



With Best Wishes

By *Andrew DeVita*

For those of you who don't already know, Mrs. Brandolino is, sadly, retiring this year. And it is safe to say that she will be greatly missed. She was very lucky to have such a wonderful career here, and we were equally lucky to have her teaching at WJHS. And I speak for all of us when I say, I hope whatever she finds herself doing, she enjoys it as much as she enjoyed her teaching career.

One thing that you may not know about Mrs. Brandolino is that she wasn't always a teacher. Her first job was an accountant. She eventually left that career and pursued teaching because she wanted to spend more time with her triplets. When asked where she thinks she would be if she hadn't pursued a teaching career, Mrs. Brandolino said that "[she] would most likely still be an accountant." She completed her student teaching at Clear Run Intermediate School and absolutely loved it. So when she was offered a job teaching 8th grade ELA at EJHS, she accepted it in an instant. She has been with the district for 22 years.

When asked whether she preferred 7th or 8th grade, she said "[she] preferred 8th for multiple reasons. One big reason was that she loved teaching *Romeo and Juliet*. And once she moved to WJHS, she taught both seventh and eighth grades at the same time. She said she much preferred individually.

Another main reason Mrs. Brandolino chose teaching was time off in the time traveling the world. Last summer she traveled to Greece. She said it was her favorite overall trip was Italy. She said she specifically loved the great food and would return to Italy in an instant.

Mrs. Brandolino was also asked what her favorite year of teaching was. And she said her third year because she sort of knew the "art of the trade." She was much more confident and was able to enjoy it very much. Mrs. Brandolino said that she actually remembered more than she could count. She could see students from 15 years ago, and still recognize them to this day. About some of her prior students, "I have been very lucky to have taught many wonderful students. And



(cont'd on bottom of pg. 2)

Congratulations, Ms. Notari!

By *Leah Dominie* and *Mya A-Y*

We had the pleasure to sit down and talk with Ms. Notari as she brings her Pocono Mountain teaching career to a close. After teaching Business Education for 22 years, Ms. Notari will be retiring in June, and we will all miss her. Here are some of the questions we asked:

Q: Was teaching your first career?

Actually, this is my second career. I was an accountant and financial analyst before becoming an Education Teacher."

What is one thing you have learned from teaching here at WJHS most?

"I have learned that this school is a close-knit family of teachers. I will miss the family. I have worked with people here at the junior high for 13 years as an office staff, and teachers."

What was your BEST experience while you've been a teacher here?

A: "The best experience was having the "lunch-ins" during the school year due to Covid. We all came together as a building. Mrs. Bush [a retired art teacher] was putting the events together."

And lastly, how do you feel about retiring? Do you have any plans?

"I have mixed feelings about retiring. On the one hand, I know that it's time for me to leave due to my health issue, but I will miss seeing the [everyone]. This summer I'll take my trips to NY and the New England. And in the fall of '23, I plan to do more traveling."

Thank you, Ms. Notari for spending time to talk to us...and teach us. We are going to miss you and wish you a happy retirement!

(Mrs. Brandolino continued)

learned a lot about them along the way." This is one of many reasons she will miss teaching so much.

Another reason she will miss her wonderful teaching career is that she will greatly miss the fun and unique experiences she had with her great coworkers and friends that she has made along the way. I'm sure we will all miss her as much as she will miss us.

Lastly, when asked if there's anything she wants her students to know, and anything she would like to say to end the article, she simply said, "If they see me after [WJHS], say hello. That would make me just feel happy."



Congratulations to WJHS Envirothon Teams!

From Dr. Fuerstein

On Tuesday, May 16th, PMWJHS competed in the seventh and eighth grade Junior Envirothon. WJHS won all four stations, and our **five teams** came in 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and two tied for fourth!



All five WJHS Envirothon teams came home with trophies and certificates in hand after a long day of competition.

The Oily Oaks– First Won Ponds and Animals

Cayleigh Keller
Julianna Klipp
Daneen Kocherova
Evelyn Sanchez
Miguel Sanchez

Monarch Butterflies– Second

Amaya Bonilla
Daisy Aparicio-Cruz
Antonette Griffith
Olivia Hauger
Malia LeCorps
Jaylyn Rowe

Bird Raven Bird– Third

Alexis Cornejo
Katryn Feuerstein
Angelina (Kody) Ranko
Aaliyah Richards
Lillianne Williamson

Magical Maples Tied for Fourth Won Wetlands

Stephanie Antonyuk
Caio dos Santos
Samantha Gibson
Joy Kokas
Kaylee Masotti


Mitochondriacs tied for fourth after a tiebreaker/ Won Trees

Gloria Femenella
Isabella Scaretta
Eden Seese
Aubrey-Lee Thomas

Congratulations to all on
a terrific competition!

Odyssey of the Mind

By Caio dos Santos

 Odyssey of the Mind (OOTM) is an after-school program that involves engineering, and creativity. Students have to design a set, create props and write an that solves a problem within an eight-minute performance. Additionally, one of the team members has to design and build a balsa wood tower and put weight on it, and to make it a real challenge, balsa is one of the weakest woods. All teams must also compete in the Spontaneous portion of the day-long competition. This is where team members have to demonstrate creative responses to a “spontaneous” or on-the-spot challenge within a set period of time. The spontaneous problems are never divulged or discussed throughout the season and can often determine whether or not a team moves on to States.

If teams win at Regionals in February and makes it to States in April, they get to spend the day at Lock Haven University and stay in a hotel with team members. If teams make it to Worlds in May, they get to go to Michigan and miss school for a week to compete with students from around the world.

On the day of the Regional competition at West High School, my team and I were in the hallway. We spent most of the day preparing our props and sets and costumes. When competition time to compete arrived, we performed and did pretty well. We spent the rest of the day hanging-out with other team members until the award ceremony, where we won second place and qualified for States. Another WJHS team also qualified!



Regionals at WHS



After dinner, we made our way to the awards ceremony, where we were surprised to find out that King Poseidon lost his “balsa tower of love” and unfortunately, no teams from WJHS made it to Worlds. But States was still an incredible experience.

If you are interested in joining, talk to Dr. and Mrs. Feuerstein. I was warned; it is a lot of work and hours, but it is really rewarding. I think every student in this school would enjoy Odyssey of the Mind.

We got to stay at Lock Haven University for the state competition. We got to stay at the university with our team captain to check out the gym and brought in all of our props and costumes. We spent the day and finally had some down time to hang out in the gym hall, walked around, and played on the basketball court.



Gianna, Jocelynn, Katryn, and Caio preparing for a day of competition at States

Joseph and The Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat

By *Mya Aragona-Young*

Our school's production of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* was a long but successful process. With 51 cast and crew members and three successful performances, we still have many more months, cast members have performed for a bunch of amazing experiences such as:

Opening performance

Eighth grade winter concert (Jan 11, 2023)

Narrators Olivia H., Isabella A., and Katryn F. sing about Joseph, played by Marguerite D.

In-school performances (Jan 16, 2023)



Joseph on Tour (Jan 24, 2023 TEC and CRIS)

Seventh grade winter concert (Jan 26, 2023)



Dancers surround the Pharoah (Leo A-Y) and Joseph (Marguerite D.)

and eighth grade band and chorus will

June 7, 2023 to see *Beetlejuice*. The

many amazing opportunities for stu-

Best Communities for Music Education

outstanding commitment to music

Back to the 80's

By *Grace O'Hanlon*

Technology

In the 80's there was a lot of technology, but not like the technology we have today. The top items that were being used were: fax machines, floppy disks, VHS tapes/VCR's, pagers, and Polaroid instant cameras. Fax machines made documents through electronic scanning. Portable phones (bag phones with huge batteries that could be used in a car or carried over the shoulder) were expensive (\$3,995), and so many people did not have them because they could not afford them. Bag phones would only be for emergencies for work. They were not common items for a person.



There were also a lot of games people could play in an arcade instead of a personal gaming system. There was *Pac-Man*, *Donkey Kong*, and *Frogger*. Technology didn't consume most kids' time indoors. Most could be found walking or riding bikes, roller skating, watching soap operas, game shows, playing vinyl albums or playing outside with friends.

Music



We saw some new acts take the stage. There were *The Sugarhill Gang*, and Van Halen that are now classic rock groups. There was also a new phenomena. The Sugarhill Gang's, *Rapper's Delight* was a big hit and started a new genre' of music.



Some of the 80's that teenagers and adults still listen to today are, "Take On Me", by A-ha, "Africa", by Toto, and "Girls Just Want to Have Fun" by Cyndi Lauper. Some artists and bands are still performing almost 40 years later.



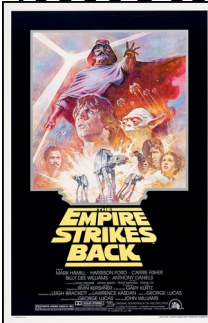
John Travolta, popular from the show, 21 Jump Street

The 80's was absolutely full of...BIG! Big glam big hair. One of the glam was about the hair. Boys and girls would wear heavy makeup on their faces, power suits with shoulder pads, and mirrored sunglasses that were poppin'! Men started wearing collarless shirts and started to be called "dudes".

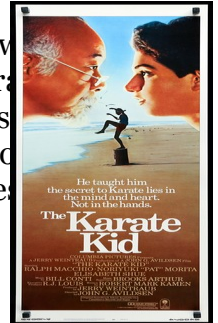


MC Hammer wearing parachute pants

Movies From the 80's



forget the classic movies from the 80's? Some movies are still v
; *Ghostbusters*, *Beetlejuice*, *Karate Kid*. Today's TV show, "Cobra
off of the movie, *The Karate Kid*. The 80's really started to use s
and were trying to get comfortable with it. For example, the m
rial, or the movie, *Star Wars-The Empire Strikes Back*, have the
have continued to span generations.



tv.tropes.org, britannica.com, Encyclopdia.com

2023 Summer Movies

By **Andrew DeVita**

Movies have been an important part of the summer ever since movie theaters were popular. Some of the most influential films of all time have come out in the summer: *Back to the Future*, *The Lion King*, *Top Gun 1 and 2*, *Forrest Gump*, *The Dark Knight* (one of my personal favorite movies of all time) *Star Wars A New Hope*, *Jurassic Park*, and of course, possibly the most "summer" movie of all time, the original *Jaws*.

Many movies are predicted to blow up the box offices as well as streaming services this summer. Here are some highly anticipated movies I would suggest you see if you're able:

Guardians of the Galaxy 3 (May 5)

Fast X aka Fast and the Furious 10 (May 19)

The Little Mermaid (May 26)

Spiderman: Across The Spider Verse (June 2)

Transformers Rise of the Beasts (June 9)

Flash and Elemental (June 16)

Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny (June 30)

Mission Impossible Dead Reckoning Part One (July 12)

Haunted Mansion (July 28)

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles (August 4,)



Sources:

syfy.com/syfy-wire/the-most-anticipated-film-releases-of-summer-2023
ew.com/gallery/50-best-summer-blockbusters-all-time



Peter Pan Goes Wrong: A Review

By *Angelina Ranko*

On March 21st, I went to see *Peter Pan Goes Wrong* on Broadway with my father. We watched the 8:00 pm show, which ended at about 10:00 pm. The cast members are affiliated with the Oliver award-winning company, Mischief, and the show was written by Henry Lewis, Henry Shields, and Johnathan Sayer.

Summary: This is a story about a fictional drama group performing the traditional story of Peter Pan, except everything horribly goes wrong. With stage props failing to actors falling unconscious, *Peter Pan Goes Wrong* fails in the best way

possible.

Experience: *Peter Pan*

had on Broadway. The show managed to parody it. The set design was creative and fun to watch. The ship and won't stop spinning, which is a bit of a problem. The audio and light timing were off, and the audio failing sounds were playing.

Jeremy Daniel's performance was outstanding, demonstrating proper stage combat and hilarious slapstick comedy (a type of physical comedy shown by absurd situations). One ongoing bit in the show that I enjoyed was Chris Bean (Henry Shields) attempting to over-professionalize the show, going as far as to shout at the audience repeatedly when they turn it into a pantomime (A British children's play involving music, topical jokes, and slapstick comedy,

traditionally based on a fairy tales and performed around Christmas).

All in all, *Peter Pan Goes Wrong* is a fantastically funny farce, a show specializing in horseplay. The actors were magnificent and the tech was great. Mischief Theatre's *Peter Pan Goes Wrong* has been nominated for Unique Theatrical Experience, twice for Outstanding Direction of a Play (Adam Meggido), Outstanding Costume Design of a Play (Roberto Surace), Outstanding New Broadway Play, Outstanding Scenic Design (Simon Scullion), and Outstanding Production of a Play, so I'm not the only one that enjoyed the experience.

Sources:

<https://www.mischiefcomedy.com/>

<https://pangoeswrongbway.com/>

<https://twitter.com/mischiefcomedy>

<https://deadline.com/2023/04/peter-pan-goes-wrong-broadway-review-deadline-neil-patrick-harris-1235330328/>

Cowboy

By *Jaylyn Rowe*

The gentle breeze of dawn. The sound of cowboy boots hitting the porch, a double eighth note per step. The soft warmth of the morning sunrise hitting an unshaven face. The beige velvet cowboy hat, shielding his pale blue eyes. Gravel rumbling as he makes his way to the rustic barn, and the chipping paint of the red truck he passes on route. The white “X” on the door of the barn that creaks open. The soft neigh of his companion, and the rush he gets, cantering through the hills, fields, and mountains. Calming, peaceful, but exhilarating. Cowboy.

Off With The Wind

By *Kevonna Smith*

Heavy rain pounded the earth, and an unnatural glow coated the droplets. Dangerous?- Perhaps, but its beauty had worth. *Amethyst* clouded, sky a gorgeous *raspberry* ; oceans reflected *lilac* , making everything seem fantasy-like. Journalists were on it instantly, for this could prove to be an exciting story. Government attempting a censor, banning conspiracies on social media and news. Some brave souls, fighting back the censorship, ‘specially those trying to receive debuting glory.

Those who attempted the truth, gone the very next day. Press conferences held, much too many. To those who uphold superstitious beliefs, it was a crime to hide that much, causing dismay. “Everything is fine, ‘tis but a natural phenomenon. I have nothing to hide, don’t condemn me!” Meetings held with governments, these meetings filled with dread and anticipation. Something bad will happen, be weary. This unknown, unfortunate situation. Those who aren’t blind or ignorant can tell, this wave of *charoite* has no virtue at all. No one dared to step out of the house for more than half a minute. Very soon, those who do will fall; with no corpse left to be seen, this mysterious mist swiping their bodies with the wind. Closed caskets, for those unfortunate souls who may or may not be dead. Those who survived lost their minds.

The days leading up to Christmas proved the government correct, the *purple* was clearing and there was white. On the eighth day of the first month, white replaced by *amber*. Down with the right. The struggle, building civilization and modernizing, stop with your clamber. Off with wind, bless your souls. #

Cryptic Cryptids

By *Alexis Cornejo*

In its most basic definition, a folklore is a tale or story that expresses traditional beliefs or customs. Folklore is carried through generations of people, with most of the tales containing lessons or deeper meanings. Others, however, tell about a myth, a legend, a scary story to tell around a campfire. Stories of lost hikers, unexplainable experiences, and monstrous creatures, otherwise known as cryptids. You might be familiar with some of them, like the Chupacabra, and the Loch Ness Monster. Here, I will tell you about two cryptids that are not as well known but are definitely very interesting creatures, even if they're not real.

Originating from Algonquian Native American folklore, the Wendigo is a tall, skeleton-like monster. This monster is typically envisioned to have an animal head, as well as rough gray skin, soul-piercing eyes, and sharp claws to help it navigate its environment and get a good grip on its prey. This creature only appears during the winter months, lurking in forests or mountains, waiting for their next meal. One thing that makes this cryptid rather interesting is its ability to mimic human voices. If this monster happens to hear someone talking, it will then be able to copy a person's voice and speak using it. It uses such abilities in order to lure in unsuspecting prey. Even if it can do this, the Wendigo does not possess a voice of its own, only being able to create growls and screams at most. Another one of the Wendigo's abilities is that it can control people's minds, causing said person to have the same instincts as itself. The Wendigo has hypervore-like tendencies, meaning that they are forever hungry unless they are eating. An unsettling part of this cryptid is its diet consisting of humans, typically lost campers.

The legend goes that there once was a hiker lost in the woods during a rather large blizzard. Being driven to madness, the hiker then resorted to cannibalism in order to survive. This caused them to turn into the monster we know today. This creature originates from Native American tribes, around the time of European settlers interacting with non-Native American people.

The Wendigo symbolizes real-world problems such as greed, selfishness, and violence.



*unsuspecting
the Wendigo Photo
credit: villains.fandom.com/wiki/Wendigo*



*An animal-featured Wendigo
Photo credit: allthatsinteresting.com/wendigo #*

Originating from Ireland as a superstitious myth, the Banshee is a ghost. The myth states that the Banshee watches over a family related to or know about in some way or another. The only name must be purely Irish. If someone in the family was going to die unexpectedly, the apparition would give some sort of warning.



A Banshee screaming as a warning in their previous life. they
 Photo credit: www.celtic-weddings.com/celtic-mythology/legend-of-the-banshee

There are two different types of Banshees: the "Good" or "Bad" Banshee. What type of Banshee a ghost becomes depends on how they lived in their family in their previous life. If the person loved their family they would become a "Good" Banshee, but if they had a bad connection with their families, they would become a "Bad" Banshee. Depending on what kind of Banshee they are, they would warn the endangered person differently. Note that when the Banshee would make themselves known, only the person who was going to pass away soon would be able to see and hear them. If the warning came from a "Good" Banshee, they would sing a sorrowful song, as if they were already mourning said person's death before it happened. If they were a "Bad" Banshee, they would give a bloodcurdling scream at a very high volume. As the legend goes, those who come into contact with a Banshee has already had their fate sealed, meaning that there is nothing they can do to change it.

Do these creatures sound familiar to you? Perhaps you have heard of similar cryptids, like the Swamp Monster or Bigfoot. Feel free to go online and research others that interest you. Just remember, it is only a scary story.



Interpretations of the Banshee
 Photo credit:
www.irelandbeforeyoudie.com/the-irish-banshee-the-history-of-this-infamous-irish-ghost/

Sources: www.britannica.com, www.allthatsinteresting.com/wendigo, www.celtic-weddings.com/celtic-mythology/legend-of-the-banshee

How to Succeed in 8th Grade

By *Mya Aragona-Young*

Seventh graders who will be going into eighth grade have no idea what to expect. If I am being completely honest, 8th grade was probably my hardest year yet. More often than not, I'd find myself overwhelmed and stressed out due to my piles of work I hadn't completed. This would often make me lose sleep and feel unfocused in class. So here are some tips for 7th graders who are willing to make their 8th grade year the best, most enjoyable, year it could possibly be.

Always come to class **prepared** (pencils, pens, homework, charged chromebook)

Stay **organized**

Stay on top of school work

If you are struggling, ask your teacher for help

Check grades daily /weekly and make up missed assignments if possible

Move yourself **out of your comfort zone** and take an educational risk

Show **respect** to yourself and others: **PRIDE**

Choose friends wisely

Join after-school activities and **get involved** with school events

Take your time and **do assignments thoroughly**

May= Mental Health Awareness Month

The word **Aavidum**, means "I've got your back." The club was created by students in a small school right here in Pennsylvania after a difficult loss of a classmate to suicide. What started in one tiny school in Lancaster County has now become a nationwide movement and curriculum. And Pocono Mountain is proud to have such committed students.

Source: Aavidum.com



ing our backs and sh



#

WHS Seniors Return!

By *Mrs. Lehman*

As a teacher and a parent, nothing is more rewarding than to watch your students and kids mature and grow into independent, thriving adults. **Ryan Williams** and **Ronell Washington**, both previous *Pride Press* writers, are doing so. I highlight for me to catch up with these two seniors this school year. They are curious, taken educational risks, asked questions, and overcame the darkness of the Covid years and landed in the light." They are back in the PRIDE.

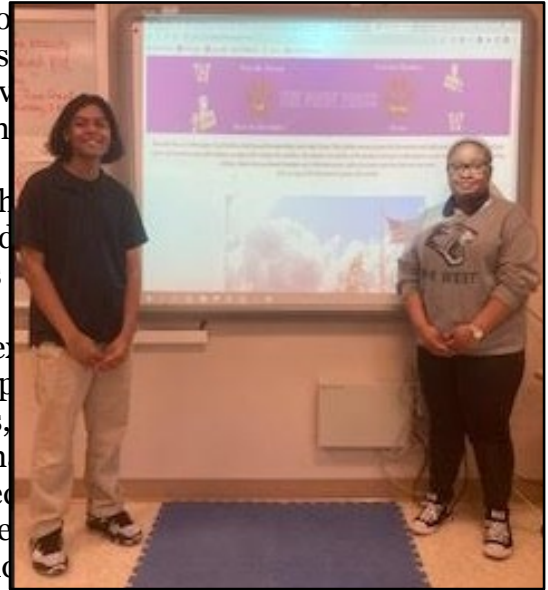
In October I received an email from Ronell asking if she could join newspaper meetings after school. They were taking a code of ethics and wanted to create a webpage for the WJHS newspaper as well as a yearbook and couldn't wait to see what they could create.

In the beginning of May, all of my expectations were exceeded. They returned to present their project to our newspaper group. They were fun but fun-loving and hard-working as 7th and 8th graders, and their experience and pride in their webpage was more than I could have imagined. The interactive pages, archived newspapers from nearly a decade ago, and the coding that made the whole project a reality. Ronell and Ryan were editors and writers and included personal reflections and photos of the school and creating some of our school's newspapers.

When I finally sat down for the "interview" with these two seniors, our time lasted well beyond the 4:45 bus dismissal and covered three pages of notes. What has been the secret to their success? THEY made it happen; they took charge of the opportunities Pocono West had to offer. Ronell and Ryan each made a choice to join clubs, beginning in the junior high, and decided to stay involved with the school community, meeting new students and teachers along the way. Ryan stated that Student Leadership in WJHS gave him many new opportunities: "Instead of just experiencing the events, I got to make the experiences for others." Ronell wrapped up by saying, "Nothing is impossible! I can do it!"

How bright are their futures? Both Ronell and Ryan have chosen to attend college in the fall. Ronell will be a freshman at Moravian University (Comp. Science w/ intent for AI development); Ryan will be a freshman at East Stroudsburg University (Secondary Ed./ Social Studies with hopes to teach geography). For both, their "**anagnorisis**" (the hero's Aha! moment, a word they taught me) came in high school: "Nothing is impossible! Get involved!"

(*A huge personal shout-out of gratitude to the *Pride Press* Alumni who participated and gave their support: Samara Cornejo, Parvis Eschinov, Alyssa Hurdich, Angie LeCorps, Bryanna Nelson, Jennifer Obydonnov, Jamie Smith, Seth Sosa, Ronell Washington, and Ryan Williams. And thank you, Mrs. Dorward, for continually challenging your students to be their absolute best!)



Ryan and Ronell stand in front of their

campaign seniors show time lasted the coding and research



Autographs



PRIDE PRESS

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Angelina Ranko Aliyah Richards Kevonna Smith Jaylyn Rowe
Andrew DeVita Caio dos Santos Grace O'Hanlon

To all of our friends and colleagues who are stepping away from their teaching at Pocono Mountain, we wish you all the BEST! From our mountaintop to the world's shores and everywhere in between where you and your families and friends may journey, we hope you find relaxing moments and enjoy yourselves. You deserve it all!

To all of our staff: THANK YOU! The support you give to ALL of us here at the Junior High makes a difference EVERY DAY in each person's life. We will never forget that— we hope you don't either.

~Have a wonderful summer!



Ronell Washington, Kody Ranko, Adam Elias, Ryan Williams
Alexis Cornejo, Mya A-Y, Leah Dominie, Caio dos Santos, Andrew DeVita