

THE WARRIOR WITNESS

The latest news and updates from the Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation.

IN THIS ISSUE

CLIMATE CRISIS: WE MUST ACT NOW!

SELF-CARE TIPS

WHAT NOW? JANUARY REGENTS CANCELED

HOLIDAY MOVIE RECOMMENDATIONS

LIS MORILLO WINS WARRIOR WITNESS ART CONTEST

AOC PLAYS "AMONG US" AND ANSWERS QUESTIONS FROM CONSTITUENTS

TOP WINTER HOLIDAY MOVIES

ARE ROBOTS TAKING OUR JOBS?

and more!

Innovation's Virtual Wishing Tree

A message from Principal Terence Joseph

Anais Torres 24h

I hope to have better connection with my family this new year.

3

Anonymous 1d

I wish that everyone have a Happy New Year and we can be back to school very soon.

2

Keira Maldonado 5h

I hope we return to Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation at the end of January 2021 without any complications. I miss coming to the building every morning.

1

Anonymous 1d

I wish everything was back to normal and that everyone stays safe

4

Samantha Sawyer 1d

i hope everyone is being safe during this pandemic.. & hopefully the new year brings people together...

5



Innovation's Virtual Wishing Tree

A message from our Principal, Terence Joseph

Happy holidays, Innovation family!

2020, the year that has tested us all, is finally coming to a close. As the saying goes, “when one door closes, a new one opens.” As the door to 2021 opens, what are you hoping and wishing is on the other side? What were you thankful for in 2020 and what do you desire most in 2021 for yourself, family, friends, community, the world?

During my visit to Japan years ago, I witnessed their tradition called the Wishing Tree. During the Tanabata or Star Festival, the Japanese communities write their loving wishes and hopes on colored or white paper and hang them on trees, which inspires joy and hope in all who see it and read the messages. Now this tradition happens around the world.

This Holiday Season, we can all use this type of inspiration. So, I ask you all to join us in creating Innovation's Wishing Tree. With your phone's camera, scan the QR code to go to our virtual Wishing Tree, a padlet.

Hit the circled “plus” button in the bottom right corner, and add your wish, message of hope or “thank you” for the new year for the rest of the Innovation Community to see. You can change the background color of your note to whatever color you chose. You can even hit the like button on anyone else's wish that has touched you.

When we are all done, our Innovation Virtual Wishing Tree will be filled with motivating messages of hope, uplifting wishes, and open the door to an inspiring 2021. Please join us and take a 1 or 2 minutes to add a loving wish for the new year to our community Wishing Tree.




SCAN ME

 **Anonymous** 26m

Terrell Anderson (Michael Terrell)


I really hope that everyone stays safe and that throughout this cold ❄️ frosty weather those who aren't as fortunate to be in a warm cozy home is warm this winter and less lives can be lost in a cruel world like this I love the people here in the world and I don't want to see no suffering

❤️ 2

 **Aniya Pearson** 24h


I hope that we can take all the lessons of 2020 and turn them into blessings in 2021!!!!

❤️ 4

 **Celeste Cintron** 2d

I hope 2021 be everyone happiness with no stress no problem and how we finished this year strong . Thanks to all my teachers and peers for the help :)!


❤️ 8

 **Anonymous** 2d

Evalyn


I hope that everyone stays safe and that I get to see all the teachers again and all my old friends❤️

❤️ 7

 **William Ortiz** 24h


i hope that everything returns to normal and that people can return to their normal lives.

❤️ 4

 **Nashanti Robinson** 10m

I wish everyone stays safe and protected during this pandemic and that 2021 will be the year of success.


❤️ 1

 **Angel** 24h

My wish:

I just wish that 2021 will be a better year for everyone and that things start looking better for people who have had a bad time.

❤️ 3


 **Anonymous** 19h

My Wish

I have 3 wishes so if your a genie please make it happen.


1. Things can go back to normal (family issues, corona gone, etc)
2. My grades stay above 80 (do it for all my peeps too)
3. Just to be happy and not worry about who's going to mess it up.

❤️ 3

 **Anna Sgherzi** 24h


My wishes:

1. Everyone in our community and beyond has comfort, love, and safety at this time.
2. Science prevails and we have a COVID-19 free future.
3. That justice prevails for those who did not receive any.
4. That the world becomes a better place for the youth.
5. To be with my students in room 314, laughing, creating, and making a mess!

 **Jada Garcia Lopez** 2d

I hope that the the corona virus ends in 2021 and we will be able to see each other. I hope everyone stays safe.

❤️ 4

 **Kristopher Bailey** 2d

School

I hope we'll be able to enter the building soon so I can see my teachers and friends.

❤️ 4

Innovation Updates for MP3

By Chanel Morris

Surprisingly, we've made it to our third marking period. Honestly, time has gone by quickly and hopefully the rest of the school year goes along accordingly. There have been a few changes made along the way to adjust to our wants and needs.

For starters, **review sessions will now be held during some synchronous classes.** Students comfortable with the class will be working independently, while students in need of more support will be placed in teacher-strategic groups and will have more opportunities to hand assignments in their grade. Moreover, students who might be struggling must attend asynchronous and after school office hours for support. Students will be asked to attend extra support hours by their teachers in order to fix any low grade or make up missing work.

Importantly, **the grading policies have changed!** Synchronous work is now worth 40%, asynchronous work is worth 25%, and assessments are 35%, although teachers may adjust those categories by 5% in either direction, at their discretion. This means that attendance and synchronous engagement are now worth most of your grade, so all that has to be done is show up, make an effort, communicate, and share with your class.

Also, teachers now have the option to base their marking period three grades on a project. This option is all up to your teacher though. The project may last for the entire marking period with no other assignments being given. Students will have two weeks after the final project submission date to revise for a higher grade.

Next, students' lowest assignment grade will be dropped and be granted extra credit. In order to earn the highest grade possible, students must complete all assignments assigned, and at the end of marking period three, their lowest grade in each category will be exempt. Teachers will choose if students will be given an extension or extra credit assignments. Due to this change, students will now be able to raise any grade holding them back from passing the marking period. Last but not least, students will have six days to relearn from any missed lessons at the end of January. This will give students time to catch up on missing assignments and get caught up.

All this information and more can be found just a click away in your school email. Due to the fact that not all students keep up with school emails, I took it upon myself to inform my fellow Warriors. Thank you Innovation staff for taking us students into consideration and helping us get to the finish line!

Regents Review: What now? January Regents Canceled

By Keira Maldonado

Back in 2019 and the early part of 2020, teachers that were in the New York State Regents program were helping their students not only learn new information, but also prepare for the Regents for June 2020. Everything was going smoothly until we had the COVID-19 pandemic in the middle of March and had to remain in quarantine for the rest of the 2019-2020 school year. Despite the challenges of transitioning into virtual learning and not taking the Regents as tradition holds, the teachers continued to help this years' graduates get into good colleges.

I interviewed the assistant principal of Renaissance Charter High School for Innovation, Ira Yasbin, to find out how the Regents' cancellation affected the graduation and college application process for seniors. "The Regents' cancellation didn't hurt the students chances of getting accepted to good colleges," Ira told me. Even though high school seniors had to do their last half of the year in their homes, vice principals, guidance counselors, as well as college and career readiness teachers helped them out by having alternative ways for them to get their applications done.

But how were they able to graduate without needing to take the Regents examinations? The 2020 Regents may have been cancelled but Ira explained that one of the ways students have been able to pass is by getting exam waivers to get diplomas with a full Regents pass. Another thing is, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) is making sure parents agree to let them give the students exam waivers to get their diplomas. "NYSED is now requiring us to contact parents to make sure they agree with Regents waivers going on forward. Parents opt their child in to get a waiver," which means the student, if they pass the class, does not have to sit the exam. But if the parent declines the waiver, the student will have to take the exam in the next cycle, and won't be able to graduate until they pass.

The waivers are a huge help for students because they can get their diplomas without taking the Regents, especially at this time because the COVID-19 pandemic was an unseen obstacle for not just the students, but the whole New York State school system.

Recently, it was decided that the January 2021 Regents was cancelled but we may still be preparing for exams in June 2021. Hopefully, if we return to Innovation High School at the end of January, or by spring break, students should be able to take the June Regents without much complications.

The Importance of Self-Care

By Zoë Whitehead-Evans

Self care is essential when working on physical and mental health. It is more than okay to pamper and appreciate yourself once in a while. Self care is key when trying to reduce stress and develop healthy habits. It is so important to take care of your mind, body and soul as it can keep you resilient, confident and happy. People sometimes disregard self care because life gets in the way. You may have a crazy job or a lot of responsibility and it is impossible to catch a break.

Self care isn't selfish and you don't need to feel guilty for having or wanting personal time to heal. Some ways to engage in self care is creating a beneficial sleep schedule. Meaning you go to sleep before 1:00 o'clock in the morning.

Another way is saying no to people who don't bring positive energy or are beneficial in your growth as a person. Remind yourself of who you are, look in the mirror and love what you see, who you are and what you're becoming.

Make sure you're eating real food not little snacks but actual meals. Eating can contribute to the amount of energy you have and the mood you will have all day.

Organization can be really helpful when trying to calm and clear your mind. Organization allows you to figure out what you need to do to take care of yourself and keep up with responsibilities to prevent feeling overwhelmed.

Self care is not only wearing a clay mask and watching Netflix (though those are still good forms of care). In my case it's a solo dance party and screaming empowering songs at the top of my lungs, or rearranging my room. It's more about making sure everything is okay inside so you feel satisfied outside. Personal time is imperative; try to look for ways to add it to your everyday routine so you can thrive within. For more ideas for self care, check out [this](#) article from Psychology Today, "Twelve Ways to Take Better Care of Yourself."



IMAGE BY SHAWNA LANGER /
GRAPHICS EDITOR

Op-Ed: How distance learning and the pandemic disappoints student athletes

By Maritza Trinidad

Has distance learning impacted you in any way? I feel that since distance learning began, more has changed than we could have ever imagined back in March. For instance many athletes don't have the opportunity to practice with friends or coaches, which can in fact be very stressful for them. Many students have a passion for sports. So much so that some schools require good grades in order for you to be in the team. Many students stay in school till after hours to get a better grade in a class to be able to play in the next game.

Distance learning has been hard for many. Many students didn't have access to laptops until they were able to borrow chromebooks from school and some don't have wifi at home. It's also hard for those students that lose their chance to play their last season. I was on the volleyball team at Innovation and I enjoyed playing so much that I tried my best to keep my grades good.

My coach from last season, Christopher O'Malley, was kind enough to talk to me for *the Warrior Witness* about how distance learning impacted him as a coach and his plans for their next season. He states, "well, it impacted us this year because we can't have a season at all". Which for any seniors on the team missed the opportunity to enjoy their last year on the team. He also explained that "we also have lost the opportunity to recruit any new players for the team and to help the players improve." This is why he thinks distance learning has been a bit of a setback for the volleyball team.

A question I wanted to ask was, "What are your plans for the volleyball team for next year?" Chris responded by saying that they want to start tryouts in September and have the season begin in October/November. He's hopeful, but it's hard to make any plans because no one knows what the school year will be like next year. Will we still be doing distance learning or will we be in the school building? Hopefully we'll be back at Innovation soon, to learn and be a community.

Lis Morillo Wins the Warrior Witness' First Student & Staff Art Contest

by Warrior Witness Staff

Congratulations are in order to Ms. Lis Morillo, whose submission to the Warrior Witness' Winter Wonderland art contest has most deservedly won first prize. Lis wrote on her Instagram (@cinnaguk): "This was for my school's winter wonderland themed art contest!! I tried really hard... I was inspired by Wreck-It Ralph and Candyland. I don't know if I achieved that "winter wonderland" aesthetic, but it's cute!"

Well, we certainly think she did achieve the winter wonderland look. Thank you so much Lis for making this beautiful piece of art and sharing it with us all!

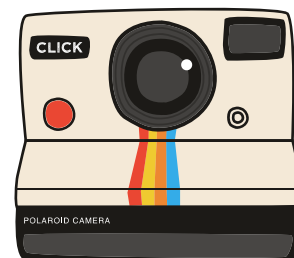


Announcements

From the Yearbook

SENIORS! We need photos from you!

- Please send a landscape (horizontal) photograph of yourself, head and shoulders, for the cover of the yearbook
- If you want to, send a baby picture (up to age 5)
- Email Anna P. with any questions and to send photos: Anna.Press@innovationhighschool.org



From the Digital Resources Team

There will no longer be set distribution times to pick up laptops or wifi hotspot devices, **but you may make an appointment to come by for tech support / replacements.** The school has wifi devices in stock!

If you have any tech issues, email the Digital Resources team and someone will reply ASAP.

Digitalresources@innovationhighschool.org

Senior Committee wants you to know...

Here are some events to put on your calendar:

- Senior Trip: Friday, May 21st, 2021
- Prom: Thursday, June 3rd, 2021
- Graduation: Tuesday, June 29th, 2021

Students must be on track to graduate by May 2021, cannot be missing more than 2 credits, and cannot be missing more than 1 Regent with 15 points away from a passing score to walk.

Questions? Email:
senioractivities@innovationhighschool.org

To attend the senior trip and prom, you must earn 500 I-Bucks and not have any major disciplinary infractions.

For the trip: you cannot receive two or more final grades of 55 in Semester 1.

For prom: same - but through Marking Period 5.

THE NBA RETURNS!

By *Abdrahamane "Abou" Togola*

Good news for basketball fans. On December 22nd, the NBA is going to start the 2020-2021 year basketball season!

According to the NBA's website, the schedule will be released in two segments, with the first half of the schedule coming around the start of training camp and the second half of the schedule coming out during the latter part of the first half.

Each team will play 72 regular-season games, which is 10 games fewer than in a typical, 82-game NBA season. For the players' safety they are going to be testing players and staff daily, beginning in advance of individual workouts, which began on December 1st.

Any player who tests positive, even if asymptomatic, must wait 10 days and then be monitored in individual workouts for an additional two days. Team traveling parties will be limited to 45 people, including 17 players, as they make their way around the country to play a home-and-road schedule in NBA arenas, so hopefully the players are quarantining themselves with their families and keeping their social interactions outdoors. Even though it's a lot of scheduling, the NBA is being very careful. For the people who love basketball, the season starts on the 22nd of this month.

A Conversation with Leah Amico

By *Natasha Marrero-Keppis*

Last week I had the opportunity to interview Leah Amico, an ESPN analyst for college softball. As an ESPN analyst, Amico basically reports what goes on with the sports events and games, like a journalist. She is also a National Softball Hall of Fame Honoree, a 3-time NCAA national champion, 3-time gold medalist, and 2-time world champion.

Amico started playing softball at a very young age. At 14 she was already traveling to compete competitively. She says that she has been so successful because of her faith in the Lord. Leah is a very religious person and never let her struggles get in between her relationship with Christ. One particularly challenging time in her life was when she first wanted to have kids but felt like she couldn't because of her softball career. She had to take a break from softball when she had her first son, and she thought that she wouldn't be able to go back, but with the support and inspiration of her teammates, many of whom were also wives and mothers, she was able to get back to work.

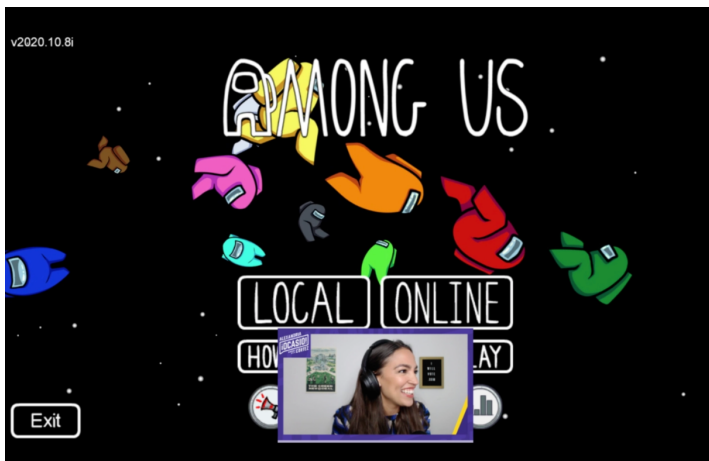
Even after coming back, so many opportunities were open to her such as switching to a better team and playing at the Olympics. Leah's team won three out of their four softball matches at the Olympic. Playing at such an elite level came with obstacles, like not knowing if she could bring her son with her when she was away, and not being able to spend as much quality time with her family. Leah told me, "It's not easy being a mother, wife, and softball player." Over the years, she has been able to manage her time and even accept new opportunities that were offered to her.

AOC Plays "Among Us" with Constituents

By Lailah Melendez

Thousands of people tuned in to Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's stream where she played a popular video game called *Among Us*. For those who don't know, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez is a young congresswoman from the Bronx.

In the stream she played with many people including Representative Ilhan Omar, some of their constituents, and fans from all over the world. Her stream was a part of a get-out-the-vote effort and directed viewers to a website called iwillvote.com. This website helps check if you are registered to vote and helps tell you how to register to vote if you are 18 and older.



INNERSLOTH VIA TWITCH / IMAGE COURTESY OF MIT'S TECHNOLOGY REVIEW

AOC has become one of the most watched streamers on twitch, a popular streaming site. In the past many politicians like Obama have done ads relating to video games to get gamers attention and get their vote. However instead of doing an ad, she actually played the game and interacted with her viewers. In the middle of the stream representative Ocasio-Cortez started talking about healthcare with one of the players, who goes by Hbomberguy, and who is from the UK where healthcare is free. AOC believes healthcare should be

free and everyone should have access to it. She asked the player, "How does it feel to go to the doctor and not worry about going bankrupt?" He told her, "It's generally incredible." He can just go to the doctor's office and get medication for free. Another player, who goes by pokimane, jumped in and said there's a difference in living in Canada and the US. As a Canadian, she can't believe how much people struggled to pay for doctor's appointments and medical care in the US.

Representative Ocasio-Cortez believes healthcare should be free because there are families that can not afford health care. While streaming, AOC's audience is able to interact with her by typing in the chat, and she's able to both educate and entertain her audience at the same time. In her recent stream, she had more than 2 million viewers.

Have we finally reached the finish line? Pfizer's Coronavirus Vaccine is Ready

By Marie Toure

For months now, the coronavirus has been ravaging the world. It has disrupted life all around the world and has caused the deaths of 1.5 million people. However, there finally seems to be light at the end of the tunnel. So far, two companies have come up with a potential vaccine. Pfizer has received approval from both the FDA and CDC to start distributing the vaccine while Moderna is still waiting for approval.

According to Gothamist, both companies "applied for emergency use authorizations approvals from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration," and Pfizer was first to receive the approval. There will be vaccines available for as many as 170,000 people in New York as soon as December 15th. People who are most vulnerable to Covid-19 will get the vaccine first. In this case, that's health care workers, nursing home residents and residents of New York's hard-hit areas--which include Innovation's zip code, 10029. However, this does not include children and teenagers less than 16 years old because the vaccine has only been fully tested on adults.

In Long Island City, the first nurse has already received the vaccine. After the vaccine, she stated that she felt "well, relieved and hopeful." She also went on to say "I feel like healing is coming." Even though the vaccine seems like a good thing, there are some controversies surrounding it. Some people are wary of it because of how rushed it seems to be, while others feel like it's a political statement. People have every right to feel this way, but that shouldn't stop



SANDRA LINDSAY, A CRITICAL CARE NURSE AT LONG ISLAND JEWISH MEDICAL CENTER IN QUEENS, WAS THE FIRST PERSON IN THE UNITED STATES TO RECEIVE THE PFIZER CORONAVIRUS VACCINE. PHOTO COURTESY OF ABC 6 NEWS, PHILADELPHIA.

them from also looking at the bright side of things. Despite the concerns, scientists have reassured people and said the vaccine should be trusted because of all the “cutting edge research” that has gone into the process.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE BBC

Even though the vaccine is finally here, we shouldn't stop wearing masks or stop washing our hands constantly. We should actually double our efforts. As the saying goes, "Just because the cavalry is coming, it doesn't mean you put down your gun and stop shooting." It will take a long time before the vaccine is widely available to all.

In the U.K., vaccines are already being offered to high-risk populations such as the elderly. However, as the media celebrates countries such as the United States and the United

Kingdom are already on the verge of getting the vaccine, what about countries in Africa and other parts of the world that are suffering from the relentless spread of the virus? Is there going to be a “terrible vaccine inequality?”

According to Cara Anna from AP news, “It will be extremely terrible to see rich countries get Covid-19 vaccines while African countries (and other nations) go without.” Health officials have warned that Africa might not get the vaccine until the second-half of 2021. If this happens, the coronavirus might become endemic in Africa. An endemic is a disease or condition regularly found in a certain region.

Does this mean that every year, thousands of African lives and the lives of people from countries that are "underdeveloped" will be lost to the coronavirus? This seems like favoritism and it is very unfair. It's sad to see nations in Africa and other third world countries elsewhere in the world always come last.

I truly believe that if powerful leading nations like the U.K. and U.S. advocate for countries that don't have a voice, then everyone, no matter where they're from or their countries financial status will get the vaccine and we can finally move on from this horrible chapter.

Are Robots Taking Our Jobs?

By Diego Abarca-Ortega

As technology has advanced over the years, robots have started arriving in workplaces, demonstrating impressive levels of performance. I am curious about technology and it is becoming evident that most regular, repetitive types of jobs will soon be able to be performed by computers, machines, robots, and algorithms. That is what machine learning is all about at the core of it. But what kinds of jobs are essentially predictable at the same level? A lot of different types of abilities fall into that group.

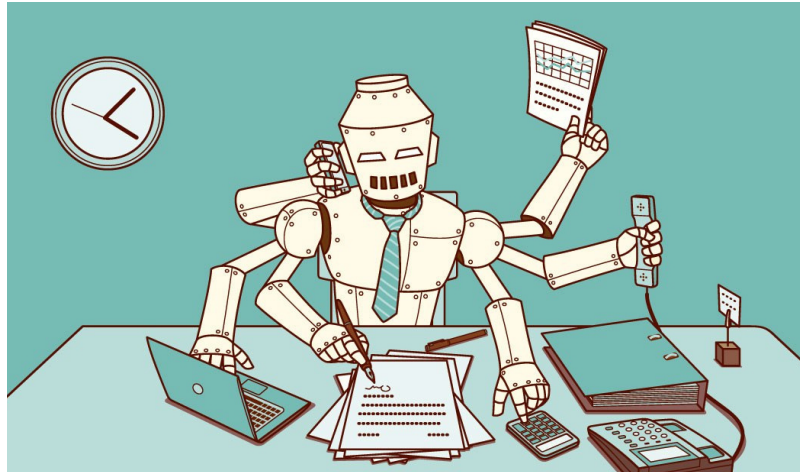


PHOTO COURTESY OF TED

In a GovTech study, “During Pandemic, More Workers Are Replaced by Robots” the researches found that during this pandemic many factories are replacing people with machines. Part of this may have to do with safety concerns, but the report found that companies become satisfied with labor-saving technology; some places like hotels, cashiers, parking attendants, are replacing humans with self-check-in.

According to the report, "Policymakers need to rethink how to improve the safety net for workers abruptly displaced by the pandemic, who also face an imminent risk of being replaced by technology."

But there are fields where robots may actually be better than humans. The medical field had robots in the surgery room in what is called Robotic-Assisted Surgery. Robots do surgeries in many specialties like urology, cardiothoracic surgery, and otolaryngology. There are advantages of robotic surgery over traditional open surgery in these medical fields: less pain, less blood loss, less risk of infection.

These robots are changing the world and are pushing us into the future. It seems some good will come of this, but what will happen to those whose jobs are now filled by machines?

Climate Change: We Must Act Now!

By Breanna Rodriguez

Climate change has been a crucial issue for numerous years. As greenhouse gases continue to spiral into the air, further polluting our planet and gradually making it hotter than ever before, it is our duty to find a stable solution for this disruptive cycle.

Earth's average temperature is 15 degrees Celsius (59 degrees Fahrenheit), but this number has greatly increased over the course of just a couple decades. The greenhouse effect causes Earth to trap the sun's energy while solar energy radiates back to space from the Earth's surface, which is absorbed by the greenhouse gases. This heats up Earth's surface and lowers the atmosphere, making our planet's temperature rise.

Additionally, it is critical to keep in mind that not only is our Earth heating up, but our glaciers are swiftly melting away as a result of this issue, signifying that our planet's rising temperature is not the only problem we must fix, but our surging sea levels need to be addressed as well.

It is predicted that a great number of countries and cities will be underwater by 2050, if we do not get our sea levels under control. New York, specifically Manhattan, (since it is classified as an island) is one of the many places that are expected to be underwater, or at least certain parts of it. Other places/cities across the United States such as Miami, Atlantic City, Honolulu, San Diego, Fort Lauderdale, etc. are also under threat since some of these places often do get hit with storms and or hurricanes.

Nevertheless, a portion of people's nerves surrounding climate change are mellowed when they discover our president-elect, Joe Biden, has a plan of action for this worldwide predicament. Biden's first step to tackling climate change is to rejoin the Paris Climate agreement, which is an international pact designed to take action against the dangers of global warming, and which President Donald Trump chose to leave in 2016. Others have shared Biden's worries, such as well-known congresswoman Alexandria



PHOTO COURTESY OF SPENCER PLATT / GETTY IMAGES

Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), who proposed the Green New Deal as a way to abolish carbon emission from most sources over the course of a decade. Lastly, another course of action Joe Biden is planning to take is spending up to \$2 trillion over his presidential term to drive down emissions by upgrading 4 million buildings to make them increasingly become more energy efficient.

It is vital that we do not have the “I’ll leave it to the higher-ups,” mindset. Some very small steps you yourself can take to slow down the repercussions of climate change are:

1. Turning off the lights when they’re not in use
2. Taking shorter showers
3. Shopping at your local fruit and vegetable markets
4. Recycling as much as you can
5. Attempting to use cars less often as your way of transportation.

We only have eleven years left before climate change is completely irreversible, so everyone should act now.

No Traveling this Christmas for Italy

By Yesmindee Romero

As we may all know COVID-19 had affected many of us this year and it could still. COVID-19 is still out there worldwide and many people are trying their best to avoid getting the virus, whereas others seem determined to go about their regular lives.

COVID-19 really impacted Italy at the start of the pandemic with many deaths. It was, in the beginning of 2020, hit hard and fast, with thousands of cases. Italy seemed to do a great job of getting the pandemic under control, but as the virus has continued to ravage the world, Italy decided to enact new tough measures to this big problem and make rules for the upcoming holidays.

These new rules include: banning travels across the country's internal regional borders between the dates of December 21 and January 6, the addition of curfews, and the closure of ski slopes until January 7, but shops will remain open until 9 p.m from December 4 to January 6. Now, if you want to come and visit Italy within these dates you will have to quarantine for 10 days regardless what country you are arriving from. Celebrating holidays with a virus going on may be difficult but we all must stick together and stay safe.

The Top 7 Holiday Movies to Binge-Watch this Christmas

By Tahjanay Turner

In her article, "15 Great Christmas Movies On Netflix to Give You All the Holiday Cheer You Need Right Now," writer Lauren Philips reminds us that all we need for a movie marathon this winter break is right in front of us. "You probably already turn to Netflix to watch all the best shows on Netflix right now and keep up with new Netflix Originals, but the streaming service is also a great spot to find holiday favorites," Philips explained to Real Simple.

As we know, COVID 19 is still around. Sadly, that means holiday festivities are cancelled, but we can still binge watch! Our holiday benders have us mentally prepared to watch Christmas movie marathons! Streaming platforms such as Hulu, Netflix, Disney+, etc. have all the Christmas classics to spice up any device you're on while getting into the Christmas spirit. Here are my top 7 movie recommendations for the holiday season.



#1 - The Grinch (2018) is a Dr. Seuss story that's been watched way too many times...but it's still good. This computer-animated update to the old tale will have your heart throbbing over your favorite Christmas villain.



#2 - Home Alone (1990) This 90's classic holiday film is all about family and the holidays - even when the family's gone. This holiday comedy will have your children out of their seats with laughter and even some laughs for the adults.



#3 - Holidate (2020) If you're like me, nothing makes you happier than finding out Emma Roberts is the star of the movie. The perfect rom-com for the adults that'll leave you questioning if you maybe need a Holidate. ;)



#4 - Krampus (2015) is a holiday horror movie classic. It might not have a savage bite like any other Joe Dante classic, but it's a gory good fun for the non-traditional holiday fans who love both edge-of-your-seat horror and the Christmas spirit.



#5 - Happiest Season (2020). If you like Twilight and Hallmark holiday movies, you'll love this. Starring Kristen Stewart, this heartfelt and heart-wrenching performance will leave more than enough holiday cheer for your Happiest Season.



#6 - A Bad Moms Christmas: For all the moms out there, this is for you. Whether you're kid-free or not, I recommend this raunchy-sweet movie. This feel-good comedy and will give you plenty of laughs and a good fix of holiday cheer.



#7 - The Santa Clause (1994). Ever wished your dad was Santa Clause? Well Charlie's dad is, are you jealous? This family-friendly holiday movie will give you the good old fashioned holiday spirit you need this year.

I hope this list gives you some inspiration for what to watch these cold winter nights! With Netflix and other streaming platforms releasing their holiday movies, we can still make this COVID holiday something special. So, grab some cookies and hot cocoa, turn on your TV, tablets or smartphone and get ready to get your holiday cheer on!



The Story of the Christmas Tree

By Qi'Ane Lewis

Recently, I was wondering: who was the first person to bring the Christmas Tree home? If you've ever been curious about this holiday tradition, I looked into it for you. According to the History Channel's website, there is a story that "the first person to bring a Christmas Tree into a house, in the way we know it today, may have been the 16th century German preacher Martin Luther." In the story, Martin Luther was walking in a forest at night, soon before Christmas. Gartman's Tree Farm continues the story on their website. Luther looked up "to see the stars shining through the tree branches. It was so beautiful, that he went home and told his children that it reminded him of Jesus, who left the stars of heaven to come to earth at Christmas."

The Christmas tree has had many famous ornaments throughout history such as lighted candles (Editor's note: do not do this, it's incredibly unsafe) and candy canes, but the most popular ornament is the angel on top of the tree. The angel on the Christmas tree is one of the most common tree toppers because the angels are the most important roles in the nativity story. According to WhyChristmas.com, back in 1605, when Christmas trees were first becoming popular in Germany, "baby Jesus topped the tree that was decorated with gingerbread and gold-covered apples." Eventually people switched to putting an angel on top of the tree to "remind people of both the angel Gabriel and the angels that served as a celestial birth announcement," writes Melissa Locker for Yahoo!sports.



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Winter Crossword Puzzle

by Innovation Staff



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



Word Bank

- | | | | |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|
| celebration | gift | menorah | sleigh |
| cheer | gingerbread | mittens | snowball fight |
| christmas lights | grateful | netflix | snowflake |
| christmas tree | grinch | new years eve | snowman |
| december | hanukkah | ornaments | surprise |
| family | hot chocolate | presents | ugly sweater |
| first snow | ice skating | resolutions | vacation |
| friends | january | santa | winter |

Sudoku

by Innovation Staff

Difficulty rating: Easy

Instructions: Complete the grid so that each **row, column, and 3-by-3 box** contains the numbers 1-9.

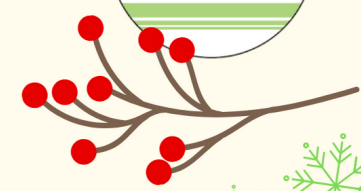
Hints:

- Start by looking for the number that appears the most.
- Look for the rows and columns that have the most numbers in them
- Look for the 3-by-3 boxes that have the most numbers in them
- Use process of elimination!

4		7	6		3	9		
		9		7	5			3
		8			2			7
	7	6		2		3	4	9
		2	3					
1		3			4		8	
		1	2		7	5	9	
		4				1	2	8
	2	5		4	8	7		



Happy
holidays



Wishing you and your families a
healthy, happy, and safe New Year!

TO: INNOVATION
 FROM: THE WARRIOR
 WITNESS

The Warrior Witness

Meet our staff

Diego Abarca-Ortega, an 11th-grade student, loves topics relating to math. He is friendly, and likes to hear music when he is studying to concentrate better. Find Diego's article, "Are Robots Taking Our Jobs?" on pg. 14.

Qi'ane Lewis is a junior at Innovation High School. She loves watching *Grey's Anatomy* with her family, and her favorite class is Culinary Arts. Find Qi'ane's article, "The Story of the Christmas Tree," on pg. 20.

Keira Maldonado is a sophomore. Her favorite classes are Geometry, Journalism, and Culinary. A fun fact about her is she loves Deep Look and other videos about nature. Find Keira's article, "Regents Review: What Now? January Regents Canceled," can be found on pg. 5.

Natasha Marrero-Keppis is a sophomore new to Innovation and we are lucky to have her! Find Natasha's article, "A conversation with Leah Amico," on pg. 10.

Lailah Melendez is a sophomore. Her favorite classes are Painting and Drawing and English. Lailah is a part of the movie club and loves to play volleyball. Find Lailah's article, "AOC Plays 'Among Us' with Constituents," on pg. 11.

Chanel Morris, a junior at Innovation, enjoys writing and photography. Find Chanel's article, "Innovation Updates for MP3" on pg. 4.

Breanna Rodriguez is a junior. Her favorite class is ELA since she has always enjoyed writing. Breanna really likes listening to music on her free time. Find Breanna's article, "Climate Change: We Must Act Now!" on pg. 15.

Yesmindee Romero is a sophomore at Innovation High School. One of her favorite classes is ELA because she likes to express herself through writing. Find Yesmindee's article, "No Traveling This Christmas for Italy," on pg. 16.

Abdrahamane Togola is a junior, and he goes by Abou. Find Abou's article, "The NBA Returns!" on pg. 10.

Marie Toure is in the graduating class of 2023, so she is a sophomore. She cannot decide her favorite class between art and geometry. She loves playing volleyball and she reads a lot in her free time. She is also a part of the movie class. Find Marie's article, "Have we finally reached the finish line? Pfizer's Coronavirus Vaccine is Ready" on pg. 12.

Maritza Trinidad is a sophomore. She loves playing volleyball and wishes her team could practice together this year. Find Maritza's article, "Op-Ed: How distance learning and the pandemic disappoints student athletes," on pg. 7.

Tahjanay Turner is a senior. She has a passion for food and loves watching *Grey's Anatomy* on her free time. Find Tahjanay's article, "The Top 7 Holiday Movies to Binge-Watch this Christmas," on pg. 17

Zoë Whitehead-Evans is a senior. *Criminal Minds* is her favorite show, but she also loves *Grey's Anatomy*. She enjoys listening to music and she cannot ride a bike. Find Zoë's article, "The Importance of Self-Care," on pg. 6.

Thank you so much for reading *the Warrior Witness*! Got a scoop for our student journalists? Share any stories, announcements, or shout-outs with Andrew Cortazzo and Anna Press, and one or our reporters will be in touch!

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