



The Thinker

Issue 6

62nd Session

July 15, 2022

Spellers Compete in Annual GPGC Musical

By Meredith G.

The Musical this year is The Twenty-Fifth Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee. Not everyone is in the musical, so some might be confused when people randomly burst into song. Hopefully, this will help.

The show is a Tony- and Grammy-award winning comedy that follows six middle schoolers in search of a championship. Performances are set for July 21 and July 22 at 7 p.m.

The whole show takes place during the Twenty-Fifth Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, where all the chil-

dren who won their school's bees in Putnam County go to compete. Rona Lisa Peretti, the host, (played by Lydee F.) is a former spelling bee champion herself.

There are seven main spellers in the Bee. Chip Tolentino (played by Tyler C.), Logainne Schwartzand-Grubenierre (played by Amelia L.), Leaf Conybear (played by Leo K.), William Barfee (played by Samson W.), Marcy Park (played by Grace J.), and last but not least Olive Ostrovsky (played by Madelyn W.).

Other characters include Vice Principal Douglas Panch and Jesus (both played by Abe

M.), Mitchell M. Mahoney (played by Azula T.), Carl Schwartz (played by Ryan Byrne), Dan Grubenierre (played by Alex Hoffpaur), Coneybear's Mom (played by Maddy W.), and Coneybear's Siblings, Raisin, Marigold, and Brook, (played by Brooklyn M., Gloria J., and Meredith G., respectively).

Chip Tolentino is a baseball player with a 'wicked 22 mile an hour screwball' according to Rona. He is also the winner of last year's spelling bee, and is back for another go, aiming to win it all!

Logainne Schwartzand-Grubenierre, also called

'Schwartzzy,' is the youngest competitor.

She has two fathers, Carl Schwartz and Dan Grubenierre, who are always pressuring her to win everything and do everything in her power to beat everyone else. She even sings "I make myself crazy, being what my Dads hope I'll be! But what about me, Dads?"

Leaf Conybear is a homeschooled kid who always has some odd little toys in his grasp. He thinks himself to be not smart because his whole family has always been telling him that. According

See Musical on page 7

Fruit Smashes on Gayle Lawn

By Elizabeth B.

The grad fruit drop is, basically, a science experiment done by Grads to see what can make the best splat.

This year the teachers were invited to drop fruit with the Grads, and Calvin Runnels and Jessica Markstrom also participated.



Fruit smashes in front of Gayle Hall Thursday.
Photo courtesy of Christa Bell

Watermelon is the most common fruit to be dropped, though other melon varieties have been used in the past. Other fruits have been used in almost a nesting doll-type design.

Kathleen Barrios and Abigail Fruge did a collaboration where they put blueberries inside a lime and then put said lime into a grapefruit. They then put the grapefruit into a papaya and that papaya into a watermelon.

Alex Hoffpaur filled a watermelon with cottage cheese one year.

"The goal was to have a lot of debris," Alex said.

According to Alex, Julia Falgoust dropped a "Wondermelon." It was filled with powders which apparently made a crater.

Victoria T., Gabriel G., Grace J., and Abram M. participated in the drop this year.

Formal Dance Set for Sunday

By Julien V.

With the last week of classes in the program comes the tradition of the Formal Dance!

Usually the Formal Dance will take place on a Sunday instead of a Saturday because of Senior Trip, according to Kathy Barrios.

This year there is no Senior Trip since we have only one Senior.

For the Formal there will be a dress code of "semi-formal clothes," which means nice dresses or slacks and blouses or suits for girls or nice pants and a polo or button down for guys, according to counselor Sydney Brummett.

The Formal is also the place where the senior's song, chosen by Senior Victoria T., will be introduced to the rest of the students.

Preceding the Formal we will have a reception in the dorm with food, and then be driven to the building where the dance is.

Meet Your CoHo: Kai Cavell

By Victoria T.

This is Kai Cavell's second year as a CoHo (Coordinator of Housing). They were a counselor from 2016 - 2018. They were a student here for five years, from 2010 - 2014. In all, this is their 10th summer at the program.

"It is very fun, very exciting having this unique summer be my 10th," Cavell said.

They decided to become a counselor because they said when they were a student, "I really got along well with my counselors, and I appreciated the activities they set up for us, and looked up to them as role models."

One of their favorite memories of their time here

was during one of their Grad summers.

"Over the Fourth of July break, I brought back martial arts wooden boards, because I did martial arts, and during the costume dance, I brought the boards to the dance," they said.

"They played the song, 'Kung Fu Fighting,' and me and several others broke boards at the dance during the 'Kung Fu Fighting' song."

Their favorite thing about the program is "the sense of community it creates through us all living in the same place. It's isolating in a way, but within that isolation, it's very community forming."

Their favorite class as a student at GPGC was publishing.

They took the class their last three summers, and in their last summer they were a co-editor-in-chief.

They previously worked at Dat Dog, but are not planning on returning, and are applying for jobs in New Orleans.

They originally decided to attend the program because their mom went to



Photo by Victoria T.

the program when she was a kid, and their mom told them about it, so they were excited but nervous to come.

Meet the Science Teacher: Calvin Runnels

By Victoria T.

Calvin Runnels is this year's Freshmen 1 & 2 science teacher.

This is his first year teaching at GPGC, but he attended the program for three years, from 2009 - 2011, and he loved being here.

He currently lives in Collette Dorm on the third floor and decided to do so because he lives in Baltimore, Maryland.

"Most of the teachers you guys have are Lake Charles natives, so they live in their own houses," Runnels said. "I don't have a house in Lake Charles."

He decided to become a teacher because a lot of his family members are teachers. In fact, his grandad actually created a school in Baton Rouge called Runnels School.

"Teaching is a really good

way of learning," he said.

"Even just this summer I've learned a ton, because you have to learn it to teach it to the kids. So I like to teach because I like learning stuff, and you have to learn it really well in order to be able to explain it, especially to middle schoolers."

He has tutored for the last three years in math, science and English but isn't sure if he will be a teacher as a career. He is going to Grad School next year to study biology, and will be teaching undergrads, as well as learning under researchers in a lab.

Runnels said he enjoys living in the dorms.

"It is an opportunity to be integrated into the GPGC community, and I get to hang out with the counselors."

He also said it is nice to be able to speak to people he

wouldn't have been able to otherwise, like the Grads.

He loves the Freshman classes, because, he said, "They have a lot of energy and are very curious. Though they can also be a little chaotic."

After a summer spent with Gifties, Runnels said he hoped Gifties also take something with them when they go.

"Thank you for coming along on this science journey with me, bearing with me when things didn't go the way they were intended



Photo courtesy of Calvin Runnels

to," he said. "And I hope you won't let anyone bore you out of thinking that science is cool. Because science is really cool."

Schedule Resets During Final Week

By Meredith G.

The last week of the program is very chaotic, according to counselor Kathleen Barrios.

The schedule shifts dramatically, as all of the morning classes are canceled, and the only classes that take place are the classes that have final performances, e.g Musical, Ensemble, and Choir.

Every Giftie has to be in Choir this year, but if you are not in any of the other classes, you have mandatory activities to do during the hours when the other classes take place, Barrios said.

The activities are counselor or arranged, but sometimes if you have art to finish in drawing, Billy Hogan, the art teacher, will let you work on it during these times, counselor Sydney Brumett said.

Final Performance week has gone through many names. It was originally called Tech Week because that was the week when all of the stage work was being done.

Students called it Hell Week because of how long and tiring it felt.

GPGC Director Josh Brown did not like that name, so insisted that all of the Gifties call it Love Week, which is the opposite of Hell Week.

Classifications Explained

By Kathleen Barrios

A breakdown of housing and academic classifications.

There are rare exceptions to these classifications when students younger than 12 enter the program or when students have skipped a lot of grades, which can cause their classification to change.

Fourth-year Alphas are

very uncommon due to the nature of classifications at the Governor's Program. Usually fourth-year Alphas are only seen when students that were previously third year Alphas are given special permissions to return for one more summer, or in the case of Abram M., when the program had to take an unexpected hiatus.

Academic Classification	Housing Classification	Definition
Freshman	Epsilon	First year students aged 12-13.
Sophomore	Delta	Second year students aged 13-14.
Freshman	Gamma	First year students aged 14.
Senior	Gamma	Third year students aged 14-15.
Grad	Beta	First, Second, and Fourth year students aged 15-16.
Grad	Alpha	First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth year students aged 16-17.

“Everybody is a genius, but if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, that fish will live its whole life thinking it is stupid”

-Albert Einstein

Word of the Week

By Lydee F.

Perspicacity

[per-spih-kah-sih-tee]

Noun

the quality of having a ready insight into things; shrewdness.

“A word to divide.” -Meredith G.

“Sweatiness.” -Azula T.

“The quality of being a purse.” -Madelyn W.

“Something to do with water.” -Julian V.

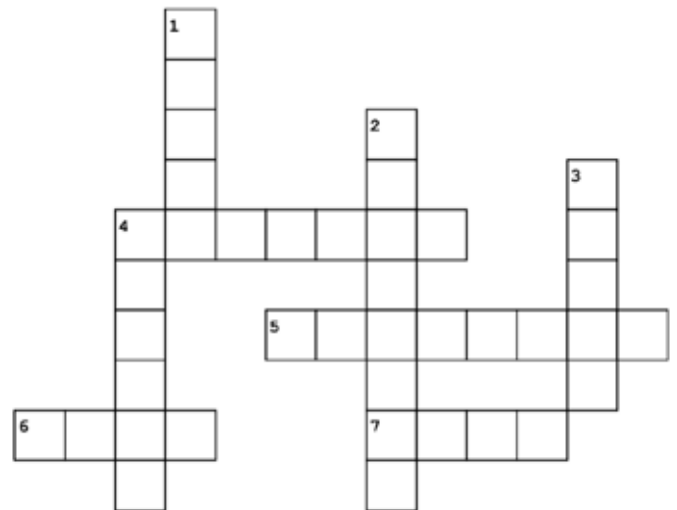
“My favorite flavor of Jolly Ranchers.” -Brooklyn M.

“I wasted time, and now doth time waste me.”

-William Shakespeare

Week 6 Crossword

By Meredith G.



Across

4. What was in the brownies.

5. The first part of Logainne's last name.

6. ___ is who makes the odd comments about spellers.

7. Who makes their own clothes.

Down

1. ___ thinks her parents don't love her.

2. Mitch Mahoney's full name.

3. Marcy Park's place in Nationals.

4. The county the bee is in.

A.G.I.: A Different Kind of Intelligence

By Victoria T.

Artificial Intelligence is a highly controversial and misunderstood subject.

Saturday is Artificial Intelligence Appreciation Day, established in 2021 to “celebrate the positive achievements of A.I. technology to humanity while also shining a spotlight on A.I. ethics and to inspire a national dialogue on A.I. and ethics,” according to the National Day Archives.

In a national survey of 1,547 adult Americans, when given 20 questions about the capabilities of A.I., only 16% of the test takers scored a 60% or higher, according to GeekWire.

So, what even is A.I.? In movies and TV, A.I. is often used as a catch-all term for sentient computers. However, that is not entirely accurate.

Sentient artificial intelligence is what is known as A.G.I., or Artificial General Intelligence, and is what is thought of in much of science fiction as the cause of the end

of the world. A.G.I. doesn't currently exist in the modern world, but A.I. does, and ordinary consumers use it every day.

Artificial Intelligence is used in many different contexts, from customer service chatbots, to voice assistants, to facial recognition. Rather than having self-awareness, consciousness, or the ability to think like A.G.I, A.I. uses a combination of machine learning, deep learning, reinforcement learning, and natural language processing to imitate human intelligence, according to TechTarget.

Data scientists train A.I.s on specific tasks, which they can sometimes do better than humans.

For example, Deep Blue, an A.I. programmed to play chess, played chess grandmaster Garry Kaspar-

ov in 1997.

In the game, Kasparov, who was considered one of - if not the - greatest chess players of all time, lost the match 2-1, with three draws, according to History.com.

A.I. gives humanity an opportunity for huge breakthroughs in fields like technology and healthcare.

However, there are many ethical dilemmas to consider when thinking of using A.I. in a wider context, according to NationalDayArchives.com.

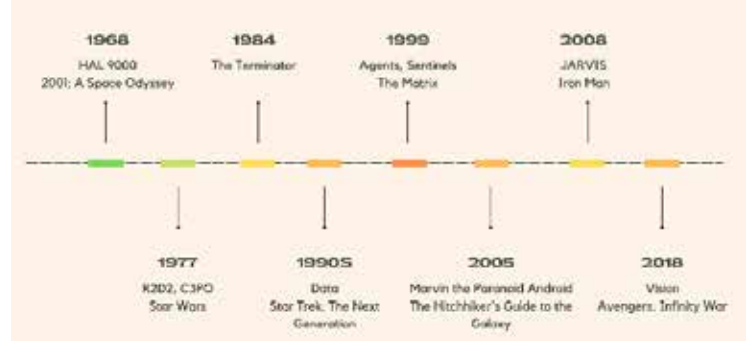
For instance, there is a debate on the ethics of self-driving cars. At first, self-driving cars seem like a

way to both lower the risk of accidents due to human error and give passengers a chance to relax or work.

But, what if the brakes in the car were to fail at a red light? The A.I. has a choice to make: it can either kill the passenger in the car or kill a pedestrian who might happen to be walking in the crosswalk.

Whose morality would be used to decide the outcome of that action? If one continues to think about this, more dilemmas can present themselves, which is why it is important to discuss this complex subject.

A.G.I and A.I. at the Movies



Dog of the Week

By Elizabeth B. and Lydee F.

The dog of the week is...

The Xoloitzcuintli!

Xoloitzcuintlis, also known as Xolos, are very lovey-dovey with their family. They are fairly good with other dogs and children. They are hairless dogs so they don't shed and don't need to be groomed. They are quite playful as well as adaptable. They are fairly open to strangers while still being vigilant. They are high energy and easily trainable so need a job or activity. They also bark a bit, but they don't drool. Their name should be pro-

nounced show-low-eats-queen-teelee or show-low according to the AKC.

The earliest accounts of Xolos date back more than 4,000 years to the Aztec Empire. Xolos are a national treasure in their country of origin and is regarded as one of the oldest dog breeds. Xolos share DNA with prehistoric dog breeds making them the closest living relatives to ancient canines today.



Image courtesy of shutterstock.com

The Moment We've All Been Waiting For...

By Victoria T.

Every Freshman student at GPGC has wanted to know the birthday of their science teacher, Calvin Runnels.

They told him happy birthday every day, often many times a day.

They brought him balloons, and sung the song.

Eventually, Runnels was worn down and agreed to tell them what his birthday was, if, and only if they could receive and write the birthdays

of every student and faculty member, other than him of course.

The freshmen dilligently set to compiling every birthday, asking, begging, and pleading.

They got every birthday, and so, Runnels has agreed to allow it to debut in the 6th and final issue of the 2022 Thinker.

And now, the moment we've all been waiting for, Runnels' birthday is March 5.

Trivia Answers

By Lydee F.

In last week's trivia, which we hope you completed, we promised to reveal the answers this week. We would never break a promise! Here are the answers to last week's trivia quiz.

Answer one: The Barbie Doll's full name is "Barbara Millicent Roberts."

Answer two: The TV Show The Tonight Show with Johnny Carson made the game Twister famous.

Answer three: The first Fisher Price toy to ever be sold was the Doctor Doodle.

Answer four: The first toy ever to be advertised on TV was Mr. Potato Head.

Answer five: The toy that became the best selling car in America in 1991 was the Cozy Coupe.

Answer six: Six eight-stud can be combined into 915,103,765 figurines.

Answer seven: Play-Doh's original purpose was cleaning wallpaper

Answer eight: Koosh balls got their name from the sound they make when they fall into your hand.

Answer nine: Action Figures got their name we all know today because boys will not play with dolls.

Answer ten: Last week's theme was toys.

Week 5 Crossword Answers

By Meredith G.

1. The last week of the program is called ___.

Love Week

2. Every summer, the Grads go up to a balcony and drop ___.

Fruit

3. What book was read to break the longest bedtime story world record?

The Hobbit

4. What others call the program participants.

Giftie

5. What starts at 8:00 every Saturday.

The Dance

6. ___ is held every Friday before the movie.

Soccer

7. "We started singin' Bye, Bye Miss ___" is a line from a traditional song.

American Pie

Week 6 Crossword Answers

By Meredith G.

1. ___ thinks her parents don't love her.

Olive

2. Mitch Mahoney's full name.

Mitchell

3. Marcy Park's place in Nationals.

Ninth

4. (Across) What was in the brownies.

Peanuts

4. (Down) The county the bee is in.

Putnam

5. The first part of Loganne's last name.

Schwartz

6. ___ is who makes the odd comments about spellers.

Rona

7. Who makes their own clothes?

Leaf

Word Search Answers

By Victoria T.

B	C	F	I	L	M	C	L	A	S	S	.	.	
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A	B	B	Y	.	.	.	H	O	L	I	D	A	Y

Be a Giftie: Extract Your Own Strawberry DNA

Gifties extracted strawberry DNA in science class this week following an experiment from the National Institutes of Health.

To be able to extract Strawberry DNA you will first need:

A resealable bag, 2 strawberries fresh, frozen, moldy ect. Next you need dish detergent, water, 2 plastic cups, (preferably) cold rubbing alcohol, a coffee filter, and something to stir with.

- Step 1: Remove any green leaves from the strawberry.
- Step 2: Put the strawberries in a plastic bag, seal it and gently smash until the strawberries are finely crushed.
- Step 3: Make your DNA extraction liquid. In a plastic cup mix together 2 teaspoons of detergent with 1 teaspoon of salt and 1/2 a cup of water.
- Step 4: Add two teaspoons of your DNA extraction liquid to the bag of crushed strawberries, reseal it, and throw away the used cup.

- Step 5: Continue to crush your strawberries for another minute.
- Step 6: Place your coffee filter in the unused plastic cup and pour the strawberry mixture into the filter. Make sure to hold the filter so it does not fall into the cup.
- Step 7: Grab the filter and squeeze the strawberry juice into the cup.
- Step 8: Pour the same amount of rubbing alcohol into the cup as there is strawberry juice. You don't need to measure the exact amount.
- Step 9: Watch for the development of a white cloudy substance (DNA) in the top layer of the strawberry extract.
- Step 10: (This is optional) Rinse thoroughly with water.
- Step 11: Leave to dry for a few days. (These last two steps allow it to be safe for consumption.)
- Step 12: Enjoy!

Best Costumes of GPGC Costume Dance 2022

By Lydee F.

"Leo." -Brooklyn M., Amelia L., Samson W., Madelyn W.

"Abe." -Victoria T., Tyler C., Azula T.

"Kai." -Kathy Barrios, Sydney Brummet

"Jace." -Elizabeth B.

"Samson." -Ryan Byrne

"Ryan." -Gabriel G.

"Abby." -Meredith G.

"Lydee." -Alex Hoffpauir

"Meredith." -Abe M.

"The Counselors." -Maddy W.

"Me!" -Leo K., Jace S., Kai Cavell

"Mr. Brown as the ghost just took it to a whole new level!"

-Abby Fruge



Photos courtesy of GPGC and Brooklyn M.

Meet the Counselors: Anna Shuff

By Victoria T.

This is Anna Shuff's first summer as a counselor, but she was a student at the program for three summers.

"When I was a kid, I always wanted to be a counselor and thought they were cool," she said. "Also, I'm at McNeese as a student, so that works out."

She also said she was previously friends with many of the counselors, which contributed to her desire to be a counselor.

Shuff will be a sophomore in college next year, although she has enough credits to be a junior.

Her favorite thing about

the program is, "getting to live in a community with people. That teaches you a lot more about yourself than even the classes do."

Her favorite class as a student was composition. She loved the class and writing. She also liked it when her composition teacher would take her class to the Quad or the New Ranch.

Her favorite memory of her time here was at the end of her first summer, at the formal dance.

"When it got to Stairway to Heaven, I looked around and while everyone was crying, realized that the relationships and connections I felt between us weren't

just on my end, and that we would all miss each other over the school year," she said.

Shuff originally decided to attend the program because her mom had attended it when she was a kid. She talked about it all the time, and the things she said made Shuff want to go.



Photo by Anna Shuff

Friday Marks National Gummi Worm Day

By Kathleen Barrios

National Gummi Worm Day is this Friday, July 15. According to nationaltoday.com, this obscure holiday can be traced back to 1981 with the creation of the gummy worm by Trolli - yes, the same company that makes the beloved sour gummy worms in the Collette Dorm vending machines.

This day is a marketing campaign to help boost sales for Trolli and their gummy worms.

Gummi worms were created by Trolli as a somewhat cheeky response to the suc-

cess of Haribo's gummy bears which were created in 1920. Trolli introduced the worms on the anniversary of the gummy bear, July 15th, in an attempt to create competition for the successful candy company.

The creation of the gummy worm paved the way for many non-bear shaped gummy creations that have been seen throughout the years.

One of the best ways to celebrate National Gummi Worm Day is by buying and sharing some of the sweet (or sour) treats with your friends - and by avoiding gummy bears completely, of course!

"Nothing so needs reforming as other people's habits." - Mark Twain

"Victorious warriors win first and then go to war, while defeated warriors go to war first and then seek to win." - Sun Tzu

Musical

Continued from page 1

to Rona, Leaf makes his own clothes.

William Barfee has many health problems. He was knocked out of the last Bee because there were peanuts in the brownies, as he is allergic to peanuts. He also has a rare mucus membrane disorder but is still a great speller!

Marcy Park placed ninth in nationals last year as a representative of Virginia. She doesn't like being good at everything but still tries her best to be. She is undoubtedly the best speller, but what will happen when she realizes that her fate is up to her, and so no one will be angry if she loses?

Olive Ostrovsky is a lovely girl with a lovely little voice. She thinks her family doesn't love her, so she tries to be the best for them. She took the bus to the bee, and her father never showed up. Her mother didn't get to be

there either as she is in India on a nine-month spiritual quest.

Vice Principal Douglas Panch gets angry whenever people call him Principal as they "would not let me be a Principal!" He is returning after a five-year hiatus and stepping in for Superintendent Spriggs as word pronouncer.

Mitch Mahoney is doing her community service as the comfort counselor. She is there to give losers a hug and a juice box.

She seems to get upset whenever people are sad, as "you can't comfort these dang kids. They don't yet know that the good don't always win, so there is nothing you can say to cheer them up when they lose."

She seems as if she has been a disappointment all her life and tries to show people that disappointment does last.

Seen and Heard

“That’s enough leg hair for today, Leo.” - Reese Menefee

“I have Brooklyn-itis; I can’t remember anyone’s names.” - Julian V.

“This salt shaker DOES NOT GET TO BE IN THE CULT!” - Azula T.

Abram M.: “Don’t you want the land?”

Grace J.: “Yeah, but there’s people on the land, and we don’t want them.”

Kathy: *Speaking about the mic* “Is this quieter than it used to be?” “Yeah, Brooklyn left.” - Abe M.

Anna Shuff: “We’re either siblings or a couple.” “Why not both?” - Brooklyn M.

“I love the smell of gunpowder!” - Meredith G.

“One time I accidentally called Mr. Brown a girly.” - Ryan Byrne

“We were talking about how your pants don’t fall down.” - Maddy W.

“We can’t have abusive teddy bears in the building.” - Josh Brown

“I don’t think the people want to watch his eyeballs explode.” - Grace J.

Christa Bell: *Looking at a picture of Abe* “It looks like a hair commercial!” “Yeah, the before picture!” - Madelyn W.

“Victoria, think! Stop eating on your mandarin oranges and think! Stop choking on them, too.” - Grace J.

“It was quite nice; It was fun to watch things explode.” - Abe M.

“The AC unit’s makin’ popcorn?” - Elizabeth B.

Said menacingly “I’m a white belt!” - Grace J.

“What can I say? Leo’s a natural baddie.” - Abby Fruge

“We need a day about ‘why do we have all these random days’ day!” - Christa Bell

“I sleep with my clothes on... sometimes.” - Madelyn W.

“The enlightenment of realizing there are no dinosaurs outside.” - Elizabeth B.

“If you touch my ribs one more time I will lick you!” -Brooklyn M.

Elayne Gabbert: *Pointing to Sopranos and Altos* “Y’all always sound so pretty!” “And then the boys come in.” - Abe M.

“No wah-wah.” - Ryan Byrne

Goodbye, and Farewell!

By Lydee F.

Sadly, it’s almost time to part at GPGC. The regular classes are over and the schedules are going to be completely changed. Gifties will be working on choir songs, the musical, Miles to Go, and Mixed Ensemble music.

Students won’t be able to see most of their teachers for the rest of the summer, nor will some of them be able to see each other for most of the school year.

Most of the students plan to come back to the program next summer, although we are forced to say goodbye to one, Abram (Abe) M.. He says that the fact that this is his

last summer here as a student is “kinda sad, but it hasn’t kicked in yet.”

Abe does say he’s willing to come back as a counselor in the summer of 2024, so Gifties who are still at the program then should still be able to see him. He says he will try to come back when he is in college.

He is simply NOT looking forward to the last week.

Coming back to the program in 2023 will be quite different; some students may choose not to come back, some may not get to come back, and there will be lots of new Freshmen.

Students will have new counselors and new teachers, along with some familiar

faces.

Suffice it to say, there will be a lot of changes.

Final Farewells from Teachers:

“Keep writing and creating!” - Reese Menefee

“I thoroughly loved spending time with [you] this summer and I wish [you] the best of luck next year.” - Christine Bertrand

“He who kills first loses.” - Robert Markstrom

“Just try to have fun. Remember to have fun.” - Jessica Markstrom

Miles to Go

We need your art, writing, poetry and creative works!

Send in your submissions to milestogo@gpgc.org

Editorial Staff:

Elizabeth B.
Lydee F.
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Julien V.

