

*Flip the page and get engaged!*

# Observer

May 2019 Vol. 8 Issue 7



Nature's  
Four  
Seasons

Spring/Summer  
Concert  
Preview

Senior  
Trip Recap

Birdwatching  
the Skies





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Source of photo: Image from Pinterest - Webneel  
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## Dear Readers,

As we enter the pit of warm spring weather, the members of the *Observer* would love to invite its readers on a journey into this month's fun, scenic, and informative publication. After being fully informed by this edition, you will be able to add bird watching and concert going to your "to do" list for this nice weather. Dive deep into the four seasons and see our school's very own results regarding students' favorite seasons! As you proceed through the pages, you will find yourself seated at a mystery dinner party, grasping the experience of seniors' trip to New York City, getting a lesson on the history of our school and the future of technology, and getting caught up on the stance of eSports and the winner of March madness! Try not to miss out on such wide range of topics and grab yourself a copy of the *Observer*!

## Mission & Vision

### **Flip the page and get engaged!**

The *Alfred-Almond Observer* strives to inform, entertain, and unify the members of our school and our community. Our aim is to provide local and national stories that relate to our readers, are unbiased, and engage our audience through truth and transparency.

## Observer Staff

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

**May 12**

**Mother's Day  
Sunday  
All Day**

**May 10-19**

**Lilac Festival  
@Rochester, NY  
10:30am-8:30pm**

**May 20**

**Elem. Band & Chorus  
Strawberry Festival Concert  
7:00PM**

**May 27**

**Memorial Day  
No School**

**May 21**

**AA Art Show & Ice  
Cream Social  
6:00 - 8:00 PM**

**May 25**

**Track Sectionals  
@Campbell-Savona  
10:00 am**

**May 28**

**Alfred-Almond  
Yearbook Assembly  
Activity Mod**

**May 29**

**HS Band & Chorus  
Strawberry Festival Concert  
6:30 PM**

**June 6**

**Spring Sports Awards  
7:00 PM**

**June 7**

**Senior Day  
@Alfred-Almond  
All Day**





# The Mueller Report

By Hanna Tormey  
Co Editor-In-Chief



Robert Mueller

*The head of the special counsel charged with investigation of the Trump 2016 presidential campaign.*

Photo courtesy of biography.com



Attorney General William Barr

*The newly appointed head of the Department of Justice released a letter summarizing his view of the Mueller Report to the American public.*

Photo courtesy of time.com

The Mueller Report seems to be one of the first things individuals think of in regards to Trump Presidency. On March 24, Attorney General William Barr presented the American people with a brief, four page summary of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's 207 page investigation. Barr's letter shows that the investigation involved "19 lawyers, 40 FBI agents, 2,800 subpoenas, 500 search warrants, 230 orders for communication records, issued almost 50 orders authorizing use of pen registers, made 13 requests to foreign governments for evidence, and interviewed approximately 500 witnesses." The letter also explains the purpose of the investigation: to investigate members of the presidential campaign of Donald Trump and others associated with it, to determine if they conspired with the Russian Government and its efforts to interfere in the 2016 presidential election, or sought to obstruct the related federal investigations.

On the Presidential front, Attorney General Barr's interpretation of the Mueller report was that it cleared the President and his campaign of any coordination or collusion with the Russian Government. Mueller's investigation did not come to a conclusion on the issue of obstruction of justice. Based on the information in the full report, Barr and the Deputy Attorney General, Rosenstein, have made the decision not to pursue obstruction charges against the President. According to The Hill, there are members of Mueller's team that are frustrated on the lack of information in Barr's letter pertaining to the obstruction charge. An additional important piece of information from the letter is a quote from the report by the Special Counsel that states, "while this report does not conclude that the President committed a crime, it also does not exonerate him."

On the Russian front, Barr's letter shows how the Russian Government did meddle in the 2016 Presidential Election. The letter shows two specific ways. One was that a Russian organization, Internet Research Agency, conducted a disinformation and social media operation in the United States with the aim to interfere in the election. The Russian Government also participated in computer hacking operations designed to gather and disseminate information used to influence the election. This specifically points to the hacking of candidate Hillary Clinton and the Democratic National Convention and providing information to sources such as WikiLeaks.

**Attorney General William Barr's full letter:**

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/03/24/us/politics/barr-letter-mueller-report.html>

**The Mueller Report:**

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/politics/read-the-mueller-report/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.8ffb4ec2d9e5](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2019/politics/read-the-mueller-report/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.8ffb4ec2d9e5)





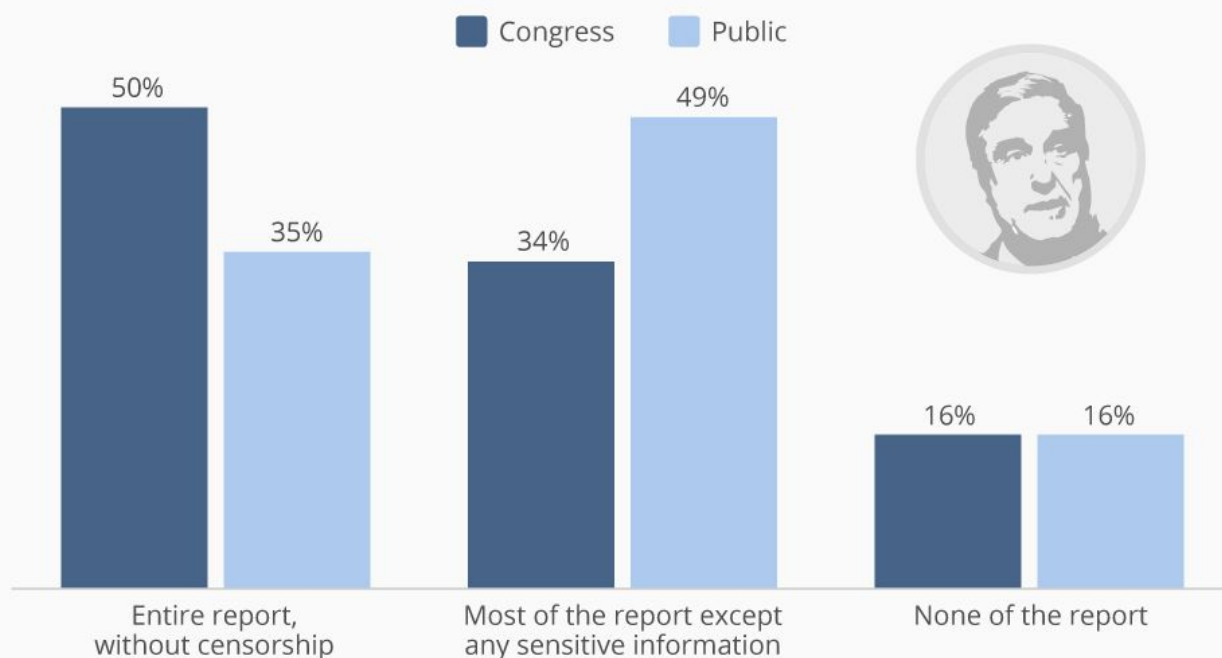
There was a strong response from Democrats following the release of Barr's letter on March 24. According to the Washington Examiner, Democrats are generally unsatisfied with the four page summary and wish to have the Mueller Report released. Presidential Candidate Kamala Harris is quoted saying, "The Mueller report needs to be made public, the underlying investigative materials should be handed over to Congress, and Barr must testify, That is what transparency looks like. A short letter from Trump's hand-picked Attorney General is not sufficient."

The President seemed to be in very high spirits after Barr's letter was sent out. Trump claims that he is totally vindicated by the letter, as reported by the Washington Examiner. Trump said, "There was no collusion with Russia. There was no obstruction, and none whatsoever. It was a complete and total exoneration. It's a shame our country had to go through this." The President has been using words such as "evil" and "treasonous" to describe Mueller's report. The Republican response involves some who completely support the President and also believe that the Mueller report was a full vindication and a "witch hunt", and are also happy to hear there will be no more doubts about the 2016 campaign, according to NPR. There are some Republicans who are not completely ready to make their minds up on this matter. Maine Senator Susan Collins said that, "I have always had confidence in Special Counsel Mueller and welcome the completion of this report. Attorney General Barr should release the report as soon as possible while accommodating national security considerations."

Attorney General Barr released a version of the Mueller report on Thursday, April 18. This version had redactions due to ongoing investigations and grand jury evidence. According to NBC news, the main takeaway from the full report was that the president "wasn't honest with the American public when it came to Russia and the entire Russian probe." One point of interest from the Mueller report was that the Trump Organization pursued a Moscow deal with Russian counterparts between 2013 and 2016. This is a fact that Trump has continuously denied. Fox news reports that the Mueller Report's principle findings "definitely [states] that Mueller did not establish evidence that President Trump's team or any associates of the Trump campaign had conspired with Russia to sway the 2016 election." In conclusion, no matter what you believe the Mueller Report says, it is clear that this document has shaped a presidency as well as our nation.

## Who Should See the Entire Mueller Report?

% that think the Mueller report should be released to Congress and the Public





# Sharing Our Reading

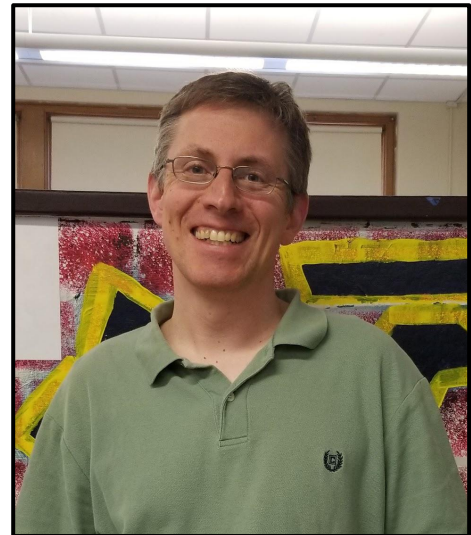
“Welcome to ‘Sharing Our Reading’ a column which invites any member of the AACCS community to write about any reading experience which has made a deep impression on his or her life. We at AACCS recognize that each person's reading brings out reactions, thoughts, and feelings which help each individual's growth as a unique human being.

We hope that, by sharing our experiences, we will deepen everyone's response to reading and inspire everyone to seek out even wider and richer adventures in books.”  
-Mr. Hall

## By: Mr. Rech, Science Teacher

What is your teacher reading? That is a great question...and my answer on any given day might be “a little here and a little there,” rather than a response of author and title. If I were to state an author and title you might assume I am reading something from cover to cover. I would have to confess that I am a “short attention span reader.” You are more likely to hear me answer by sharing a small interesting tidbit or an excerpt from a single chapter in a nonfiction book. Maybe I would answer by sharing an idea I read about in a magazine article about how to use woodworking tools, for example.

As a young person in elementary school, there were many book reports assigned. This was not one of my favorite tasks, to say the least. My concerned mother was able to stir up reading in my life in some interesting ways. One thing she did was provide a basket of Reader's Digest magazines at the front door. I was required to be ready a few minutes early and have one



open in my hands while I waited for the big orange limousine (actually, the short bus). During my high school years I made it through the obligatory traditional reading assignments, including some Shakespeare, “The Scarlet Letter,” and “A Separate Peace.” As an adult I have returned to some of these classics to refresh my memory of the full work because my memory only retained a few small but powerful details. Since working at Alfred-Almond, I have re-read through “Nineteen Eighty-Four,” “Fahrenheit 451,” “A Separate Peace,” and others. As an adult I



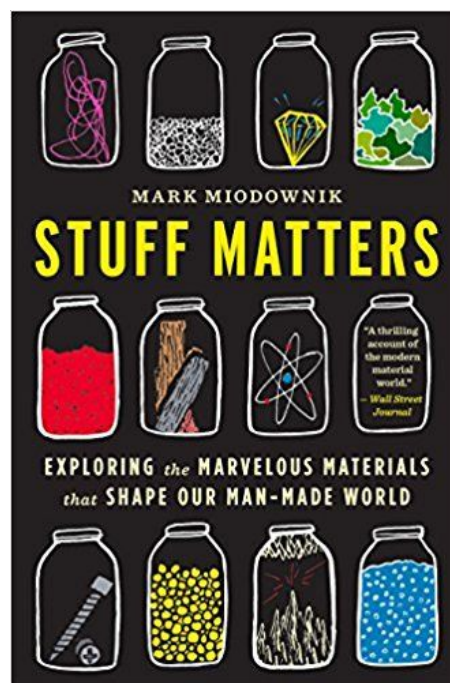
have also learned that my lack-luster interest in literature caused me to miss out on some really interesting works! Fortunately I have overcome my short-attention-span reading style to some extent by also reading some modern works. For example, I have read and enjoyed the three *Hunger Games* novels.

Now I present my “book-report” to go in this column for this publication, for which I have significantly procrastinated for some time now, like any normal student with a due date! I am currently working on a couple chapters in a book called “Stuff Matters” by Mark Miodownik. And, you guessed it, I have not read this cover to cover. I have been through about four chapters, not in order. This book came to us as one of the special interest books we were allowed to purchase for our classrooms this year. One of my students borrowed this book over the winter break and

read it cover to cover. When she returned it and shared her thoughts, I took her advice on which chapters were most interesting and started there. There are chapters about everyday life stuff, the matter that is all around us, and a brief history of how it became so significant to us. Each chapter explores and explains the history of a particular type of matter like graphite, plastic, glass, porcelain, paper, concrete, chocolate, and sunscreen lotion. We tend to overlook the significance of these substances and rarely pause to think about how important they have been in society. We move around so fast in life that we don't pause to think about what Chemistry, Material Science, and Engineering goes into improving the applications of such common substances. It can be quite exciting when a new

application for ordinary everyday stuff has been developed and we experience anew the reality that matter really matters. The simplest forms of matter all around us can be mixed with unlimited creativity to yield a limitless quantity and variety of significantly helpful things in life.

So, it is important to follow through on a task like this, sharing what we read, even if it must be in the form of a book report of sorts. I have been sharing this book in person with a number folks even though I have not yet finished reading it cover to cover. Recently a student showed me an art project he completed that involved making paper. I shared with him what I was reading in “Stuff Matters,” and he took a few minutes to read the chapter about paper. He appreciated my recommendation to take a look at the book, not cover to cover, but certainly with close attention to one particular chapter.







# Esports, Eathletes, and Eeagles

By: Wesley Dennison Design manager

## What is an “esport”?

The video game industry has come a long way since the days of arcades and “Pac-man.” From console to console, video games have slowly grown from a small culture of gamers, into a ubiquitous franchise - look no further than the apps on your phone. In their rise of popularity, games like “Counter Strike Global Offensive”, “League of Legends”, “NBA2K,” “Fortnite” and many more, have a significant playerbase, so much so that they are acknowledged by people outside it. According to statista.com, a total of 17.7 million people watched game 7 of the NBA finals, just over one-fourth the number of people who watched the 2017 Worlds event for “League of Legends” (60M). These video games have been dubbed “esports” and, like their physical counterparts, they are slowly being introduced to schools and colleges with professional coaches and teams.



**The Talented Mr. Perry**

Mr. Perry, Mr. Boothe, and of course Mrs. Calkins, are coordinating the school's esports teams. Mr. Perry (shown) is showing off the equipment we have for gaming, including an Alienware tower and a gaming chair.

Photo courtesy of: Wesley Dennison



## League of Legends

*“League of Legends” is a 5v5 MOBA (Multiplayer Online Battle Arena) where the two teams play in three lanes and a jungle to destroy the other's Nexus (base)*

Image from: riotgames.com

## How do you play?

Every game is different, from League of Legends to Fortnite, they all have completely different goals, objectives and rules. The commonality between them is that in order to play, you need a decent computer, and a good internet connection. Games like “League of Legends” are played with 10 people, five per team, while games like Hearthstone are card games between two people. Esports have as much variety as athletics.

## Potential Careers in Esports

To say that the job field, and general atmosphere, is completely analogous is almost completely true. There are a plethora of potential job opportunities that have sprung up. The players themselves are paid an average of 1,000 to 5,000 dollars per month, while the highest paid team members are paid in the \$15,000's. These paychecks do not include the money given to teams for winning or placing in tournaments. Esport tournaments have various prize pools based on their significance and public support, for instance; Dota 2's Biggest tournament (The Internationals) have prize pools around \$20M in recent years. The money is split among the staff and players of the teams. There are many job opportunities



## Overwatch

*“Overwatch” is a six person team based shooter that requires teamwork to accomplish the various objectives in each match, such as capture the flag and objective control.*

Image from: grindstore.com

for coaches of esports teams, too. According to indeed.com, an average head coach of a team will earn roughly \$80,000 per year, with several colleges and other institutions hiring right now.

## Esports at A-A

Currently, the plan for esports is to have an intramural esports team as a test run of the equipment, as well as the teams themselves. Mrs. Calkins, being the coach and organizer, plans to expand the number of games we have, however the list now is “League of Legends,” “Overwatch,” and “Rocket League.” Soon, our school will expand into the High School Esports League, or HSEL. This league will pit us against teams from all across the nation, from A schools to DD schools.

## HSEL

*The HSEL tournament is a Swiss syle tournament, meaning the teams with the most similar win rates play against each other, and at the end of the season the best teams advance to the quarterfinals*

Image from:

highschoolsportsleague.com





# Esports, Eathletes, and Eeagles Cont.

## College and Scholarship Opportunities

In the wake of their massive popularity, esports have created many opportunities for scholarships in colleges. Over 400 colleges offer scholarships for esports across the nation. Among these are Alfred University, Alfred State, and the University of Buffalo, which has been particularly successful. UB beat 300 North American Heroes of the Storm players in Blizzard's college tournament, coming just short of being the champions. Colleges like Boise State University, Harrisburg University, and Georgia State University all offer some degree of gaming scholarships for incoming freshmen. Colleges have been increasing their participation in esports, and the opportunities will only grow with time as the esports industry booms.



## Viewership

*Though it looks like a scene from a Sci-Fi movie, this is actually the 2018 League of Legends grand finals, Worlds. It's total viewership was second in America to the Superbowl*

Image from: riftherald.com





# Meet your Science Teacher Downstairs, Miss Carretto

By Parsa Rashidi  
Copy Editor

I had the opportunity to sit down with Miss Carretto and ask her a few questions about her job as a Living Environment and AP Bio teacher at Alfred Almond. She has been working as a teacher at Alfred Almond for the last 16 years. In the past, she worked long term substitute jobs at Genesee Valley and Wellsville.

During her freshman year in Alfred University she wanted to be a ceramic engineer. However, when given the booklist by AU, she decided she didn't want to be a ceramic engineer anymore as her full time career choice. Her new career choice was anything related to biology, most presumptively in medicine. In high school she spent time job-shadowing doctors because her interest at the time was becoming a pathologist. Pathology revolves around the study of the causes and effects of disease or injury.

As she continued studying at college, she narrowed her interests to chiropractic science and was set to attend a chiropractic program at Seneca Falls, NY. However, late (very late) in her senior year of college, she changed her mind once again and decided to continue her schooling by obtaining a master's degree in secondary education.

When I asked Miss Carretto what she enjoys most about teaching, she told me that what she enjoys most is the variety of the day. She also enjoys the challenge of change, and the fact that she has to constantly be changing her approach in teaching in order to meet the needs of her students, which keeps her passionate and motivated in teaching. If she had to go to work knowing she would be doing the exact same thing everyday, it would take out the joy in teaching.

Her free time during the day is spent searching for new methods and material to teach her students. When searching for new methods of teaching she wants to be assured that it will reach every single one of her students. So with that, she spends the majority of her free time modifying and planning new lessons. Her major focus is to teach an engaging lesson to her kids everyday, as well as plan for the following days of the week.

*“Everyday is something different when teaching at Alfred Almond, and that’s what makes it fun to teach.”*

- Miss Carretto



Photo courtesy of Parsa R.

When Miss Carretto was attending Hornell High School, she had an AP European History teacher whom she admired for how much she taught her. She was Miss Carretto's main inspiration in teaching, and she always aspired to teach her kids the way she did for her. But what really inspired her the most in her teaching strategies were the teachers she had during highschool and college who *weren't* as effective in teaching their students. Her main goal was to teach her students in ways opposite to the way her past teachers had taught her, and make learning fun for her students.

Currently, Miss Carretto is the student government advisor and senior class advisor. She is also leading a gene annotation program which is supported by the University of Buffalo. Students annotate a bacterial gene and will present their research at a capstone symposium in May. If you're currently taking any classes with Miss Carretto, be sure to drop by her room and thank her for being very dedicated to making sure her students learn and have fun.





# NYS 2019 Summer Concerts

By: Amya Snyder, Design Manager

With school soon coming to an end, musicians are announcing their summer tour dates around the world. For big artists coming to a small area, tickets are known to rise in price and sell out quickly. Now is a great time to start looking ahead and planning your summer music festivities!

## Darien Lake:

**Chris Young** - May 24, 2019, 7:30pm

**The 1975** - May 29, 2019, 7:00pm

**Zac Brown Band** - June 15, 2019, 7:00pm

**Kidz Bop** - July 7, 2019, 4:00pm

**Thomas Rhett** - July 19, 2019, 7:00pm

**311 Dirty Heads** - July 20, 2019, 6:00pm

**Heart Love Alive** Tour - July 26, 2019, 7:00pm

**Dierks Bentley** - August 1, 2019, 7:00pm

**Korn, and Alice in Chains** - August 2, 2019, 6:30pm

**Breaking Benjamin** - August 4, 2019, 6:00pm

**Smashing Pumpkins, Noel Gallagher's High, and Flying Birds** - August 10, 2019, 7:00pm

**Beck and Cage the Elephant** - August 13, 2019, 6:00pm

**Kiss** - August 23, 2019, 7:30pm

**Florida Georgia Line, Dan + Shay** - August 24, 2019, 7:00pm

**Slipknot, Volbeat, Gojira, and Behemoth** - August 25, 2019, 5:30pm

**Brantley Gilbert** - August 30, 2019, 7:00pm



Darien Lake

Photo from: [stepoutbuffalo.com](http://stepoutbuffalo.com)



Buffalo Keybank Center

Photo from: [venuecoalition.com](http://venuecoalition.com)

## Did You Know?

According to the Recording Agency Association of America, the best selling album of all time is the Eagles/Their Greatest Hits 1971-1975

Information from:  
<https://www.businessinsider.com/50-best-selling-albums-all-time-2016-9>

## Buffalo Keybank Center:

**Twenty One Pilots** - June 1, 2019, 7:00pm

**New Kids On the Block** - June 21, 2019, 8:00pm

**Iron Maiden** - August 13, 2019, 7:30pm

For more info go to:  
<https://www.darienlake.com/concerts>

For more info go to:  
<https://www.tickets.com/venue/keybank-center-10121/>



# NYS 2019 Summer Concerts Continued

## Syracuse Lakeview

### Amphitheater:

**Cardi B** - May 25, 2019,  
8:00pm

**Zac Brown Band** - June 9,  
2019, 7:00pm

**Chris Young** - June 13, 2019,  
7:00pm

**Dierks Bentley** - June 30, 2019,  
7:00pm

**Rockstar Energy Drink  
DISRUPT Festival** - July 2,  
2019, 1:00pm

**Peter Frampton FINALE** - July  
3, 2019, 7:30pm

**Shinedown** - July 6, 2019,  
6:30pm

**Rob Thomas** - July 23, 2019,  
7:30pm

**Brad Paisley** - July 26, 2019,  
7:30pm

**KIDZ BOP World Tour 2019** -  
July 27, 2019, 6:00pm

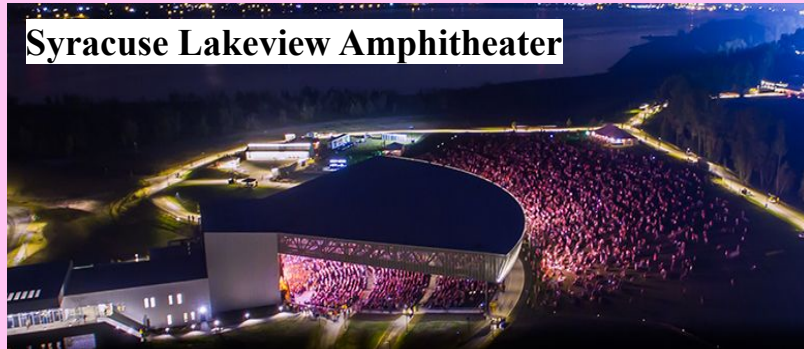


Photo from: [sjhamphitheater.com](http://sjhamphitheater.com)

### Did You Know?

The largest concert in the world was with British singer-songwriter, Rod Stewart in Copacabana Rio de Janeiro, 1994. 3,500,000 people attended.

Information from:  
[https://ipfs.io/ipfs/OmXoypizjW3WknFiJnKLwHCnL72vedxjOkDDP1mXWo6uco/wiki/List\\_of\\_largest\\_concerts.html](https://ipfs.io/ipfs/OmXoypizjW3WknFiJnKLwHCnL72vedxjOkDDP1mXWo6uco/wiki/List_of_largest_concerts.html)

**Heart: Love Alive Tour** - July 30,  
2019, 7:00pm

**Florida Georgia Line** - August  
15, 2019, 7:00pm

**Breaking Benjamin** - August 24,  
2019, 5:30pm

**KISS: End of the Road World  
Tour** - August 27, 2019, 7:30pm

**Mary J, Blige & Nas** - August 31,  
2019, 8:00pm

### Things to bring to a concert:

- **Cash** - Concerts last for several hours so you may want to buy food and drinks. There will also be some merchandise and souvenirs for sale.
- **Comfortable Shoes** - This will help you be prepared to stand for a long period of time.
- **Sharpie** - On the chance you meet the artist in the band, you could use this to get their autograph.

For more info go to:

<https://www.livenation.com/venues/28773/st-joseph-s-health-amphitheater-at-lakeview>

Information from:

<http://www.excite.com/events/blog/8-things-to-bring-and-not-to-bring-to-a-concert/>



# Dinner? Party! Pt. 1

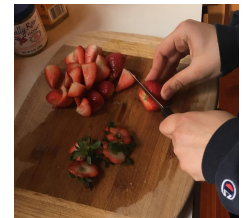
**By Nora Looney**  
**Copy Editor**

On Tuesday, April 16, a mysterious dinner party took place in Alfred, New York. How this came to be, you ask? Let me tell you. It all started a few weeks back, on a typical Thursday workday in journalism. My classmate and partner in crime, Ali, and I were brainstorming topics for our next articles. We both came to the conclusion that we wanted our articles to revolve around food in one way or another. Ali decided that she would write a recipe themed article. I suggested that we could make the recipes together, and from there, the ideas kept coming. We gleefully discussed the possibility of hosting a fancy dinner party for some friends. The more we talked, the more certain we were of this plan. After hearing bits and pieces of our conversation, Olivia expressed her interest in joining the project. We were delighted by this, and the three of us agreed that she would come as a guest, and write a review of our meal. Later that night, we sent out “invitations” to the remaining guests through a group chat. We made sure to invite a few friends that were in journalism and a few that were not, and who had no idea what to expect.

The next step was to decide what we wanted to cook. After extensive research and collaborative thinking, we decide on tacos, cheesecake, and a refreshing drink. We came to this decision because of their tastiness and low cost. Originally, we wanted to prepare an elaborate, very fancy dinner, but we soon realized this wasn't very realistic due to its priciness and level of difficulty. While I am a cheesecake lover, I was skeptical when Ali presented this idea to me. I knew that cheesecakes can be hard to perfect, but Ali was confident in our abilities. If you want to know how it turned out, read Olivia's article, which includes detailed reviews of our recipes.

The party would occur the Tuesday during the week of spring break. Ali and I gathered all of our ingredients the Saturday before, and then anxiously waited for Tuesday to come. When the time arrived, Ali came over to my house. This was around 2:00 PM. We rolled up our sleeves, and got to work. The recipes were easy to follow for the most part. The only challenge we came across was cutting the onions. The tears flowed heavily. Other than that minor dilemma, the process was easy peasy. You can read more about the actual cooking process in Ali's article.

We packed up the food in some tupperware and transported it all over to Hanna's house for the festivities to begin. Shortly after we arrived, the guests began to roll in. We served ourselves, and shared some laughter and good conversation. We received mixed reactions to each of the items we prepared, which once again, you can read about in Olivia's article. All around, this was a wonderful experience, that brought me closer to both my friends, and my interest in the culinary arts.



Images courtesy of Nora Looney.





Ali Fancher  
Staff Writer

## Dinner? Party! Pt 2

### Recipes

### Drink: “Color Me Happy”

5m

Prep Time

1h

Infusion Time

**Ingredients:** Water (1 gallon) , Ice (15 cubes), Strawberries (1 quart) , and Limes (5)

**Materials Needed:** a knife, cutting board, and water pitcher

1. Wash the limes and strawberries thoroughly.
2. Cut the limes and strawberries into fourths.
3. Pour the water into the pitcher.
4. Place the strawberries and limes in the water and let the fruit sit for an hour in the refrigerator.
5. Finally add the ice to the pitcher.



**Fresh Squeezed  
Lime Juice**

Photo Courtesy of  
Nora Looney



**Fresh Cut  
Strawberries**

Photo courtesy of  
Nora Looney



**Add Them  
Together**

Photo courtesy of  
Nora Looney

You can add some fizz to the drink by carbonating the water before placing it into the pitcher or buy plain carbonated water.

The taco shell can be whatever you prefer, hard or soft.

## Main Course: Tacos

**Ingredients:** Ground turkey, shredded cheese, beefsteak tomato, onion, sour cream, salsa, lettuce, taco meat seasoning, and taco shells

**Materials :** cooking pan, cutting board, knives, stove top, medium size serving bowls.

### Ground Turkey

1. Place the ground turkey in a pan and place over a medium flame.
2. After half of the turkey is browned then sprinkle in seasoning and continue cooking until the turkey is fully cooked.
3. Place in a serving bowl and now it is ready to eat.

### Tomato and Onion

1. Wash the tomato and dry it thoroughly.
2. Then place the tomato on the cutting board and dice it. The picture above shows the approximate size. Repeat step two for the onion, you do not have to wash the onion.
3. Once done cutting place the tomato and onions in separate bowls.

15m  
Prep Time

15m  
Cook Time



Photo from: [How to chop](#)



Photo courtesy of Nora Looney



## General Assembly of Tacos

**15m**  
Prep Time

**0m**  
Cook Time

1. This is a very simple and easy last step. First you will need to get out all of the ingredients.
2. Place the shredded cheese, lettuce, salsa, sour cream in a bowl and place a serving utensils in each.



## Dessert: Cheesecake

**30m**  
Prep Time

**40m**  
Cook Time

**3h**  
Set Time

**Ingredients:** Packages cream cheese (2), sugar (1 ¼ cups), vanilla extract (2 teaspoons), large eggs (2), strawberries (2 handfuls), and a pre-made crust.

**Materials:** mixer, large bowl, spatula, oven, measuring cups and spoons

### Directions

1. Place cream cheese, vanilla extract, sugar, and eggs in a large bowl.
2. Thoroughly mix all of the ingredients together with an electric mixer.
3. Place the mixture in the premade crust and bake at 325 F .
4. Bake for 40 minutes and then place in the refrigerator for 3 hours.



Photos courtesy of Nora Looney

## Toppings: Strawberries

**5m**  
Prep Time

**0m**  
Cook Time

1. Wash and dry the strawberries and place them into a bowl.
2. Mix in one tablespoon of sugar.



## Dinner? Party! Pt.3

### Reviews

By: Olivia Ormsby  
Staff Writer

For our second-to-last articles as journalism students, my colleagues, Ali Fancher and Nora Looney, along with myself, decided to indulge in a delicious article involving a dinner party.

Ali and Nora agreed to prepare the food while I agreed to review their work. Ali and Nora cultivated the secret menu that was not to be revealed until the dinner, as well as gathered the ingredients and prepared the meals. On Tuesday, April 16 at 5:00, myself along with Nathan Grove and Annie Lloyd arrived with empty stomachs in order to digest the amazing food that was prepared for us. Find out our thoughts below!

*To see the recipes for the food and drink, check out Ali's article.*

### Drink: Fizzy Water

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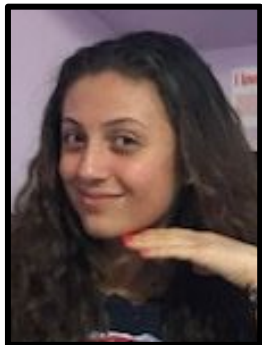
#### Description

"I don't normally like sparkling water, but this was really good."

#### Rating

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"It was unique and refreshing. I really liked the cool sensation when I took a sip. It was truly enlightening."

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"It was super fizzy and didn't quench my thirst completely, but it was pretty good."

8.5  
10



Color Me Happy

Ali prepares the drink for our dinner party.

Photo courtesy of Olivia Ormsby





## Dinner: Tacos



Hungryyy

Annie Lloyd filled her turkey taco with yummy tomatoes, lettuce and more.

Photo courtesy of Olivia Ormsby

## Dessert: Cheesecake



"What's the Issue?"

Ali served the cheesecake, but her eager attitude to eat got a little messy.

Photo courtesy of Olivia Ormsby



Pretty Preparation

After some good ole TLC, Nora prepared me the perfect piece of cheesecake.

Photo courtesy of Olivia Ormsby

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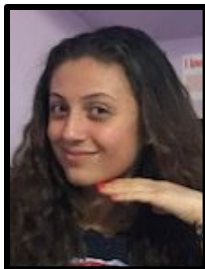


### Description

"These were really great! I didn't even notice the meat wasn't beef."

### Rating

8.5  
10



"It really hit the spot. I left the table feeling full and satisfied".

10  
10



"I love tacos. These tacos were pretty dope because they were made with turkey so I felt a little healthier while eating them."

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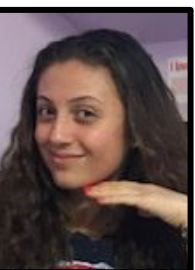


### Description

"I had a hard time getting the thought of scrambled eggs out of my head."

### Rating

4  
10



"Great taste but the texture felt like scrambled eggs."

7  
10



"I have mixed feelings about cheesecake and this cheesecake was pretty OK. The consistency was like scrambled eggs (which I hate) so that was a little tough."

6.5  
10



Observer  
Volume 8 Issue 7

Seasons 18  
May 2019



# SEASONING UP THE OBSERVER

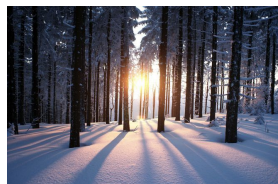




# WINTER

By Spenser Ormsby  
Copy Editor

The season of winter definitely brings negative feelings; however, it is truly the most wonderful time of the year. Winter is the season between fall and spring. It starts on the 21st of December and ends on March 19. In the northern part of the world, the cold weather brings sparkling snow, glimmering Christmas lights, and cozy nights by the fire. Some of the happiest holidays take place during the course of this beautiful season: Christmas and New Year's. This season is full of indoor and outdoor activities and sports. Some sports that are played in the winter season include skiing, snowboarding, hockey, basketball and wrestling. Some fun activities that you can do during the Winter that cannot be done during any other time of the year include ice skating, sledding, and snowman building. Despite its chilliness, the Winter season gives us a chance to wind down, get comfortable, and admire the winter wonderland.



## FUN FACTS:



The Earth's orbit around the Sun has very little effect over the seasons on Earth. Instead, it's the tilt of Earth's rotational axis, which is angled at around 23.4 degrees, that creates seasons.



The winter solstice is the "shortest day" of the year, meaning the least amount of sunlight.



Snow comes in different crystal shapes.



Every winter, at least one septillion (that's 1 followed by 24 zeros) snowflakes fall from the sky.







# SPRING

By Sarah Johnson  
Editor In Chief

Spring is a season that brings us both April showers and May flowers. It lasts from March 20 to June 21, giving us a fresh, sunny, and colorful transition from winter into summer. However, it is a common misconception that the Spring is only that: a transition season. This notion could not be farther from the truth. The showers of early Spring wash away the dirty, leftover snow from the winter and hydrates the grounds for successful blossoms. The freshness in the air and the bright sun help lift people from the seasonal depression they may have fallen into during the winter and help spark a drive in most to start cleaning, going outside, and enjoying all that Spring has to offer. Some holidays that occur in spring include Easter, Passover, April Fool's Day, Earth Day, Arbor Day, Mother's Day, and Father's Day. These fun and appreciative days are not the only things that make Spring so great. There is also a crazy amount of sports being played during this season. Boys' tennis, track and field, golf, baseball, and softball are just a few examples of the activities taking place. With perfect 60s-70s temperatures, longer days flooded with sun, blooming flowers, fresh smelling air, and new feelings of motivation after being trapped all winter make it easy to believe that spring is indeed the overall favorite season in America.

## FUN FACTS:



The first spring flowers are usually daffodils, dandelions, lilies, tulips, iris and lilacs



There's more daylight during spring because the earth's axis tilts toward the sun at this time of the year.



The earliest known use of the term "spring cleaning" was in 1857



Spring babies have fewer allergies

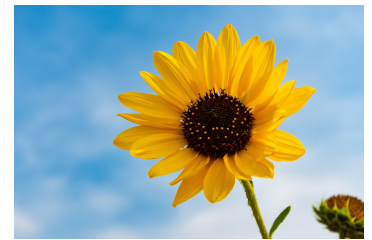




# SUMMER

By Dylan Guthrie  
Design Manager

Summer is the season that brings great weather and free time for students and teachers. This great season starts on June 21 and sadly ends on September 23. Sitting between these dates are two holidays, which are Independence Day and Labor Day. Summer is the time any athlete can really get to work perfecting their craft and practicing the sport they love. This is the best time of year for athletes such as myself because I can do what I love without worrying about school. For us seniors, this will be a very different time than we have experienced, as we will be getting ready for the next chapter in our lives. I will admit, the heat outside can be a little much, being in the 80s and sometimes reaching the 90s. It is great weather for tanning, though!!!! At the end of the day, summer is a great season to spend time outside with family or just relax by yourself in the warm weather.



## FUN FACTS:



Summer is the hottest of the four temperate seasons, falling between spring and autumn.



At the summer solstice, the days are longest and the nights are shortest, with day-length decreasing as the season progresses after the solstice.



The reason the equinoxes and solstices don't always come on the same day is that Earth doesn't circle the sun in exactly 365 days.



Solstices happen twice a year - in June and December .







# FALL

By Lindsey Allen  
Staff Writer

The season of fall, also known as autumn, is the season that gives us beautiful scenery, cooler weather, and crunchy leaves to step on. Fall begins on September 23rd and ends on December 21st, slowly preparing us for the cold winter that is coming. In the fall season, we celebrate Columbus Day, Halloween, Veterans Day, and Thanksgiving. I wouldn't consider Daylight Savings a holiday, but it's worth mentioning. The fall Daylight Savings gives us an extra hour of sleep! During this spectacular season, athletes are playing all sorts of sports. Boys' and girls' soccer, football, girls' volleyball, cross country, golf, and girls' tennis, just to name a few. Fall comes in second place when it comes to the favorite season in America, but we all know that this season is underrated. After a long and hot summer, fall is the season to cool you off and prepare you for an even longer and cold winter season. When the leaves fall from the trees it's a beautiful sight to see, and after you admire the scenery you can rake those leaves into a pile and have a great time jumping into them! After using all your energy jumping in the leaves, you can go home and re energize by sipping on a nice hot glass of apple cider. Fall allows you to go pumpkin picking and then carve them up for Halloween! Later in the season, Thanksgiving allows you a break from school, time to catch up with your family, and time to be thankful for all those things you may take for granted.

## FUN FACTS:

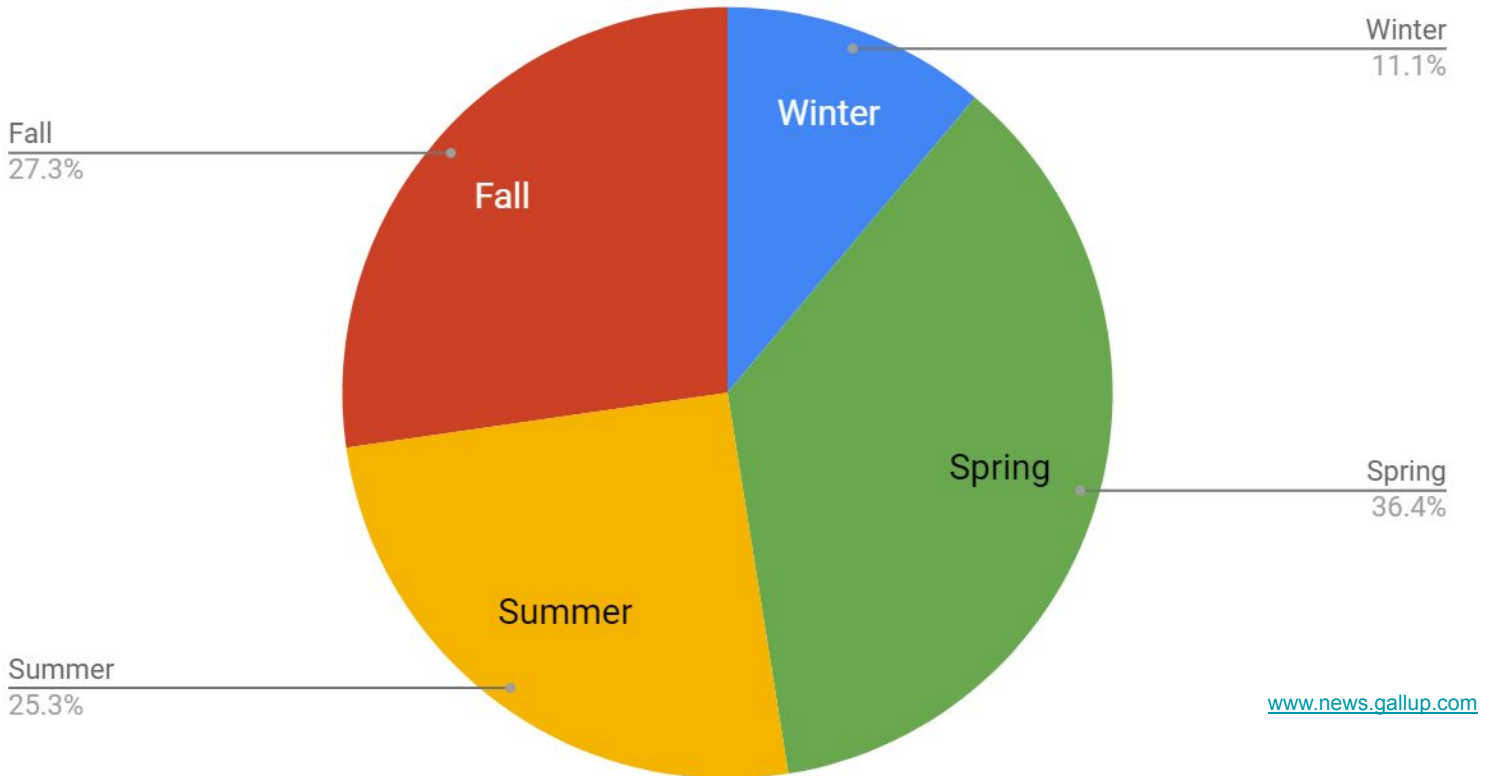
-  Fall colors are caused by the amount of sugar in leaves; the more red in the leaf, the more sugar that leaf is storing
-  More people go from "single" to "in a relationship" or "engaged" in fall than any other season
-  Ancient people wore Halloween costumes to hide from ghosts
-  Children born in the fall are statistically better students and live longer



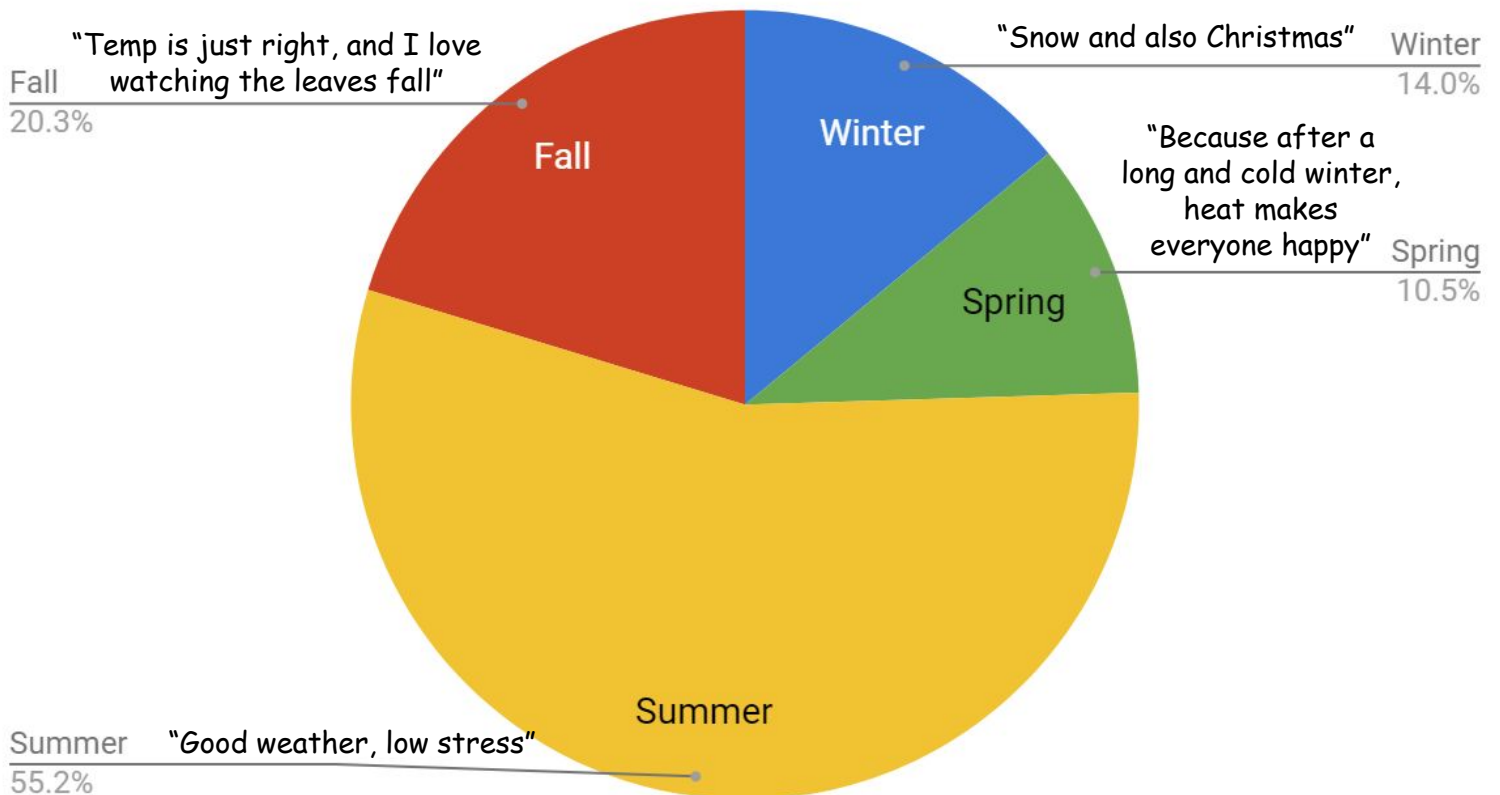




## America's Favorite Seasons



## AA Students' Favorite Seasons (7-12)





# RESPONSE BLOOPERS

Here are some funny answers to our Activity Mod poll....

**What is your favorite season?**  
Season 5, The Clone Wars  
**Why?**  
It was a masterpiece of television



*Photo from Google Photos*

**What is your favorite season?**  
Game of Thrones season 8  
**Why?**  
Because



*Photo from Google Photos*

**What is your favorite season?**  
Season 2 of The Office  
**Why?**  
The other seasons are weak



*Photo from Google Photos*



# THE SEASONS OF SEASONS

By Alex Comer  
Copy Editor

Well, now that we have seen those other "seasons" I think it's time for us to look at some real seasons. Now let your tastebuds buckle up and go for a ride through the wonders of the top seasons of each season.

## Summer:

Mint, Mint is a very interesting seasoning; it is put into a lot of different products ranging from ice cream, to toothpaste. As McCormick.com says, "Refreshing spearmint adds cool flavor to beverages, spring vegetables, or fruit and grain salads. A traditional seasoning for lamb, stews and marinades."



Photo Courtesy: bentleyseeds.com



Photo Courtesy: healthline.com

## Fall:

Cinnamon, Cinnamon is a key seasoning to the fall season, whenever I think of cinnamon I think of fall because of its color and unique and pleasing taste when paired with the right food. According to psseasoning.com, "Cinnamon comes from the bark of the aromatic evergreen tree. Ground cinnamon contains a distinct, robust spicy flavor with subtle sweetness."





# THE SEASONS OF SEASONS

By Alex Comer  
Copy Editor

## Winter:

Ginger, Whenever I think of Winter I always think of Christmas and how good ginger makes the gingerbread cookies taste, that taste makes me think of all the times I'm with my family and just having a good time. Spiceislands.com says "Depending on where it's grown and when it's harvested, the flavor of ginger can range from spicy warmth to biting heat, ginger is sourced from China and has a pungent, lemony flavor that matches well with everything from couscous to cookies."



Photo Courtesy: [bulgarianspices.com](http://bulgarianspices.com)



Photo Courtesy: [organicfacts.com](http://organicfacts.com)

## Spring:

Rosemary, Rosemary is another interesting seasoning; it is a very beneficial herb and is used in many types of food and even used as a tea. As [thespruceeats.com](http://thespruceeats.com) states, "As a medicinal herb, it has long been recommended for strengthening the brain and memory. The herb contains substances that are useful for improving digestion and increasing circulation."



# Benior Beep

By: Joe Miletta, Design Manager

Every graduation class has the opportunity to have a once in a lifetime experience. You may think “once in a lifetime? I could go to NYC any day.” While this is true, this is most likely to be the only time to go with peers from high school.

## Senior Trip Planning Meeting:

The first meeting is talk of nominating places to go, along with a base head count of how many people are thinking of going. After that, we voted on Google Classroom for the final decision, and then chose our roommates. Out of New York City, Boston, and Philadelphia, New York was chosen and an itinerary was drawn up.

## Payment and Rules:

After our destination was chosen and schedule drafted, it was time for a final count and payments to start coming. Payments come in thirds; there is another option to pay in full, but most people opt for the payment plan. After everyone pays and a few weeks before the departure date, there is a meeting with your class adviser, your parents, and you. This meeting is about the rules, permission slips, health forms, and more. This meeting is mandatory.



Bus Buddies

*A semi-group photo on the bus coming into NYC.*

Photo courtesy of: Joe Miletta



City Skyline

*Our first good view of NYC.*

Photo courtesy of: Joe Miletta

## The Benior Beep Begins:

The departure time may vary; our time was 8 am on Saturday, April 27. The bus ride was roughly six hours long. During this time, Wesley and I mostly played video games, talked to friends in the seats around us, or watched the movie that was playing throughout the bus. I recommend bringing multiple things to do, not just one; doing anything for 6+ hours straight will get old. Also, don't worry about what you look like; dress comfortably, otherwise the ride will feel even longer. Besides, most people are asleep anyway.

## The Arrival:

We are getting close, everyone can feel it, the traffic is tightening up, the average speed drops by 40 mph, and there are less trees than before. Our bus driver, Matt, comes over the speaker and asks us who's never been to NYC before, and about 15 people raise their hands. Then, we get our first glimpse at the city skyline. Towers of glass and steel stretch for miles. Then, it all disappears from view as we enter a tunnel and anticipate the view coming out the other side.





## First Steps:

Once we get to the drop-off point in Bryant Park, we split up into groups of at least three and go out and explore; we have 3.5 hours to ourselves. We wander around aimlessly for a while, until we decide to just go to Times Square. Times Square was massive, with people everywhere you looked. Billboards covered the sides of buildings up high and stores on the ground level. We ran into other groups from our school there and shopped for a while. Then we all met up for dinner at Planet Hollywood, a diner with a ton of movie memorabilia and sets. After dinner we went to the Empire State Building and got a breathtaking view of the city at night. We then went back to the hotel for the night.

## The Adventure Continues:

The second day we took a ferry to Liberty Island to see the Statue of Liberty. The statue was cool to see, but it was smaller than I had expected. The ferry next took us to Ellis Island; while there I looked up my family name and found my great grandfather's name in the registry. We had lunch on Ellis Island and explored the wonders of ... the gift shop. We then took the ferry back to the mainland and travelled to Broadway to see the musical "Come From Away." I had low expectations for this show, however it was one of the best shows I have ever seen. It was fun, uplifting, and it ran as one continuous scene, no black out, no curtain, not even an intermission. After the show we went on a tour with Jared The Tour Guide.



**First Looks**

*Where we are dropped off and looking out into the seemingly endless streets.*

**Photo courtesy of: Joe Miletta**



**City from Above**

*The view from the top of the Empire State Building.*

**Photo courtesy of: Joe Miletta**



**The Group**  
*AA Senior Class in front of a George Washington Statue*

**Photo courtesy of: Joe Miletta**

Jared was a nice man who had vast knowledge of the city and its long history. He showed us the grave of Alexander Hamilton and told us the story of how he died in a duel with the vice president at the time. The tour wasn't what I expected it to be; it felt like more of a history lesson than a tour. He then took us to Ground Zero and we saw the Twin Tower Memorial. This massive black waterfall into a deep void that could never be filled stood before us; we all were silent looking at the names, the water, the surrounding area affected by the tragedy. It was breathtaking. After that we rode around on the bus and Jared pointed out different things like the Brookland Bridge, until we dropped Jared off and headed towards the hotel. We stopped to get food at Wendy's and went back to the hotel and a bunch of us got changed and went down to the pool. After being in the pool a couple minutes we decided to chicken fight; it was hilarious and super fun.

## The Finale:

The final day was short and everyone was tired; we went to Madison Square Garden and got a tour of the massive arena. We went up to the bridges and watched this VR film. The view from up there was amazing. Just imagining watching an NBA game from up there was so cool. After that we went down onto the ground level and he told us how they do the floor changes. After the tour we all went out to find lunch before we headed home. The Benior Beep overall was amazing and one of my favorite trips of all time. I definitely recommend going on your senior excursion.





# Last Team Standing

By: Davon Bloom, Design Manager

This Virginia Men's Basketball team won the 2019 March Madness Championship led by Coach Tony Bennett. They sealed the deal getting the 85-77 overtime victory. Here's a look at the members of that team.



[dailyprogress.com](http://dailyprogress.com)

Name & Number: Kyle Joseph Guy #5  
Position: Point Guard/ Shooting Guard  
Age & Origin: 21 years old, Indianapolis,IN

Name & Number: Deandre Hunter #12  
Position: Small Forward  
Age & Origin: 21 years old, Philadelphia,PA



[espn.com](http://espn.com)



[alamy.com](http://alamy.com)

Name & Number: Mamadi Diakite #25  
Position: Forward  
Age & Origin: 22 years old, Conakry,Guinea

Name & Number: Kihei Issaiah Clark #0  
Position: Point Guard  
Age & Origin: 19 years old, Tarzana,Los Angeles,CA



[news.virginis.edu](http://news.virginis.edu)



[shutterstock.com](http://shutterstock.com)

Name & Number: Jack Salt #33  
Position: Center  
Age & Origin: 23 years, London, United Kingdom



ballershoesdb.com

Name & Number: Ty Jerome #11  
Position: Shooting Guard  
Age & Origin: 21 years old, New Rochelle,NY



virginiaspports.com

Name & Number: Marco Anthony #24  
Position: Point/Shooting Guard  
Age & Origin: 19 years old, San Antonio, Texas



alamy.com

Name & Number: Jay Huff #30  
Position: Power Forward  
Age & Origin: Age unknown, Durham,NC

Name & Number: Braxton Key #2  
Position: Shooting Guard  
Age & Origin: 22 years old, Charlotte,NC



en.wikipedia.org



virginiaspports.com

Name & Number: Francesco Badocchi #1  
Position: Forward  
Age & Origin: 20 years old, Milan, Italy



ninjaoutreach.com

Name & Number: Francisco Caffaro #22  
Position: Center  
Age & Origin: 18 years old, El trebo, Santa Fe Argentina



virginiaspports.com

Name & Number: Austin Katstra #45  
Position: Forward  
Age & Origin: Age Unknown Charlottesville, VA



alamy.com

Name & Number: Grant Kersey #13  
Position: Guard  
Age & Origin: Age Unknown Charlottesville, VA



twitter.com

Name & Number: Kody Statmann #23  
Position: Guard  
Age & Origin: 18 years old, Bentley Park, Queensland, Australia



twitter.com

Name & Number: Jayden Nixon #10  
Position: Guard  
Age & Origin: 18 years old, Charlottesville, VA





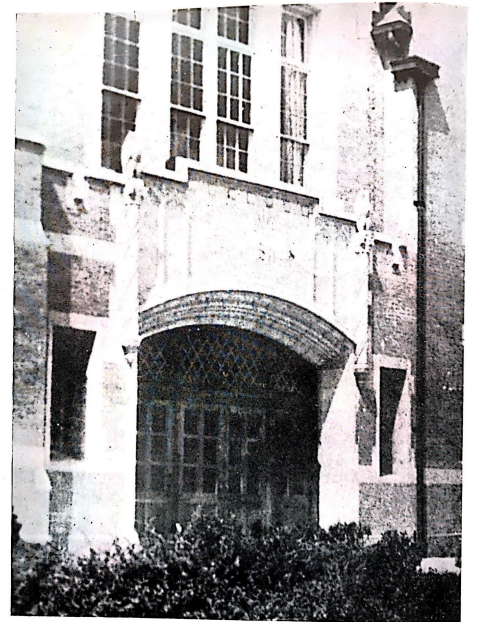
# History of Alfred-Almond

By: Arnold Saint-Phard - Staff Writer

The Alfred-Almond building was created in 1938 and the school started in the fall of 1939. The school was comprised of Alfred, Alfred Station, Almond, and a few rural areas (like Ward, Hornellsville, Hartsville, and West Almond). This merge happened during the Great Depression (1929-1939) and was the outcome of the Public Works Act (PWA). The PWA was passed, giving money to the people to help bring the economy back up. To receive the money, your community, or a group of communities, in this case, had to ask for a grant. The government said they would approve the grant of about \$188,837 if the communities formed a centralized district, secure a site of which to build a new school and begin to work on the building by October 1, 1938. Keep in mind the cost for the construction of the building was estimated to be about \$419,637 in 1938; since inflation that amount is equivalent to \$7,321,296 in 2019.

After much talking, the communities agreed to centralize the towns school district by a vote of 451 to 142 on September 13, 1938. A board of education was formed right afterward, which would mean there was a lot of unity and compromise that happened. Both the Alfred and Almond communities compromised on an old farmland. After some wise words from the people from each community, the site and the bond issue was approved by a majority two weeks before the deadline.

The project was in full gear, the communities came together and the deadline was met. This was an 18-month project and the first class to graduate from Alfred-Almond was the class of 1939-1940. In the newspaper, Alfred Sun, it explains in great detail the beauty of the building and that it was "Grand and dominant". Today the school has done great academic accomplishments and recreational achievements. I hope with this foresight and dedication that you will cherish and remember the story of Alfred-Almond.

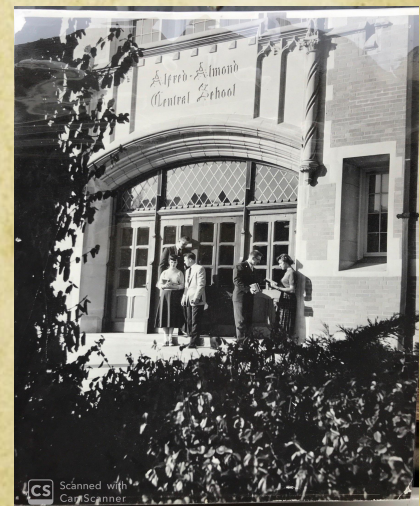


*Alfred-Almond Central School*

6

First Year- This picture was taken during the school's first year of opening.

Photo courtesy of ALCEN (in 1940s)



Another one - A picture from the past showing a group of students getting ready to get this knowledge.

Photo courtesy of Alcen (in the 1940s)





# The Right Place at the Right Time.

By Gabe Marcus  
Copy Editor

Could you imagine being born in 782 AD? What about 4729 AD? Even if you were born at that time, imagine growing up in Africa or Europe. How different would life be and what decisions would be made. I was born on May 17, 2002 in Johnson City Tennessee, and after all of the events and coincidences since then somehow ended up in Almond, New York.

It is quite a weird timeline to learn to read at age two, skip first grade, get suspended in 8th grade and become a rapper very shortly after. Until about 2010, I was just a loud yet shy kid from Western North Carolina. In That time since some very unsuspecting events. By the time I became a rapper, my life would totally change.

I wish I could live in the city. I never lived in a major city and sometimes I get extremely bored in my usual environment. Some of my friends live in a major city and go out all the time to the mall , while the only major hub in Almond is the 7/11.

My favorite time to be born would have been the 1960s. I would have been in high school in the late 1970s. During the 1980s, I would be a young adult, but I would still be young enough to understand the working of modern technology such as the



Imagine This *A world that is inverted.*

<http://www.3develop.nl/blog/inverted-world-map-blue-marble/>

internet. My life would be significantly different if I had siblings because I would not be so independent and selfish. And social media would not be extremely foreign in my 50s.

The 1910s would have been a miserable time to be born because I would be living my prime life in the great depression, and then retire during the Vietnam War. I would also say that being born in the 2010s because of the misconceptions and stereotypes of today's youth that would be counterproductive, is not specifically the best time to be born.

Circumstances and timelines of events are extremely fascinating to me. For example, my life would be significantly different if I had siblings because I would not be so independent and selfish..

If my priorities were not Business, Rap, Education, Athletics and Down Time in that order, I would be a totally different person.

Other people that I know have also definitely been impacted by me being present around them. If there was no me, whether at school, or just in general. For example, If I had not lived in the current Governor of Maine's house for four years, I probably wouldn't care about American politics as much as I do now.

If I hadn't had the experiences mentioned, I'd be a very different person. If I hadn't been born after 9/11, I would probably be less political. Remember to thank everyone for being there for you at the right place and the right time.



# Science Today: Our Past and Future

*By: Gabe Empson ETC*

They call it the idea of accelerating change, and the group in that 1910 scientific convention had no idea how right they were. If only they had gone on and seen what we have today. The following is a graphic representation of the span of time in our history as well as what we achieved as a race during that time. Pay attention to the years that go by as we jump from one achievement to the next. This is the story of us, and everything that led up to us. Enjoy the look back at the journey we've had, and think of what's yet to come.

## 6 million years ago

The first primitive human species arose. Walking on two feet, they began a journey that birthed our very lives. These ape like ancestors of ours were incredibly smart in terms of survival skills, knowing almost instinctively which plants are good to eat and which animals were best to avoid.



## 2.5 million years ago

Our ancestors learned for the first time how to use the things around them like tools. Called the "stone age", humans were able to solve problems they before found impossible.

## 2 million years ago

Around now, humans learned and created one of the most dangerous and useful inventions even today. Language. Like grunts and barks, humans were able to have simple interactions with one another while at the same time, understand each other.



## 1.5 Million years ago

Our ancestors discovered the ultimate cleanser. Fire! With this discovery, food became safer to eat as the bacteria would have been destroyed in the heat of being cooked, and early humans were now able to survive winters and environments previously too cold for them.

## 20,000 Years ago

Our hunter gatherer ways had finally come to an end with the discovery of farming. Food was no longer a worry and or a driving factor in how the tribes behaved. This gave them time to focus on individual and more specialized fields.



## 12,000 Years ago

Our tribes for the first time became cities. Gathering together in large groups for security and an easier way of life.



3,500 Years ago

People grouped together into the first country in modern day China. It was called the Shang Dynasty.

720 Years ago

The first clock was created with the brand new invention of the gear.

430 Years ago

The first magnifying glass was created.

330 Years ago

Sir Isaac Newton constructed his three laws of motion that began the field of physics.

240 Years ago

Hot air balloons took flight being the first of mankind's aviation achievement.

180 Years ago

The telegram, morse code, first ever photograph, propellers, and rubber.

140 Years ago

Landline telephones, audio recordings, the lightbulb, and the factory line.

100 Years ago

Jet engines, air conditioners, smoke detectors, the peoples car, the standard bullet, and microwaves.

60 Years ago

First transistor, the laser, flywheels, electric car, microwave ovens, Sputnik satellite, the first prototype of a computer for the people, the moonwalk, and the first computer storage system.

20 Years ago - Now

The internet, first new code form for computers, E-commerce, HD TV, wi-fi, the ipod, self healing paint, cell phones, touch screens, Roombas, E-books, 3D video, streamable media, nanotechnology, supercomputers, quantum computers, AI, and.....

2800 Years ago

The first working water system was created in Rome, Italy. It consisted of fountains and sewers.

570 Years ago

Gutenberg made everyone's life easier with the printing press.

420 Years ago

Both magnetism and the thermometer were created / discovered.

310 Years ago

Thomas Newcomen moved a piston using steam.

220 Years ago

The first battery, modern paper, and steam engines

160 Years ago

Car engine, fire extinguishers, typewriters, radio, elevators, and concrete.

120 years ago

Electricity for private consumption, plastic, LCD, electric motors, electric generators, space reaching rockets, X-ray, and long range radio signal.

80 Years ago

Combat jet fighters, refrigerators, solar cells, radar, Xenon lights, nuclear power, Kevlar, Nylon, and photocopyers.

40 Years ago

Space shuttle, vacuum cleaner, laser surgery, CDs, microchips, the first online network, and the space shuttle.

A lot has changed since those first humans stood against the merciless tide of the universe. Together we have created a lot of change, but over 90% of our human achievement has happened in less than 1% of our human existence. What will you think of the world we create tomorrow? Will we be just as lost as our grandparents are with the newest touchscreen phones? Or will we learn to keep learning and enjoy the tides of tomorrow? Remember to get smarter every day, and I'll see you next issue.



# A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

A beginner's guide to birdwatching in New York State



Written by: Abigail Tarun, Design Manager

Blessed with many habitats, there's a reason birdwatchers list New York as one of the top bird-watching destinations in the Northeast. Over 450 bird species spend time within this state each year, and with its beautiful hotspots like the Adirondacks and the Finger Lakes, New York offers unique opportunities to view many of those diverse species. Even if you've never birdwatched before, you can enjoy this simple pastime activity just by being observant in your own backyard or neighborhood year-round, and you don't have to spend so much money on equipment. All you really need is a good informative field guide and a decent pair of binoculars to get started. The activity of birdwatching itself can get you closer to nature as you learn more about a bird's behavior through observation.

**Eastern Bluebird**, the  
State Bird of New York  
Image from pixels.com



For any beginner wanting to take birdwatching seriously, you will enjoy your new hobby well if you gather the right equipment and clothing beforehand. Note that you can purchase any of these items at any local birding festival or event (like the annual Adirondack Boreal Birding Festival) from vendors. You can also visit a specialty bird store or nature shop at a local refuge or nature center. Of course if you don't have any of these places near you, you can always order online for the items listed below from any specialty store. ([Audubon](#) is great!)

**Binoculars** This is your primary tool for a birdwatcher. It gives you a super 8-times to 10-times magnified vision which helps you see birds better so that you can identify them. If you can, spend around \$150 to \$350 for a great starting binocular. It's highly recommended that you try out the binoculars before purchasing it in order to select a model that fits your hands, eyes, and style for birding.

**Field Guide** Just as binoculars give you the magnified vision to spot birds, field guides enable you to identify birds by matching the image and text in the guide with the bird or birds you are seeing. There are two types of field guides: one with photographs to illustrate fieldmarks, or ones that use artworks and illustrations. Pick whichever one feels best for you. Some of the most popular field guides to get are Peterson, Sibley, Kaufman, and National Geographic, which you can order online or get at your local bookstore.

**Comfy Footwear** It's hard to enjoy bird watching if your feet aren't comfortable. Bring the appropriate shoes for the type of environment you'll be in. Ankle-supporting hikers for woodlands or rocky trails, rubber boots for marshes, and lightweight tennis shoes or sturdy sandals for casual birdwatching along a boardwalk.

If you're ready to invest a little more money and effort, here are some great supplementary items for an even greater bird-watching experience.

**Bird Club Membership** There's no better way to expand your birding skills and opportunities than by joining a bird club. You'll be surrounded by a new social circle of people who share your interest in birds, and you'll be able to participate in the club's activities, such as field trips, bird counts, meetings, and presentations. Here are some great clubs that might be located near you: [Jamestown Audubon Society](#), [Allegany Co. Bird Club](#) in Belmont, and [Burroughs Audubon Nature Club](#) in Rochester.

**Field Journal or Life List** Many birders enjoy keeping notes about their field trips or birdwatching experiences and even keep a life list of any sightings. Basically, a life list documents all the bird species you've seen at least once in your life. Speaking of species, there are more than 900 regularly occurring bird species north of Mexico and, according to recent studies, 18,000 species worldwide. With so many species, recording your sightings allows you to keep track of which species you've seen in the area. A great tool to use is [eBird](#), a site which you can use to store your observations, recordings, notes, and sightings into one place.

## Additional Resources for Birdwatching

These sites offer comprehensive information on thousands of bird species in North America and articles on just about every birdwatching topic or important birding event.

<https://www.audubon.org/>

<https://www.allaboutbirds.org/>

Here is a comprehensive checklist of all 433 recognized bird species in New York:

<https://www.nybirds.org/Publications/NYSOA-FieldChecklist.pdf>





Now that you've prepared for an enjoyable birdwatching experience, it's time to learn some useful pointers and tips on how to bird in any location, time of day, weather, or season. With enough patience and practice, you'll start becoming a seasoned birdwatcher!

- **Become familiar with your surroundings.** When you start out birding, you may need to spend some time becoming acquainted with even your most commonplace species (near your backyard for example), become familiar with some of the best birdwatching places in the area, and even understand what birds you might expect to see at different times of the year. For your first trips, don't try to spot every bird you encounter. Rather, try to focus on the birds you see well, and then, learn how to identify those birds by their shape, color, size, habitat, behavior, and the sound of their calls.
- **Know the habitat.** Every bird has its preferred habitat for feeding and breeding - woods, fields, grasslands, wetlands, ponds, etc. - and is seldom found far from it. Learn what birds you will likely encounter in one habitat and which habitats a certain bird you are looking for prefers. Also, don't ignore what time of year it is. Different birds are present in the same habitats at different times of the year.
- **Blend in with your environment.** Many birds have poor color vision, but bright clothes, like whites, will contrast with the surrounding environment and enhance the appearance of movement. Wear darker colors or earth tones to blend into the background. Also, avoid any sudden movement to not startle the birds. The closer you are to a bird, the more slowly and quietly you should move.
- **Find a good spot.** The best places to go birdwatching are where two habitats meet, such as the edge of a forest and a meadow, or where muddy shorelines meet the water. Finding a spot where birds can find food and water can increase your chances of finding interesting species. Keep in mind the time of day, as well. While birds can be found 24 hours a day, many birds call out or sing at dusk and dawn because the cooler air and lower wind carries their song further. These songs will announce their presence and even help you locate the birds you can't see.
- **Be patient.** Having patience is a virtue and for birdwatching, especially. Some birds like to call out and make themselves known while others are more quiet by nature because they like to blend in with their environment. Either way, just keep listening to the sounds of their calls, and most importantly, remain calm even if you can't identify them. The challenges of birdwatching is part of the reason why the activity is rewarding, so just keep being persistent while also learning to enjoy nature's surroundings.

**Helpful Observational Key** - Look for the following symbols in this field guide (next to bird species) indicating general areas of observation for bird species native to NY reported by bird observers to the NYSARC (New York State Avian Records Committee)

\* Species known to breed, to have bred, or to have established breeding in New York.

-- Notation unavailable or not recorded by Committee

(N) Anywhere within New York.

(U) In upstate New York.

(D) In downstate New York.

(A) Outside the Adirondacks.

(P) Outside of the pelagic zone but within New York State. Pelagic zone begins 3 [statute] miles from shore extends to the 200 nautical mile mark with state boundary lines marked.

(S) Anywhere in New York State in spring.



## Family *Passerellidae*: New World Sparrows and Allies

### Classification

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum:** Chordata

**Class:** Aves

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Family:** *Passerellidae*

The *Passerellidae* are a large family of passerines (sparrows) with distinctive finch-like beaks that primarily eat seeds.

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Image from  
massaudubon.org

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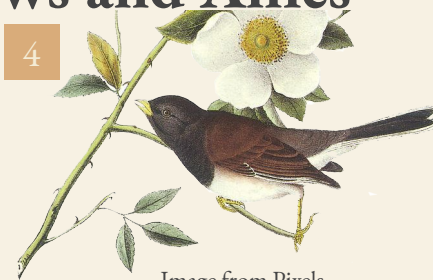


Image from Pixels

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Image from  
audubon.org

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Image from  
massaudubon.org

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Image from  
massaudubon.org

#### 1. Vesper Sparrow *Pooecetes gramineus* \*

With its noticeable brown-streaked pattern and white tail feathers, the Vesper Sparrow is quite easy to spot anywhere out in the open field. In the summertime, its melodic tune or *vesper* can be heard clearly throughout the day in a descending series of trills and musical slurs. Often, the Vesper Sparrow will dust-bathe in the bare soil of open fields or meadows to pat out any of its feathers.

#### 2. Eastern Towhee *Pipilo erythrophthalmus* \*

Under dense thickets of leaf-litter, you can typically hear the Eastern Towhee rummaging through the dry leaves and making lots of noise for its small size. During the nesting season, the males will make distinctive a *chewink* call to their mates, letting you know how common they really are in the forest. If you look near the leaf-litter, you will see the towhee's distinctive black coat layered in reddish-browns and a white underbelly.

#### 3. American Tree Sparrow *Spizelloides arborea* (--)

Highly common in Canada's icy tundras, the plump-winged American Tree Sparrow typically make its way to weedy areas and marshes during the wintertime. They will scavenge for grass and weed seeds in open areas or will likely visit your backyard if they spot a seed feeder. While feeding or foraging in flocks, the American Tree Sparrow will toss back and forth making a *teel-wit* twitter sound varying from flock to flock.

#### 4. Dark-Eyed Junco *Junco hyemalis* \*

Abundant in many coniferous forests and woods, the Dark-Eyed Junco commonly ventures to the forest floor looking for fallen seeds. While foraging through the ground, you will often hear high chip notes given almost absent-mindedly and sometimes even, intensifying in volume as they stoop for cover. While regional differences do exist, generally, the Juncos will have a slate-colored body with white outer tail feathers and a light pink bill.

#### 5. Savannah Sparrow *Passerculus sandwichensis* \*

Throughout North America, the Savannah Sparrow takes on three subtle yet distinct regional appearances which can confuse newer birdwatchers into thinking they are separate species. Look closely, however, and you will find that all three subspecies share the same thin, rounded underparts with a yellow mark in front of their eye. Savannah Sparrows tend to breed in open areas with low vegetation including tundras, grasslands, and farmlands. Males will sometimes make a distinct insect-sounding "hiss" to warn off intruders or alarm others nearby.



## Family *Parulidae*: Wood-Warblers

### Classification

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum:** Chordata

**Class:** Aves

**Order:** Passeriformes

**Superfamily:** Passeroidea

**Family:** Parulidae

The family *Parulidae* consists primarily of New World warblers, which are a group of small, colorful passerine birds. Most members of this family are insectivores. It's likely that these types of warblers originated in Central America, where the greatest number of species there are found.

#### 1. Magnolia Warbler *Setophaga magnolia* \*

Many male warblers are black and yellow, but the Magnolia Warblers stand out from the rest with their bold black necklaces complete with a lengthy tassel, black mask, and a pronounced white wing. Females bear white eyerings on their grey head and a moderate streaking pattern unlike the males. They will breed in dense strands of conifers and will perch by forests during migration to forage for hidden insects. Both males and females will call out with a nasal *zic* or *zeep* chirping sound.



Image from Fine Art America



Image from Fine Art America



Image from minniesland.com



Image from National Audubon Society

#### 2. Northern Parula *Setophaga americana* \*

Hidden in the upper canopies of forests, the Northern Parula cheerfully hops about plucking the insects off of tree branches. While they may not be visible, the males, however, are easy to hear if you can recognize their buzzy trill head constantly though early spring and mid-summer. During nesting season, the Northern Parulas like to hide their nests in Spanish Moss (in the South) or in the similar Ursa lichens of the North.

#### 3. Cape May Warbler *Setophaga tigrina* \*

Sharing a double life between the West Indies' palm trees in the winter and the northern spruce woods in the summer, the Cape May Warbler has differing tastes in food depending on where it lives at that time. In the summertime, the Cape May Warbler likes to collect nectar from tropical flowers with its curled semitubular tongue that is unique to this species. Its preferred food, however, is the spruce budworm which seemingly ties in with highly populated areas of the species. Among birders, it's easy to recognize the tiger-striped males in the spring, but the drab appearance (nonbreeding) in the fall can be quite confusing for any birdwatcher.

#### 4. Blackburnian Warbler *Setophaga fusca* \*

A fiery gem in the forest, the Blackburnian Warblers have a distinct look to them with a black and white plumage offset by a flame-orange face and throat. In the high tops of both deciduous and coniferous forests, Blackburnian Warblers will glean for lurking insects hidden in the undersides of dead leaves even while hovering (called "hover-gleaning") and will sometimes catch them in flight. Males will primarily sing a thin but rapid trilly pattern of *zip zip zips* with the last note, *tsee*, being much higher in pitch than the rest.





## ***Family Trochilidae: Hummingbirds***

### **Classification**

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum:** Chordata

**Class:** Aves

**Clade:** Apodiformes

**Family:** Trochilidae

The Family *Trochilidae* contains more than 300 species of brilliantly- colored hummingbirds which are the only birds that can fly backwards. Five species have been recorded in New York.



Image from  
Pixels.com

### **Ruby-Throated Hummingbird *Archilochus colubris* \***

Glimmering in the sunlight, the Ruby-Throated Hummingbird radiates a jewel-like appearance with its viridian crown and white underpart coupled with its brilliant red throat. Hovering their position with exquisite control, the Ruby-Throated Hummingbird beats its wings 50 times per second in order to sip sugary-sweet nectar from tubular flowers such as honeysuckles, trumpet creepers, and morning glories. They will often visit backyards with hummingbird feeders as well and can easily pick up tiny insects in midair. If you listen closely, you can hear the soft mouse-like squeaks of the Ruby-Throated Hummingbird. Beyond the Great Plains, the Ruby-Throated Hummingbird is the only breeding species in the East.



## Family Accipitridae: Hawks | Kites | Eagles

### Classification

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum:** Chordata

**Class:** Aves

**Order:** Accipitriformes

**Family:** Accipitridae

The *Accipitridae* are a family of small to large birds with strongly hooked bills for ripping apart flesh, keen eyesight, and powerful talons. Fourteen species have been recorded in New York from this family.

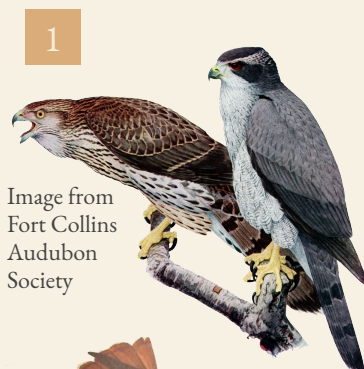


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Fort Collins  
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Society



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Audubon  
Galleries



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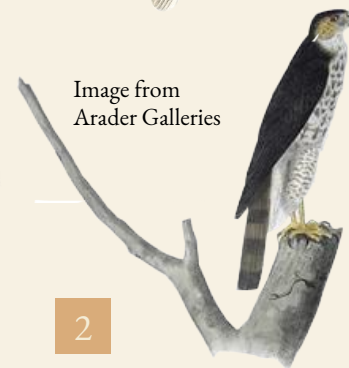


Image from  
Arader Galleries

#### 1. Northern Goshawk *Accipiter gentilis* \*

A powerful predator of northern and mountain woods, the stealthy Northern Goshawk watches for prey on high perches and then attacks them with short, quick bursts of agile flight even through densely packed layers of vegetation. Classified as an accipiter, its short broad wings and long rudderlike tail give the Northern Goshawk superb aerial agility to chase birds and mammal prey. Northern Goshawks are known to be extremely protective of their nests. They commonly attack any animal or human that approach them too closely.

#### 4. Red-Tailed Hawk *Buteo jamaicensis* \*

A lone predator of the open country, the Red-Tailed Hawk has a bulky and broad-winged build designed to effortlessly soar in the air. Like most predators, the Red-Tailed Hawk does most of its hunting by watching from a high perch, then swooping down to capture prey in its talons. Despite its widespread distribution and trademark reddish-brown tail, the rest of the Hawk's plumage can be quite variable, especially west of the Mississippi Red-Tails which can range from blackish to rufous-brown to nearly white. The Red-Tailed Hawk has the iconic war-like *keeeeer* cry you've probably heard by now in Old Western movies.

#### 2. Cooper's Hawk *Accipiter cooperii* \*

A skillful flier of the woodlands, the Cooper's Hawk tears through cluttered canopy layers in high speed pursuit of smaller birds (in the size of jays and robins) and mammals. They will conserve their flying with a flap-flap-glide pattern over time, and once they have spotted their prey, the Cooper's Hawk will cruise low to the ground, approaching from behind an obstruction to take down their prey as swiftly as possible. A typical adult has a steely blue-gray back with warm reddish bars on the underparts and thick dark bands on the tail.

#### 3. Northern Harrier *Circus hudsonius* \*

Bearing uncanny similarities to owls, the Northern Harrier mainly relies on their hearing as well as vision to capture their prey. Their disk-shaped face looks and functions much like an owl's, with stiff facial feathers helping to direct sound to the ears. This owl-like face can even hear mice and voles lurking beneath the vegetation. From a distance, the Northern Harrier has a distinctive appearance holding out its wings in a V-shape and sporting a white patch at the base of its tail. Each gray-and-white male may mate with as many as five females, which are larger and brown in appearance.



# Family Anatidae: Ducks | Geese | Swan

## Classification

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum:** Chordata

**Class:** Aves

**Order:** Anseriformes

**Family:** Anatidae

The Family *Anatidae* classifies ducks and most duck-like waterfowl like geese and swans. These waterfowl have adapted to an aquatic lifestyle with webbed feet, a bill flattened to a lesser or greater extent, and feathers with special oil that can shed water. There are 47 registered species of this family recorded in New York.

### 1. Wood Duck *Aix sponsa* \*

One of the most stunningly pretty waterfowls, both sexes of the Wood Duck share elegant yet distinct characteristics which include the iridescent chestnut and green body of the male and the delicate white pattern around the eyes of the female. Their diet consists mainly of seeds from trees and shrubs but also insects and crustaceans living by the swamps and marshes. Wood Ducks are one of the few species equipped with strong claws that can grip bark and perch on tree branches.

### 4. Canvasback *Aythya valisineria* \*

Often called the aristocrat of ducks, the Canvasback has a certain condescending look to them with its long sloping forehead held high. Males stand out with a coppery-rusty head and neck with a pale whitish body bookended in black. As the largest within its genus, the Canvasback is known to be an excellent diver going all the way to the bottom of lakes and wetlands mainly to eat the roots or the leaves of the aquatic vegetation.



Image from  
massaudubon.org



Image from Audubon Galleries



Image from redbubble.com



Image from Fine Art  
America



Image from Audubon Prints



Image from Etsy

### 2. Surf Scoter *Melanitta perspicillata* (--)

A black-and-white sea duck common on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts in winter, the Surf Scoter's boldly patterned colors somewhat associate themselves to that of a skunk which is the colloquial basis for its name "skunk-headed coot." When feeding, the Surf Scoter springs forward and dives with its wings partly opened. They like to feed primarily on mollusks along with crustaceans, small fishes, echinoderms, and aquatic insects. You will most likely find the Surf Scoter around a fishing pier or a harbor of an ocean in Long Island.

### 3. Redhead *Aythya americana* (D)

Just as its name suggests, the Redhead duck has a dapper appearance with a cinnamon-brown head, a black breast and tail, and a neat gray body. These sociable ducks like to congregate together in huge flocks to molt and migrate in the wintertime particularly along the Gulf Coast of Mexico, where winter numbers can reach the thousands. While ducks in general often lay their eggs in the nests of others, Redheads take this parasitic behavior to the extremes by laying their eggs in at least 10 other species' nests including the predatory Northern Harrier. Strangely enough, a call of Redheads sounds like a grunting mew of a cat.

### 5. Bufflehead *Bucephala albeola* (--)

A tiny buoyant duck with a puffy shaped head, the Bufflehead spends winter bobbing in freshwater lakes or reservoirs usually alone, in pairs, but never in a flock. From a closer look, the males' heads illuminate a glossy green and purple setting off their striking white patch while the females have a subdued gray-brown head along with a white patch. Buffleheads like to use old tree cavities especially those used by woodpeckers as nests for their young.

### 6. Common Goldeneye *Bucephala clangula* \*

The Common Goldeneye adds a pleasant note to winter with its incandescent yellow eyes, glistening green-black head, and a crisp black-and-white body and wings. Eating mostly aquatic invertebrates and fish, these distinctively-shaped large-headed ducks will synchronously dive for their food at the same time in sections with their flock. Although, they tend not to mix well with other waterfowl. Look for Common Goldeneyes in large rivers, lakes, as well as the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf coasts in winter.





## Family Strigidae: Owls

### Classification

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum:** Chordata

**Class:** Aves

**Order:** Strigiformes

**Family:** Strigidae

The Family *Strigidae* includes typical owls ranging from small to large nocturnal birds of prey. They have large forward-facing eyes, a hawk-like beak, and a facial disk that surrounds their eyes. Eleven owl species from this family have been recorded in New York.

#### 1. Northern Saw-Whet Owl *Aegolius acadicus* (N)

A tiny cat-like owl with an oversized head and bright yellow eyes, the Northern Saw-Whet Owl may appear to be cute, but is actually very predatory when it comes to mice and other small rodents. At wintertime, they will prowl in the conifer trees late at night to avoid any detection. During daylight, the Northern Saw-Whet Owl will roost in dense vegetation, typically just above eye-level and near the trunk in evergreen trees. Saw-whets will make a soft *too-too* whisper-like song which can be heard up to half a mile away.

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Image from  
adopt-an-audubon-b  
ird.nyhistory.org

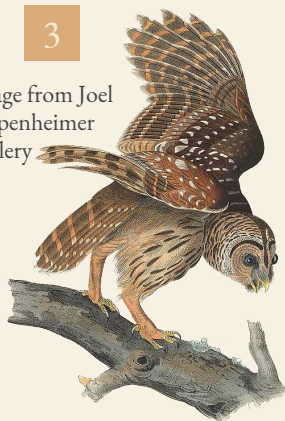
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Image from  
fineartamerica.com

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Image from Joel  
Oppenheimer  
Gallery



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Image  
from  
National  
Audubon  
Society



#### 2. Great Horned Owl *Bubo virginianus* \*

With long, earlike tufts, the intimidating yellow-eyed stare, and deep hooting call, the Great Horned Owl is the quintessential owl of storybooks. A powerful predator, the Great Horned Owl can take down birds and mammals larger than its size including skunks, geese, and even hawks. Yet, it can also choose to go for daintier prey such as tiny scorpions, mice, and frogs. Great Horned Owls begin nesting very early in the north, and their hoots may be heard rolling across the floor late at night.

#### 3. Barred Owl *Strix varia* \*

While they are easy to hear with their distinct baritone hooting call, the Barred Owl can also pass completely unnoticed as it flies noiselessly through dense canopies of trees. Although the bird is mostly active at night, it will also call and even hunt in the daytime for small mammals and rodents. The Barred Owl has some attractive qualities to its appearance with its deep brown eyes and brown-and-white striped pattern. Their deep *hoo* pattern sounds like a barking dog and a variety of other screeches mixed into it.

#### 4. Eastern Screech Owl *Megascops asio* \*

If you ever hear an eerie soft trill at night, know that it's coming from a tiny owl no larger than a pint glass. Common in the East, this robin-sized nightbird dwells in just about any city park or suburb as long as they are trees nearby for them to perch. While they may be in plain sight, these birds are actually highly camouflaged in the daytime hidden in nooks and crannies of inconspicuous places. Be sure to listen for their distinct mewing purr at night.



## Family *Alcidae*: Murres | Puffins | Allies

### Classification

**Kingdom:** Animalia

**Phylum:** Chordata

**Class:** Aves

**Order:** Charadriiformes

**Clade:** Pan-Alcidae

**Family:** Alcidae

The Family *Alcidae* consists of diving birds having short wings and tail, webbed feet, a large head and heavy body, and thick compact plumage. Including auks, puffins, guillemots, and murres, many of these species are confined to the Northern Hemisphere's northern parts like the Arctic Circle or Greenland.

#### 1. Razorbill *Alca torda* (U)

Found only in the North Atlantic, this stocky, thick-billed auk nests on northern islands and coasts, often in the same colonies as murres. In winter, Razorbills live in flocks well offshore, but hardy observers who go out to the coast during winter storms may seem them in flocks sweeping past, low over the water. Razorbills like to dive anywhere from 5 to 20 inches to get their food. Their diet consists mainly of fish especially like sand lance, herring, sprat, and capelin. Razorbills have a low gutturing croak call that sounds like a toad.

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Image from  
[adopt-an-audubon-bird.nyhistory.org](http://adopt-an-audubon-bird.nyhistory.org)



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Image from  
[adopt-an-audubon-bird.nyhistory.org](http://adopt-an-audubon-bird.nyhistory.org)



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Image from  
Amazon



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Image from  
[adopt-an-audubon-bird.nyhistory.org](http://adopt-an-audubon-bird.nyhistory.org)



#### 2. Dovekie *Alle alle* (U)

The smallest member of the auk family in the North Atlantic, Dovekie feeds on abundant tiny crustaceans in icy waters, and nests by the millions far above the Arctic Circle, often in northwest Greenland. In the wintertime, small numbers of Dovekies come as far as New England or occasionally all the way to Virginia in scarce numbers but the vast majority of Dovekies still remain farther up north. On the water, Dovekies bob about buoyantly; flocks fly low over the waves. Winter storms sometimes drive them close to the coast or even inland.

#### 3. Atlantic Puffin *Fratercula arctica* (N)

Sharply dressed in black and white with a huge multicolored bill, the Atlantic Puffin is often called the clown of the sea. It breeds in burrows on islands in the North Atlantic and winters at sea. In flight, puffins frantically flap their small wings to stay aloft, but underwater, those wings become powerful flippers that allow the birds to catch small fish one by one until they have a full beak. Outside of the breeding season, you'll likely need to take a pelagic birding trip well offshore to find one.

#### 4. Thick-Billed Murre *Uria lomvia* (N)

A common bird of the far northern oceans, the Thick-Billed Murre is found in Arctic waters all across the globe, but there has also been reported sightings of this robust auk all the way down to South Carolina's coastlines. Using its wings underwater to hunt for fish and crustaceans, the Thick-Billed Murre can dive great depths anywhere from 100 to even 200 m below the surface. In fact, it can remain submerged for more than three minutes. Thick-Billed Murres will remain very far from land over deep waters, mostly in pack ice or cliff edges of rocks.



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Thanks for reading! Be sure to share this article with others!

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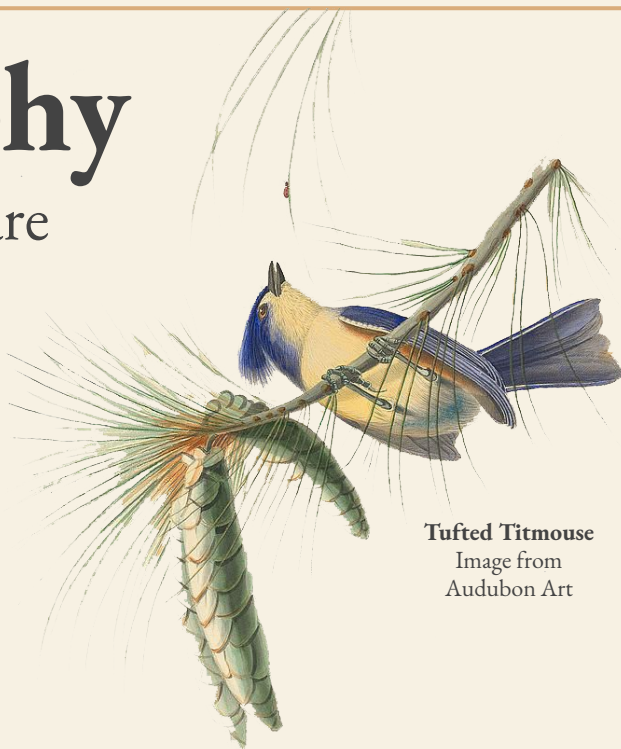
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Yellow-Billed  
Cuckoo  
Image from  
Audubon  
Galleries



Tufted Titmouse  
Image from  
Audubon Art

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All scientific drawings of birds used  
in this article were created by  
ornithologist John James Audubon





# Nora and Conner: Scholars, Athletes, Friends, Upstanding Citizens, and Now...Film Critics??

**Disclaimer:** Important Information about “Avengers Endgame” is in this article. You have been warned please stop reading if you have not seen it yet.

The Marvel Cinematic Universe has been a collective storyline that has been over 22 movies so far. It started with Phase One, the origin stories of Hulk, Iron Man, and Captain America. Phase Two would begin after the “Avengers” and from that point forward every movie was linked. Now Phase Three which will end with the upcoming “Spider-Man” movie. Phase Three has been the expansion of what the Avengers means; it went from a six person team to the expanded Avengers in “Infinity War”, along with the Guardians of the Galaxy.

## “The Avengers”:

Where it all began, the first movie in the Marvel Expanded Universe (MCU) that tied everyone’s story arcs together. This turning point would be forever remembered by the six original Avengers coming together for the first time. All of their standalone films had created each of the personal character arcs and the personal strengths and struggles of the main characters



Photo from Amazon.UK

Avengers was when the strengths of all of these individuals really came into play. The crisis is established when Loki, Thor’s brother, steals the tesseract, what would become the space stone, from SHIELD and starts reeking havoc all over the world. This leads to the activation of the Avengers protocol by Nick Fury, the Director of SHIELD. This act brings all of the original Avengers together for the first time and it really doesn’t go over well. Captain America, otherwise known as Steve Rogers, immediately butts heads with

Iron Man, who is Tony Stark. Tony and Steve have both had their origins spelled out by now in the timeline and both have large egos. It just didn’t seem like there was enough room for both of them on the team until the death of Phil Coulson, a famous SHIELD Agent, brought the team together. After these scenes, the movie came to a close with the world being saved, but the things that happened would haunt the Avengers and the world for forever. The team, which now consists of Iron Man, Captain America, Hawkeye, Black Widow, Thor, and the Hulk, fly to New York City to fight Loki and the space army now unleashed upon New York through a portal in the sky. After each Avenger really established what they contribute to the team (for example, Hulk smashes things), the team started to work together which culminates into some of the best large-scale action scenes ever seen at the time. Giant ships flying through New York being taken down by the Hulk and Iron Man in glorious fashion establishing what the Avengers movies are going to bring to the franchise.





## “Avengers Infinity War”:

Infinity War is the second to last movie in the infinity saga, a series of 22 films stretching over 10 years. Every Marvel movie released before it led up to this point, with 29 heroes facing the biggest bad guy of them all: Thanos. While Thanos has made appearances in previous films, notably sending Loki to New York City in the first Avengers movie, and sending Rhonin to retrieve the power stone in “Guardians of the Galaxy,” “Infinity War” is the first movie where we get a good look at his character. Played by Josh Brolin, Thanos is a murderous warlord with one goal set in his mind: universal balance. He believes that the life has overrun the universe, and resources are running out. His solution to greed, and overpopulation is to murder half of all living beings. To accomplish this lofty goal, Thanos plans to collect the infinity stones, six colored stones that represent the six facets of existence: power, space, reality, time, soul, and mind. With these gems strapped into his fancy golden gauntlet, Thanos can delete half of existing life with a simple snap of his fingers. Infinity War is Thanos’ journey to collect all the infinity stones, facing various challenges along the way. Notably, he sacrifices his own daughter to find the soul stone, stabs Iron Man



Photo from Amazon.com



Infinity Gauntlet

Photo from Aliexpress.com

and spares his life in exchange for the time stone, and rips the mind stone out of the forehead of a robot. And with his fully bejeweled glove, Thanos snaps his fingers and turns half of all living beings to dust as the sufficiently defeated Avengers stare on, helpless. As we watch half of our beloved cast fade away into nothingness and the screen cuts to black, we’re left wondering how the remaining Avengers could possibly fix this mess.

If you have read up to this point and have not seen “Endgame” stop, seriously there are a ton of spoilers on the next page. It would be extremely unwise to look because the movie is a fantastic experience without spoilers. Don’t ruin it for yourself out of curiosity either. Apologies for any temptations to look.





## “Avengers Endgame:”

The ultimate conclusion to the 22 film Infinity Saga. The movie ended up being three hours long and featured all of the characters throughout the MCU. The movie began with the remaining Avengers on Earth looking at the world and what remains. There are censuses from all over the world trying to account for the devastation on Earth alone from the snap. The Avengers and the other heroes in the Galaxy are still trying to grapple with how Thanos managed to complete his ultimate goal. After about a month, Iron Man returns to Earth with help from Captain Marvel and the Avengers track down Thanos. They find that Thanos destroyed the stones and, after this information is revealed to him, Thor kills Thanos out of pure rage. The Avengers move on, attempting damage control all over the world and trying to stop military actions. This would go on until Antman shows up from the Quantum Realm, where he has been for five years, even though to him it was only five hours. This leads the Avengers to the idea of a time heist to bring everyone back. The time heist ensues; which takes us back through almost all of the films and lets all of the fans truly enjoy all of the memories and how fantastic the movies have been. It also paid tribute to all of the fans that have been there from the beginning. Many of the scenes contained callbacks to all of the old movies as well.

These scenes brought applause from the whole theater as we reminisced as well. As the movie moved to it's conclusion it brought all of the stories back to their beginnings especially Tony Stark. The conclusion to his story was heartbreaking and what was the most important to him really came through. He is Iron Man and truly does have a heart unlike the original Tony Stark who dominated the weapons industry regardless of the irreparable damage his designs caused to people. It was a heartfelt close to a decade of storytelling that will hopefully be remembered as the franchise continues.



Photo from imdb.com



Photo courtesy of Sophie Napolitano

## Reactions From Sophie Napolitano:

Q: Overall how excited were you?

A: 11/10

Q: Was it what you expected?

A: No, I was expecting more action but I loved how it was actually done.

Q: What was your favorite part?

A: Every scene with Tony Stark!

Q: Can you elaborate on your love for Tony?

A: I think that Tony Stark is the perfect combination of smart and sarcastic and funny and he's an amazing dad! Also, his relationship with Pepper is my favorite and I'm just a big fan.

Q: What would you hope for Marvel in the future?

A: Maybe in a few years after some solo movies it'd be cool to start a new franchise with more representation of diverse characters.





**We  
would  
like to  
thank...**

**"Miss Sick for letting me  
borrow her charger."  
-Wesley Dennison**

**"Jared the tour guide,  
Pete the tour guide, and  
Matt the bus driver for a  
fantastic Senior Trip."  
-Gabe Marcus**

**"Olivia and Nora for  
being such caring soccer  
teammates."  
-Emily Agnello**

**"Tristan for being such a  
great friend and always  
making me laugh when  
he hits the woah."  
-Olivia Ormsby**

**"Miss Carretto, Mr. Mac  
and Mrs. Decker for being  
great advisors on our  
Senior Trip."  
-Class of 2019**

**"Tic-Tok for hours of  
endless fun." - much  
love Nora, Annie, Olivia  
and Zane**

**If you have any  
acknowledgements  
you would like  
in the  
Observer  
please contact**

**oo0352@acsapps.com**



# Start Practicing for A-A's Esports Team!

By Wesley Dennison & Joe Milette &  
Dylan Guthrie  
Design Managers



Image from: [engadget.com](http://engadget.com)

Available At

[na.leagueoflegends.com/en/](http://na.leagueoflegends.com/en/)

“Whether you’re playing solo or co-op with friends, League of Legends is a highly competitive, fast paced action-strategy game designed for those who crave a hard fought victory.” - Riot Games

“Rocket League combines soccer with driving in an unbelievable physics-based multiplayer-focused sequel to supersonic acrobatic rocket-powered battle-cars!

Choose from variety of high-flying vehicles equipped with huge rocket boosters to score amazing ariel goals and pull off incredible game changing saves!”

- Psyonix Inc.



Image from: [techcrunch.com](http://techcrunch.com)

Available At

[rocketleague.com](http://rocketleague.com)



Image from: [dlcompare.com](http://dlcompare.com)

Available At

[playoverwatch.com/](http://playoverwatch.com/)

“In Overwatch, you control one of several heroes in competitive 6-person team shooting matches. Battle over objectives, take down the other team, and achieve victory.” - Blizzard Entertainment