

THE** **OBSERVER

News We're All a Part Of

CHERRY BLOSSOMS

SPRING BREAK

MUSHROOM SEASON

EARTH DAY



April 2018
Vol. 7 Issue 6



**Cover Design: Joshua
Carstens & Dekanuva**

3. Announcements

4. Titanic Panic

6. Cherry Blossoms

7. Different, Not Less

8. March for Our Lives

10. School Safety

12. Youth Summit

14. Who is it?

16. Alumni Answers

19. Track Previews

21. Spring Break

23. Coachella

**25. Amazing eBay and
Amazon Products**

27. Earth Day

29. Mushroom Season

31. Left vs. Right

32. National Pet Day

35. Acknowledgements

36. Games!

Dear Readers,

**Welcome to the sixth
edition of *The Observer*!
In this edition we'll cover
how the Alfred-Almond
alumni are handling
college, and how the
track team is ready to
spring into action. Did
you miss the March For
Our Lives event? No
worry, we have it
covered! Having trouble
trying to figure out what
to do over spring break?
We have some options!
Want to see the peculiar
things you can buy on
Ebay or Amazon? Well,
we'll show you! Check it
out and continue reading
to see what else we have
in store for you!**

Joey Kays

Mission & Vision

News We're All a Part Of

It is our mission as the Alfred-Almond Observer to provide truthful, unbiased, and accurate information to the student body. Our goal is to deliver relevant stories focused on both informing and entertaining the Alfred-Almond community. We strive to promote a positive school climate and will use the Observer as a way to give all voices at Alfred-Almond a platform.

Observer Staff:

DJ Don and the Bees:

Duncan B-C: DJ Don; Public
Relation Manager
Josh C. : Bee 2.253; Design Bee
Attilo C. : Bee 6; Worker Bee
Jessie M. : Queen Bee/
Editor-in-Chief
Sophie N. : Bee Numba 5; Writer
Bee
Maya R. : Bee 2; Editor Bee

Team Scream:

Abby H. : Editor-in-Chief
Matt I. : Staff Writer
Roni M. : Design Manager
Chloe M. : Copy Editor
Emily N. : Design Manager
Sam W. : PR Manager

The Unnamed:

Sam Q. : Editor-in-Chief
Morgan G. & Kaitlyn C. : Design
Zoey K. : Editing



Announcements

Drunk Driving
Simulation
(Activity Mod)
**Tuesday,
April 17**

First Home
Track Meet
**Tuesday,
April 17**

Senior Trip
to
Philadelphia
April 13-15

Earth
Day
**Sunday,
April 22**

Spring
Break
**April
23-27**

Jr/Sr
Prom
**Saturday,
May 5**

AP
Exams
**May
7-18**

Art Show
6:00-8:00
PM
**Tuesday,
May 15**



PANIC ON THE TITANIC

By

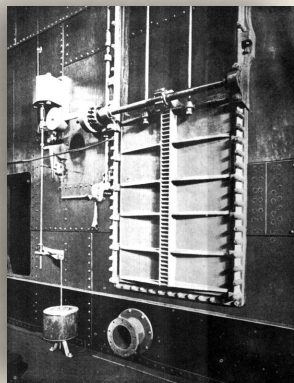
Veronica Morsman

Design Manager

This year, April 15 will be the 106 year anniversary of the sinking of the RMS¹ Titanic. The sinking occurred during the night of April 14 into the morning of April 15 in 1912. While many people are familiar with the famous sinking ship that hit an iceberg, not everyone knows the full story of the olympic-class ocean liner: the RMS Titanic, and why it was one of the most talked about tragedies of the 20th century.

The RMS Titanic was built in Belfast, Ireland for the White Star shipping line and cost around \$7.5 million. The Titanic was carrying 2,206 passengers and 898 crew members on its first voyage from Southampton, England, to New York City. The winter of 1912 produced icebergs in the North Atlantic. However, the Titanic was believed to be “unsinkable” which led crew members not to worry much about the weather warnings.

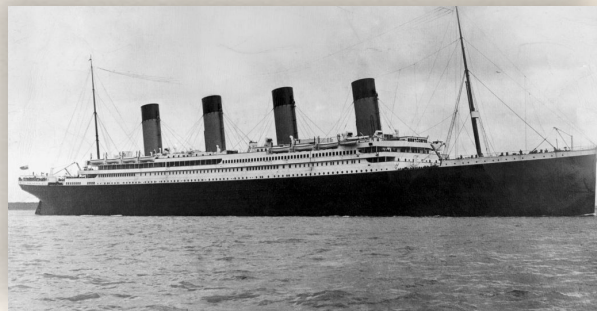
The Titanic was the most luxurious cruise ship and boarded some of the wealthiest people in the world during its time. It was nearly 900 feet long (nearly four city blocks) and over 100 feet tall (equivalent to an eleven story building). The ship could reach speeds of 30 knots, approximately 35 miles per hour, and was thought to be the world's fastest ship. Engineers believed the ship was unsinkable due to the watertight compartments and electronic watertight doors.



“Unsinkable” Ship

The Titanic was thought to be “unsinkable” due to the twelve watertight doors located on the ship’s tank top level.

**Photo from
historyonthenet.com**



The RMS Titanic

The Titanic pictured on April 10, 1912, 5 days before the sinking. It was the largest ship of its time at 900 feet long and 100 feet tall.

Photo from history.com

On the night of April 14, 1912, at 11:40 p.m., the Titanic’s right (starboard) side made a violent collision with an iceberg, damaging six of the watertight compartments. This was too much damage for the ship to withstand.

At 12:10 a.m., on April 15, passengers were ordered to head for lifeboats. Crew members radioed for help and sent an SOS signal. Unfortunately, the 20 lifeboats on board could only account for about 1,200 passengers, which left around 2,000 people without a lifeboat. No drills regarding the procedure had been planned prior to the tragedy which led to improper loading of the lifeboats and panic on the deck. The survivors who were able to make it onto a lifeboat were mainly women traveling first class.

At 2:20 a.m., the Titanic sank completely, plunging 12,600 feet, equivalent to about 35 football fields, to the ocean floor. The temperature of the Atlantic’s water was thought to be 28°F.

¹Royal Mail Ship, aboard the ship was a Sea Post Office with five clerks who sorted mail coming into the United States.



When the water is this cold, victims have less than 15 minutes before their bodies will shut down due to hypothermia and frostbite. The captain of the ship, Captain Edward Smith, went down with the ship.



Every Man for Himself

Passengers crowded onto lifeboats in a panic without any proper instruction during the catastrophe.

Photo from maritime-executive.com

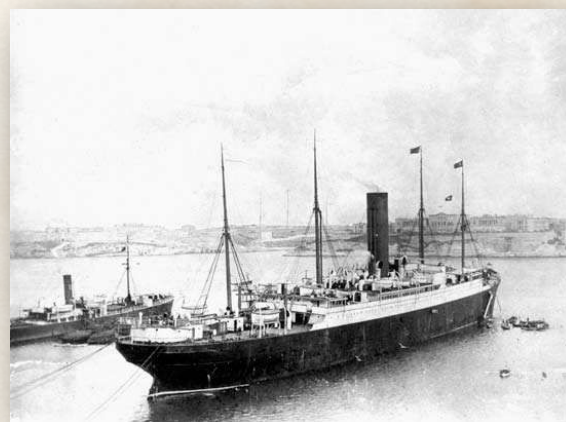
The first ship to respond to the distress calls was the Carpathia, but it was three hours away which would have been far too late. The closest ship was the Californian, which had nearly collided with the same iceberg before warning the Titanic. The captain of the Californian, Captain Stanley Lord, did not order assist to the Titanic because he assumed the Titanic's distress rockets were company signals. His officers and crew believed there was a more serious reason for the rockets; they assumed an emergency had occurred, and the Titanic did in fact hit an iceberg. Captain Stanley Lord ordered the ship to stay put for the night to avoid any icebergs and afterwards went off to sleep.

Meanwhile, the Carpathia has traveled all through the night to reach the Titanic. Once the news got to Captain Lord of the sinking ship, he ordered the Californian to the Titanic's side to help. Finally, the Californian arrived alongside the Carpathia, which had finished collecting some of the estimated 705 survivors. The Carpathia then departed to New York while the Californian stayed behind to continue the search for survivors, only to find wreckage.

The tragedy of the Titanic taught the world many lessons from its mistakes. The Titanic only supplied half the amount of life jackets and life boats for half of its maximum number of passengers.

Today maritime law requires cruise ships to carry a surplus of life jackets, usually well above the total number of passengers. The law also requires ships to have enough lifeboats for its passengers. Along with the lack of supply, there was also a lack of preparation and training. No drills were scheduled or performed by the passengers on board. Cruise ships around the world now use muster drills, a mandatory drill with the objective to familiarize all passengers with the location they are to attend in the event of an emergency. During these drills, lifeboat and life jacket instruction is presented.

The Titanic was one of the most talked about tragedies of the 20th century. However, behind every mistake there is always a lesson. The "unsinkable" RMS Titanic is a perfect example of how all humans can have faulty judgement; many times we perceive a lack of foresight as an error when it can actually be a lesson and a gift. As Henry Ford said, "The only real mistake is the one from which we learn nothing."



The RMS Carpathia

Captain Arthur Henry Rostron ordered the Carpathia to respond to the Titanic's distress calls and collected remaining survivors.

Photo from britannica.com

Japanese Cherry Blossom Festival

By Abigail H.
Editor in Chief

Every year in Japan, spring is welcomed with a festival centered around the blossoming of the Japanese cherry blossom trees. There, festivals take place all throughout Japan and are referred to as **Sakura**. Many people also have parties with their coworkers, friends, or family. These parties are celebrated by taking part in **hanami**, which is cherry blossom viewing. When people want to watch the beauty of cherry blossoms at night time, it is referred to as **yozakura**.

Differing from American schools, the school year in Japan starts during spring, so they celebrate the new start during this time. Work offices and schools will often have events during this time to allow new employees or students to make friends.



Picnic and food!

Japanese families and visitors come to the park to relax and enjoy hanami together.

Photo from ideaviaggio.altervista.org

At parks, people will often get a spot to view with their families in the morning of the blooming day or the day prior. During the day people will picnic and conduct hanami to relax.

Many groups will bring a variety of food to share and even some sake (Japanese alcohol). Some of the foods that people bring to their picnics are exclusive to this season.

A homemade treat specific to this celebration is hanami **dango**. Dango is a sweet dumpling made from rice flour and sugar that has an almost bouncy texture when eaten. Another type of snack commonly eaten during hanami is cherry blossom cookies. Cherry blossom cookies are basically sugar cookies, but with salt pickled flowers on top for decoration and flavor. During this season, many people will use the cherry blossom leaves and flowers in their cooking to add flavor. In addition, people will have matcha green tea for their drink.

Outside of the homemade foods, there are also special "limited edition" snacks from popular brands like Kit Kat and McDonald's.

The Sakura Burger has a pink bun that has a cherry scent to it topping a pork patty and an egg with teriyaki sauce on it. With that variety of flavor, it's hard to tell what the overall taste would be.^[1]

Each year, the festival isn't on the same exact date because the cherry blossoms don't bloom on the same day every year. In some years, it's in early March, and sometimes it's in mid April. It's difficult to predict the time of the blossoming, so if you want to travel to Japan someday and see the beautiful flowering, it will take a bit of research to figure out how the trees are looking that year and what the experts predict the big day will be. If you don't want to go all the way to Japan to experience the beauty of cherry blossoms, there are also festivals that take place in Washington, D.C., and Brooklyn, New York.^[2]

Even if you can't make it to the Cherry Blossom Festival this year, you can still appreciate the nature of spring by just enjoying the warm weather and admiring the upcoming reappearance of flowers.

[1] To see a video of someone trying the Sakura Burger go to this link.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WpOCky8bKkk>

[2] You can find updates on the cherry blossom trees and predictions in Washington, D.C. at this link.

<https://cherryblossomwatch.com/peak-bloom-forecast/>



Different, Not Less

By
Chloe Muhleisen
Copy Editor

"I am different, not less." This quote from Temple Grandin, an advocate for autism, shows that just because someone may have an atypical way of learning things and seeing the world, they are not any less than someone who may think "normally". There is no real normal way of thinking. Autism is misunderstood because it is commonly thought that people with this condition are less educated or don't have the capacity to learn as much as others. This is not true. People with autism have a different way of thinking, and experience social situations unlike other people do.

Autism is a mental condition that is recognized in the month of April. It is brought to attention to educate more people and create better understanding. Autism is characterized by difficulty in communication and forming relationships with other people. It affects many people throughout the world and it is important to make people more aware of what it is in order to discover ways to help and support those who are dealing with this condition.

There are many misconceptions when it comes to autism. Some believe that people with autism are intellectually disabled. This is not true because often times people with autism have normal to high IQs and have exceptional skills in specific subjects. Histories and records have

revealed that many notable figures in history may have been on the autism spectrum. Some of these people include Albert Einstein, Charles Darwin, Amadeus Mozart, Sir Isaac Newton, Thomas Jefferson, Michelangelo, Steve Jobs, and Tim Burton. These people are known for doing amazing things and break the stereotypes associated with autistic people not being intellectuals.

Temple Grandin was diagnosed with autism as a child and went on in life to pursue psychology and animal science. She is a very successful woman and has become an advocate for autism and helping people understand it more.

Grandin didn't speak until the age of four and was diagnosed with autism at the age of two. At the time, autism was considered a form of brain damage and her mother was blamed for her condition. Temple Grandin went through extensive speech therapy, but social interactions were still difficult for her during school. Despite these difficulties, Temple achieved academic excellence and went on to get a degree in psychology and animal science. She became a prominent public figure after appearing in a book called *An Anthropologist on Mars* by Oliver Sacks.

The book was based off of Temple Grandin's description of her social interactions and how she feels in a social

setting. It gave the public an insight on how the autistic mind works and brought to attention a better understanding of the definition of the word. Temple described her hypersensitivity to noise and other sensory stimuli that can make social interactions painful and at times dull. She described how she is primarily a visual thinker and considers speaking to be a secondary skill. She also described her extreme sensitivity to detail and fixations of certain aspects of life. Temple brings awareness to the public and creates a new understanding of autism.

There are many ways in which you could help people with autism continue to thrive in their daily lives. The most effective way to do this is to learn about Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Learning about the disorder will help create a better understanding between you and the person dealing with this disorder. Another way to help someone with ASD is to accept them for who they are. They have no control over what they're born with. You should be patient and not give up.

Autism is commonly misunderstood and deserves more attention. No one's intellect should be questioned based on disorders they may have. Learning about ASD will help you find ways to support people dealing with these difficulties and it might even make you a more sympathetic and understanding person.

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/science/science-news/ten-ways-support-someone-autism>

Visit the website at the bottom of the page to discover ways to support someone with ASD!



One of Many, Marching for Our Lives

Kaitlyn Cook
Design Team

Background

On February 14, 2018, there was a school shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. 17 people were killed. Afterwards, kids at the school decided that enough was enough. They immediately started calling for government action. According to BostonGlobe.com, these students included Emma Gonzalez, David Hogg, Alfonso Calderon, Sarah Chadwick, Cameron Kasky, and Samuel Zeif. USA Today reported on February 17, 2018 Emma Gonzalez gave a speech at a gun control rally where the audience chanted with her “We Call B.S.” The March For Our Lives is a planned demonstration advocating for comprehensive gun control. The March was announced on February 18, 2018; it was four days after the shooting. Before the March even happened the influence of these activists could be seen. Retailers such as Dick’s Sporting Goods, and Walmart have raised the minimum age limit to buy a gun to 21, reported NBC Nightly News. Florida, the state in which the shooting took place, has passed legislation that includes raising the minimum age limit to 21, requires a three day waiting period, and bans the sale or possession of bumpstocks reports CNN.

My Experience

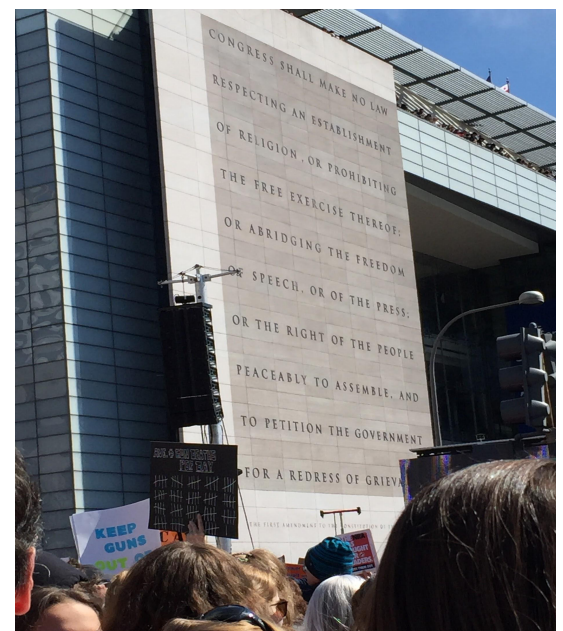
I attended the March for Our Lives rally on Saturday, March 24. My day started out with a Washington D.C. specific rally. I thought that students from Parkland were going to be speaking there, but instead I got an interesting look into D.C. politics. The rally focused on how not having statehood affected their ability to pass gun control laws that they wanted. Students from around the city spoke about how gun violence had affected their lives. From the rally we marched. We started out as a small group, filling up the size of a small park, but as we walked more people joined us. We ended filling the streets we were marching on, to the point where I couldn’t see the beginning or the end of the crowd.. All around me I could hear the sound of chanting and drum beats. The air was brisk, but the sun was out to keep us warm. We marched from the little park that had held the rally, all the way to the National Mall. Marching on the Mall was something I thought I would never experience. It was empowering to know that I was marching along with people fighting for basically the same goal, and that other powerful movements had come before me.



A Powerful sight

The March for Our Lives was swarmed with people. There are estimates from as few as 200,000 people to as many as over 800,000 people attending. The Capitol Building could always be seen in the distance.

Photo courtesy of Kaitlyn Cook



A Reminder

The First Amendment gives the people the right to peacefully assemble. The March took place by a building that had the First Amendment engraved on its wall.

Photo courtesy of Kaitlyn Cook



One of Many, Marching for Our Lives *(continued)*

From the Mall, my group and I went to Pennsylvania Avenue where the official march would be taking place. The way there was filled with people and vendors; we were two hours early and the streets were already packed. Music was blasting from speakers strategically placed. My group ended up being about one block from the main stage. We were next to the Newseum, a museum dedicated to famous news reports; in the distance we could see the top of the Capitol Building. Inscribed on the side of the Newseum was the first amendment, which combined with the view of the Capitol Building was an incredible reminder of what we were doing that day.

When the event started, it quickly became clear that we would not be marching, but instead listening to the voices of this movement. The speeches that were given all came together to form one message: Congress needs to take action against gun violence. This message came not only from the students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas (MSD) High, but from students from Sandy Hook, students from Chicago, and students from Washington D.C. as well. The organizers of the event successfully highlighted not only the problem of school shootings, but of gun violence in general.

Emma Gonzalez, a student from MSD, made an incredibly powerful speech where she barely spoke. She listed the names of the victims from Stoneman Douglas and then stood in silence. At first I thought she was taking a moment to compose herself, but the longer the silence went on, I realized that it was a planned part of her speech. Cheers erupted from the crowd to encourage her to speak, but she remained silent. Eventually everyone stood in a deafening silence. Finally speaking, she said "Since the time I have walked on stage, it has been six minutes and 20 seconds." She was referencing the amount of time that the shooter had been in her school.



Other speakers included 11 year old Naomi Wadler, who focused on the gun violence African-American women face; Sam Fuentes of MSD, who had been in one of the classrooms that the shooter entered; and Zion Kelly from D.C., who had lost his twin brother, Zaire Kelly, to gun violence. Kelly asked us to imagine losing someone that close to us. This was the closest that I came to tears the whole day. The entire event lasted around three hours, and they were the most powerful hours of my life.

A Local Speaker

Another Alfred-Almond student participated in this event, but at a different location. Hudson Laprade, a senior, spoke at the Bath March for Our Lives. He was asked to speak at the event after one of the organizers heard him speak at the Almond Town Hall meeting with Tom Reed, back in March. On the day of the March, Hudson marched with the crowd, about a quarter of a mile, after speaking. Hudson expressed that he was not nervous for his speech; public speaking is something that he is used to by now. While talking to him about his speech I noticed a theme: Hudson saw this speech as his duty. He kept saying that the speech "wasn't about him." He was focused on bringing an issue that is important to him to light. If there's one thing Hudson wanted people to take away from his speech it was, **"Don't give up, keep making your voices heard, go vote, [and] keep hope, because if everyone loses hope nothing will change."**

The Stage

This stage held many people and emotions. Musical acts such as Miley Cyrus and Broadway stars such as Lin Manuel Miranda sang. Students from the MSD Drama Department also performed an original song they created for their school.

Photo from The New Yorker



How Can Alfred-Almond Maintain a Safe Learning Environment?

By : Sophie Napolitano & Kaitlyn Cook

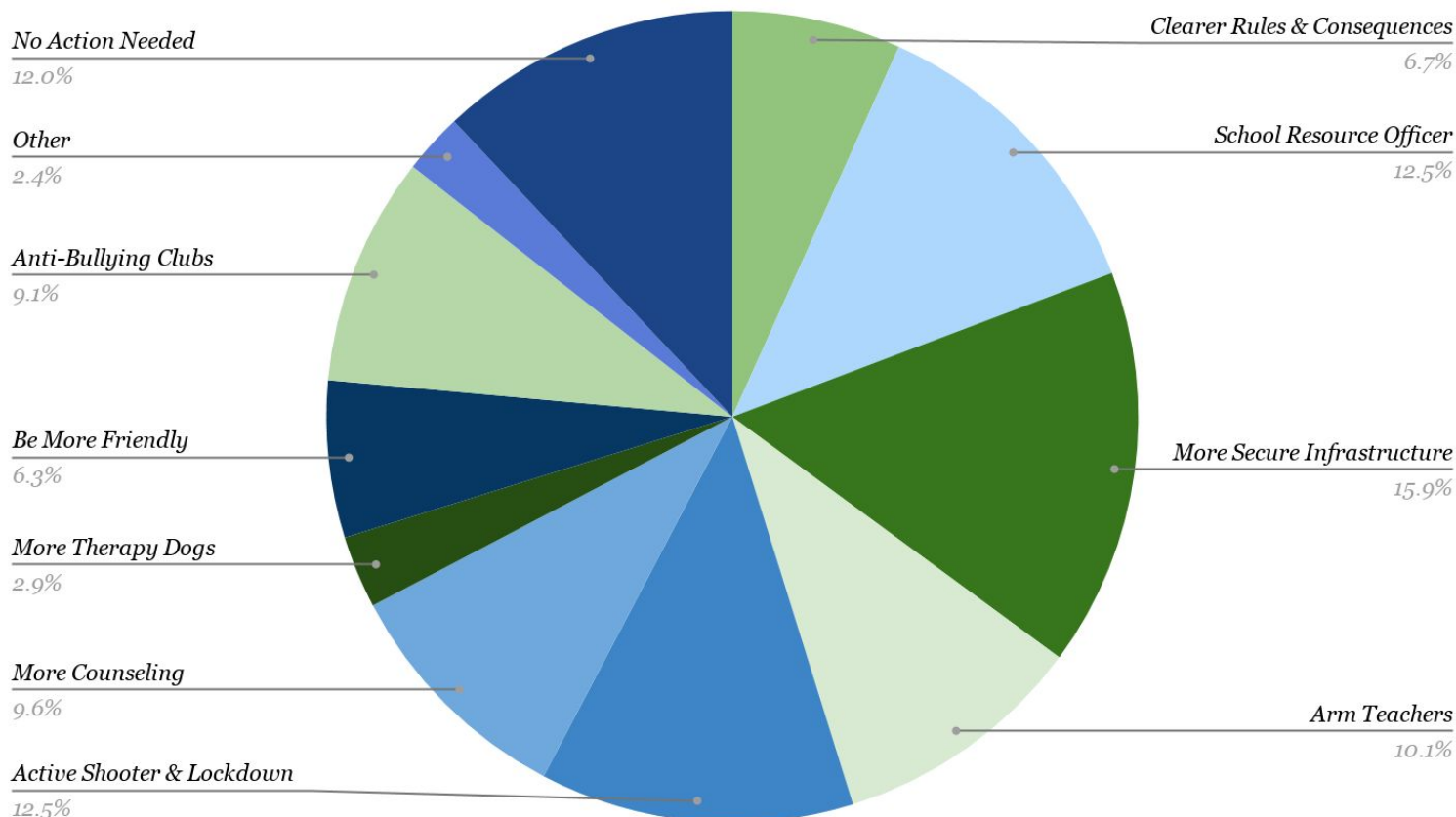
During Activity mod on Tuesday, March 27 we asked all Alfred-Almond students in grades 7-12 to take a survey about school safety. We were pleased to see such diverse responses. Here's what the student body thinks could make our school a safer place!



Puppy Love

Kilroy (pictured left) began working at Alfred-Almond this year. He is an excellent addition to our counselling staff and is loved by the student body. If you ever need a fluffy companion during the school day, Kilroy is the dog for you!

Photo Courtesy of Sophie Napolitano





School Safety

Continued

By : Sophie Napolitano
Bee 5; Writer Bee



Since the school shooting in Parkland, Florida, there has been a lot of talk about the safety of schools circulating throughout the news. Additionally, students have been coming together to discuss ways that they believe they can protect the student body. My classmate Kaitlyn and I distributed surveys asking for your opinion on how we can maintain a safe learning environment. Along with looking at responses from the student body, I was also able to meet with Mr. Calkins, AA's superintendent, to ask him about how he plans on keeping the students safe.

The first thing that we discussed was the replacement of our school's exterior doors. Every year the school's infrastructure is reviewed, and with the help of Hunter Architects and Engineers, the school decides what needs to be updated. Alfred-Almond has beautiful doors, however, they are no longer up to the safety standards of our school. The doors have cracks in them, their glass has needed to be replaced, and the wiring is falling apart on the inside. Unfortunately, because the school is a historic building, it is very difficult to replace these doors. The school had to get permission from the State Historic Protection Office to replace the doors, and after more than a year long process, the petition passed. This summer the doors are

scheduled to be replaced. Many of you may be sad to see our historical doors leave, but don't be alarmed - there is an excellent committee of members of the Alumni Association picking out the best doors that will fulfil both the safety requirement and the visual approval of the community. The doors will be custom-made and retain all of the historic beauty we are all so used to.

“Safety and security is everyone's business”

Along with improving the infrastructure of the school, Mr. Calkins is also pushing for funding for a School Resource Officer (SRO). He has been in contact with both Senator Catharine Young and Sheriff Ricky Witney to discuss this possibility. In our state there is no separate funding for extra security measures like having an SRO. If a school decides to hire an SRO, they end up having to make a tough decision, sometimes between having enough teachers or having

an officer. Mr. Calkins believes “we shouldn't have to make a decision like that for school safety.” If more funding is available to schools near us, he believes that an SRO would be an excellent addition to the school. Mr. Calkins is also hoping to perform an active shooter training for both the teachers and the students. This training would help staff and students learn some of the warning signs of how to indicate a potential school shooter, and would help teach individuals how to respond in the case of a shooting.

While it's important for our school to be implementing all of these security measures, Mr. Calkins wants to make sure that “safety and security is everyone's business, it's not just the business of the administration.” It's so important for the student body to be actively involved in all that is going on. One of the best ways you can help is by reporting unusual behavior. When you see something unusual or alarming, it's best to tell someone about it rather than keep it to yourself. Additionally, while it may seem obvious, sometimes just taking that extra bit of time to be nice to someone can create a huge impact. Talk to our counselors about bullying or suggest ways you think we can improve the environment of our school. People love to hear your input, so don't be afraid to talk about these issues!



Believe There is Good in the world

CHANGE STARTS WITH YOU

By
Attilo Cushing
Bee 6: Worker Bee

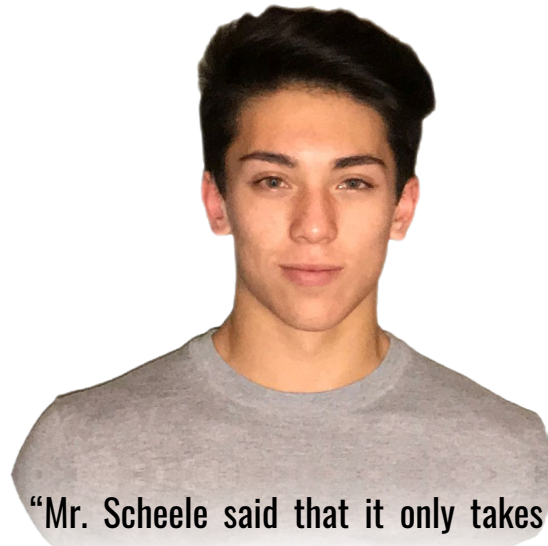
Youth Summit Logo
Picture from www.in.gov



Build a better world

Kyle Scheele is a motivational speaker, cardboarder, and author who has used these platforms to challenge many students across the nation with the task of building a better world.

Photo from kylescheele.com



“Mr. Scheele said that it only takes one person to tear someone down and one person to build them back up.”

-Laertes C.

Photo Courtesy of Attilo C.

How can you help?

To me or to you, a smile, a hello, or a compliment might not mean a whole lot, but to others, positive words could mean the difference between an awful day where everything seems to be going against you, and a great day where everything is on your side. At this year's Youth Summit, a supplemental activity of this theme was to meet with seventeen new people at the seminar (instead of walking out like many other students on that same day) to pay homage to the 17 lives lost in the Parkland shooting.

¹Learn more about Kyle Scheele [here](#).

²Click [this link](#) to learn more about those who lost their lives at the Parkland shooting.



CHANGE STARTS WITH YOU



“You don’t always know people’s situations, or their lives, so don’t be quick to pass judgment on others.

-Mariah D.

Photo Courtesy of Attilo C.

Not only does this emphasize the idea that the smallest things can make the biggest difference, but it also fuels the thought of “what if?” What if someone had been there to talk to the kids who have gunned down students in schools when they needed it? What if the difference between a school shooter and a typical high school kid is a stable home life, supportive family, or friends?

Recently in America, more and more families are being torn apart by the loss of their beloved children from school shootings. Every child lost was a son, daughter, friend, boyfriend or girlfriend who had the world at their fingertips, and opportunities all around them, ready to make a dent in the universe. Was the difference between the senseless, abrupt end to their lives, and nothing happening at all only a few words? The fragility of life is nothing new, and unexpected tragedies will always happen, however certain heart wrenching events can be avoided by taking small steps. “I learned that what you say can affect people, and to be careful of what you say,” said Isaac L, one of the attendees that day. The next time you walk down the hallway, instead of avoiding eye contact, pretending to look at your phone so you don’t have to see the person, or suddenly becoming interested in the wall on your right, try looking at the person and saying “Hi”, or “Hello” - there’s a good chance it will improve their day!



Believe

There is

Good in the world ... That

was the motto at the 2018 youth summit, and while I could have simply written that in a sentence, I kept the unique format because I perceive it to be essential to the message. It shows that once you truly believe that there is good in the world, you can in turn become the good you come to recognize. In order to accomplish anything significant, you must believe in the goal as well as yourself. A change in perspective is crucial, and as Mahatma Gandhi once said, “Be the change you want to see in the world”, for change starts with **you** taking small steps to achieve the larger goal.

Mix It Up!

After all this talk of taking steps towards change, you can start taking action with the new upcoming Mix It Up activity. It will be held during 4th, 5th and 6th mod in the cafeteria on April 18, and it should be noted that participation is not mandatory. The whole purpose of this activity is to initiate more interaction between students from different friend groups, learn new things about others and to create a tighter knit community at A-A so that the hours of a school day can be more enjoyable. Show that you care about eliminating the “what if” scenarios, and join everyone on Wednesday, April 18! More details will be provided as this date approaches.

“Put yourself in their shoes. If someone said it to you, how would you feel?... as corny as it is, people more often should ask themselves that.”

-Isaac L.

Photo Courtesy of Attilo C.

Look to your left, now look to your right. You probably *recognize* the people around you, but do you really *know* them? This is the concept I've been trying to develop through this column, and yet, for many, the answer to this question is still *no*. To be fair, humans are complex, and considering most of us don't even fully know ourselves, how can we even begin to truly know someone else? The answer, while not absolute or perfect, is simply to **ask questions**; only a few sentences into this article and I've already asked you two. Think hard about all of the conversations you've ever had - were they filled with small talk or meaningful questions? All of those friends you talk to daily, do you know their favorite childhood memory, their aspirations, their dreams? If not, it's truly never too late to begin; just think back to this next time you're having a conversation, and start asking questions. To get you started, try to figure out **who is on the other end of this Q and A**.

Q: What are three interesting facts about you?

A: I was born and raised in Toronto. I had an acting/modeling career as a child. I'm a certified Shooting Sports instructor (shotgun, rifle, archery).

Q: What are your hobbies?

A: Reading, and pretending to be a swimmer/runner.

Q: What is your favorite movie genre?

A: Chick Flicks

Q: What is your favorite sport?

A: Diving and Hunter/Jumpers

Q: What highschool did you



attend?

A: West Genesee

Q: Did you go to college, if so where?

A: SUNY Delhi with a stint at Cornell University

Q: When did you get married?

A: 1985

Q: How many children do you have?

A: Four; 2 boys, 2 girls

Q: Why did you decide to do the work you are doing now?

A: I wanted to ease my kids' transition from a large, urban school district to a small, tight knit school population. I volunteered in the classroom to get in touch with this school's culture and climate. When a full-time position became available, I was asked to apply.

Q: What's your favorite part about your job?

A: It is always changing and evolving. I love working around students and keeping up with technology.

Q: What is a normal day in your job like?

A: Always different but typically, arrive early to get in a walk or swim.

deliver finished projects to classrooms. Lifeguard in the pool. Laminate, photograph and edit, update webpage and message boards, visit classrooms, set up technology, inventory and maintain equipment, lend a hand where needed, attend sports and after-school events.

Q: What jobs did you have prior to this one?

A: I am a LVT (Licensed Veterinary Technician) so I have worked in private practice, academics, and corporate research and development. I have been a bank teller, delivered newspapers, provided day care, done data processing, and medical lab testing.

Q: What job would you be terrible at?

A: Accountant or fiduciary¹. I am not enthralled with numeric details!

Q: What job do you think you'd be really good at?

A: Dog-walker

Q: What would you say your biggest accomplishments are?

A: Raising four decent human beings.

Q: Would you rather go into the past and meet your ancestors or go into the future and meet your great-great grandchildren?

A: Future, because I want to see what happens.

Q: Would you rather have a rewind button or a pause button on your life?

A: Rewind Button

¹Fiduciary- someone who is entrusted to manage the finances of another person.



Picture Perfect *This person can often be found around the school snapping pictures of students and faculty alike while participating in class, clubs, sports, etc.*

Photo Courtesy of Morgan Giglio

Q: Would you rather read an awesome book or watch a good movie?

A: Read an awesome book



Desktop *This is the desk of our mystery staff member who has a love for animals, especially dogs.*

Photo courtesy of Morgan G.

Q: Would you rather explore space or the ocean?

A: The ocean

Q: Would you rather go deep sea diving or bungee jumping?

A: Having just said the ocean, I'm going to say bungee jumping

Q: Would you rather be a kid your whole life or an adult your whole life?

A: I wouldn't want to be a teenager



Let's Laminate *Another nifty thing this mystery staff member does is run the laminator that is found in their room.*

Photo courtesy of Morgan Giglio

again but I wouldn't mind being a kid again. Everybody takes care of you and I had a pretty good childhood.

Q: Would you rather be an Olympic gold medalist or a Nobel Peace Prize winner?

A: Nobel Peace Prize Winner



The Books of Chrome *As a technical genius, this staff member has been entrusted with the school's collection of Chromebooks located just outside their room.*

Photo courtesy of Morgan G.

Q: Would you rather hear the good news or the bad news first?

A: I guess I would take the bad news first.

Q: Would you rather have an unlimited gift certificate to a restaurant or a clothing store?

A: A restaurant, I like anything anyone else cooks as long as I don't have to make it and clean up after it myself.

Q: Would you rather spend the next year exempt from all taxes or have a one-month paid vacation?

A: Tax exemption would give me more money than the vacation but I would pick the one-month paid vacation.

Who is it??? IDEK bro



Who's behind door #5? *Find out which faculty member it is on page #36!*

Photo courtesy of Morgan G.

ALUMNI ANSWER

As many seniors decide where they're going to go to college, I thought it would be important to interview some past alumni on their opinions of local schools. This would help give some insight to help everyone's decision. At the same time, quite a few juniors and sophomores are embarking on tours to get a taste of various schools to see where they want to apply to. In hopes of aiding everyone's decisions on application and acceptance, here's what some recent AA alumni expected from their college choice, and what they got.

By: **Jessie M.**
Queen Bee / Editor in Chief

People and Colleges:
Noah Holmok: Class of
2016 – Alfred State

Wyatt Ames: Class of
2017 – SUNY Fredonia

Alex DeGraff: Class of
2017 – Cornell University

Abby Fancher: Class of
2017 – Rochester
Institute of Technology

Elizabeth Allen: Class of
2016: University at
Buffalo

Noah Holmok
Majoring in Sports
Management

Alfred State
SUNY College of Technology



Q. Is college as challenging as you thought it would be?

A. Nope. It depends on what major you're in.

Q. Were the AP courses as helpful as expected?

A. No, but some of them do and apply to what I do.

Q. Did you under-prepare or over-prepare with bringing school clothes and supplies)?

A. Noah lives at home.

Q. Does A-State help you find used or lower priced textbooks?

A. No

Q. Are the classes large?

A. Depends on what class; I've had classes with ten and classes with 30.

Q. What are some cool clubs you've found at A-State?

A. I'm not into clubs.

Q. Do you like how A-State structures the program for your major?

A. Honestly, most of my courses don't matter after my intro classes, so I can choose what I want to take.

Q. Do you still play sports?

A. Yes, I play soccer.

Q. What do you miss most about A-A?

A. The teachers

Photo Courtesy of:
Noah H.

Photo From: suny.edu



FREDONIA

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Wyatt Ames Majoring in Communications



Q. Is college as challenging as you thought it would be?

A. Yes, I figured college classes couldn't be that much harder. The biggest challenges are self imposed, like dedicating your time to clubs and friends. Professors for the most part that I've seen give you a lot of time to do any assignment.

Q. Were the AP courses as helpful as expected?

A. Yes, but I only ever took one AP class, and I failed it. I ended up taking just an easier version of the same class my first semester and realized it wasn't teaching me anything new so I never bought the textbook.

Q. Did you under-prepare or over-prepare with bringing school clothes and supplies?

A. Yes, a bit too much actually, I find myself doing laundry every three days and just cycling through those clothes.

Q. Does Fredonia help you find used or lower priced textbooks?

A. The campus itself won't put you through a program to find cheap textbooks, but everyone will tell you to just look online.

Q. Are the classes large?

A. Classes are actually fairly small for me, I've been in lecture halls that can hold about 100 students only to fill it with some odd 30.

Q. What are some cool clubs you've found at Fredonia?

A. I joined the Dungeons and Dragons club and that's been a great time. I've made a lot of friends and have made myself more known around campus.

Q. Do you like how Fredonia structures the program for your major?

A. The Communications major is handled pretty well; when I had to transfer departments I ended up talking to just about every single person in the Comm. Department and they were all super nice and helpful. The requirements for my major aren't ridiculous and I have some nice options for complementing minors.

Q. Do you still play sports?

A. No, I never liked to play competitively which is the only big option here. But the courts are nice, and if I could find a friend that actually played tennis I still would.

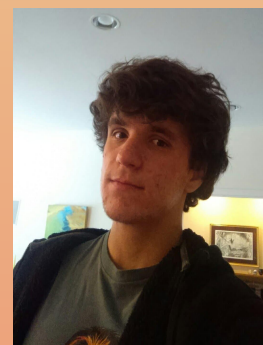
Q. What do you miss most about A-A?

A. I miss the lower consequences for missing an assignment.

Photo From : suny.edu
Photo Courtesy of: Wyatt Ames



Alex DeGraff Majoring in Computer Science



Q. Is college as challenging as you thought it would be?

A. It is far more challenging than I thought it would be. Although my experience was probably typical, it just depends on the school you go to or the classes you take

Q. Were the AP courses as helpful as expected?

A. No

Q. Did you under-prepare or over-prepare with bringing school clothes and supplies?

A. I'd say I prepared the exact right amount. Actually I didn't buy enough notebooks, you need a crap ton of paper so buy twice what you think you need and you'll be good.

Q. Does Cornell help you find used or lower priced textbooks?

A. No they wanna milk you dry. You gotta find them on your own. [sic]

Q. Are the classes large?

A. Yes, very. I've taken a class with over 1,000 [people], one with over 500, and three classes with around 300. My smallest class was 17 people.

Q. What are some cool clubs you've found at Cornell?

A. Creative computing club is my favorite club. It's a club that focuses on the intersection of computer programming and art, so, you know, using math to make cool projects that are fun instead of entirely utilitarian. There's also a mafia club that plays mafia - that's pretty fun.

Q. Do you like how Cornell structures the program for your major?

A. Oh yeah, it's awesome. It's honestly pretty much as good as it could get. You can take courses you would usually have to wait until you were a graduate student to take, but at Cornell there's a bunch of classes you can take for computer science as an undergrad and they're interesting (and you can't take 'em anywhere else) with great professors. It's a bit too theory-heavy for my taste... I came here because I wanted to learn about the theory, but I think they stress it a bit too much.

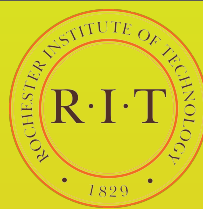
Q. Do you still play sports?

A. Uh, I take P.E. classes, otherwise, no. But you can here; there are D1 sports, and there are lots of clubs that play for fun or competitively.

Q. What do you miss most about A-A?

A. My friends and Mr. Donlon

Photo Courtesy of:
Alex DeGraff
Photo From: vailcentre.org



Abby Fancher Majoring as a Physician's Assistant



University at Buffalo
The State University of New York



Elizabeth Allen Majoring in Occupational Therapy

Q. Is college as challenging as you thought it would be?

A. Yes, I would say it is... The most challenging aspect is probably the fast pace of classes compared to high school. I have at least one test every week, so it can get kind of crazy! It's a little overwhelming at first, but once you figure out what you need to study and plan out what you need to get done each day, it's very manageable.

Q. Were the AP courses as helpful as expected?

A. The AP courses were very helpful to me. The AP Biology course helped a lot with my first semester of general biology and the other AP courses transferred as perspective credits (RIT's general education requirements) so I did not have to take as many credits during my first and second semester as some of my peers.

Q. Did you under-prepare or over-prepare with bringing school clothes and supplies?

A. I would say I was adequately prepared with school supplies, but I was totally under-prepared with school clothes. I had to bring more the next week.

Q. Does RIT help you find used or lower priced textbooks?

A. RIT has students buy their books from the RIT Barnes and Nobles, and they also offer used books to buy or rent. The bookstore will also price match if you find the textbook somewhere else that is cheaper.

Q. Are the classes large?

A. The class sizes vary depending on what class you are taking. For example, my biology lecture is pretty big with about 250 students in the lecture hall... However, I took an English class my first semester that only had 26 students in it.

Q. What are some cool clubs you've found at RIT?

A. At RIT there are over 300 clubs, so you can find some cool and interesting ones. There is even a club for my major which is called PASA and stands for Physician Assistant Student Association.

Q. Do you like how RIT structures the program for your major?

A. I like how RIT structures my major because after my sophomore year I begin the graduate years of Physician Assistant, so I have to finish all my perspective courses and immersion before the graduate year.

Q. Do you still play sports?

A. No, I do not play sports at RIT. I did join an intramural dodgeball team with my friends from the floor of my dorm building during the fall semester.

Q. What do you miss most about A-A?

A. I miss not seeing my high school friends and my sister everyday.

*Photo From: rit.edu
Photo Courtesy of: Jessie M*

Q. Is college as challenging as you thought it would be?

A. College is as hard as I thought it would be; I have an older sister so I got the lowdown from her.

Q. Were the AP courses as helpful as expected?

A. Honestly, the AP courses didn't prepare me at all, but the credits that transfer will be super helpful.

Q. Did you under-prepare or over-prepare with bringing school clothes and supplies?

A. I over-prepared with school clothes, I always do haha! I over-prepared with supplies too; a lot of my notes, homework, and assignments are online. The ideal amount of clothes and supplies were very little. I find myself wearing the same outfits over and over.

Q. Does UB help you find used or lower priced textbooks?

A. UB does not help me find lower priced textbooks, but they do sell used books at their bookstore which is convenient.

Q. Are the classes large?

A. The classes are very large! Most of mine are between 100-300 kids.

Q. What are some cool clubs you've found at UB?

A. I'm actually in a sorority here! It's called Delta Phi Epsilon and I love love love it :)

Q. Do you like how UB structures the program for your major?

A. The program for my major is extremely competitive and very hard to get into- I do not like that about it. I wish it would expand! You can also only apply to it in January, which is super frustrating. It would be much more helpful if you could apply 6 months or something like that.

Q. Do you still play sports?

A. I do not play any sports here; it's D1 so I definitely wouldn't be able to play on school teams, but we have a lot of club teams! I'm just really busy and it's hard to find the time.

Q. What do you miss most about A-A?

A. Funny enough, I miss playing sports the most about AA.

*Photo From: suny.edu
Photo Courtesy of: Elizabeth Allen*



Do you want to be BIGGER, FASTER, & STRONGER?

By: Matt I.
Staff Writer

Alfred Almond is an absolute track and field powerhouse in section five, but, what goes on at a track meet? I started asking around to see if anyone that's not on the track team could tell me what any of the events are. No one could, including myself, so I asked some members of the team to help me out.

I asked Roni Morsman and she told me that there were 21 different events at a track meet. I also asked the coaches for a little insight on their teams.

Track and field events

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| 100 meter | 1 straight away. Sprinting. |
| 100 meter hurdles | 1 straight away with hurdles. Sprinting. |
| 200 meter | 1 straight away and a corner. Sprinting. |
| 400 meter | 1 full lap around the track. Sprinting/mid-distance. |
| 400 meter hurdles | 1 full lap around the track with hurdles all throughout. Sprinting/mid distance. |
| 800 meter | 2 full laps. Mid distance |
| 1500 meter-girls | 3 and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a lap. Distance |
| 1600 meter-boys | 4 full laps. Distance |
| 3000 meter | 7 and a $\frac{1}{2}$ laps around the track. Distance. |
| 4 by 1 relay | 4 runners that each run a 100 Sprinting |
| 4 by 4 relay | 4 runners that each run a 400. Sprinting/mid distance |
| 4 by 8 relay | 4 runners that each run an 800. Mid distance |
| Steeplechase-boys | 7 laps. Distance |
| Steeplechase-girls | 5 laps. Distance |
| Pentathlon | Long jump, High jump, Shot put, 100 hurdles, 1500 meter |
| High jump | Jump over the bar |
| Long jump | Jump out as far as you can into the pit |
| Triple jump | Hop, step, jump into the pit |
| Discus | Throw the discus |
| Shot put | Throw the shot put |
| Pole vault | Use the pole to catapult yourself over the bar |



Alfred Almonds Empire



Steeplechase

Hunter C. an Alfred-Almond alumni and former track star tries to pull away in the Steeplechase.

Photo courtesy of eveningtribune.com



Triple Jump

A track star in the making, Ethan H. tries for a new best in the triple jump.

Photo courtesy of eveningtribune.com



Shot Put

Former Alfred-Almond athlete Jacob L. gives the shot put a toss.

Photo courtesy of eveningtribune.com

The girls track team under Coach Decker has been seeing some great success these past few years. I asked Coach Decker what he thought his chances at the title are this year. He replied with, "We should be in the conversation again for winning a Sectional title this season. We have finished 2nd the last 6 years, so maybe this will be lucky Number 7!" As for the captains of the girls track team they are, Emelia Enke, Abby Hendee, Ellen McInnes, and Sophie Napolitano. I asked Coach Decker about the people to watch this year and he said the athletes to watch are, Zoe Balinsky, Avery Libordi, Maeve Looney, Emilia Enke, Sophie Napolitano, and the 1600 Relay team of Avery, Maeve, Hanna Tormey, and Nora Looney. I asked Coach Decker if he had any advice for future athletes looking to join the track team and he said, "Come out for the team as soon as possible. I don't know how many times over the last several years I've heard members of the team say they wish they would have gone out for track sooner. It takes time to figure out what events you will be most successful, at and the sooner that is figured out, the sooner you can start winning them."

The boys track team has experienced an amazing amount of success with Coach Cook at the helm. Coach Cook has won nine Sectional titles, and he has won the last eight consecutive titles. There is no comparison to the track empire he has created at Alfred-Almond. When asked what he felt his chances are to win the title again this year and next, Coach Cook replied with "I like to think that we have a shot every year if we stay healthy." The captains of the team this year are Evan Wood, Hudson Laprade, Chase St. George, and Ethan Hann. These will be some of the athletes to watch this season as well as Nick Clark in the throwing. Coach Cook hopes that he can keep the tradition of dominating section V going this year and for years after. When I asked Coach Cook if he had any advice for future athletes he replied with, "If you want to be BIGGER, FASTER, & STRONGER, then join the track team."

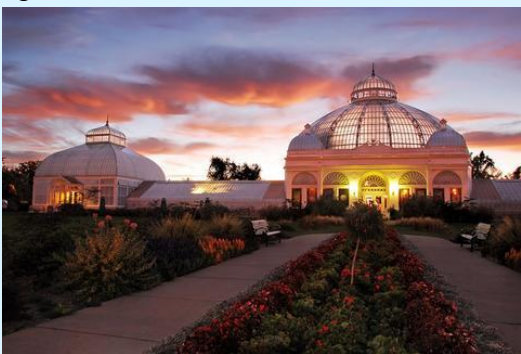
To find the spring sports schedule click the link below.

[http://www.aacs.wnyric.org/sports_schedule/2017-18/SPRING%20SPORTS%202018%20\(1\).pdf](http://www.aacs.wnyric.org/sports_schedule/2017-18/SPRING%20SPORTS%202018%20(1).pdf)



Buffalo, NY

Visit the **Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens** where you can view both indoor and outdoor gardens with exotic and local plants. It provides an educational experience and a chance to reach out and see different plants in the environment throughout the world. Buffalogardens.com shows maps and pictures of the building and exhibits present there.



Enjoy the Sunset Among the Plants
Photo from buffalogardens.com

Take a dip in history by visiting the **Forest Lawn Cemetery** and visiting some of the famous gravesites located there. According to forest-lawn.com you could go visit people like Millard Fillmore, America's 13th President; Red Jacket, a chief of the Seneca Indians; or Elvin J. "Shep" Shepherd, a legendary saxophonist. The cemetery backs up to the Delaware Park which has a lot of agricultural activities to indulge in.



The Gates to History *Photo from ILoveNY.com*

Spring Into a Local Destination

By
Samantha Quick
Editor in Chief



If you want to take a plunge into culture, visit the **Elmwood Village**. According to visitbuffaloniagara.com, the village has tons of restaurants ranging from sushi to Mexican to pizza and subs, with stores and parks all around. Elmwood Village is a good way to submerge yourself into a new cultural adventure.



Elmwood Village Map *Photo from researchgate.com*

Syracuse, NY

You can open a door to the past and visit the **Erie Canal Museum**. You can take a tour of the Sims Store Museum full of canal memorabilia or tour of the Chittenango Landing Canal Boat Museum where you can see replicas of old canal boats. If you don't want to go to a museum, you can go and take a ride through the Erie Canal, experiencing what it is like to go through some gates and what it was like to travel the Erie Canal.



Ride Through History *Photo and information from eriecanalmuseum.org*

If you want to have some fun be sure to visit one of the **four escape rooms** in Syracuse. Each building has many rooms varying in difficulty and time with unique themes. In Syracuse you could go to the Destiny USA Mall and find all four buildings located in or around there; 5 Wits, Escape the Estate, Museum of Intrigue, and Escape the Mystery Room.



Room in 5 Wits *Photo and information from tripadvisor.com*



Rochester, NY



Fun Inside and Out *Photo from museumofplay.org*
Go visit some of the museums in Rochester including the **Strong Museum of Play** and the **Rochester Museum and Science Center**. Both places are good for kids and adults to jog the brain and entertain the mind. The Museum of Play was originally opened in 1968 by Margaret Woodbury Strong who died a year later causing the museum to close so one day in 1982 it would be reopened as the Strong Museum of Play. The Rochester Museum and Science Center opened in 1912 as the Rochester Municipal Museum but was renamed in 1965. The museum provides many different exhibits exploring new and old scientific discoveries or ideas. Both museums provide opportunities for kids to learn and explore objects and ideas they may otherwise never had known.



Explore Our World *Photo from facebook.com*

All Rochester information comes from
vactionidea.com

A fun outdoor activity would be to go to **Highland Park** and explore the many acres of designed lawns. Frederick Law Olmsted creates patterns in the landscape with over 10,000 different plants each year for their famous annual festival. Even though the festival is not until May 11, it is still a good idea to go and see the other attractions at the park, such as the Lamberton Conservatory, the John Dunbar Memorial Pavilion, the Warner Castle, and the Greater Rochester Vietnam Memorial. There are also all the normal things a park would have, including picnic areas, benches, and many different walking or biking paths.



Stop and Smell the Roses

Photo from newyorkbyrail.com

If you love animals, you should go to the **Seneca Park Zoo**. With over 90 different species of animals including animals from polar and coastal regions, the zoo is a good way to show children many different animals in the world while also entertaining them for some time.



*Photo from
rochester.kidsoutand
about.com*

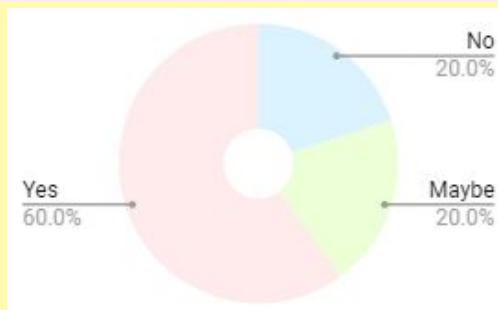
Connect. Care. Conserve.

SYRACUSE CONT.

Go and visit the **Landmark Theater**, note that there are no shows going on during spring break. Open since 1928, the Landmark Theater provides a gorgeous dip into the past while hosting modern shows. The Landmark has hosted shows like Dirty Dancing and Impractical Jokers, while also providing music concerts and other entertainment. Over spring break the Landmark is not showing any shows but you can go and take a tour of the facility.



The Stage Sees You *Photo and information from
landmarktheatre.org*



Student Body on Spring Break

When asked if they were going somewhere on spring break, 60% of the 10 kids said yes. The destinations range from family gatherings to tropical getaways.

Created by Samantha Quick



It's Coachella Baby!

By: Duncan Bryant-Carly

DJ Don: PR Manager

Coachella: the internationally famous music festival, right? I used to think everyone knew what Coachella is, but after bringing it up to my classmates and teachers, I found that this was not entirely true. I searched the web far and wide, and did my best to come up with an accurate explanation of Coachella, yet no matter where I searched, each resource gave off the notion that Coachella is not easily described in words; only through experience can you gain the best understanding of the event. That being said, I present to you my best interpretation of Coachella.



So Many Colors

*Coachella at sunset, showcasing all the colors and beauty of the festival
Photo from greaterpalmsprings.com*

Coachella, officially known as “The Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival,” takes place every year at the Empire Polo Club in Indio, California during the month of April. Coachella is one of the biggest music festivals in the world featuring world renowned artists and musicians that all come together for two weekends. The bands all play over the course of Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, then rest for a week and play again the next Friday, Saturday, Sunday. Across five different stages, over 200 bands will play over the course of three days, meaning that there is literally live music for 72 hours straight. The music performed at Coachella ranges all the way from rock n’ roll

to hip/hop to techno and everything in between. To put in perspective how famous Coachella is, Kendrick Lamar, Guns n’ Roses, AC/DC, and Outkast have all performed at Coachella in the last four years, with even more music legends being added to the roster this year.

Perhaps what makes Coachella so popular is how it not only hosts musical artists, but visual artists as well. All throughout the land that Coachella rests on are sculptures and works of art done by various artists; often times the art is even interactive on top of its artistic value. In addition to the never ending music and voluminous artwork, the dress code is hardly consistent with today’s standards. At Coachella, it is the norm to dress in extravagant clothes and weird outfits, and it would be considered “lame” to dress in normal, everyday clothes. In fact, Coachella is so out of this world that the word “extraterrestrial” seems to describe the festival pretty well.



The Sculpture

The Spaceman is a small portion of all the creative and extraordinary artwork found at Coachella

Photo from thesandiegouniontribune.com



Pearl Jam, one of the first bands to ever play at Coachella
Photo from consequenceofsound.net

The history of Coachella dates back to 1999 when the festival was first started by Paul Tollett and Rick Van Santen. At the time, Pearl Jam and other bands, such as Beck and Rage Against the Machine, had been experiencing trouble with Ticketmaster over-pricing tickets to their shows. With Ticketmaster dominating the

concert scene, these bands searched for a way to host an event without Ticketmaster. Soon after, they discovered the Empire Polo Club in California, and thus began the famous festival. In 1999, Pearl Jam and the other bands proved that the performance could be successful without Ticketmaster. No event was held in 2000, but in 2001 Coachella was restarted as an annual one-day event. In 2002, a second day was added to the festival, and in 2007, a third day. In 2012, a second weekend was added to the festival and remains this way to this day.



The Giant Caterpillar

Another famous piece of artwork that appeared at Coachella one year
Photo from pinterest.com

Coachella has become internationally known, and people from all over the world come to hear the music, see the artwork, and live the experience. This year, Coachella will be held on April 13-15 and April 20-22, and will feature big-time musicians such as Eminem, Beyonce, The Weeknd, Portugal. The Man, and many, many more. Aside from the over-priced food and drinks (slice of pizza: \$7.00), Coachella is a place where dreams come true and memories that last a lifetime are made.



A Couple Partygoers

Two attendees of the Coachella festivities dressed in wacky outfits, yet fitting in perfectly at the venue
Photo from dailymail.com



Oddities From Ebay and Amazon By Josh Carstens, Bee #2.253, Design Bee

Vintage Camera Lenses

Ebay is the main marketplace to find vintage optics from eastern European countries for very cheap. Vintage lenses have risen in popularity in recent years, thanks to the advent of compact mirrorless cameras like the Sony Alpha a6000 and Panasonic LUMIX GX85. The quintessential vintage lens is the [Helios 44-2](#), a USSR-made 58mm lens which rose to fame for its swirly bokeh, or the light orbs that appear when something is out of focus, which occurs due to a lens defect. It can be found for under \$50 on Ebay as there was a surplus of these produced from 1958 to 1992. The USSR was also responsible for the Jupiter series of lenses, such as the [Jupiter-9](#) 85mm and [Jupiter-11](#) 135mm, which vary in availability depending on the model but can also be picked up on Ebay for under \$50. However, when shopping for vintage lenses, make sure you're not buying something with thorium oxide in the lens element, as it's radioactive. While the use of thorium oxide in lenses hasn't occurred in decades, the list of affected lenses is rather large and includes products from Canon, Olympus, Carl Zeiss, Nikon, and especially Kodak, who produced lenses with thorium oxide from the 1940s to 1960s. However, the amount of radioactivity found in these elements isn't anywhere near fatal, or even detectable at a distance of over 3 feet. (Neither of the mentioned lenses contain any thorium oxide so don't worry)

Online retailers and resellers like Amazon and Ebay have proven to be huge forces in the manufactured goods industry, singlehandedly killing other massive businesses like malls and select department stores (Kmart and Sears in particular). They prove to be very useful services and are getting even more useful with offerings like Prime Now and Amazon Go, which allow for deliveries to be made within a couple hours from being ordered and eliminate the need for cashiers. They're also acquiring existing successful companies like Whole Foods and PayPal. With their giant market relevance, there are millions of items being sold, many of which are stranger than others. Here are some of my favorite weird items, useful or otherwise.



Photo from rugift.com

1500 Live Ladybugs

Fun fact: Certain types of native ladybug species are becoming more and more rare, while other species are rapidly growing in population, changing the North American ladybug composition and reducing the health of forage and food crops since native species are no longer there to reduce pests. Normally, I would offer a way to remedy this problem, but if you want to actively make the problem worse, I suggest you purchase [1,500 Live Ladybugs](#) from Bug Sales for a mere \$4.25. Alternatively, you can go with the [18,000 ladybugs](#) for \$44 if you need more firepower. Once you've already purchased and released your thousands of ladybugs into the environment, you can visit [lostladybug.org](#), which is a project that accepts any and all location-tagged pictures of ladybugs in order to track the population movement. Or you could just do so without first buying and releasing 1500 live ladybugs from Amazon.

Photo from jassy2012.deviantart.com



Photo from amazon.com



An Entire House

A callback to the era of the Sears catalog home, it's possible to order all the materials for your future house from none other than Amazon.com. The [Allwood Eagle Vista](#) is a 1336 square foot kit cabin and can be ordered from Amazon with free shipping, and is \$64,650. There is only one in stock. While one may expect an Amazon house to not be the sturdiest in the neighborhood, the model of the Sears home may prove them otherwise. Do-it-yourself houses are widely regarded by history enthusiasts as stronger than the usual house. And if you're not into doing all the construction on your own, you can also order a prefabricated home made out of a shipping container for less money. The New Generation Builders' [Container/Tiny House](#) is \$35,000 and there's also only one in stock, however the shipping is \$4,500 if you live more than 100 miles from Tampa, Florida. The product pictures show a fully furnished little home, complete with a fridge, shower, toilet, countertops, and an AC unit. The description says it comes with a 42" flat screen TV with surround sound and a subwoofer.

Crunchy Munchy Chocolate Pizza

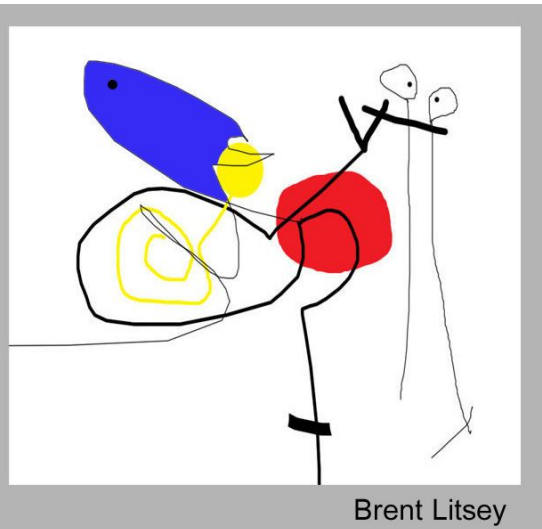
[This delicacy](#) from Gourmet Chocolate Pizza Co. is made with Belgian chocolate, brownie and fudge pieces, and white chocolate shavings, and is claimed by the Amazon description to be the "perfect gift or present for your Dad Uncle Niece Nephew Brother Sister Boyfriend Girlfriend Husband Wife Children Teenagers." I may have included this purely because I'm currently starving.

Photo from amazon.com



Expensive Art

You haven't seen artwork until you've seen "[A BIG FISH IN A LITTLE POND](#)," an abstract piece by Brent Litsey listed for \$1,000,000 without bidding. This 48'x48' acrylic painting is being sold on Ebay with free shipping from Kansas, and has been relisted several times, going back to at least November. On a related note, the most expensive listing for the search query "Donald Trump" is the 36'x24' oil statement painting "[Donald Trump: Yankee Putin](#)" by Kevin Bellis, which makes a poignant statement about Donald Trump's relations with Russia and Vladimir Putin.



Brent Litsey

Photos from ebay.com





We've Only Got One

By: Maya Racho

Earth Day: April 22, 2018. It is the special day to celebrate and appreciate what gives us life and meaning. We owe everything to Mother Earth, for without her presence, none of us would exist. As almost 50 years of the national holiday have passed, it is important to look back on the heroic individuals who began this tradition. On April 22, 1970, millions of Americans traveled to streets, parks, and other public places advocating for stricter environmental laws and a more stable environment for the future. With only one Earth Day underway, the United States Protection Agency was created and the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species acts were established.

From there, the tradition continued to grow and gain momentum. On April 22, 1990, the first global Earth Day occurred. Environmental concerns arose around the entire earth, and more than 140 different countries participated in movements for recycling, trash pickup, and limitations on air and water pollution. From this monumental day, the United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro was created in 1992. Five years later, President Bill Clinton awarded Senator Gaylord Nelson the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his inspiring role as Earth Day founder.

Moving into the present, Earth Day is forever expanding. Their specific vision, which can be found at <https://www.earthday.org/about/>, outlines 3 major goals: broaden, diversify, and mobilize. As of today, more than 1 million people participate in the holiday. For the 2018 year, the Earth Day Network plans to focus on ending plastic pollution, eliminating single-use plastics, and regulating the disposal of plastics. Their campaign **End Plastic Pollution** outlines the specific goals on educating and reforming individuals on the dangers of plastic on the environment. As the 50th anniversary of Earth Day in 2020 approaches, it serves as a vision for change. Citizens need to act rather than wait, for time is running out to preserve our beautiful earth.



The Beginning of a Movement

The first Earth Day in 1970 brought together environmental groups from all around the U.S., who all found that they shared the same love and worry for the earth.

Photo from history.denverlibrary.org



Gaining Momentum

With the first global Earth Day underway, people around the world grew more confident in their fight for change and a better environment.

Photo from [flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)



It's Now or Never

Now more than ever it is important to protect and preserve our environment.

Photo from www.cbsnews.com

The Dangers
We Face:

How We Can
Take Action:

There is
Still Hope:

1. The United States makes up only 4.4% of the world population, but we consume over 30% of the earth's resources.

2. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is larger than the state of Texas.

3. Even though over 75% of waste is recyclable, only 30% is recycled by Americans.

4. More than 1 million species of animals face potential extinction from disappearing habitats, including the leatherback turtle, the black rhinoceros, and the northern hairy-nosed wombat.

5. Sea levels have continued to rise at their fastest rate in 2,000 years. This is due to melting of polar icecaps and thermal expansion, this may be a result of global warming.

6. Almost 40% of all lakes in America are too polluted for inhabitable life, fishing and swimming.

7. ⅔ of the Great Barrier Reef in Australia has been damaged because of climate change.

8. The earth has already lost 80% of its forests due to deforestation, and poor forest management.

9. 27% of the ocean's coral reefs have been damaged as a result of global warming.

10. Humans are consuming 50% more natural resources than the earth can provide. This can only continue for another 50 years.
1. Turn off the water while you're brushing your teeth.

2. Instead of using plastic straws at restaurants, buy biodegradable straws, or simply say you don't need a straw.

3. Turn your computer off overnight, it will reduce the overall power you use.

4. Take only one napkin at a time, instead of taking a large handful.

5. Keep around scrap paper and reuse it, instead of taking a new piece of paper each time.

6. Create a compost pile. If you don't like eating leftovers, a compost pile is more environmentally friendly than simply throwing them out.

7. Bring your own cups to coffee shops; it saves a disposable cup and you might get more bang for your buck.

8. Bring reusable bags to the grocery store, they're heavier than plastic bags and don't end up in the ocean.

9. Bring reusable bags to the grocery store, they're heavier than plastic bags and don't end up in the ocean.

10. Buy a low flow shower head, it'll use up less water and save money
1. Though coral reefs around the world have undergone extensive coral bleaching, the coral can repair itself and has begun to do so on a large scale.

2. The wild tiger population has increased for the first time in 100 years.

3. Giant pandas are no longer an endangered species.

4. Wind, solar, and other renewable energy has been decreasing in cost, making them a cheaper alternative to coal and fossil fuels.

5. 195 countries participate in the Paris Climate Agreement. The agreement is with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change regarding greenhouse gas emission.

6. Rainforests are resilient. As long as there are a couple remnants of the old forest remaining, the plants can regrow with astonishing speed.

7. The American public is burning 8% less fuel than 10 years ago through the use of fuel efficient and green energy vehicles.

8. The U.S. has implemented nationwide fuel efficiency standards for different cars and small trucks. U.S. automakers are required to meet these standards in their vehicles, or else they cannot sell.

9. Tiny homes are becoming more popular. They use less resources and leave a smaller carbon footprint.

10. More cities have turned to bikes for transportation, which decreases overall pollution and traffic.



A Forager's Guide to Spring Mushrooms

By: Sam Warren
Public Relations

Healthy

Morels- Morels have many medicinal benefits while also being extremely delicious. They are high in Vitamin D and used to strengthen your liver and immune system. They are also used to prevent side effects of prescription medication. They are delicious pan fried in butter. Morels are always found on the ground. Morels generally have a uniform shape. They're usually found near elm or apple trees.



Chanterelles- Chanterelles are a great source of Vitamin B and minerals. Chanterelles are always found under trees individually in a centralized area, never in clumps and never in a pasture. Chanterelles are delicious in pasta. They compliment garlic, onion, and chives very nicely.



Oyster- Oysters are some of the most commonly found wild mushrooms. They're found in all seasons, but more frequently found in spring and summer. They're named for their oyster-shaped cap. They are also good sources of Vitamin B and minerals. There are different types of oysters, and they come in different colors. In our area, they are white, yellow, or gray caps with white stipes. They grow on live and dead trees in clumps together.



Toxic Look-a-Likes

False Morel- As the name suggests, the false morel is a type of mushroom that looks like a morel, but isn't. It has a chemical in it called MMH. MMH causes vomiting, dizziness, diarrhea, and sometimes death. The stipe (mushrooms "stem") is filled with fibers and tissues when a real morel's stipe is hollow.



Jack O' Lantern- The Jack O' Lantern is fairly easy to identify and it's the only thing close to a chanterelle. They are way bigger than chanterelles, have more round shapes, and grow in clusters together. If you eat them they can cause gastric upsets that can last for several days, but are not usually fatal.



Omphalotus Nidiformis- An oyster look alike, this mushroom grows in Japan and Australia. So you don't really have to worry about it, but if you're ever there and pick them, the easiest way to identify them is by putting them in the dark. They're bioluminescent. They glow bright greens and blues. They're quite beautiful but if you eat them your liver will shut down and you will die.



Photos From
americanmushrooms.com
and [flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com/photos/samwarren/)



Spring Mushrooms Continued

Medicinal

Reishi- Reishi is by far my personal favorite. In ancient China it's known as Ling Zhi- the mushroom of immortality. It has tons of health benefits. Dozens of studies have shown Reishi tea or tinctures can be used to help with inflammation, chronic fatigue syndrome, bronchitis, liver disease, food allergies, asthma, stomach ulcers, skin disorders, diabetes, viruses (including the flu, HIV/AIDS and hepatitis), heart disease, blood pressure, high cholesterol, insomnia, anxiety, depression and even tumor growth and cancer. For mental health benefits you can also eat them. The Reishi is extremely beautiful. If you plan on eating it, you want to eat the yellow edges, and if you want to make a tea or tinctures, you want the red middle part of the cap. There are no poisonous reishi look-alikes. They're generally found on live or dead hemlocks.



Chaga- Chaga is another medicinal mushroom. It is very hard and literally impossible to chew if you wanted to. It's not actually a mushroom, but the dense black mass of mycelia (what mushrooms grow from) that grows on the outside of birch trees. It's exterior is hard, black, and cracked, and looks like burnt charcoal. It's insides are a little softer with a yellow-brown color that can be seen when it's removed from the birch tree and broken into chunks. Chaga's known as the king of medicinal mushrooms. It can be used to stimulate and regulate the immune system, treat and fight cancer, reduce inflammation, protect the liver, benefit the skin, battle ulcers and gastritis, and lower cholesterol and blood pressure. It can also be used as a coffee substitute.



Dangerous

Destroying Angel- The Destroying Angel's caps are pure white. They're initially egg-shaped and then more bell shaped and then they become flat with a tilt on the stipe. The stipes are usually curved. They're pure white and have a stringy/fibrous texture with an ungrooved, fragile ring high up on the stipe. They also have a sack-like vulva that's usually buried in the dirt. They're highly toxic. If you eat them you will get kidney and liver damage and without treatment, you would go into a coma and eventually die.



Death Cap- The Death Cap is responsible for 80-90% of mushroom deaths, even small doses can be very dangerous. It's very similar to the Destroying Angel. It also damages the liver and kidneys. It's cap is wide, smooth, with a greenish to yellowish color and is usually sticky or slippery. Their gills are white, crowded together, and very tightly attached to the upper part of the stipe.



DO NOT EAT WILD MUSHROOMS UNLESS THEY ARE 100% POSITIVELY IDENTIFIED AS SAFE FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION!



LEFT VS. RIGHT

By

Zoey Kays

Staff Writer

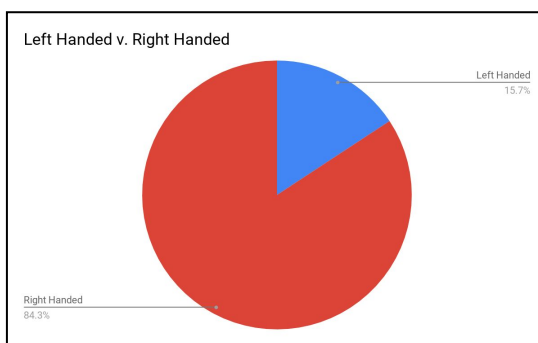
The majority of humans on this Earth have a dominant hand they use to write, throw, eat with, etc. M.K. Holder from Scientific American said that 70-90% of people are right handed, and that 5-30% are left handed. There's even a small group of people who are ambidextrous, which means they can use both hands efficiently. There are not many lefties in this world, and it is very hard for these left handers because the majority of items are made for the righties. Finding left handed items, such as scissors or ball gloves, is sometimes a struggle.

Many people ask why we have dominant and recessive hands, and why most of us are proficient with our right hand. According to Jason G. Goldman, a reporter for BBC, there is a hypothesis that when humans began to evolve, the left hemisphere of their brain began understanding language, and maybe being right handed was a side effect from that. This is because the left hemisphere of the brain controls the right side of the body, and the right hemisphere of the brain controls the left side of the body. The hypothesis states that the left side of the brain evolved to carry out tasks such as hunting and gathering. The right may have then evolved to recognize and react to unanticipated changes in the environment, for example an approaching predator. Rachael Bletchly from Mirror Online states that the left hemisphere controls language, speech, logic, math and science. The right hemisphere controls art, music, creativity, perceptions and emotions. This leads scientists to think the left handed people tend to be more creative and better at visual thinking. For example, there are more left handed architects than right handed architects.

For people who have their left hand as their dominant, there are many struggles that follow along with it, such as getting stuck with a right handed desk. Most school desks have support for people who write with their right hand, but no one ever thinks about the lefties. Another example is trying to find an instrument for the left hand. The minority is always left out...no pun intended.

LEFT HAND FUN FACTS

- ❑ BILL GATES, OPRAH, NEIL ARMSTRONG, ALBERT EINSTEIN AND PRESIDENT OBAMA ARE ALL LEFT HANDED.
- ❑ LEFTIES HAVE A HIGHER RISK OF ADHD, DYSLEXIA, AND CERTAIN MOOD DISORDERS.
- ❑ THERE IS A RUMOR THAT STATES PRESIDENT RONALD REAGAN WAS LEFT HANDED, BUT SCHOOL TEACHERS FORCED HIM TO BE RIGHT HANDED WHEN HE WAS YOUNG.
- ❑ A NUMBER OF SPORT SUPER-STARS ARE LEFT HANDED, FOR EXAMPLE PHIL MICKELSON, RAFAEL NADAL, AND OSCAR DE LA HOYA.
- ❑ AUGUST 13 IS INTERNATIONAL LEFT-HANDERS DAY.



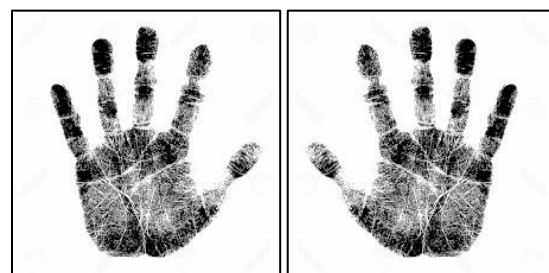
Left Handed v. Right Handed

The pie chart above represents the results of a poll I published on Instagram. The poll received approximately 400 votes. Both percentages, left and right, were within the margin of the average percentage stated in the first paragraph of this article. The red color represent the right handed votes, while the blue represents the left.

Image courtesy of Zoey Kays

RIGHT HAND FUN FACTS

- ❑ RIGHTIES LEARN 12% MORE THAN LEFTIES IN A LIFETIME.
- ❑ CHRISTIANITY STRONGLY IS IN FAVOR OF THE RIGHT HAND.
- ❑ RESEARCH SHOWS THAT RIGHTIES LIVE THREE YEARS LONGER THAN LEFTIES.
- ❑ RIGHTIES TEND TO REACH PUBERTY FOUR TO FIVE MONTHS EARLIER.
- ❑ RIGHT HANDED PEOPLE TEND TO BE MORE LOGICAL AND ANALYTICAL.





Pretty Pets

By: Emily Noone
Technology Advisor

April 11 is observed as National Pet Day every year. When many people think of pets they think of just cats and dogs, yet there are other animals that people welcome into their homes as well. People generally have pets because they enjoy the relationship and the animals help relieve stress and loneliness. People also love the sense of responsibility that these domesticated animals give them, they have to take care of them and give them attention. Animals make people happy and give them a sense of responsibility and companionship. I wanted to explore some of the interesting pets that students and teachers here at Alfred-Almond have, so I asked around the school to see what kinds of pets people have.

Photo courtesy of Mrs. Valentine



**B
R
O
N
X** **B
E
R
N
I
E**

Mrs. Valentine has two dogs: Bronx, a 5 year old Goldendoodle, and a 4 year old Lab Mastiff Mix named Bernie. Both of her dogs are named after The Yankees, and both Bernie and Bronx can sit and shake. On their birthdays, Mrs. Valentine and her husband throw them parties and gives them cheeseburgers. When asked what pet Mrs. Valentine would have if she could have anything, she said more dogs.

**B
E
A
U
F
O
R
D**



Photo courtesy of Katy D.

Beauford the Peacock is Katy D.'s pet. He is 4 years old. Beauford is named after the bully from Phineas and Ferb. Although Beauford cannot do any tricks, he can peck at windows. Katy, senior, would like to have an elephant if she could have any other animal as a pet, "because they're cute."

**B
U
G
S**

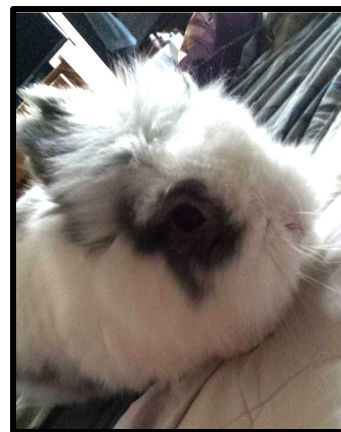


Photo courtesy of Scott M.

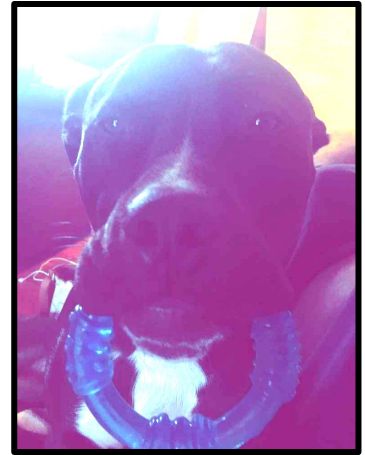
Bugs, a Netherland Dwarf Lionhead Angora Cross bunny, belongs to eighth grader Scott M. Bugs is 2 years old and is too stubborn to learn any tricks. If Scott could have any other pet he said he would love to have a Platinum Alligator Gar, which is a type of fish.



T O M

*Photo courtesy of
Vianna K.*

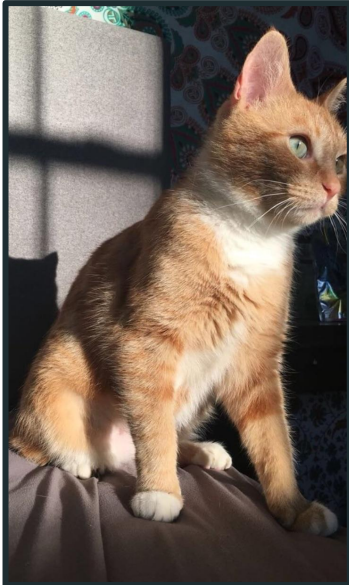
Tom is Vianna K.'s cat. She is 3 years old. She is very good at catching mice and loves to chase things. A lion is what Vianna would want if she could have any pet in the world.



M I K E Y

Photo courtesy of Matt I.

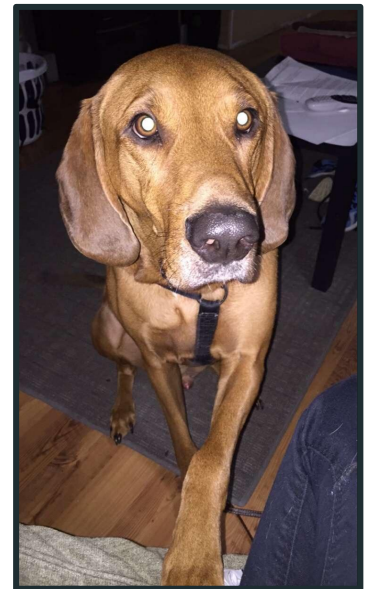
Matt I.'s pitbull's name is Mikey, and is named after the guy from the Blind Side, "Big Mike". Mikey is 1½ and knows how to do a lot of tricks. He can sit, highfive, stand on two legs, lay down, and he can catch food. Matt would like a tiger if he could have any other animal as a pet.



T U N I

*Photo courtesy
of Emily A.*

Tuni, the 1½ year old tabby cat, belongs to freshman, Emily A. Tuni is named after tuna fish. The only trick Tuni can do is chase it's tail. If Emily could have any other animal, she would want a Husky.



R O S C O

Photo courtesy of Miles M.

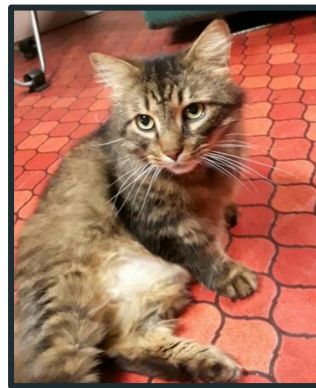
Miles M., eighth grader, has a Redbone Coonhound named Rosco. Rosco is 3 years old, and he knows how to sit and lay down. If Miles could have any other pet, he would want a rhino.



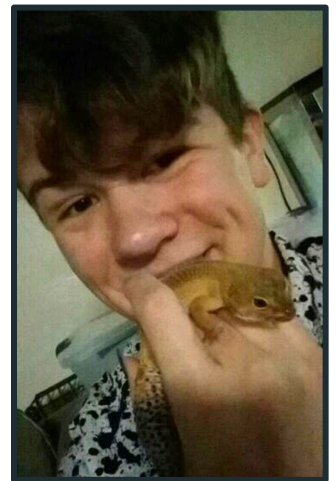
TAITUS



CYNTHIA



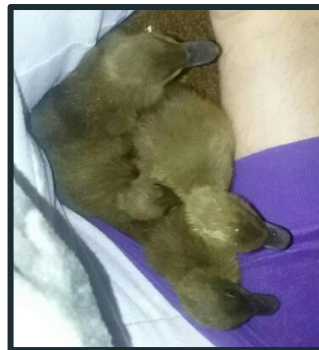
ROCKY



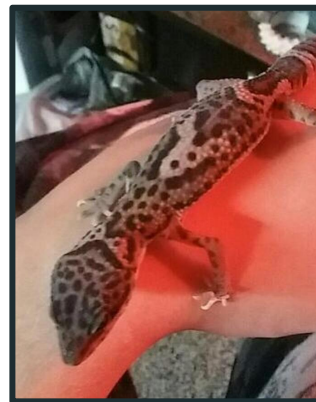
CHER



SONNY



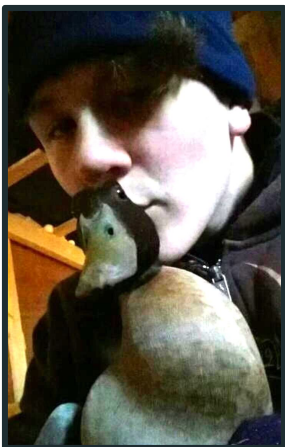
**Fuego, Poachy,
Chico, Patchy**



SPICY



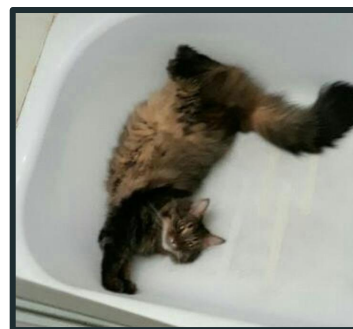
CRICKET



LARRY



LUCIFER



OZZY

*Photos courtesy
of Noah B.*

Noah B., a junior, has many pets. He has seven Khaki Ducks: Larry and Joanne (named after Lady Gaga's album), Butternut, Chico, Furgi, Patchy, and Poachy. Noah has two Bearded Dragons, Taitus and Cricket. Taitus is named after Taitus Andromedon from UnBreakable Kimmy Schmidt. Sonny and Cher are his Leopard Geckos, named after the famous duo; he also has another Leopard Gecko named Spicy. Cynthia Lee Fontaine is Noah's Tarantula, named after the drag queen. Sasha and Rasputia are goldfish; Rasputia is named after the character from Norbit. Noah has two fiddler crabs named Jesus and Lucifer. Rocky and Ozzy are 6 year old cats; Ozzy is named after Ozzy Osbourne. All of his pets other than the cats are about 1 year old. If Noah could pick any other animals to have as pets, he would choose Tegus, Chameleons, Unicorns, and Mallards.

Acknowledgements

If you would like to make an acknowledgement for the next issue, please contact a member of *The Observer* staff or fill out this [form](#).

Thank you **Josh Carstens** for being patriotic!
-Brady Holmok

I would like to acknowledge **Will Tormey** for never giving my Chromebook charger back
- Hanna Tormey

Thank you **Mr. Rech** for being an awesome science teacher!
- Physics Class

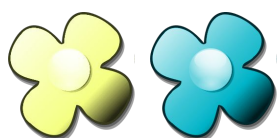
Thank you **Mrs. Birch** and **Mrs. Perry** for enjoying National Library Workers Day
-Mrs. Donius

Thank you **Ms. Karr** for guiding the music and drama department.
- Logan Whittal

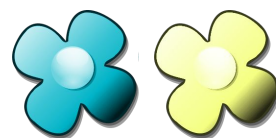
Thank you **Mr. Bialecki** for being a great role model!
-Ellen McInnes, Daniel Walsh, and Carsen Hann

Thank you **Mrs. Bain-Lucey** for acknowledging National Library Workers Day on April 10th
- Mrs. Donius

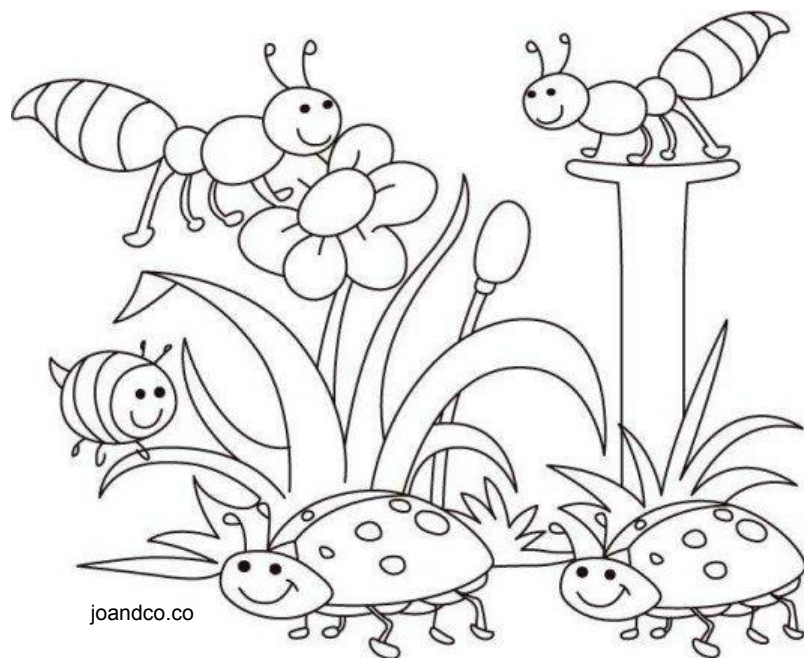
Thank you **Maya** for writing interesting articles in *The Observer*!
- Taylor F. and Josie R.



Spring Time Games



COLOR ME!!!

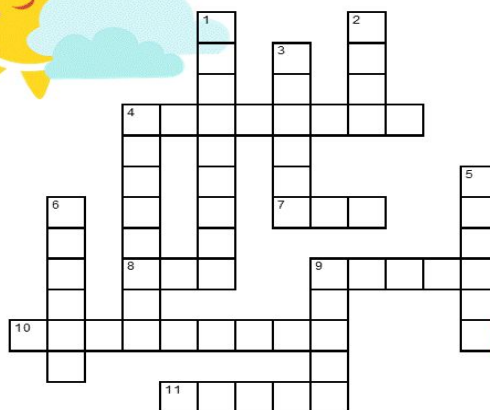


joandco.co



Easter Crossword

puzzles-to-print.com



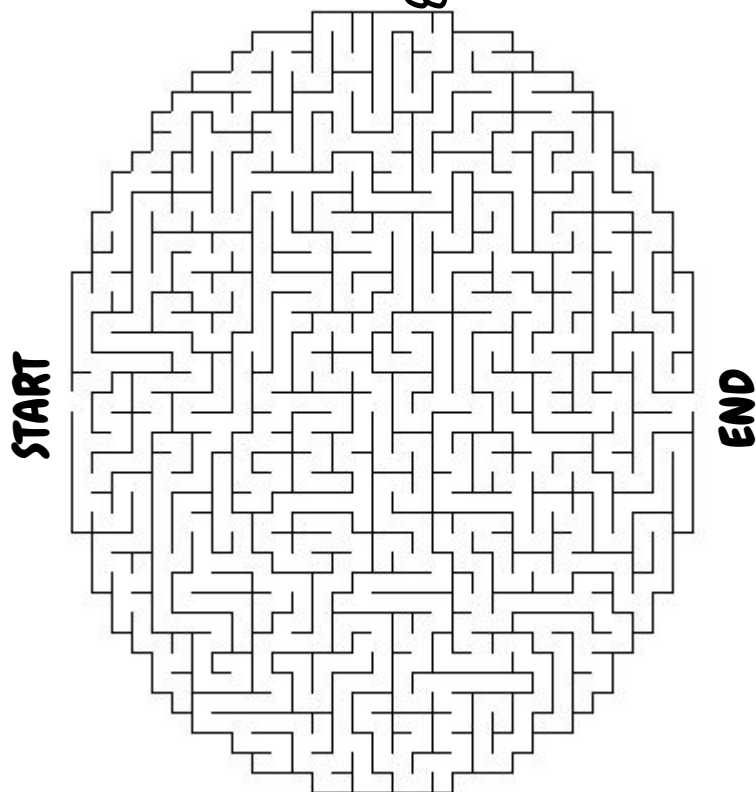
ACROSS

4. You might do this to eggs for Easter
7. A hen makes this
8. Used to color eggs
9. The hen's baby
10. Colorful candy you might find in an Easter basket
11. Peter Cottontail is one

DOWN

1. Eggs might be made from this
2. Look for eggs
3. Easter Day event
4. Yellow or white spring flower that grows from a bulb
5. What the Easter Bunny brings
6. A pretty hat worn on Easter
9. Don't eat too much of this or you might get a belly ache

Easter Egg Fun



puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com



The mystery staff
member from pages
14 - 15 is...

**Mrs.
Chambliss!**

Photo courtesy of
Morgan Giglio

