N M
K P A N C L W D E R Z C A Y I B U
D E N S S E N I P P A H G O M E W
F D P S O U L M A T E B N W O W B
L L D Q C P G W V P S T K U Y L X
O B R C X H K U E T A D R E V O L
W S W E E T H E A R T D R O S E S
E J E W E L R Y Z F G C P W L Y O
R P I N K K X N B X B S U A G Q S
S T R E L A T I O N S H I P Y T T
H N S Y D N A C E N I M E B I U R
P I J P A E T A L O C O H C X D A
J A K Q E U Y R C A R D S A H J E
L S G U H Q Y V A L E N T I N E H
D T G F W V W M R A E B Y D D E T

Arrow

Balloons

Be Mine

Candy

Cards

Chocolate

Cupid

Date

February

Flowers

Happiness

Hearts

Hugs

Jewelry

Love

Pink

Red

Relationship

Roses

Saint

Soulmate

Sweet Heart

Teddy Bear

Valentine

Greek Mythology: February

Nicole Butterfield

We're skipping to February! Sorry wind gods, I guess you won't get a highlight...maybe in the summer. February has one signature holiday that all of you most likely know, (I mean, there are technically two, but who's relating George Washington's Birthday to mythology?), and that is Valentine's Day! Valentine's Day shouts love all season round, which happens to be the thing our Goddess is best known for. Haven't guessed it yet? Well, say hello to Aphrodite!

Aphrodite is the goddess of love, lust, pleasure, passion, procreation, and beauty. But there are a lot of things you wouldn't expect about this goddess. For one, her symbols are myrtles (a flower), roses, doves, swans, and sparrows. Most of her symbols are either beautiful flowers or white birds. But sparrows? Sparrows are usually brown with grey heads, white cheeks, a black bib, and a rufous (reddish brown) neck... not fitting the theme at all. There is an explanation though! We must go back to ancient Greece when the Greeks looked into sparrows. The Greeks thought that the bird symbolized true love and a spiritual connection—therefore it went to Aphrodite. But that's not the only strange thing about this Goddess. Hestia, Goddess of the Hearth, was the firstborn of Kronos and therefore the eldest god, right? But what if I told you that this wasn't the case?

If you've been reading the previous articles about Greek Mythology, you would know the story of how Kronos killed his father, Uranus. For those of you who haven't, I'll give a quick summary. Uranus, the embodiment of the sky, had children with Gaea, the embodiment of the Earth. They had many children but Uranus did not like them and therefore locked them away in Tartarus. Gaea was upset about this, so she went to her other children the titans to defeat their father. None of the children agreed, except Kronos. Kronos took the challenge and killed his father. But that's where Aphrodite comes in. Because this was how she was born.

Aphrodite was born off the coast of Cythera, a part of southern, eastern Greece. She was born from the sea foam. You see, when Kronos killed Uranus, he also severed his genitals. He threw them into the sea, creating lots of sea foam, and from that foam came Aphrodite.

Be sure to
look out
for our
next
issue!

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