



The Stylus

10 wonderful things in 2024

2024 was a year full of surprises. Good things and bad things happened, but that doesn't stop us from looking at all the bright things that happened this past year. A lot of wonderful things happened, and here's a recap of all the good actions and changes that were made this past year.

Colorful auroras dazzled viewers across the planet

In 2024, the United States experienced auroras due to heightened solar activity. This increased solar activity led to northern lights being displayed across different parts of the U.S. These auroras were so wonderful, a couple even got engaged under this beautiful display.



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Year of the Snake

Intuition, strategy, elegance. These are all traits of the Wood Snake, and they come into play because we are currently in the Chinese Year of the Snake!

From January 29, 2025, to February 16, 2026, the Chinese Lunar New Year is being celebrated. The holiday falls on the second new moon after the winter solstice, with the date usually falling between January 21 and February 20. Although for us it is during the winter, in China it's known as the Spring Festival, representing the desire for a new life. The New Year is a big celebration all around the world, but here are some examples of Chinese New Year traditions:

New Year's Eve Dinner - The New Year's Eve dinner is one of the most important meals for Chinese families. The majority of families will gather at a home to eat dinner, rather than a restaurant.

Fireworks - Fireworks are known to drive away evil. After the clock hits 12:00AM, fireworks will be launched to celebrate the New Year. It is also believed that the person who launched the first firework of the New Year will have good luck.

Red Envelopes - Red envelopes are given to children by adults, married couples, and the elderly during the New Year festival. It is believed that the money in the red envelopes given to children will drive away evil, keep them healthy, and give them a long life.

Small Year - The small year is the last day of the year. People believe that the Kitchen God leaves the family, goes to heaven, and reports the family's activities to the Emperor of Heaven.

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10 wonderful things in 2024, Cont'd

Valedictorian graduates top of his class while homeless

Elijah Hogan graduated as a valedictorian at Walter L. Cohen Carter High School in New Orleans. Hogan gave a speech at his graduation ceremony, and he called it a “Thank-you note” to the community who helped him and other students go through the struggle to remain focused on their education, despite the challenges of homelessness.

An NBA player fulfills his dream of being a teacher

Brooklyn Nets player Mikal Bridges became a second grade teacher for a day at PS 134 in Brooklyn. Some of the activities he did were playing basketball with fourth graders, teaching math class, and learning the xylophone.

Solar eclipse

There was a solar eclipse on April 8 for the first time in over a decade. This solar eclipse, also known as the Great North American Eclipse, was a major event in 2024. Eclipse-chasers from around the world found a way to see the solar eclipse and everyone says it was beautiful.

Students surprise custodian with dream car

Francis Apraku, a custodian at James Madison High School in Virginia got super emotional when students surprised him with his dream car, a Jeep Wrangler. This birthday present was a result of months of fundraising led by students. This fundraising campaign definitely exceeded expectations, raising over \$20,000.



cbnews.com

Dog missing for 2 years reunited with owner

A Indiana woman reunited with her emotional support dog after he had been missing for almost 2 years. According to social media, the dog owner, Samantha Powers, left her dog in the care of a friend and he got out. Thankfully, her dog had a microchip, so Fort Wayne Animal Care & Control were able to locate him.

Entertainment events

Fantastic movies were released in 2024. Films like “Avatar 3”, “Deadpool 3”, “Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire”, and “Moana 2” were released.

“Mind-blowing” medical advances

Science Corporation is developing an experimental eye implant to restore vision. A man who received the world’s first whole-eye and partial-face transplant said that he was happy to be a “normal guy” again.

Donations made everyone happy

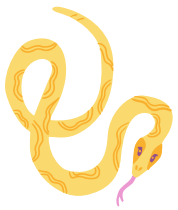
A candle company donated hundreds of candles to hurricane survivors without power in North Carolina. Also, a woman in Arizona bought 500 pieces of clothing and donated it to children in need.

Endangered Narwhals on the rise

Canadian officials found that Narwhal populations may no longer be at risk of endangerment. The “unicorn of the sea” was on a “Near Threatened” list since 2008, but their populations have been on the rise. Everyone loves the Narwhal!



abcnews.go.com



Year of the Snake, Cont'd



Decorating - After cleaning their whole house, celebrants decorate it. This is to welcome the New Year. Most decorations are colored red, because red is supposed to bring luck and prosperity.

Birthday of the “Water God” - No washing clothes, hair, bathing, no sweeping the floor or taking out the garbage for the first 2 days of the New Year. It is the birthday of the “Water God,” and it is found to be disrespectful to use water during this time.

Why is it an Important Holiday To Those Who Celebrate it?

The Lunar New Year is the most important holiday in China. Not only is it celebrated in many countries such as South Korea, Vietnam, and Mongolia, it’s a reminder of the importance of family, nature, life, and the hope for a brighter and prosperous future.

Some may not realize that it was only in 2023 that New York Governor Kathy Hochul signed recognition of the holiday into law, acknowledging the contributions and traditions of Asian-Americans in New York State. According to the New York State Senate website, New York is home to the second-largest Asian-American population in the country.



hanfunmodern.com



chinahighlights.com

100th day of school

By Gabby Potes

Germantown CSD is 100 years old this year, and there is only one 100th day of the 100th year, so we should celebrate it and have fun to never forget it. Mrs. Elena Spence, Mrs. Janet Crawford, Ms. Liz Choiniski, and Mr. Tom Shannon—with the help of other teachers and staff—are planning some activities to celebrate this special day.

On February 13, the school hallways will be decorated. Different teachers will decorate their doors and hallways to have them represent different decades. Elementary students will have a special morning meeting celebration. The younger students will do some Kahoot, there will be surprises, and the cheer team will perform some cheers for the elementary kids.

We will have more activities after school. At 3pm, the school will be open for anyone who wants to come in and view the many changes to our building. We will have tours for people who studied here in the past. At night, there will be two basketball games: boys JV and girls varsity will compete against Rhinebeck. At the games, the school will be selling food and school merch.

We're celebrating this date to remember our history and how far we've come. This is also a way to acknowledge all the people that have been here all these past years and who have helped us come this far. This day will also remind us, the students, that we should be thankful for all the teachers and staff that make learning in Germantown possible.



Above: Bulletin board created by Ms. O'Connor's studio art class. Planned and executed by the students, they took inspiration from a lesson on artist Wayne Thiebaud and created cakes and cupcakes (paint sticks on paper) to celebrate GCS's 100th Day/100th Year.

photo: Karen Katz

Love on a Budget

By Alice Sindoni

Valentine's Day is on its way, and stores are filling up with things to purchase for your loved ones. But do you really need to spend your money to show love? This article is going to show ways that you can show love to your significant other without spending your life savings.

Gifts for Them:

Love Letters

Love letters can be the key to expressing all of your deepest feelings in your heart. A good thing about love letters is they can be made anonymously. This unsigned letter idea can help if you are nervous toward that special person. That way, you can confess to them while keeping them guessing.



Handmade Flowers

Handcrafted flowers really show to your significant other that you are willing to give them your time and are thinking of them. They can be made in different ways using:

- Paper
- Pipe Cleaners

[Tutorial for paper flowers : Click Here!](#)

[Tutorial for pipe cleaner flowers : Click Here!](#)

Inside Dates:

Movie Nights:

Movie nights are one of the most common things people do. From scary to funny, and from stories of love to hate, all movies can be a part of the night you share together. Snacks with this night are always a go-to, like popcorn, sweet treats, etc. And it's always good to get creative! Build a fort for yourselves to get comfortable.



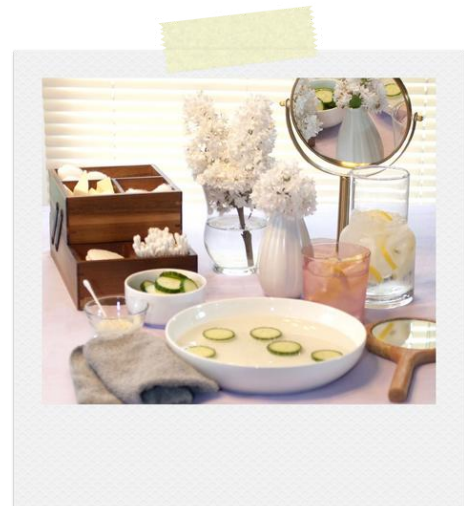
Baking / Cooking Dates:

Food is always an option when you're with your significant other. Studies actually show that cooking / baking with your partner:

- Enhances communication with one another
- Builds more trust
- Reduces stress / Sparks romance
- Encourages trying new things
- Helps develop patience with each other

Spa Day:

Having a relaxing time with each other is great for mental health. A lot of times, life takes over and you and your significant other forget to relax. This is a great way for your brain to relax, boost your mood, and stop you from running around all day. This can also help with enhancing self-esteem!



Outside Dates:

Picnics:

Getting outside and spending time with your partner are both some of the best things you could do. And a picnic is just the right choice for any occasion. Even for a Valentine's winter picnic, just grab some blankets, some sandwiches (or any other food you'd like), dress warmly, and you're set.



Road Trips:

There is endless things to see in the United States no matter where you live or go. Seeing and learning new things is always an excitement for the mind. With our busy and overscheduled lives, it's hard for you and your partner to really sit down with one another and take in life's beauty. This idea helps couples connect with not only each other, but the world around them.



What Makes You Feel Loved?

Ms. N:

- Ms. N, one of the science teachers at Germantown, celebrates Valentines Day. She explained that her mother “always gets her candy” for the holiday. Her valentines this year are her mother and her pets. She also explained what made her feel loved: “I feel loved when people consider my feelings and respect me.”

Anonymous:

- This person (who would like to remain anonymous) has told me that yes, they do celebrate Valentine's Day. And this year they are celebrating it with their significant other. They shared that they show their celebration of the holiday by decorating with their family and going out to eat. They also explained what made them feel loved: “I feel loved when someone shows (through actions) that I can fully trust them, and they always try to be there for me, as I am there for them.”

girls just wanna have fun

By Georgia Balkan

Valentine's Day. Everyone always wants a valentine or someone special for this day. After seeing all the ads about Valentine's Day rings, places to take your girlfriend, or new stuffed animals online, we really get the sense that society expects everybody to have a date. But what's the point of getting a valentine when you have your gals?

According to INDEPENDENT, Galentine's day is an "unofficial" holiday on February 13. As the name suggests, Galentine's day is similar to Valentine's Day, but instead you spend time with your female friends. In 2010, when the 16th episode of season 2 of "Parks and Recreation" was aired, the phrase became very popular. Galentine's Day has then been celebrated every year by girls around the world. Even before this day became popular, single women on Valentine's day would spend the day with people they love instead of a partner.

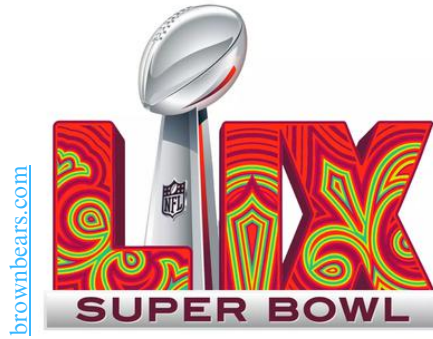


Out of 47 people who responded to the Stylus survey question of who you are spending Valentine's Day with, only 21.3% (10 people) said they had a valentine. 53.2% (25 people) said that they were spending the day with their galentines. Survey respondents said they liked to spend the day in a variety of ways: watching movies with their friends, getting little gifts for their parents, eating chocolate, getting Vasilow's chocolate-dipped strawberries and going out to eat with mom, watching rom-coms, giving gifts to friends, and, of course, going out with bf or gf!

THE FINAL DRIVE: SUPER BOWL LIX

By: Evan Provo

With the Super Bowl right around the corner, the end of another NFL season is almost here. But the fun doesn't stop after the Super Bowl, with free agency, the draft, and preseason speculation guiding football fans through the offseason. But before we get there, a champion still needs to be crowned.



The AFC and NFC Championship games are set to decide the best team on February 9. However, one of these teams is not like the others. The Washington Commanders ended just 4-13 last year, and seemed to be years out from the playoffs. But, with the #2 overall pick, Washington drafted the Heisman (An award that's gifted to the best college football player every year) winner Jayden Daniels (see below), who has had one of the most historic rookie seasons, leading Washington all the way to the NFC Championship game.



www.nbcnews.com

But Daniels' heroics don't end there. He threw the ultimate hail mary which ricocheted into Noah Brown's hands as time expired to beat the Chicago Bears (see right); he threw a game-winning touchdown in overtime to beat the Atlanta Falcons; he led an improbable victory over the 15-2 Detroit Lions just last week as the underdogs with 350 yards and 2 touchdown passes. And in the NFC Conference Championship game, he has the chance to do the very same thing and become the first rookie QB to start in the Super Bowl ever.

Standing in their way are the Philadelphia Eagles, their longtime divisional rival. Every year, divisional rivals play two games against each other: one at home and the other on the road, and these two teams did not disappoint in their previous matchups. Both games were decided by one score, with one being a game-winning touchdown throw by Daniels with under 10 seconds left.



www.washingtonpost.com

NFL · Jan 18	Final		
W	45	-	31
Washington Commanders (14 - 5)			Detroit Lions (15 - 3)
NFL Divisional Round			

NFL · Dec 22	Final		
	33	-	36
Philadelphia Eagles (12 - 3)			Washington Commanders (10 - 5)

Meanwhile, MVP candidate Saquon Barkley (see right), Jalen Hurts, and the rest of the star-studded Eagles roster stand in the way of this dream. The Eagles finished with a 14-3 record, which was tied for the 2nd best record with the Minnesota Vikings. Saquon Barkley came up just one hundred yards short of the all-time regular season record for rushing yards, but is second place on the all-time list for most rushing yards in a season, including the playoffs.

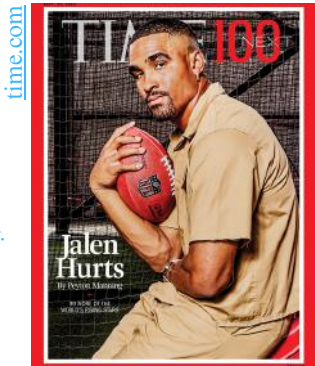


www.latimes.com

After playing for the New York Giants for six years, Barkley left the Giants and signed with their biggest rival after a contract fiasco. Barkley intends to lead the Eagles back to the Super Bowl alongside star quarterback Jalen Hurts, who looks to avenge their loss from two years ago to the Kansas City Chiefs (see below).



Eagles defensive backs Reed Blankenship (left) and Cooper DeJean (right)



time.com



www.npr.org

Speaking of the Chiefs, they find themselves in yet another installation of their rivalry with the Buffalo Bills in the AFC Championship game. Patrick Mahomes and Josh Allen (see both below) have led their teams to 15-2 and 13-4 seasons respectively, with Kansas City's only true loss coming to Allen and the Bills back in November (Kansas City rested their starters against the Denver Broncos in the final week of the season). Allen has continuously gotten the upper hand in the regular season with a 4-1 record over Mahomes, yet has failed to get it done when it matters most. Mahomes is 3-0 over Allen in the playoffs, and has catapulted them to the Super Bowl each time. While it seems like most of the general fandom wants the Chiefs out and the Bills in, they are very split between the Eagles and Commanders, leading to what will surely be a divisive and entertaining championship weekend.



www.wsj.com

NFL - Jan 21, 24		Final	
	27	-	24
Kansas City Chiefs (13 - 6)			Buffalo Bills (12 - 7)
NFL Divisional Round			
NFL - Jan 23, 22		Final/OT	
	36	-	42
Buffalo Bills (12 - 7)			Kansas City Chiefs (14 - 5)
NFL Divisional Round			
NFL - Jan 24, 21		Final	
	24	-	38
Buffalo Bills (15 - 4)			Kansas City Chiefs (16 - 2)
NFL Conference Championships			

A rematch of Super Bowl 57 just two years ago: the Kansas City Chiefs vs the Philadelphia Eagles. Despite the overall fan opinion of both teams and seeing a rematch of a Super Bowl that was upsetting two years ago, these are two of the best teams in the league. The rising question is will Patrick Mahomes win a fourth Super Bowl and catapult himself near the top of greatest of all time lists, or will Saquon Barkley lead his Eagles to win that ever-so-elusive Super Bowl that he vowed to win just seven years ago when he was drafted?



That was *then*...

The beliefs are divisive among teachers here at Germantown, with Ms. Katz and Mr. Michell believing that if the Eagles win, it will be because of Saquon Barkley. Mr. Michell thinks the Eagles will win because the Chiefs couldn't stop James Cook against Buffalo, so it will be tough for them to contain the potential NFL MVP. Ms. Katz, however, thinks Mahomes and the Chiefs will pull it out despite the tough challenge of Barkley and the star-studded Eagles team. Ms. Katz says, "I like the way the team works together. I have no real connection to the Eagles, but Saquon Barkley is pretty amazing. If there is an upset, it's going to come from him." Mr. Fitz says the Chiefs will win because "the refs love them," but he's rooting for the Yankees, lol.



GCS BASKETBALL: VARSITY BLUES?

by Dea Pujiawati-Hull

As the 2024-25 school basketball season comes to an end, let's look back at the Germantown Clippers season.

Highlights of the season with varsity coaches Broast and Conte:

Boys coach Mr. Broast felt very good about the basketball season, and his favorite part was coaching. He understands how coaching can be a little challenging for players, but he believes it makes him a “better coach and person.” Often the team fell short of playing together in a coordinated way, but Coach Broast’s favorite moment this season was winning against Chatham, when he believed the boys came together as a team and played with “heart on both ends of the court.” Broast believes the team has come a long way since the beginning of the season and has finally come to the right path.

Girls coach Mr. Conte believes this season is going well, with every individual improving in their own ways and the team improving as a whole. His favorite moments were during the Chatham and Hunter games, because both Clippers offense and defense played strong in their first halves. Conte described the team’s defense as “solid” because the girls put in effort both in games and in practice. Conte added that practices were becoming more competitive which he believes has fundamentally improved the varsity girls team. Many players on the girls team contribute to basketball beyond the regular games, too: Abby Lent, Gretchen Yoli, Hannah Ferrer, Deandrea Edwards, Julianna Stagno, and Kayleigh Craft all help out with the youth basketball team program every Saturday.

The season through the lens of the varsity boys players:
Both varsity boys and girls teams have experienced ups and downs throughout the season.

cont'd pg . 13



photo courtesy of Brantley Oji



photos: Ken Bovat

VARSITY BASKETBALL, CONT'D



photos: Ken Bovat

One individual on the boys team shared that they have been an “uncoordinated team” with athletes playing as soloists, rather than as a team that works together. He added how, although the varsity boys first win against Chatham seemed “pretty nice,” the feeling changed when he entered the locker room. The atmosphere in the locker room felt a bit cynical, as if the win didn’t matter. Another player expressed how dressing up on game days sometimes felt useless, though he admitted that maybe if the team had more fight and motivation to win, they’d feel more pride in dressing up for game day.

The boys season through the lens of Greyson Ludwig:

Senior ***Greyson Ludwig*** has been playing basketball since he can remember, and said that this year has been the first he would ever describe as “terrible.” Despite the highlight of the win against Chatham, Ludwig echoed the idea that the team hasn’t been playing together effectively. He added that the team as a whole really argued too much, which might be why Coach Broast put up a poster in the locker room about how great teammates are happy with each others’ successes. Ludwig believes that Coach Broast was trying to convince the team to be pleased about not just individual players' success, but for the team as a whole, adding that this message convinced the boys to play better.

The varsity girls season through the lens of Kayleigh Craft, Julianna Stagno, and Hannah Ferrer:

Sophomore ***Kayleigh Craft*** sees this season as a building year for every player, and though the team hasn’t been successful in every game, she has seen improvements in teamwork since the beginning of the season. The scores of every game seem to be getting better. Craft’s favorite aspect of this season has been Mr. Conte telling the team to be in “Mojo mode” during practice, making it both fun and serious.



photos: Amanda Yorck

cont'd pg 14

Varsity Basketball, Cont'd

She believes these practices help the team grow since many of the girls on the team haven't played in many years. Sophomore **Juliana Stagno**, also believes the team has been progressing over the season and believes the team gets better each time they play. Stagno added that "Mojo mode" plays a big role in getting the team "hyped and together."

Senior **Hannah Ferrer** is the varsity girls team captain, alongside senior **Adele Heuer**. Ferrer shared that she's been happy with this season and also believes the team has been getting better, especially with the energy of young players on the team.. Ferrer loved the "Mojo mode," too, where everyone gets into a bright mood and always laughs and hypes each other up. As a captain, she feels good to have this team experience learning that doesn't just create skills, but also develops a type of chemistry for players. Lastly, Ferrer gave some captain advice to younger players to "go out and do your best and continue to work at different things." She also hopes all the girls will continue their basketball career and keep playing in the future.

Highlights of Senior Nights

Germantown Clippers vs Taconic was the **varsity boys** senior night game. The game was a heart-breaking close call for the Clippers, with just a five point deficit. Some wondered aloud whether a late game technical foul blew the team's chances to win.

The **varsity girls** senior night game was GCS vs Cairo-Durham. The game was full of intensity, with both teams fighting their hardest to earn every point. Despite being a nail-biter, the Lady Clippers won their senior night game, with worthy performances by seniors Deandrea Edwards, Adele Heuer, and Hannah Ferrer.



photo: Ken Bovat



From left: Seniors Aiden O'Brien, Logan Briggs, Coach Broast, Brad Vavrina, Greyson Ludwig



From left: Seniors Deandrea Edwards, Adele Heuer, and Hannah Ferrer

photo: Amanda Yorck

AI: Help Or Harm?

By Cora Sheeley

Have you ever seen a photo or video that seems...off? It might be AI. If the shadows don't match up, or there's an extra finger, it's definitely AI. Recently, there have also been lots of movies made about AI, such as "Subservience," "Atlas," "Megan," and others. Is it just me, or are these movies scary?!

Artificial Intelligence, also known as AI, is a tool with lots of functions: language translation, robotics, algorithm, healthcare applications, cybersecurity, art, social media, and finance. Apps such as Chatbot or ChatGTP, provide natural language understanding, which can be used for a variety of tasks.

Beginning last October, Apple released its first new "Apple Intelligence" AI features in iPhone, iPad, and Mac, with further features released in December. Now iPhone users can harness a very powerful—and possibly troubling—tool right in their hands. It's a mixed bag, for sure.

How is AI Beneficial To Healthcare Workers? Although some kids these days will use AI to generate funny photos or videos, AI can be very beneficial to healthcare workers. For example,



Both images generated by AI

doctors can use AI to write letters to patients, collect past patient history, and select the best type of medicine for a condition. AI software can also review a large amount of data quickly and identify certain issues a person may be facing. In addition, it can be used to identify drug errors that are most likely to occur in a health system.

Why are Some People Afraid of AI?

One of the most common reasons why people fear AI is because AI is potentially more advanced and powerful than any other person. The advancement in technology can lead to AI taking over jobs, which will lead to unemployment. Jobs such as being a cashier, telemarketer, customer service agent, and data entry clerk would most likely be eliminated in this scenario. Another reason for caution is when AI is not used for positive purposes, it could feed users misinformation with everything from inaccuracies to damaging deep fakes.

Can people be relied on to use the promise of AI and reject the more controversial misuses of it? We'll have to see...

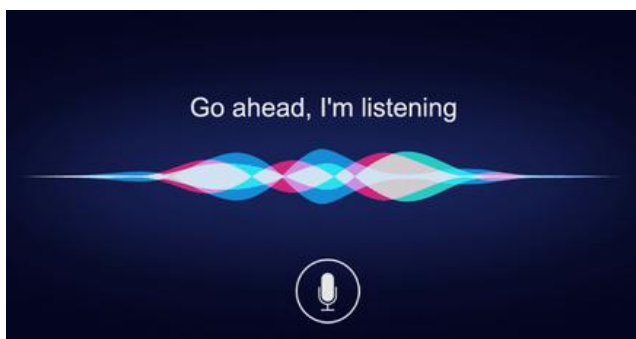
IS SIRI LISTENING?

By Georgia Balkan

Hey Siri, what's my favorite color?"

While this may be a perfectly innocent question to ask your personal virtual assistant, is the AI assistant still listening after the question is answered?

Ask people anywhere who own an Alexa or have an iPhone with Siri, and many will say they feel the AI intelligence is always listening. From conversations as simple as what to have for breakfast to those as personal and complex as planning a wedding, Siri is there, picking up bits of conversation.



How do we know? Have you ever been talking about something like camping, and then the next time you go to a website, you see ads for tents and other camping gear? Or maybe it was a conversation about a vacation to Disney, and suddenly you are bombarded by Florida hotel ads?

The students at Germantown High School took a survey, and 87.2 (41 people) out of 47 respondents said they felt Siri listened to their conversations. iPhones have always been accompanied by Siri, but has she always been listening?

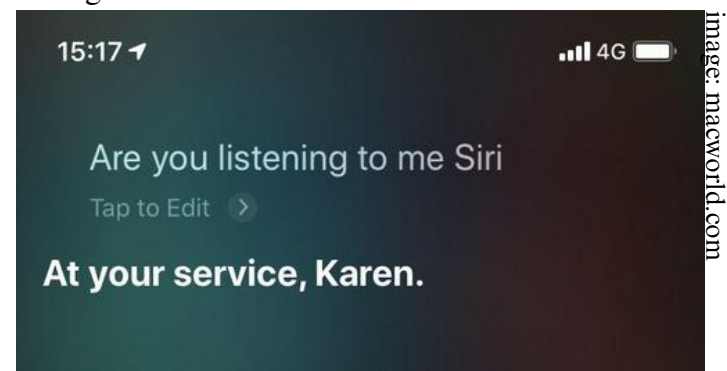
In January of this year, Apple finally paid \$95 million in a class-action lawsuit brought in 2019 alleging that Siri was gathering and keeping data without permission, essentially “eavesdropping” on users. According to the BBC, Apple claimed that they "permanently deleted individual Siri audio recordings collected by Apple prior to October 2019." According to the same source, claimants said that advertisers received the recordings and then used keywords they said in the conversation to sell ads.

A simple Google search will tell you how to turn off the Siri listening feature on an iPhone or other device.

<https://us.norton.com/blog/how-to/is-my-phone-listening-to-me>

People can also mute the microphone on an Alexa or other home assistant device to stop the device from listening randomly or past the point when a question is answered.

Let's keep our virtual assistants working for us, not against us.



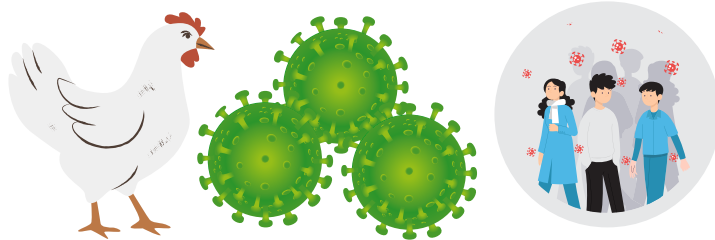
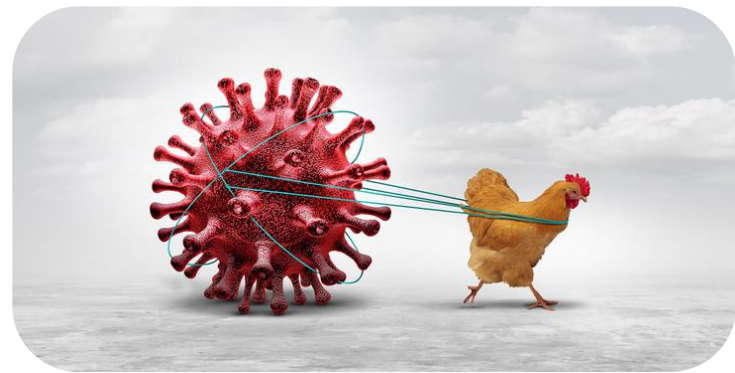
Is COVID 2.0 Coming in 2025?

By Dea Pujiawati-Hull

The recent outbreak of H5N1 Avian flu has caused many concerns, raising the question: will the Avian flu turn into a Covid- like situation?

Get to know the Avian flu:

Avian flu is commonly known as “bird flu.” According to [Better Health Channel](#), the spread of Avian flu is common among wild water birds like ducks and geese, sometimes spreading to commercial birds like chickens and turkeys. Bird flu has been reported worldwide since the late 1880s, and the current strain seems to have originated among wild birds in the U.S. and Canada. A cause of outbreak of bird flu between dairy cows led to the first human confirmed case on April 1, 2024 in Texas, where according to [CDC](#), the exposure of bird flu to dairy cows led to a cow-to-human spread of Avian flu. By late October 2024, cases were reported of spread from infected ducks to farm pigs in Oregon (the pigs and infected poultry had been sharing water sources). In December of 2024, H5N1 had been detected in over 900 cattle herds in 16 states, mostly in the midwest and west. Human-to-human spread has still not yet been reported, but any contact with infected birds or other animals will affect people.



Symptoms of Bird Flu:

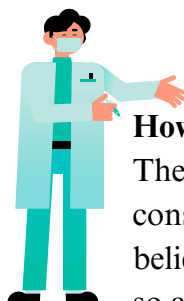
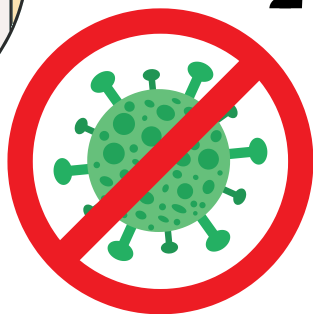
Those who are infected by the virus (mostly people who work on farms) will experience symptoms based on individual health; according to the CDC, there will be a range of symptoms, with some individuals experiencing mild breathing problems. Those individuals facing worse symptoms will have similar problems as a severe human flu, such as fever, cough, fatigue, muscle aches, and sore throat. The most severe reactions can also include pneumonia (lungs being infected by fungi virus), encephalitis (brain tissues not functioning correctly), and sensitivity to light. Temporarily blindness can also occur, since the first contact of bird flu for humans will cause pink eye-like symptoms.

Other effects that have come from Avian flu:

As the Avian flu increases in farm animals it raises the questions of whether Avian flu will affect agriculture products. As of right now, the agricultural products being affected are unpasteurized milk, uncooked meat, and eggs. According to [CBS NEWS](#), many stores in Massachusetts have set limits on how many eggs customers are able to purchase, due in part to how the virus has killed more than 20 million egg laying chickens in the U.S. According to [CIDRAP education](#) the APHIS (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service) are updating their policy on surveillance of pre-slaughter animals, increasing focus on turkeys in affected states. The same organization is cautioning about feeding domestic pets like cats and dogs raw food that might contain uncooked meat and unpasteurized eggs or milk.

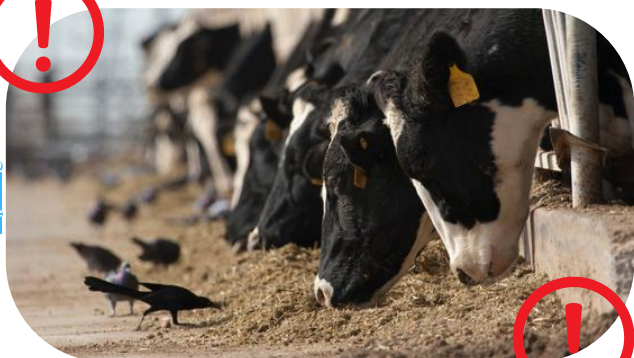
Will the Trump administration's decision to withdraw the US from the WHO affect the spread of Avian flu?

As of right now the decision to withdraw the U.S from the World Health Organization could limit access to crucial information about the Avian flu, causing the U.S to be unaware of the rate of Avian flu cases in other countries. According to World Health Organization (WHO), the mission of the WHO is to create treatments, vaccines, and critical data analysis during international health emergencies. Will Americans be more vulnerable during virus outbreaks now that we are not part of the WHO?

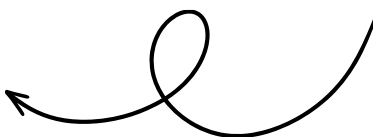


How to stay safe during the outbreak of Avian flu:

The [Uchicago Medicine](#) suggests that people should consume only pasteurized dairy products. Researchers believe that dairy cows can pass the virus through their milk, so avoiding raw milk will limit the transmission of the virus. Refrigerate and cook your eggs and meat to the right temperature in order to consume them safely. Try to avoid contact with wild animals or sick or dead birds and livestock, since the virus can be airborne through your eyes, nose, and mouth. Most importantly, the number one caution in the outbreak of any virus: wash your hands thoroughly and often, especially after any outdoor activities and especially if you have a small farm. Be diligent when cleaning your hands – stay safe!



The variant of H5N1 bird flu has been circulating in wild birds, but this is the first time it's been detected in cattle.



Ireland

By Alice Sindoni

History:

Ireland has been inhabited for over 9,000 years, and has experienced multiple invasions resulting in a mixture of ancestry and traditions. It is located west of Great Britain. It gained its independence from Great Britain in the year 1921 (December 6th) when representatives from each signed the Anglo - Irish Treaty. Its heritage / culture was most linked to Gaelic language. The island is divided between the Republic of Ireland (also known as just Ireland) and Northern Ireland which stayed loyal to Great Britain.

[Click Here to Learn More](#)



Food:

As people know, in America, corned beef is one of the main courses that are made on St. Patrick's Day. But what if I were to tell you that corned beef is technically *not* an Irish dish? It is more of an Irish-American dish. Corned beef can be put into Irish stews. Traditional Irish foods include:

- Irish soda bread
- Colcannon
- Shepard's pie
- Banoffee pie (dessert)

(Click on the underlined names to see recipes!!!)



[Irish Soda Bread](#)



[Colcannon](#)



[Shepards Pie](#)



[Banoffee Pie](#)

Religion and Tradition(s):

According to the 2023 census, in the year 2023 (the most recent) the population regarding religion is 69% Catholic, 2% Church of Ireland (Anglican), 2% Muslim, 2% Orthodox Christian (including Greek, Russian and Coptic Orthodox), 3% unspecified Christian and 2% other religious groups. 14% did not state any religious beliefs and 7% did not state / specify their religion. As most know, St. Patrick's Day is one of the most celebrated holidays in Ireland. March 17th, 1903 was the first time Ireland celebrated St. Patrick's Day. They held a parade in honor of their nation's saint. Fun Fact: St. Patrick was not from Ireland. He was rumored to arrive there in 432 AD spreading Christianity around in the 5th century.

[More on Religions in Ireland ~ Click Here](#)

[More on St. Partickis Day ~ Click Here](#)



Interior of St. Patrick's Cathedral



St. Patrick's Day Parade: Dublin, Ireland

Music and the Arts:

Ireland is known for its traditional folk music, but also has a variety of other popular music genres including:

- Traditional Irish Music ~ this lively music is a key part of Irish culture. It includes jigs, reels, ballads, and drinking songs. Instruments often used include the fiddle, tin whistle, uilleann pipes, and the bodhrán.
- Country and Irish ~ traditional Irish music mixed with North American country music.
- Irish Rock ~ this style of music has been popular in Ireland since the 1960s. The British Invasion introduced British blues and psychedelic rock to the island.

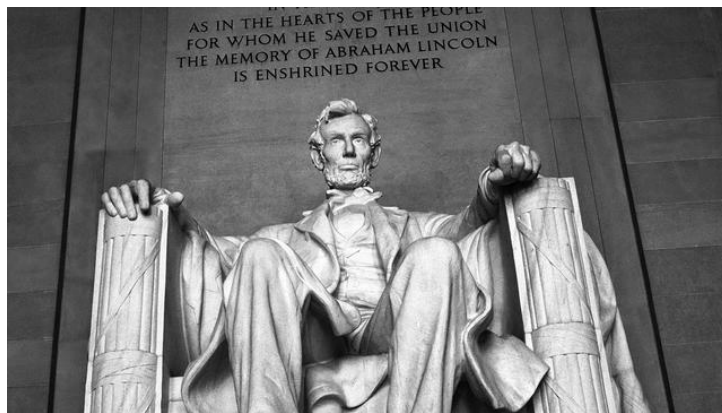
[Click Here to learn more about Ireland's music and the arts!](#)

This Month In History: February

by Evan Provo

Greensboro sit-ins begin (Feb 1, 1960)

Nearly one hundred years after the end of slavery, the Civil Rights Movement aimed to finish what the Reconstruction Amendments started. Starting with *Brown v. Board of Education*, which essentially overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1954, African Americans all over the south peacefully protested for their civil rights. The Greensboro sit-ins were not the first, but they were some of the most effective protests, as it started with just four African American college students, and vastly grew to several hundreds of people in the surrounding areas over several months. The action? Nonviolently sitting at a segregated lunch counter, expecting service just like anybody else.



www.theatlantic.com

Abraham Lincoln's birthday (Feb 12, 1809)

As the sixteenth U.S. president, Abraham Lincoln made contributions to the betterment of the U.S. and the definition of what it means to be president. Lincoln helped preserve the Union, abolish slavery, and would've helped usher the U.S. through the early days of the Reconstruction Era. However, his beloved life was cut short on April 14, 1865 when he was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth.

Bombing of Dresden (Feb 13-15, 1945)

Nearing the end of WWII, a series of air raids and bombings occurred on the German city of Dresden, almost completely leveling it. From February 13 to 15, the Allies unleashed a cruel, and questionable act by the so-called "good guys" with their terror bombing campaign in Germany. This air raid inspired a prisoner-of-war, Kurt Vonnegut, to write *Slaughterhouse Five*, an American classic and his most famous novel.



This Month In History: February

Malcolm X assassination (Feb 21, 1965)

Among the most famous and profound Civil Rights activists, Malcolm X had a different approach than most. With a strong belief system and a level head, Malcolm X paved the way for African American success along with the likes of Martin Luther King Jr. and W.E.B. Du Bois. However, on February 21, 1965, he was shot twenty-one times by a group of three men before a scheduled speech. His name will live on forever, and will be remembered for all the great things he did.



www.daysoftheyear.com



Valentine's Day (Feb 14)

Love is in the air on February 14, so be ready to cherish and appreciate your loved ones. Valentine's Day isn't only for couples, but friendships and family, too. It's a day to celebrate with your loved ones, and even if you think you're alone on Valentine's Day, think again. Go out, and have fun with whoever you love.



www.thbaker.co.uk

March

Women's History Month

Women's History month originated from the Soviet Union, as Vladimir Lenin wanted to honour the role of women in the Russian Revolution and declared the celebration on March 8; the United Nations made it a global holiday fifty-six years later in 1977. March was chosen for Women's History month because it coincides with International Women's Day.



[/thefulcrum.us](http://thefulcrum.us)

This Month In History: March

Evan Provo

First Congress meeting under the new U.S. Constitution (Mar 4, 1789)

The most important Congress meeting came on March 4, 1789, which was the first meeting under the new constitution. The new constitution, which took effect in 1787, outlined the shape of the U.S. government for centuries to come, and it's still what we live by today.



Death of the Notorious B.I.G. (Mar 9, 1997)

On March 9, 1997, one of the most known rappers in hip-hop history was shot and killed in Los Angeles. With hit songs like Juicy, Big Poppa, and Hypnotize, Christopher Wallace instantly rose to superstar status under Sean Combs' Bad Boy Records label. Wallace died just a few months after Tupac Shakur died, but their names are forever etched in the history of hip-hop. I share my birthday with Biggie Smalls' death date.

COVID-19 is declared a global pandemic (Mar 11, 2020)

A time period that we all remember and wish to forget, the COVID-19 pandemic lasted three years, starting in 2020. The pandemic led to quarantine, schools and workplaces closing, masks and vaccines, mental illness, lack of social interaction, and millions of deaths worldwide. While the pandemic is over, COVID-19 is still around, but mostly as a similar virus to the flu.



Attempted assassination of Ronald Reagan (Mar 30, 1981)

On March 30, 1981, would-be assassin John Hinckley Jr. shot then-president Ronald Reagan under his arm and his ribs while Reagan was leaving the Washington Hilton hotel. The president was inches away from death, but unlike four presidents before him, Reagan survived the assassination attempt, and even joked about it during a speech in the following months. The 40th U.S. president surviving the attempt only solidified the persona he conveyed as the tough guy that could lead the U.S. against the Soviet Union.



What's Happening This Year: Don't Miss These Events!

By Rahne Rosado

There are multiple upcoming events that are big this year. Later in the year are the gubernatorial elections in New Jersey and Virginia, lined up for Tuesday, November 4th. These are expected to fill vacancies in Congress that are based on President Trump's Cabinet nominations. But that's just politics.



GCS students responding to the Stylus survey shared some of things they are most looking forward to in 2025. They included: summer break, How to Train Your Dragon (live action), the Minecraft movie and GTA 6, “regaining my own potential” (you go!), Stranger Things season 5, video game updates, turning 16, being in eighth grade, Wednesday season 2, Wicked Part 2, “working on myself and improving everything,” “getting jacked,” and many other personal goals and events.

Here are some events to look forward to in sports, award shows, and movies.

Sports events:

Super Bowl - Sunday, Feb. 9

NBA All-Star Game - Sunday, Feb. 16

Daytona 500 - Sunday, Feb. 16

Major League Baseball Opening Day - Thursday, March 27

Boston Marathon - Monday, April 21

Kentucky Derby - Saturday, May 3, Preakness Stakes - Saturday, May 17, Belmont Stakes - Saturday, June 7

Major League Baseball All-Star Game - Tuesday, July 15

New York City Marathon - Sunday, Nov. 2



Award shows:

Golden Globe Awards (on CBS) - Sunday, Jan. 5

Grammy Awards (on CBS) - Sunday, Feb. 2

SAG Awards - Sunday, Feb. 23

Academy Awards - Sunday, March 2

Tony Awards (on CBS) - Sunday, June 8

What's Happening This Year Cont'd

By Rahne Rosado

Upcoming movies

"Captain America: Brave New World," February 14

"Black Bag," March 14

"Snow White," March 21

"A Minecraft Movie," April 4

"Thunderbolts," May 2

"Mission: Impossible - The Final Reckoning," May 23

"Jurassic World Rebirth," July 2

"Superman," July 11

"The Fantastic Four: First Steps," July 25

"Freakier Friday," August 8

"Now You See Me 3," November 14

"Wicked: For Good." November 21

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/2025-calendar-holidays-events/>



Photo from <https://thequorum.com/news/entertainment/minecraft-movie-makeup-shots-6-months-before-release/>



Photo from <https://thequorum.com/news/entertainment/superman-movie-makeup-shots-6-months-before-release/>



Photo from <https://thequorum.com/news/entertainment/wicked-for-good-makeup-shots-6-months-before-release/>

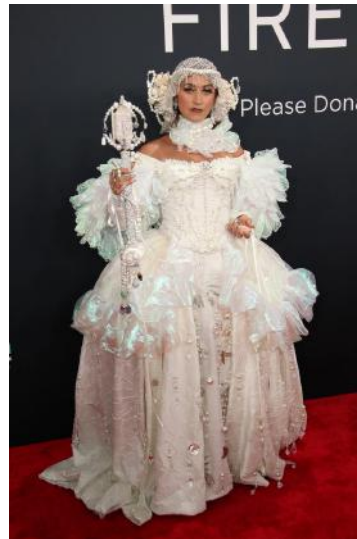
67th Grammy Awards

by Madelynn Dodge

If you are a big fan of music or have a favorite band or singer, you probably know what the Grammys are. On February 2, 2025 at 8:00 pm, comedian Trevor Noah hosted the Recording Academy's 67th Grammy awards in Los Angeles, California. Awards were given to familiar and new artists whose songs you probably have heard. There are all different categories of nominations.

Record Of The Year: Nominees

- "Fortnight" Taylor Swift ft. Post Malone - **WINNER**
- "Good Luck, Babe" Chappell Roan
- "Not Like Us" Kendrick Lamar
- "BIRDS OF A FEATHER" Billie Eilish
- "360" Charli xcx
- "Espresso" Sabrina Carpenter
- "TEXAS HOLD 'EM" Beyonce
- "Now and Then" The Beatles



Song of the Year: Nominees

- "TEXAS HOLD 'EM" Beyonce
- "Please Please Please" Sabrina Carpenter
- "Not Like Us" Kendrick Lamar - **WINNER**
- "Good Luck, Babe" Chappell Roan
- "Fortnight" Taylor Swift ft. Post Malone
- "Die With A Smile" Bruno Mars and Lady Gaga
- "BIRDS OF A FEATHER" Billie Eilish
- "A Bar Song (Tipsy)" Shaboozey

Best Pop Solo Performance:

Nominees

“Good Luck, Babe” Chappell Roan

“BIRDS OF A FEATHER” Billie Eilish

“Apple” Charli xcx

“Espresso” Sabrina Carpenter - **WINNER**

“BODYGUARD” Beyonce



Best Rap Performance:

Nominees

“Not Like Us” Kendrick Lamar - **WINNER**

“Yeah, Glo” GloRilla

“Like That” Future & Metro Boomin Featuring Kendrick Lamar

“Houdini” Eminem

“NISSAN ALTIMA” Doechii

“When The Sun Shines Again” Common & Pete Rock Featuring Posdnuos

“Enough (Miami)” Cardi B



Best Rap Song:

Nominees

“Yeah, Glo” GloRilla

“Not Like Us” Kendrick Lamar - **WINNER**

“Like That” Kendrick Lamar

“Carnival” Kanye West & Ty Dolla \$ign

“Asteroids” Rhapsody



Best New Artist:

Nominees

Benson Boone

Sabrina Carpenter

Doechii

Khruangbin

RAYE

Chappell Roan - **WINNER**

Shaboozey

Teddy Swims

Lifetime Achievement Award:

Prince



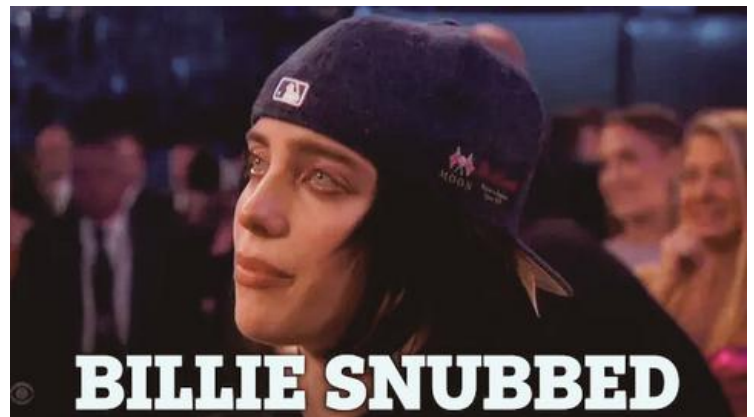
Concerning Controversies:

After the Grammys ceremony on February 2, there were bound to be artists and viewers that were upset about the results of awards. One controversial pick gave the award of “Best Country Album” to Beyonce for her “COWBOY CARTER” album. The singer/songwriter of “Deeper Well,” Kacey Musgraves, also nominated in this category, seemed to be one of the most enraged out of all the celebrities.



Fans are infuriated for Billie Eilish who left the Grammys empty handed. After having one of the most streamed albums, “Hit Me Hard And Soft” and song, “BIRDS OF A FEATHER,” fans are calling this “The Snub of the Century.”

Some artists have spoken out or even boycotted the Grammys, feeling that the selection process is rigged or somehow not fair, especially to newer artists.



Although Beyonce has 35 Grammy trophies, newer artist Kendrick Lamar went home with 5 trophies. After releasing his diss tracks towards Drake, his album “Not Like Us” won “Best Song” and “Record Of The Year.” Pretty impressive!



97TH

Academy Awards

by Madelynn Dodge

On Sunday March 2, 2025, multiple channels including Hulu, ABC, ABC.com, Youtube TV, AT&T TV, and FUBOTV will be streaming The 97th Academy Awards! The Academy Awards, more commonly known as the Oscars, are nominated awards that are given to people involved in all aspects of filmmaking after they produce amazing movies. There are all different types of awards given to different film makers.

Nomination Categories and Nominees:

Best Director:

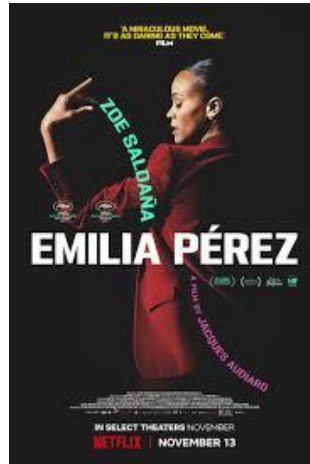
Jacques Audiard, “Emilia Pérez”

Sean Baker, “Anora”

Brady Corbet, “The Brutalist”

Coralie Fargeat, “The Substance”

James Mangold, “A Complete Unknown”



Best Actor:

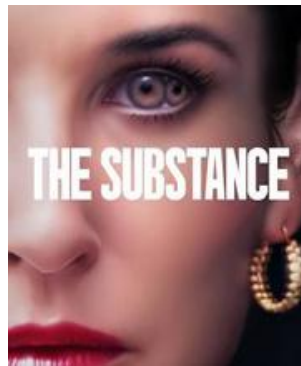
Adrien Brody, “The Brutalist”

Timothee Chalamet, “A Complete Unknown”

Colman Domingo, “Sing Sing”

Ralph Fiennes, “Conclave”

Sebastian Stan, “The Apprentice”



Best Actress:

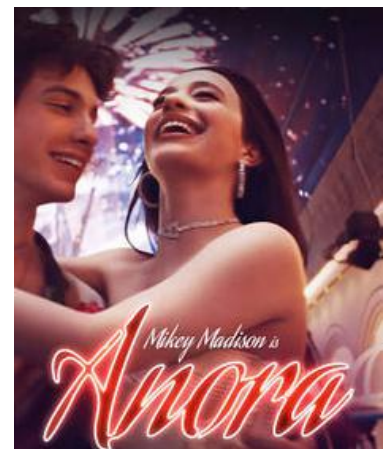
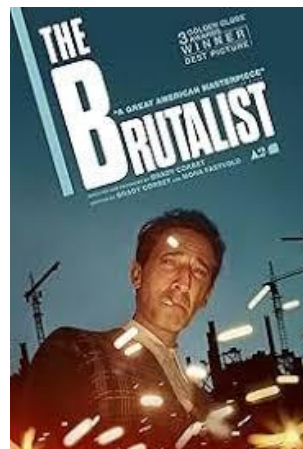
Cynthia Erivo. “Wicked”

Karla Sofia Gascon, “Emilia Perez”

Mikey Madison, “Anora”

Demi Moore, “The Substance”

Fernanda Torres, “I’m Still Here”



Best Actress In Supporting Role:

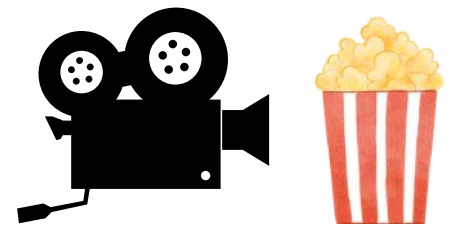
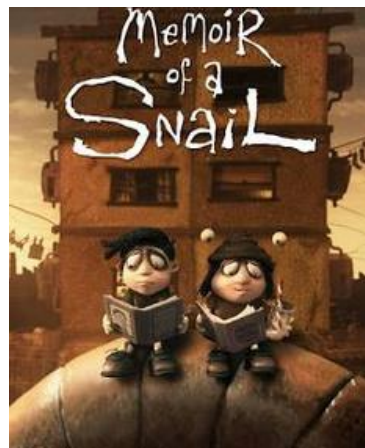
Monica Barbaro, “A Complete Unknown”

Ariana Grande, “Wicked”

Felicity Jones, “The Brutalist”

Isabella Rossellini, “Conclave”

Zoe Saldña, “Emilia Pérez”



Best Animated Feature Film and Creators:

“Flow,” Gints Zilbalodis, Matīss Kaža, Ron Dyens and Gregory Zalczman

“Inside Out 2,” Kelsey Mann and Mark Nielsen

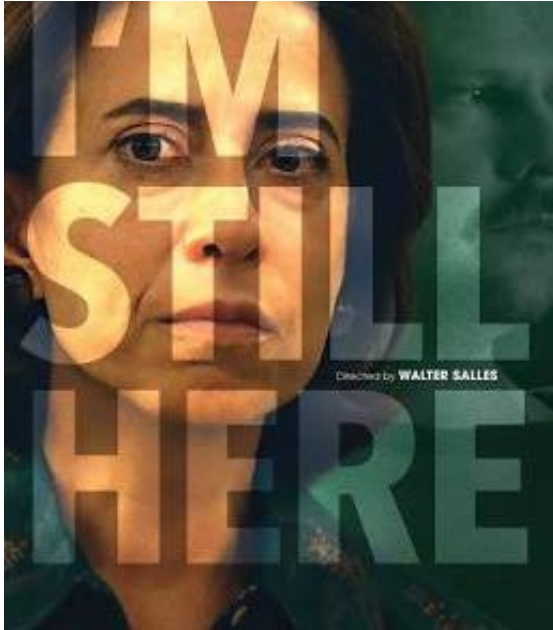
“Memoir of a Snail,” Adam Elliot and Liz Kearney

“Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl,” Nick Park, Merlin Crossingham, and Richard Beek

“The Wild Robot,” Chris Sanders and Jeff Hermann

Like the Grammy Awards, the Oscars have had their fair share of controversy. The nominees and winners are voted on by members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), made up of over 9,000 people! Members have to be involved in some aspect of movie production.

All photos credited to [oscars.org](https://www.oscars.org)



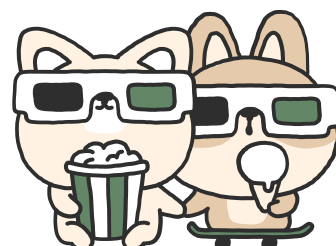
There have been mistakes made by presenters, winners unexpectedly kissing the presenters, people stumbling on the staircase to the stage, and who could forget Will Smith's infamous 2022 slap?



Over the years, some have said that the kinds of movies and actors nominated gets trendy, ignoring possible actors who might be more deserving, but less well-known. In the middle 2000-teens, there was a campaign called #oscarssowhite to raise awareness of the lack of diversity in the nominees.



Still, for people who love movies, it is an exciting night to watch our favorite actors and actresses get recognized for their work.



The Current State of STARWARS

by Guest Writer Mr. Fitzgibbons

If you know anything about me, you know I'm a Star Wars fanatic. My love for Star Wars started from a very young age, when my father showed me the first movie - the first movie to be released, that is, so Episode IV. I remember watching that VHS tape (Google it if you've never seen one before) so many times it almost stopped working.

Fast forward (yes, that's a VHS pun...) to 2015. Disney had purchased the Star Wars franchise from its original creator, George Lucas. A brand new movie, Episode VII: The Force Awakens, was hitting theaters. The movie was a smashing success. This modern-day Star Wars mania was only further fueled by the release of Rogue One, a spinoff film, one year later. As a college student, I was in the Star Wars prime of my life.



A year after that, in 2017, Star Wars Episode VIII: The Last Jedi was released and to say the film was controversial is an understatement. For many fans including myself, this film began a shocking downward spiral for Star Wars. The issues with the film are too abundant to outline here. I had to see it twice; I was in denial after my first viewing. There was no way that Star Wars could suck... could it? I finally understood how my father's generation felt when Star Wars Episode I: The Phantom Menace released in 1999. Yes, the release order and constant controversy gets confusing. Research it if you want. But honestly, if you don't already know most of this, you're probably not reading this article.



Since The Last Jedi, Disney has released one more movie (Episode IX) and a plethora of direct-to-Disney+ television shows (The Mandalorian, Kenobi, The Bad Batch, Ahsoka, The Acolyte, to name a few). All of these releases ranged from "good I guess" to "complete trash oh my gosh why did they make this?!" They've also announced and canceled several projects, making it look like they're basically just throwing spaghetti at the wall and hoping something sticks.

All that being said, I still watch every single piece of Star Wars media that gets released and, much to the chagrin of my wife, I have to watch it the minute it's available. On December 2nd at 9:00 pm sharp, I queued up the newest Disney+ Star Wars show: Skeleton Crew. I had zero expectations for this series. It was being marketed as Star Wars a-la The Goonies. It seemed more like a side project that, with a cast of mostly kids, was intended for younger audiences.

I LOVE IT →
I LOVE IT →

!!

I LOVE IT I LOVE IT I LOVE IT



I LOVE IT I LOVE IT I LOVE IT



I LOVE IT I LOVE IT I LOVE IT

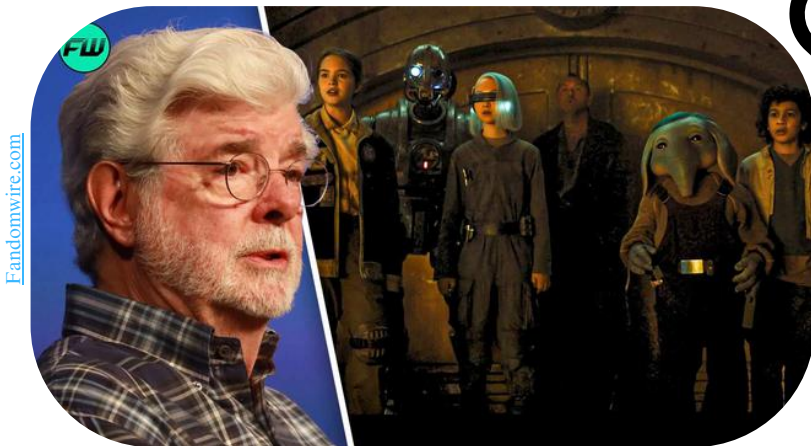
Skeleton Crew blew me away. It wasn't just the fantastic acting and cinematography either. I can very happily say that Skeleton Crew can be summed up in one word: FUN! It has somehow captured the imagination and magic of the Star Wars I grew up watching while simultaneously feeling fresh and new. It feels like Star Wars, which, if you're a fan like me, you know that's something that can't really be put into words.



Why will no one watch this?

This brings me to the current state of Star Wars. Despite the magic of Skeleton Crew, it kind of feels like nobody cares. I can't find a single person in my family, friend group, or life in general who has even heard of it, nevermind watched it. Even one of my students, who I have counted on for years as a Star Wars sounding board, can't bring himself to commit to sitting down and watching it.

Therefore, if I had to sum up the current state of Star Wars, it would be: "nobody cares." This makes me sad more than anything. Through the ups and downs of Star Wars fandom, I've always tried to remember George Lucas' insistence that he created Star Wars for children. He famously said: "it's a movie for twelve year olds." Recalling that quote is how I got over many of my disappointments with recent Star Wars media. It's not for me, it's for kids. But if that's the case, why, then, do kids not even care?



Why won't anyone care??

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NEED ADVICE? ASK BOGIE!



What can I do to be a better friend if I feel like I'm being annoying?

This is an impressively self-aware question. So, you know you are being annoying, how? Are your friends telling you this? Are you just reading the signs? Or are you just feeling insecure and assume people think you're annoying? I think you have to both look at your own impulses and behavior and talk to your friends to see what their perspectives are. Step one of being a better friend might be to tell them you are interested in being better as a friend. They might have a few ideas for you.



photo::perfectionpending.com

Stressed? Perspective is everything.



Bogie, I am dealing with the worst case of senioritis ever. Not only that, but my life's lowkey going downhill. My crush doesn't like me back, days are getting longer, and my forehead is getting bigger. Pls, will it get better?

Oh, my friend. Sounds like you are struggling with a few things at once. Bottom line? It will get better. These things never last forever. Senioritis is a formidable opp, but you don't have to be its b#*ch. Get on top of that stuff. As far as the crush, well, it happens to the best of us, and is never easy. But it also fades over time. It's all learning. I'm going to leave the forehead one on the table for now. Big brain, big forehead? I'm pretty sure foreheads don't grow after toddlerhood. You're just overwhelmed. You'll be aight, I promise.

I'm good.

Wow. That is a simple yet powerful statement right there. I'm not sure who you are, but I am so glad to know that A) you are good, and B) that you feel so empowered by your goodness that you want to share it with the world. You go, good person.



My bf of 3 years just cheated on me for a 17 year old who lives in Vermont. Like literally the worst state.

I'm sorry that somebody cheated on you. That is a bad feeling, no matter how old you are. I'm glad you felt like you could vent here. But I've got to ask: What did Vermont ever do to you? Besides have part 2 of the cheating duo living there, of course. Vermont is actually a really pretty state, with beautiful mountains and cute little towns. It's not even in my top 5 worst states. If you'd said Alabama or North Dakota, maybe I'd see your point, but Vermont? Well, take care of your heart. He probably wasn't worth the trouble, anyway.



image:themiddleburyshop.com

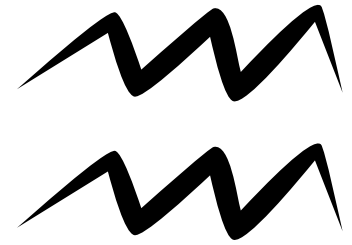


February and March Horoscopes

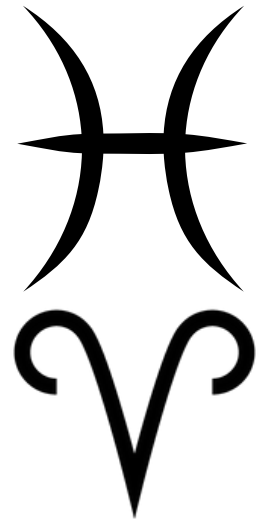
Featured signs: Aquarius, Pisces, and Aries



Aquarius (the water bearer) January 20–February 18: Aquarius, you’ve seen your way through some tough times lately, and you’re seeing the light at the edges of those grey clouds. Stick with it. Feeling happy after being down for several months can seem like an adjustment--and it is--but don’t ignore the sunshine. It’s real. Enjoy your friends, and dig in to the challenges your new situation presents to you. You’re up for it!



Pisces (the fish) February 19–March 20: Pisces, these two months are going to be very interesting for you. Remember that old saying, “Don’t ask questions if you’re not ready for the answers”? Well...You’ve asked yourself the questions, so you’ve got to gear up for the answers. Don’t worry; they won’t all be hard to hear. You’ll have to take the good with the “bad” (none of it is really bad, just challenging) and figure out how you will move ahead with this knowledge.



Aries (the ram) March 21–April 19: Aries, you’ve been going back and forth on a decision lately, fearful of making the wrong choice. I’d venture to say that you already know what you want to do. You just have to turn down the volume on self-doubt and others’ judgments. You’re the only one living your life; the naysayers are merely spectators.



Taurus (the bull) April 20–May 20: Taurus, you will begin to hit your stride in the coming months. You’ve always had good instincts, but you haven’t always been good at trusting them. A few “wins” in both relationship and school/work issues have gotten you back on the right path. Stay open to listening, both to your friends and to your own intuition. Watch out for a shady deal that might come your way.

Gemini (the twin) May 21–June 20: Gemini, the winds of change are blowing. There is someone special waiting for you to notice them, so I’m hoping you’ve got your eyes and your heart open. You’ve been satisfied with your current situation, but love is right around the corner...Are you willing to give it a chance?

Cancer (the crab) June 21–July 22: These months are going to be a kind of limbo for you, Cancer. Don’t get nervous; sometimes the best thing to do in a situation is to stand still for a bit. There will be a few questionable opportunities that will cross your path in the coming weeks. Listen to your heart and your common sense when they do. Ask yourself if making the move is going to serve your interests and well being. One thing is for sure; you will have your loyal friends around you the whole time.

Leo (the lion) July 23–August 22: Leo, these next few months will present you with a few important opportunities. You are usually up for adventure, but there is that big cat laziness that also lurks within you. Save your “napping” for later; if you decide you don’t feel like putting in the extra effort on a few very cool upcoming chances, you’ll regret it. Do your best.

Virgo (the virgin) August 23–September 22: Virgo, you have been on a tough road since late summer. It’s like you chose the black diamond ski run, but you only had cardboard boxes on your feet. That you got through it without losing your genuinely decent personality is an accomplishment. I’m glad to say that the tide is turning for you. Keep your eyes open for behaviors that could drag you down again, and enjoy your successes.

Libra (the scales) September 23–October 22: Libra, you are continuing to shine in the next few months, but there is a threat to your current stride: complacency. You know, it’s that settling-in-and-being-satisfied thing that happens when everything seems to be humming along smoothly. I’m not saying that you can’t be happy with being happy; just don’t let yourself get lazy so you stop noticing all of the wonderful around you.

Scorpio (the scorpion) October 23–November 21: Okay, Scorpio, your efforts to lift yourself out of your winter blues have been noticed. In fact, you’ve really shown up for your friends and family a few times when they’ve needed you most. You still need to fight the tendency to get annoyed easily, though. It’s like your intensity doesn’t allow you to do anything halfway. Stick with your better impulses, if you can. You do good, creative, funny, and loyal like almost nobody else.

Sagittarius (the archer) November 22–December 21: Sagittarius, you’ve been a bit edgy lately, feeling something brewing that you can’t quite name. It’s okay; you don’t need to get ahead of everything that happens to you. Just keep your usual receptors up, and you’ll tune into what’s been bugging you. Chances are, you’ll be glad that you finally addressed whatever it is so you can get back to being yourself.

Capricorn (the goat) December 22–January 19 : Cap, you might not have noticed, but you are really riding a wave of good times and good luck. Nah, it isn’t luck; it’s your own effort that has gotten you here. There’s no reason to feel that things are going to turn on you, but you may get to feeling a bit claustrophobic with all the predictability. Taking a step outside the routine might not be a bad idea. Just leave some “regular life” breadcrumbs to follow to get yourself back on track once you’ve had a little adventure...

