

THE ADVOCATE



William Aberhart High School
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Cover by: Alena D

ROBOTS ON THE BATTLEFIELD: HOW MILITARY UTILIZES ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN TIMES OF WAR

by: Laura Z.

There's a fine line between aid and ascendancy. What determines a product's beneficiality in the long run? Does the advantage it provides outweigh the damage it causes? These questions promote concerns around the world, and are still up for debate as artificial intelligence emerges in the military market. As its development continues to expand into more complex areas, the utilization of artificial intelligence is present in an arrangement of tasks in the frontlines of war, as well as behind the scenes. In the past year, AI's potential has skyrocketed, leading special forces to continuously lean towards it for support, as it proves to provide an incredible potential for aid in menial labour and soldier missions alike. However, hidden behind this constructive facade lies the true nature of AI: destruction. Countless reports have been made condemning this system for the harm, wreckage, and death it has caused, spiking uproar in regards to what is next to come.

Generative AI, a subfield of artificial intelligence, uses patterns and data training from past input to create new data in the forms of text, images, videos and even code. This type of software can be useful in tasks such as data processing and warfare systems, allowing an easier way for surveillance and reducing the margin for human error. It's also considered very time-efficient, as it allows workers to contribute their efforts to less time consuming assignments, benefitting the entire task force. Other ways that AI is implemented include cybersecurity, drone swarms, combat simulation, and target recognition. These features cut the time and energy required and boost overall efficiency, though they still require human surveillance to remove any margin for error. Artificial weaponry refers to AI-controlled combative weapons used on the battlefield, often resulting in a great advantage for the controlling parties as it removes the human variable, therefore theoretically reducing casualties and/or potential weaknesses and increasing effectiveness tenfold. Strategically

implemented, AI can be very beneficial to many parties of the armed forces.

However, as a continuously growing technology, AI is rapidly surpassing the rules it was created alongside, the very ones used to preside over it. In the context of the military-industrial complex, AI is being used to enhance weaponry and systems at an increased rate, promoting new concerns amongst the public about underlying safety, risk management, and global implications. It has been reported that an attack on a Gaza hospital has resulted in the deaths of 20 civilians due to the misidentification of targets, which occurs in an estimated 10% of general cases. The acceleration of these artificially-lead attacks incapacitates human judgement, causing an approximation of up to 20 civilians dead per every intended target. These damages are due to a lack of human oversight, giving autonomy to machinery, then resulting in catastrophe. A report from a United Nations commission confirmed that in



Ukraine, drones have been used to attack noncombatants, which is considered a war crime under the Geneva Convention. Another major concern with the utilization of AI is the security threats it poses. The software is at risk of being manipulated or hacked by combatting parties, causing the leak of crucial information potentially being exploited.

The introduction of new industrial weaponry may have consequences beyond the physical; accepting artificial weaponry on the frontlines can lead to impulsive conflict, a growth in human leniency, and quite possibly a blur between the risks of war and the price humanity is willing to pay for it. The speed at which the AI weapons market has grown in the past couple years is astronomical, but the growth of fabrication has brought along a rising call for conflict. Weaponry being produced and utilized at rates that leave margin for error quicken only the call for action on the battlefield, while doing so with inhumane carelessness. It's a possibility that with further advances of technology, soldiers may be less present in conflict zones, leading to less casualties amongst the military personnel. Contradictorily, this may result in a negative multiplier effect, where the usage of AI could give leave to extended periods of disaccord, possibly allowing for more civilian casualties and societies conditioned to the presence of war. There is also the risk of dissociating acts of war with its cost, lowering the societal connotation of the gravity of

conflict, which only amplifies geopolitical problems. Death, due to its adversity, is what compels countries to find solutions beyond destruction.

So what is Canada's approach to this rising market? According to an article by Policy Options, Canada's own military funding (specifically defense and security) is set to increase spending targets by 5% of GDP by 2035. This augmentation could potentially reach around \$100 billion yearly, more than doubling Canada's current military defense budget. This increase will be integrated into software and command systems, and under the oversight of the Minister of Artificial Intelligence and Digital Innovation, Evan Solomon, will shape the future of artificial weaponry in Canada. Canada remains to act responsibly and under the guidance of the Geneva Conventions and their additional protocol, such as reviewing legalities of weaponry, though it must be ensured that any military supplies complies with and highlights obligatory levels of human surveillance over any potential weaponry before it can grow rapidly out of control.

Another rising issue to address while talking about the popularization of artificial intelligence is ethicality. What lines should be drawn in military warfare? It's possible that with rapid growth in the field, individuals will be less and less participant in combat, leading to (previously mentioned) leniency and an

overall decline in the incorporation of human decision making in the industry, reshaping humanities relationship with violence and what measures we are willing to cross until it is deemed "unethical." When does the injury of noncombatants outweigh the practicality aspect of AI weaponry? As long as different nations around the world do not agree on what boundaries are to be considered "too far" with the usage of AI, there is an underlying issue of exploitation and unfair advantage, crossing into universal values of justice and human safety.

The proliferation of artificial intelligence in the military industry holds many benefits and continues to prove to be a capable tool to aid in time management, safety, security, and analysis. In certain aspects, it is considered a benefit, and is a worthy cause of investment for a country's economy. However, these assets are not enough to dismiss the liabilities. It is important to keep a firm grasp on the usage of this software. As the demand and market continue to grow, it becomes crucial to identify the situation from an ethical standpoint, as not to normalize aspects of war within the day-to-day life of nations around the globe. Because in the end, where does personal benefit cross over the line into immorality, and how important is it in concern for the future prosperity of all of our societies?

THE ADVOCATE

THE ADVOCATE is the official newspaper of William Aberhart High School. THE ADVOCATE is meant as a forum for student expression and is published to inform and entertain the students and the entire school community.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Note From the Head of Layout:

cold daylight fleeting
days, weeks, slip by obscurely
cherish time, as one

Hello Abe!

I for one am so happy to be back working at the Advocate, and to see everyone put in such incredible work this month!

It's getting chilly, so it's the perfect time to bundle up with The Advocate and do some reading, and the puzzles.

We have some awesome articles, ranging from current politics to life-saving cancer treatment. Keep an eye out for paintings done by some of Aberhart's art classes (courtesy of Mr Wiebe), and some more incredible creative works such as our short stories, and comics.

Call for poets, artists, and other creatives:

If you would like to have your art, photography, poetry, or really anything else published in The Advocate, please email us:

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EDITORIAL

- 1 Robots on the Battlefield: How Military Utilizes Artificial Intelligence in Times of War

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 Note From the Head of Layout

POLITICS AND SCIENCE

- 4 Carney Government Survives Budget Vote, Staving Off Winter Election
- 5 December in History: The Evolution of Cardiovascular Medicine
- 6 How the Louvre Heist Stunned The World
- 7 A Political Shift in 2025: Democrats Win in Key States
- 9 A Breakthrough from the Deep: How Whales Outsmart Cancer
- 10 How Worried Should We Really Be About Climate Change

CULTURE

- 11 Canada Announces Plans to Explore Participation in Eurovision
- 12 2025 Wrapped- A Look Back at the Major Headlines and Pop-Culture Moments That Defined Our Year
- 13 Richard Van Camp Pays a Visit To Aberhart
Movie Review: The Breakfast Club
- 14 Holiday Baking: Recipe For Chocolate Peppermint Bark
- 15 "We're Not 'The Orange', We Are Orange" : An Interview With Ms Thibeault

CREATIVE

- 17 Loss (Short Story)
- 18 The Reason (Short Story)
- 19 Lazy, A Short Comic
- 20 Colouring Sheet
- 21 Puzzle Page

CARNEY GOVERNMENT SURVIVES BUDGET VOTE, STAVING OFF WINTER ELECTION

by: Gavin D.

It looked like Canada was headed towards a snap winter election due to the budget bill only for Mark Carney's minority government to narrowly pass the confidence vote. The vote itself was 170 to 168 in favor of passing the budget. The vote only passed because of strategic voting from Elizabeth May of the Green party, and several abstentions from Conservative and NDP MPs. While all parties wanted to avoid a Christmas election, the NDP was particularly exposed, having lost its official leader, Jagmeet Singh, and its official party status in the April federal election.

Major legislation, such as budget votes, can be considered as confidence votes; if the acting government is unable to garner a majority, the parliamentary session will come to an end, leading into another election. Unlike last April, the official opposition did not have to introduce a motion of no confidence, as the government needs an approved government to continue operating long term without relying on supply bills.

The Building Canada Strong : Budget 2025 passed even though the Liberal party only controlled 169 seats (excluding the speaker), which required them to receive two non votes from other parties to counter the Conservatives and the Bloc. One of the required votes came from Elizabeth May, even though her support was conditional on the Prime Minister's commitment to meeting the Paris Climate Agreement. Two NDP MPs voted to

abstain while the other five voted against. This tactic was defended by interim leader Don Davies, who stated that "Canada [is] facing instability and overlapping crisis... in these challenging times, now's [not] the right time for an election." These abstentions along with two conservative MPs abstaining, one due to resignation and the other because of medical leave, pushed the Liberal government over the threshold.

This isn't to say that the NDP or the Conservatives were happy with the budget itself. The NDP party strongly criticised the bill for failing to meet the needs of Canadians during a critical moment, but the now leaderless party was not prepared for a month-long campaign season. The Conservatives oppose the budget's contents, but like the NDP, are not interested in an election.

Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre attacked the budget during the question period on the 17th of November, stating "This Prime Minister is using his budget and the deficit like a credit card with no limit. In doing so, he is driving up the price of groceries, housing, and future taxes."

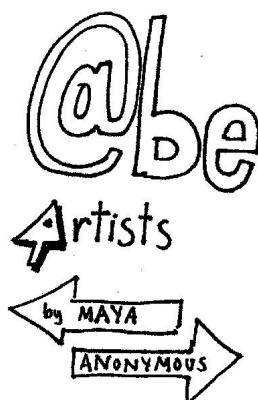
The conservatives seemed so intent on avoiding an election, that according to reports, MPs Andrew Scheer and Scott Reid did not cast their votes during the initial round. They reportedly waited to confirm that the bill would pass due to the NDP abstentions before registering votes

against the budget that were, by that point, completely symbolic.

An election may come sooner than we expect with the Liberals having to pass another budget in 2026 which will likely come after a new NDP leader is selected and after Pierre Poilievre's leadership review in January. Without the Liberal-NDP "supply and confidence" agreement, Carney's government will have to repeat this precarious support-seeking for each future fiscal bill. This could mean that the 44th parliament could come to an end after only two years of governance.

The budget itself primarily aims to protect national sovereignty and bring down costs for Canadians. This includes heavy investments in defense and responding to American tariffs to protect sovereignty. While additionally cutting taxes on the middle class and cancelling the consumer carbon tax to bring down the cost of living. Major investment in infrastructure to the tune of 115 billion dollars is also included. The budget additionally introduces a new Office of Digital transformation to lead the adoption of AI tools across the government.

François-Philippe Champagne, the minister of finance defended the budget stating that "Budget 2025 is an investment budget. We are making generational investments to meet the moment and ensure our country doesn't just weather this moment but thrives in it."



DECEMBER IN HISTORY: THE EVOLUTION OF CARDIOVASCULAR MEDICINE

by: Maya S.



On December 3rd, 1967, South African cardiac surgeon Christiaan Barnard performed the world's first successful heart transplant. The operation entailed transferring the heart of donor and accident victim Denise Darvall to 54-year-old Louis Washkansky. Washkansky regained consciousness for a brief but significant 18 days, before succumbing to pneumonia caused by immunosuppressive drugs. This groundbreaking, first-of-its-kind operation opened the door to perpetual advancements within the field of cardiovascular medicine. In 1968, Barnard's second heart transplant patient, Philip Blaiberg, was able to leave the hospital, return home, and live for a year and a half.

The life expectancy for transplant patients continued to rise as the operation's techniques and nuances continued to

advance. According to the National Library of Medicine, the prognosis after a heart transplant today indicates a 15% mortality rate within the first year after the operation. After the first year, it becomes constant, at about 4% a year for the next 18 years. Therefore, 50% of patients can expect to live past 10 years post-operation, and 15% past 20.

Recently, Canada experienced another breakthrough in cardiovascular innovation, a direct consequence of Barnard's success in December 1967. In early September 2025, doctors at Toronto General Hospital successfully transplanted a heart that had already stopped beating—Canada's first. Canadian medical professionals have used this method for lung, kidney, and liver transplants, however this is the first time it has been used for hearts.

The procedure itself is not brand new—it has been successfully performed in Australia since 2014, the United Kingdom since 2015, and the United States since 2019—however the research reaped by these countries has helped medical professionals in Toronto profoundly prepare for this operation.

Traditionally, heart transplants rely on donors who have undergone death by neurologic criteria (more commonly known as brain death), but whose hearts continue to circulate blood through the body. This new method—known as donation after circulatory death (DCD)—relies on the heart to stop beating naturally, which is then swiftly retrieved, revived, and transplanted. Revival often involves the aid of a portable machine, which pumps oxygenated blood through its chambers, allowing surgeons to monitor its operational viability.

The University Health Network says that donors for this new process are usually stroke or traumatic brain injury patients with “no chance of neurological recovery.” With the family's consent, life support is stopped and the heart is collected once death is confirmed.

In Canada, at the tail-end of 2024, there were 155 adults and 29 children anxiously awaiting a donor. Many patients waitlisted for a transplant succumb to their disease before advancing far enough up the list. DCD could expand Canada's donor pool by 30%, reducing wait times and saving lives.

DCD marks a historic leap in the field of medicine, giving even the most silent of hearts a second chance. The undeniable correspondence between the discoveries made by Barnard and those by doctors at Toronto General Hospital emphasize how each milestone is capable of causing a chain of events, expanding the repertoire of knowledge that can be used as a stepping stone for the next discovery.

HOW THE LOUVRE HEIST STUNNED THE WORLD

by: Kirina C.

"A stab at the heart of French history" (CNN World). The world was stunned. Shocked. Something so effortless. So easy the world felt artificial, or rather, fictional. On October 19, 2025 the world-renowned museum, the Louvre, was robbed. The museum that contains too many man-made marvels to count. The museum that holds some of humanities' best creations became a spectacle one Sunday morning like never before. Four men began their heist, and headlines came almost as quick as the crown jewels were snatched.

It all started when the crew stole a lift truck a few days before the heist. After going undetected, the real plan fell into action. The lift was positioned to reach the window accessing the Galerie d'Apollon (Gallery of Apollo). High-visibility vests were worn with the same pride as the stolen jewels once were. Cones were placed, and with that the charade began. Half the crew was raised into the sky by the truck's extending tower, stopping at the gallery's untouched balcony. Angle grinders paved the thieves' pathways to a life of riches and pride. An Oscar-worthy facade allowed the angle grinders to continue this pathway by deterring guards. Within four minutes, petty criminals had become hunted fugitives. As the extending tower returned the triumphant duo back down to the road, the Imperial crown of Empress Eugenie slipped and fell. Bystander videos documented the two thieves bending over on the lift, trying to locate the crown. Meanwhile, their victims had caught on, and

were closing in. The crew tried to set the lift on fire with a handheld blowtorch and some gasoline, but security was already on the way. So, like any other great heist, the getaway plan entailed four electric scooters reaching speeds of a hundred kilometers per hour, going parallel to the Seine River. The scooters were then abandoned for cars and the crew had done it.

The investigation began. The French Police's Forensics team worked tirelessly, looking for facts, not theories. They got photos, dusted fingerprints, DNA swabs, and lots of evidence left behind, like the angle grinders, white helmets, blowtorch, and orange cones. Meanwhile, the Brigade de Répression du Banditisme (BRB), the robbery police squad who had already solved many high-profile theft cases, was working with the Police Command Center. There, they found footage of the scooters being discarded. One scooter was even able to be recovered and processed. The DNA matched a 34-year-old man in the criminal database for petty crimes. He was arrested on the way to the airport on October 25, 2025. Due to their tedious approach, forensics uncovered leftover DNA on the angle grinders as well. It matched to a 39-year-old unlicensed taxi driver. His criminal background entailed a little more than the first suspect in custody, but nothing as major as the charges he is now facing. On October 29, with two of the four thieves in custody, French prosecutors were elated to announce they had a partial confession from both.

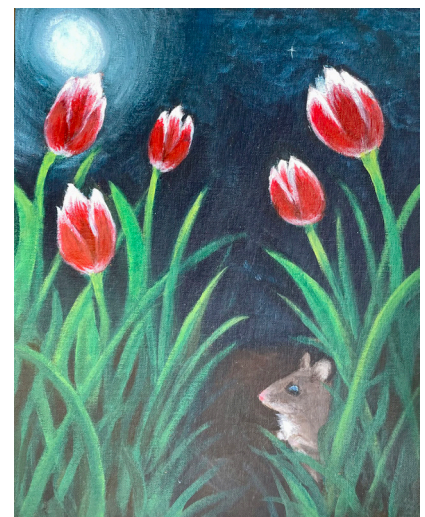
The investigation slows here, though. After two quick catches, the BRB were eager for more. However, as calendars switched to November, the several people they arrested were all released without charges. Finally, the last two in the crew were caught. A 37-year-old male rounded out the male trio so when the last suspect was detained, some were shocked to see a 38-year-old woman. Both of these final suspects denied any involvement in the crime, leaving all four still under investigation for organized theft and criminal conspiracy. The investigation has also been extended because of the lack of jewels found after searching each member of the crew as well.

Now, over a month after the heist, the French police arrested four more suspects on Tuesday, November 25. The initial four have all been charged, but the police have ninety six hours to question them due to a lack of crown jewel location.

Since the heist, security measures have been tightened around all of France and Europe's most prized possessions. In addition, many jewels and artworks have been transferred to the Bank of France. It is safe to say that no matter where the criminals will be, their attempt will not be forgotten. They found a way, as two petty criminals and two regular citizens in their late 30s, to shock the world who was convinced



ALE
ARTISTS
← ANONYMOUS
BY: VALENTINA →



A POLITICAL SHIFT IN 2025: DEMOCRATS WIN IN KEY STATES

by: Imogen R.

Democratic candidates posted major victories in the November 2025 elections. Wins in mayoral races, statewide contests and key ballot initiatives showed a clear shift in voter sentiment. The results also highlighted falling approval for President Donald Trump and the Republican Party. Republican candidates underperformed across the country, including in states long viewed as safely Republican.

Zohran Mamdani won the Democratic primary in June 2025, defeating former New York governor Andrew Cuomo and signaling growing support for more progressive policies within the party. His rise continued in November, when he won the New York City mayoral race, the largest municipal election in the country. Mamdani defeated both Cuomo, running as an independent, and Republican candidate Curtis Sliwa, securing 50.4 percent of the vote. His platform focused on public investment, housing and transit reform. He also ran an aggressive social media cam-

paign that energized young voters. Youth turnout reached 28 percent, a marked increase from the roughly 19 percent seen in previous election cycles. As well as the highest ever turnout for early voters in a non-presidential election.

His campaign focused on free childcare, free and faster buses, a local income tax aimed at New York's highest earners, and a citywide rent freeze. He also positioned himself as a mayor who would push back against President Trump, a message many Democratic voters wanted to hear. Mamdani offered a sharp break from past leadership, and voters responded.

His operation was large and disciplined. He built a volunteer base of more than 100 000 people. He spent months on the streets, riding transit, speaking with residents and framing himself as part of everyday city life. His digital strategy targeted young voters, a group that usually

shows low turnout. The mix of street-level campaigning and heavy online engagement helped drive strong youth support.

Mamdani's rise revived a long-running issue in American politics. Right-wing media often use the terms socialism and communism as if they mean the same thing. The habit fuels new versions of old "red scare" fears that have shaped American attitudes since the Cold War. Communism and socialism are different. Communism is a far-left ideology developed by Karl Marx in the 1800s, during a period of severe worker exploitation. Communism calls for a workers' revolution, followed by a society with no private property and no government. In theory, everyone shares resources and participates equally. In practice, countries that have called themselves communist have usually become authoritarian states with centrally planned economies and limited individual freedoms.

Socialism is a left-leaning ideology, but it sits far closer to the political center than communism. It argues that market economies need some level of government intervention to protect people from harm and to prevent extreme inequality. Socialism supports strong social safety nets and public programs such as healthcare, education and affordable housing. These services are funded by the public for the public. Many modern democracies already operate with a mix of market systems and socialist policies, which makes socialism a common feature of everyday life rather than an extreme ideology.

However, right-wing media in the United States often use socialism and communism as interchangeable terms. The goal is to trigger fear, reinforce long-standing Cold War anxieties and lock in their audience's voting behaviour. The tactic shifts debate away from policy and toward emotion, making it easier to attack any proposal that expands public services by labeling it as extreme.



Another major Democratic win came in Virginia, where Abigail Spanberger won the governor's race. The scale of her victory surprised both parties. Rural voters who had backed Donald Trump in previous elections shifted toward her, driven by frustration over tariffs that damaged manufacturing and agriculture across central and western Virginia. Spanberger still relied on strong turnout in the northern and eastern urban regions that usually support Democrats. The unexpected factor was her gains in deep red counties that had not supported a statewide Democratic candidate in years. Her message on economic stability and rebuilding local industries landed with voters who felt ignored by national Republican leadership. Spanberger delivered the strongest performance by a Democratic statewide candidate in several election cycles, showing how economic pressure can change voter behaviour in regions long viewed as Republican strongholds.



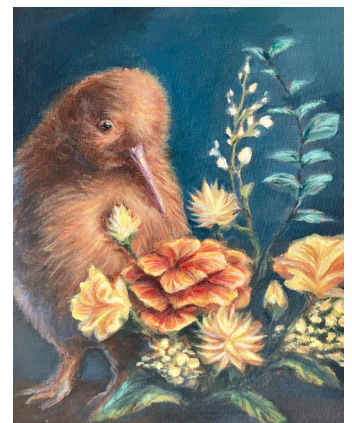
Rural voters in Virginia have grown frustrated with local economic decline. The shift created a shock for Republicans, who have depended on wide margins in these areas for years. Spanberger outperformed Kamala Harris in 48 of Virginia's 52 rural localities. She won 45 percent of rural voters, leaving only an eight point gap with her Republican opponent. That result marks a nineteen point improvement over the 2021 Democratic nominee and shows how quickly rural support can move when economic pressure is high.

Spanberger, the first woman elected governor of Virginia, broke from typical Democratic strategy by spending extensive time in rural regions. Many of these com-

munities faced intense economic strain during the first nine months of Trump's term. Her direct engagement in counties that Democrats usually ignore helped shift voter attitudes and cut into long-standing Republican margins.

National Democrats now argue that her rural gains should guide the party's approach in the 2026 midterms. Winning three seats would give Democrats control of the House. Eli Cousin put the warning in blunt terms. "The results are also a massive warning sign for House Republicans, who have made life harder for rural Americans by rubber stamping cost-spiking tariffs and voting to put rural hospitals and health clinics at risk for closure."

Spanberger's win shows how fast political coalitions can shift when voters feel economic pressure and see little response from national leaders. Her focus on rural communities, combined with strong support in Democratic-leaning urban regions, delivered a statewide map that neither party expected. Her victory, along with Mamdani's rise in New York, marks a broader realignment that shaped the 2025 elections. Democrats leave this cycle with new momentum, while Republicans face growing cracks in regions they once treated as secure.



A BREAKTHROUGH FROM THE DEEP: HOW WHALES OUTSMART CANCER

by: Ana F.

We all are familiar with cancer. A disease that has plagued millions, and impacts almost everyone's life, either directly or indirectly. A statistic published by The Canadian Cancer Society states that an estimated two in five Canadians will be diagnosed with cancer at least once within their lifetime. However, human beings aren't the only species susceptible to cancer. Cancer is actually a very impartial and widespread disease among the animal kingdom, and it can affect reptiles to invertebrates. This being said, not all species are created equal when it comes to cancer. So what really is cancer? And how do some animals live double our lifespan without DNA mutation?

What is Cancer:

Cancer is an uncontrolled growth of cells within the body, and can affect almost any organ.

As you grow and live you produce more cells. Whether creating more cells or replacing dead cells, your body produces around four million cells every second through a process called cell division. This cell production is controlled by DNA stored inside the cell. A 'code' that directs your cells, making sure you don't create too many or too little. Unfortunately sometimes this DNA code gets damaged and mutates. This can happen as you age, since your cells have more time to make DNA mistakes during the division process, or it can even be a genetic mutation inherited from birth. With a malignant (cancerous) DNA mutation, the cell reproduction code gets damaged, and your cells no longer know when they should produce more cells. This leads to cells constantly and uncontrollably dividing, creating a large, ever growing clump of cells called a tumor. The malignant cells of tumors, if left unchecked, can then spread to the rest of your body, restricting your organs from properly functioning and eventually killing you.

Peto's Paradox:

This understanding of cancer led many researchers to the simple yet sensible

observation that the bigger the animal is the more cells it has, and the more cells it needs to make/replace, making the opportunity for DNA mutation higher. Essentially, the bigger the individual is, the greater the chance of it developing cancer. However, nature proves this to be untrue.

Many species who are much bigger than humans rarely get cancer, and have long life spans. A prominent example of this is found in whales. They are one of the largest mammals on the planet, however they have extremely low rates of cancer and live for an incredibly long time.

This contradiction between science and nature has continued to baffle researchers for decades, earning itself the name of Peto's paradox. A thing that in theory should be true, but isn't. Not until just this year did researchers uncover a new discovery to crack this mutation mystery.

The wonderful life of the bowhead whale:

In order to better understand Peto's Paradox researchers at the University of Rochester began to study the cells of the bowhead whales of Alaska, who are said to live over two hundred years. They first began by manually causing mutation in the DNA of the bowhead whale in an attempt to see if they were just more equipped to handle mutation. However, this study showed that once the bowhead whale cell mutated it was much faster at becoming malignant compared to humans. Proving that whales aren't better at detecting and discarding mutated cells. This led the team to then switch their focus from after the cell had mutated to before; the prevention. They began studying how bowhead whales prevented double strand breaks within their DNA, and they discovered something revolutionary for the cancer world.

Double strand breaks:

One of the main causes of malignant cells (cancerous cells) are double strand breaks, which happen in your DNA. All DNA is formed in a double helix structure; two long connected strands hooked and twisted around each other in a spiral. Sometimes these two strands come apart either

by external forces, like radiation or exposure to chemicals, or just by normal internal cell processes. When double strand breaks happen our cells freak out, and try as fast as they can to squish the two sides back together again. Unfortunately human cells are not super precise about putting the two sides back together. When DNA breaks apart, each strand becomes incredibly vulnerable, and it is incredibly easy to damage the 'code' that they hold. Essentially, human cells just slap the two sides back together again without scanning or fixing any of this damage that could have happened while they were broken apart. Which ultimately leads to an intact but possibly mutated cell.

The discovery that the researchers at Rochester uncovered was that whale cells are two to three times better at repairing double strand breaks, meaning that their cells are much slower at mutating. This is all thanks to a tool in their cell called CIRBP. The use of CIRBP helps the cell detect and mend small damages to DNA that may have happened during the break, instead of just slapping the two strands back together again.

What this means for humans:

Human cells actually have their own kind of CIRBP, except it is extremely inefficient and underdeveloped compared to the CIRBP found in bowhead whales. However this is actually a good thing because it means that human cells are compatible with CIRBP, and we can inject the whale CIRBP into human cells. When the Rochester researchers did this, injecting the whale CIRBP into singular cells of humans, they found a significant decrease in cell mutation rates within those selected human cells. A groundbreaking discovery for cancer research and prevention!

This study provides a promising flicker of light at the end of the lengthy tunnel of cancer research, and is an amazing example of how better understanding the world around us helps us better understand ourselves.

HOW WORRIED SHOULD WE REALLY BE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE?

by: Biset N.

When you think back to your childhood, one thing you probably remember is snow, and lots of it. From just observing the weather's changes and fluctuations in Calgary since 2012, the effects of global warming are becoming impossible to ignore. In 2012 the average temperature in Calgary for the month of November was a maximum of around 1.9°C and a minimum of around -6.6°C in 2025. However, the maximum has reached around 7.7°C alongside the minimum reaching as high as -3.3°C. This change in temperature isn't something that happened in a week, and is instead the result of numerous years of overconsumption, the burning of fossil fuels by big corporations, AI, and many other factors.

Firstly, overconsumption is something that has become so normalized that people who don't buy more than necessities are seen as "weird" or even poor in some instances. In the 2015 study Environmental Impact Assessment of Household Consumption, it was found that the production and use of household goods and services was responsible for 60% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Moreover, according to a June paper titled Scientists' warning on affluence, the idea of "green" consumption is not enough, instead it is essential to reduce consumption considering 45% of global greenhouse gas emissions comes solely from the production of the things we use (and buy) every day. These 2 examples alone show clearly how : one, the classification for overconsumption is probably a lot lower than you might expect, and secondly that finding "alternatives" that allow you to continue to indulge in everyday consumerism are not the solution they are sold out to be. This means that even well-intentioned shifts toward "sustainable" versions of the same products still feed into the same cycle of constant purchasing and disposal. The root of the issue isn't just what we buy, but how much we believe we need to buy in the first place. Overconsumption is woven so deeply into modern culture through advertising, social pressures, and fast-changing trends, that reducing our impact requires more than swapping one product

for another. It calls for a fundamental re-evaluation of our habits and expectations. Without addressing this cultural push toward excess, any attempt at "green" consumerism becomes little more than a temporary bandage on a much deeper and more systemic problem.

Another well-known culprit for the acceleration of climate change is big corporations. In the article just 100 companies responsible for 71% of global emissions, a study by The Guardian explains that since 1988, more than half of the global industrial emissions can be traced to only 25 corporate and state-owned institutions. Companies like ExxonMobil, Shell, BP and Chevron have been identified as among the highest emitting investor-owned companies since 1988, but they're not alone. Nowadays companies will even use "green" ideas to try and sell consumers more, which eventually and inevitably keeps us stuck in the same cycle. One extremely common way companies sell us more by fogging our perception of their actions as intentions of helping include selling reusable bags. While reusable bags are marketed as an environmentally friendly alternative, many corporations produce them in such large quantities and with materials that require significant energy to manufacture, that they often end up causing more harm than good. Consumers are encouraged to buy multiple "eco-friendly" bags, frequently replacing them long before their actual lifespan ends. This not only drives up corporate profits but also shifts the responsibility for sustainability onto individuals, distracting from the far greater emissions these companies produce through extraction, manufacturing, and transportation. By promoting superficial solutions, corporations create the illusion of environmental responsibility while continuing business practices that intensify climate change. Ultimately, these "greenwashed" products reassure consumers without demanding real, systemic change from the industries most responsible for the problem.

Another increasingly significant contributor to environmental degradation is

artificial intelligence. Although AI is often marketed as a tool that can help fight climate change, its development and use come with a steep environmental cost. Training large-scale AI models requires massive amounts of energy, often sourced from fossil-fuel-powered grids, and the data centres that run these systems consume enormous quantities of electricity and water for cooling. A 2019 study from the University of Massachusetts Amherst found that training a single large AI model can emit as much carbon as five average cars over their entire lifetimes, and models have only grown larger since then. Additionally, as AI becomes integrated into more consumer products and online services, the overall demand for data storage and computation increases, expanding the carbon footprint of the tech industry as a whole. While AI has the potential to support climate solutions, its current trajectory reflects a pattern similar to other "green" innovations—promising sustainability while still feeding into the high-energy, high-consumption systems that drive environmental decline.

All in all, it is no surprise Calgary hasn't had snow on the ground up until the last week of November when these practices continue to be excused. The effects we are witnessing today are not random anomalies but direct consequences of years of unchecked consumption, corporate negligence, and the rapid expansion of high-energy technologies. If we want to prevent these changes from becoming permanent, we can't rely on half-measures or "green" marketing campaigns designed to soothe rather than solve. Real progress will require collective pressure on corporations and governments, a cultural shift away from wasteful consumer habits, and honest conversations about the environmental costs of the technologies we depend on. While the damage already done cannot be undone, a meaningful shift in priorities, one that values sustainability over convenience and accountability over profit, can still shape a future where snow in November isn't a memory, but a reality once again.

CANADA ANNOUNCES PLANS TO EXPLORE PARTICIPATION IN EUROVISION

by: Cameron W.



From left to right, Austria's JJ, the winner of Eurovision 2025 performs "Wasted Love" (EBU/Alma-Bengtsson), Norway's Kyle Alessandro performs "Lighter" (EBU/Sara Louise Bennett), KAJ, a group from Sweden begins to sing their song "Bara Bada Bastu" (EBU/Alma-Bengtsson), Tommy Cash, an Estonian rapper poses before his song 'Espresso Macchiato' (EBU/Alma-Bengtsson)

The night opens with a knight in chain-mail armour singing an upbeat pop song in front of a large stone monolith. Many other elaborate and delightful songs are performed, including a three minute anthem to sauna culture as well as a group of people dancing "spaghetti-esque" choreography while singing about numerous Italian stereotypes. Ultimately, a sweeping opera ballad performed atop a sailboat made of old luggage captivates hearts and minds and is crowned the winner. This may seem like a bizarre and eccentric affair, but it remains one of the most watched non-sporting events in the world.

Each May, performers from around 40 countries descend on a European city for the Eurovision Song Contest, an elaborate and vibrant cultural event filled with diverse styles of music. Eurovision typically takes place over a week in May, and is composed of two semi-finals and a grand final. Countries have their own selection processes to choose who will represent their country at the contest, and many countries opt to hold a similar regional competition.

After they have chosen a performer, there is a draw to split up the countries into the two semi-finals so they can secure their spot in the grand final. Certain countries known as the "Big Five", which includes France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the United Kingdom, as well as the host country for that year, are guaranteed a spot in the grand final because their national broadcasters financially contribute the most to the contest. Other countries must impress viewers, who have a chance to vote for

their favorite performances. In the Grand Final, votes cast by the audience and a jury selected by each country each count for 50% of the total result. The voting process encourages fairness and camaraderie between countries by not allowing the jury nor the viewers to vote for their own country.

Most performing countries are geographically located in Europe although there are some exceptions, notably Australia. Canada has recently announced plans to join this list of non-European countries who compete in the the competition. The federal government indicated in their Canada Strong Budget that they would be allocating an additional \$150 million to CBC/Radio Canada and that "the government will explore modernising CBC/Radio-Canada's mandate to strengthen independence, and work with it to explore participation in Eurovision."

In order to compete in the Eurovision Song Contest, a country's national broadcaster must be part of the European Broadcasting Union (EBU). CBC/Radio Canada is currently an associate member of the EBU. Membership to the EBU includes participation in the Eurovision Song Contest, but being an associate member does not.

Australia's national broadcaster, the Special Broadcasting Service, is also an associate member and has been airing the Eurovision song contest since 1983. Australia first appeared in the contest as a guest performer in 2014. The next year, to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Eurovision, the EBU invited Australia to compete as a wildcard entry. After

singer Guy Sebastian placed fifth, the EBU agreed to continue including the country in the contest, despite their non-European status.

Canada also has a history with Eurovision. In 2022, Insight Productions, an organizer of the Juno awards and numerous Canadian spin-offs of reality TV shows, such as The Amazing Race Canada and Big Brother Canada, announced plans to launch a Canadian version where performers would represent each province and territory. In the end, the contest never came to be, although producers told the Canadian Press earlier this year that the company is still planning on creating a Canadian spin-off.

Céline Dion famously represented Switzerland at Eurovision in 1988 and won with her song "Ne partez pas sans moi".



In November, CBC reported that according to two government sources, Prime Minister Mark Carney is personally involved in advocating for Canadian participation in the contest.

The next Eurovision Song Contest will begin in Vienna, Austria on May 12, 2026. Viewers in Canada can stream all three shows on the Eurovision YouTube channel.

2025 WRAPPED- A LOOK BACK AT THE MAJOR HEADLINES AND POP-CULTURE MOMENTS THAT DEFINED OUR YEAR

by: Emily R.N.

This year was quite a whirlwind. With the release of several new music and many events that broke headlines, let's glance back over this year's top artists, shocking events, and the most talked about obsessions of the year!

Top artists of 2025:

While it's difficult to determine the exact top artists from this year - as different sources have different ways of tracking listening data - here's the artists that consistently stayed at the top of streaming platforms such as Billboard top 100 Artists, and Spotify.

The Weeknd:

Canadian born artist The Weeknd, has left quite a mark this year! Currently #1 most streamed global artist on Spotify, his song: Blinding Lights, holds the record for the most streamed song ever on the platform, having racked up an impressive 5 billion streams as of November 2025.

Bruno Mars:

Pop/ R&B singer Bruno Mars certainly cooked up a storm in 2025! From collabs such as: "APT" with K-pop singer Rosé, which won "Song of the Year" at the 2025 MTV Video Music Awards, to his highly controversial collaboration with Sexxy Red in January 2025, it's safe to say that Bruno Mars has been experimenting with many different genres of music this year. He holds second place for "most streamed artist" on Spotify.

Taylor Swift:

Taylor Swift had a very eventful year; from the release of her 12th studio album The Life of a Showgirl, to getting engaged to NFL player Travis Kelce, she remains one of the most consistent artists of this year, remaining among the top artists from several global streaming platforms. She is the third most streamed global artist on Spotify.

**Disclaimer: While there are no actual*

statistics regarding the next 2 topics, the following are what I found to be the most talked about obsessions/events this year, especially among youth culture.

Most surprising Event of 2025:

Louvre heist:

This was undoubtedly one of the most shocking events and most talked-about heist of 2025. In October, thieves managed to steal 8 crown jewels from the Louvre museum in Paris, France. Perhaps the most surprising element of this heist was that the escapade occurred in broad daylight while the museum was open to the public! The news captured so much attention worldwide that a documentary series surrounding the heist: Louvre Heist: Minute by Minute, was released in November.

*Honorable Mention: Justin Trudeau and Katy Perry... a couple?

On a lighter note, one of the most unexpected pop-culture moments of this year had to be Canada's former prime minister, Justin Trudeau, and pop superstar Katy Perry being seen on several outings, and even photographed holding hands. This sparked instant couple allegations, and speculation surrounding the unlikely pair. Whether or not this will be a lasting relationship, or just a fling, remains to be seen!

Most insane crazes of 2025:

This year brought many crazes. From Labubus to Dubai Chocolate, here's this year's most talked about obsessions:

Dubai Chocolate:

Dubai Chocolate - a milk chocolate bar filled with crunchy shredded phyllo dough and pistachio paste - became extremely popular thanks to viral videos and its association to luxury. Originally created

by Filipino Chef Noel Catis in 2021, it reached worldwide recognition this year, and is now being produced by several major companies, such as Lindt. Many wonder if the creator should have put a patent on this first!

Labubus:

Inspired by Nordic fairy tales but reimagined by Hong Kong artist Kasing Lung, "Labubus", later evolved to become collectible stuffed toys, recognizable by their particularly large eyes and sharp teeth. Endorsed by celebrities like Rhianna and BLACKPINK'S Lisa, they quickly became an international craze. Labubu costs vary widely from \$30, to over \$300 for the limited variations. Currently, rumours of a Labubu movie are circulating, though nothing has been currently confirmed.

Starbucks Holiday Teddy Bear Cup:

And finally, every holiday season, Starbucks' release of holiday edition cups are most anticipated. This year however, the brand released a special, limited edition "teddy bear" cup, which immediately became the most desirable cup from the collection, especially amongst youth. Now, some of these cups are being re-sold on e-bay for up to \$700!

Final thoughts:

Looking back, it's safe to say that 2025 brought many surprises, obsessions, and moments no one saw coming. With a year this eventful, it's hard not to wonder what 2026 will bring!

We wish everyone at Abe a wonderful holiday season and a happy New Year!

RICHARD VAN CAMP PAYS A VISIT TO ABERHART

by: Addison C.

“When you hear the voice, listen. Honour yourself, respect yourself.” - Richard Van Camp.

On Friday, November 21st, William Aberhart High School alumnus, Richard Van Camp paid a visit to our school and gave a heartfelt presentation to one of our Aboriginal Studies classes. Students were captivated by the style of Van Camp’s engaging storytelling, connecting his lessons to their personal lives.

Born in the Northwest Territories, moving to Alberta later in life, Richard Van Camp is a celebrated Indigenous author of over 30 published books in 30 years. Some of Richards most popular works include *The Lesser Blessed*, *Three Feathers*, and *Beast*.

While visiting Aberhart, Van Camp chose to convey one lesson to students: to trust their voice.

Richard explained how he believes in humans as sacred beings to have spirits that guide them in life. He shared many real life experiences of times of his life when “the voice” directed him in the right direction.

Van Camp later explained that everyone, no matter their beliefs, has their own voice and the right to find (and listen to) it. He stated that it’s vital to trust your voice when you hear it as “you can’t argue with spirit”.

Another of Camp’s doctrines included believing that “bigger things than us happen all the time”. He reminded



students that life is full of forces, teachings, and moments of guidance beyond our control, that trusting these experiences can lead us toward the path we’re meant to follow.

In addition, his teachings resonated deeply with Aberhart’s commitment to community and belonging. At a school that values empathy, leadership, and cultural awareness, Van Camp’s emphasis on listening, honouring, and respecting ourselves and others felt especially meaningful. His words reinforced the sense that “Aberhart is a family” that

empowers students to find their own voice.

Van Camp’s message to students centred on self-trust, intuition, and honouring one’s inner voice will stick with most long after graduation. His insights offered them tools for navigating challenges, making decisions, and trusting their own paths.

By learning to listen to their inner voice, students are better equipped to step into adulthood with clarity, confidence, and a deeper understanding of who they are and who they hope to become.

MOVIE REVIEW: THE BREAKFAST CLUB

by: Lia A.V.

I don’t know about you, but watching a good movie at the end of a very stressful week is one of those small luxuries I’ll never take for granted. On that note, I’d love to share one of my favourites. Released in February of 1985, *The Breakfast Club*, directed by John Hughes, follows a mixed bag of teenagers, who are stuck together for Saturday detention. It’s definitely considered a cult classic (and is my #1 on Letterboxd) for a reason. In this film, the five main characters: Claire, Allison, John, Andrew, and Brian—who represent typical high school stereotypes,

like the delinquent, the jock, the nerd, etc.—are unpacked throughout the course of the motion picture. As they come together, they realize that there isn’t much that separates their lives, other than school status. The most popular, pretty girl in the building can go home and feel just as invisible to her parents as the girl who’s known as a “basket-case” and a freak. The boy who’s usually just observed by others while keeping to himself and studying feels the same parental pressures as the boy who’s revered for being a super athlete. Introspectively, this movie’s

message sticks with you; we’re all just kids who are still trying to figure ourselves out, some people are just better at pretending they have it all down-pat. A good lesson, paired with scenes that are crazy chaotic—and guaranteed to get at least a little laugh out of you—is the perfect way to learn a little something about yourself. Give it a watch, and see if you find solace in any of the characters! Personally, I think I’m a total Allison.

My rating: 10/10 ; Age rating (MPA): 14A

HOLIDAY BAKING: RECIPE FOR CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT BARK

by: Cailyn B.



Line a 9x12 inch glass dish or a regular baking sheet with parchment paper.

Pour the melted chocolate, vegetable oil, and peppermint extract mixture into the dish. Using a spatula, spread the chocolate mixture evenly on the bottom of the dish.

Place the dish in the refrigerator for approximately 10 minutes to cool. You'll want the chocolate to not be completely chilled. It's important that the chocolate is still a little soft when you take it out of the fridge, otherwise, when you add the white chocolate layer, the two chocolates will separate.

Next, put the 2 cups of white chocolate into a microwave safe bowl, and repeat the same heating process (Microwave in 20 second intervals on high, while stirring in between, until the chocolate is smooth and melted).

Once the chocolate is heated, pour in $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of vegetable oil and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of peppermint extract, and mix.

Nothing is better than enjoying the holiday season with chocolate peppermint bark! It's easy to make and has minimal ingredients, making it a fast and easy treat to enjoy with friends and family.

Ingredients

3-4 large candy canes (or as many as you want!)

Milk chocolate portion:

2 cups of semi-sweet or dark chocolate (preferably chunks, not chips)

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of peppermint extract

White chocolate portion:

2 cups of white chocolate (preferably chunks, not chips)

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of vegetable oil

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of peppermint extract

Steps

Unwrap the candy canes and place them in a plastic, sealable bag. (Thicker freezer bags are recommended).

With a wooden spoon or rolling pin, crush the candy canes until they are in smaller pieces. Set aside.

Put the 2 cups of semi-sweet or dark chocolate in a medium size, microwavable bowl. Heat the chocolate in 20 second intervals in the microwave on high, stirring in between, until it is smooth and melted. Be sure to not overheat chocolate!

In the same bowl, pour in $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of vegetable oil and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of peppermint extract. And mix together with a wooden spoon or spatula.

Take the chilled chocolate in the glass dish out of the refrigerator and pour the white chocolate mixture on top. Be careful not to let the white chocolate set before pouring it on top of the dark chocolate. White chocolate cools quicker than regular chocolate.

Sprinkle the crushed candy canes over the still warm white chocolate. To prevent the candy from falling off when you cut the bark later, gently press the candy into the chocolate

Place the pan/dish back in the refrigerator for approximately 1 hour, or until the chocolate is completely hardened. Once chilled, use a knife to cut the bark into smaller pieces

Enjoy and happy holidays!

"WE'RE NOT 'THE ORANGE', WE ARE ORANGE" : AN INTERVIEW WITH MS THIBEAULT

by: Ruby T.

Tell us a bit about yourself, a little introduction

I'm Ms. Thibeault, and I used to play professional volleyball. I played on the national team for seven years, and then settled down in Calgary where I had a family; I have a little guy who's almost five years old now. I've been here at Abe since 2018 or 2019, and I've been loving it ever since.

Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Sylvan Lake, Alberta. Nice little small town, but I went to high school at Lindsay Thurber, around twenty minutes out in Red Deer.

What are some of your hobbies/interests?

I still love to play volleyball, albeit more recreational, but I play indoor and beach. I like to go hiking, mountain biking, and I love anything outdoors. So camping, bike rides, floating the river, all of it.

How did you end up at Aberhart?

When I retired from volleyball, my husband and I picked a city (it was between Vancouver, Toronto, and Calgary), and we landed with Calgary because it's close to home, but not too close. It's amazing here, the volleyball community here was so welcoming, and the city never ceases to amaze me. It's also close to the mountains, which I love.

So when I got here, I was about to be on the substitution list for teaching. That's when I got reached out to by a woman I knew through volleyball (who played at U of C), because she needed someone to cover her maternity leave at E.P. Scarlett.

Funny story: I was asked to coach the junior boy's volleyball team there, and we upset Aberhart in city finals. Abe was very, very, very good that year. They hadn't lost a set all season, and we beat them! And then I was only at Scarlett for the first semester, before I was offered a temp contract for semester two at Abe. So I came here, and I remember walking into the gym to teach Phys Ed, and half the Abe volleyball team was in my gym class and they were like "What are you doing here?!" and I was like "Surprise! I'm at Aberhart now!"



What school sports do you coach, and which is your favourite?

I only coach volleyball, and then a couple track and field events like high jump and hurdles. Volleyball is my favorite, but you can't even compare the two. As far as team sports go, volleyball is so fun, but I love track because of the community. At Abe we have over a hundred track athletes that all cheer for each other, and I love that so much. I've obviously got more experience with volleyball, but it's still fun. And it's outside! I hate being in the gym all day.

Can you give an elevator pitch for Phys Ed 30 Leadership?

This is its guinea pig year. I'm the athletics director, and there's so many extra responsibilities that come with Aberhart's spirit and community, like pep rallies, Will's Till, and the social media page. So there were a lot of things I was trying to manage by myself, which was very difficult and took me away from teaching and other important athletic director stuff like registering teams. The idea for the class started four years ago when a group of students wanted to make an Athletic's Council to help out, and I was like "oh my god, yes". Because what matters is the voices of the students/athletes and what they wanted to

do at the school. A lot of that school spirit dies after COVID, and it was difficult to get the students and fans excited about sports again. In this program, students get some work experience helping to run Will's Till, public speaking opportunities through pep rallies, and it's just an overall awesome opportunity. The course is year-long with classes every other day, and classes vary from leadership-heavy things related to upcoming pep rallies, or just pure Phys Ed. And we get to go on a lot of trips, we're going skiing soon, and we'll go camping just like the other Phys Ed 30 classes in the spring.

What sports did you play in high school?

I played everything. I loved basketball, I actually also got recruited to also play basketball in university, so I had to pick between that and volleyball. Volleyball was a passion for me, I had already been doing Team Alberta and Junior National team, but I miss playing basketball. It's so different. I also did badminton, high jump and hurdles for track and field, club basketball and volleyball. I tried to play rugby in grade twelve, but I wasn't allowed to because I had already signed at a university. Oh! And I played soccer.



Have you ever had any serious sports injuries?

I haven't had anything too devastating. I've dealt with patellar tendonitis a.k.a. jumper's knee my whole life, and have just toughed that one out. I was told it wouldn't get worse, it would just stay bad as long as I kept playing, so I had to manage it throughout club, national team, and pro volleyball. There was no way I would have time to let it rest either, I was playing sports every month of the year.

Otherwise, I sprained or fractured my ankle pretty badly during my last national team game in Puerto Rico, and I missed out on a dream contract in Italy. I missed half the season and I was in a wheelchair for a part of it.

Oh, I also tore my MCL. This was after I retired from pro, but there was this big game and we were in the finals, and I dove for a ball and tore it. I actually played the whole game, two sets after that, and only afterwards did I realize how bad it was. It healed on its own though.

What about Aberhart sets us apart from other schools?

I think it's the best in the city. I mean I'm biased, but I love it cause it's small, and because there's a lot of multi-sport athletes, so compared to other schools where there's the soccer kids, the basketball kids, and the football kids, there's a lot of overlap here and so kids are able to support each other through various games. And Mr. Sagriotis has put a lot of effort into making the staff feel a big sense of community, and it's starting to trickle down to the students. He makes an effort to hire teachers that want to go above and beyond, and make sure everyone's wearing orange. And there's this whole thing that "Mr Sagriotis doesn't want school merch to be black" and it's because his whole thing is "We're not the orange, we are Orange" and to embrace the orange and to be Orange. And I love that. It's a bright colour, people don't normally wear it, but the buy-in is there and you can feel the connection throughout the school, and it's just so freaking cool.

What is your favourite hype-up song?

I don't have a go-to, but I did like "No Broke Boys" a lot over the summer.

How did Aberhart acquire the Gritty suit?

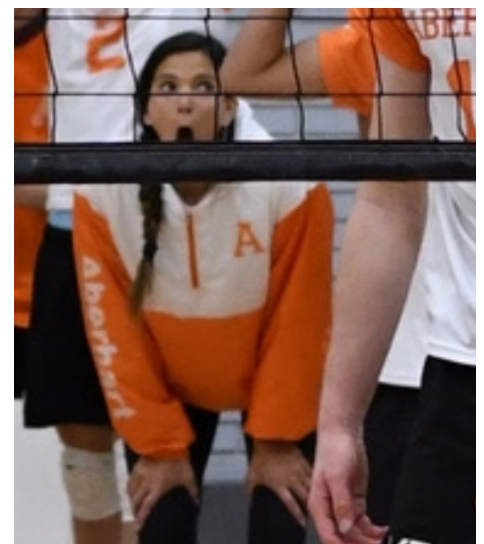
It might have been Ms. Flaman, but someone was like "we need a mascot, let's order one that's orange, let's just order the Gritty one and then we'll put an Abe jersey on it." It's not super good quality, it might just be from Amazon. We've had it for a couple of years, I don't know if it's ever been washed. And we have the old one that we found, it's like spartan armor since Abe Orange used to be Abe Trojans. It's a tin suit, it's got a helmet and a cape, and last year we had two students stage a fight between the mascot suits at a pep rally.

If you could renovate the gym, what would you change?

Higher roof. And more stands. In any capacity, right? We don't really need the stage for anything, but we need seating. Then we can host city finals. They won't let me right now! I go to the meeting and they ask who wants to host city championships? And I always raise my hand and they have to clarify "anyone other than Abe?"

Any closing remarks?

Not really, just that I love Abe, and there's a reason I do what I do. You guys are the best kids in the whole city, it's lovely to teach you guys and spend time here every day. Like, actually, it's not mandatory for teachers to go to graduation, but we go because we love you guys and we want to celebrate with you.



THE REASON

by: Anwyn M.W.

I only knew two things as I stepped outside. Either I wasn't going to see tomorrow or if I did - I must have a guardian angel.

The night was a shadow, dark and foreboding, and could I even call it night?

It was already 7:24- that was plenty of chance for the sun to arise, and it hadn't.

Shaking my head in disbelief that I was upset with a giant ball of gas, I took the first step out onto my driveway.

Frost. That is what I felt, and it was not just under my feet and blown around my face, it was in my veins and it sent a tremor through my body, making my mind regret and my arms tense up.

I could have turned back. Whether it was stupidity or fear that drove me forward,

I trod on through the streets, praying that muscle memory would join me on my journey, for sight had not.

I found it ridiculous that education was still required at this moment- how could my mind function when my body could barely?

A sharp cracking sound.

I whip around, my eyes snap open and my heart stops.

There is nothing there. At least-nothing visible.

What a comforting thought. I turned back around and continued walking- quicker this time-if even by an imperceptible quantity.

I longed for the soft glow of my fireplace- just moments ago I had been at peace.

Now all I could see was black and all I could feel was ice. Winter fell around me.

Risking a look over my shoulder, I saw my footprints travelling behind me in the white powder- the only set, alone as I was.

Not a single person came to sight as I kept going. I didn't know whether that was comforting or eerie, but I paid it no mind.

The shadow that was everything in sight- or not in sight- enveloped me only further as I walked. The soft crunch of new-fallen snowflakes was the only sound.

A cramp started to build in my left leg,

creeping up my veins like tendrils and forcing a wince into my face.

I needed to rest. Just for a moment.

I watched my breath billow in clouds around my face and dissipate into the dark.

I stood- every second my mind begging me to move forward and my body the opposite.

I could have stood there for a minute, an hour, a century- and only realized when I spotted a faint glow on the horizon- like a tiny sliver of peace and I hung onto it- held it close to my heart. Soon, it began to grow, lighting up the world and spiraling towards the clouds in hues of marigold and rose. A golden light shone across my face and a warmth flew through my body as the sun rose at last, illuminating the world.

It reminded me. It reminded me of the reason why I pressed on- the reason I had tossed away my sorrows. The reason was waiting for me- and that gave me hope.

The sun does not bring total security. Just as easy as things disappear in shadows, they can exist in light. I looked behind me again as I began to walk- then I stopped dead in my tracks. The warmth I had just felt drained from me.

A figure stood behind me, about five yards back. It was of a great height, its features blurred to my eyes by the sun. Seemingly humanoid- but in the state of the present world, that was less comforting than it should have been.

As soon as it had appeared- it was gone. Had I imagined it? It would have been quite a plausible answer.

Still, I ran. My legs carried me forwards, my mind did not think- blinded by my will to live.

I did not look back. It did not matter if it was my imagination or something more.

I was not going to die today. There was a very significant reason to keep going- and it was waiting for me.

My body was a lightning flash, moving forwards fast- too fast- I tripped, caught myself, moved on. The cramp in my side crept further up into my chest, making my heart burn and sting-the sen-

sation felt like it was killing me- but it was preferable to the real thing.

Eventually, it was too much. I stopped dead, my throat feeling like an ancient cellar filled with dust. I got ready to have the wind knocked out of me, to feel a blinding pain, to feel something- but nothing came.

I risked a look behind me, the sun catching my eyes, but that was it. The world sat still behind me, not a figure in sight.

Stupid, I shamed myself, trodding on now with an aching chest and honestly, a relieved mind.

As I continued, my skin began to freeze. I could feel it, the frostbite. It truly did feel like icy teeth, and they penetrated me on every part of my exterior, and if I could be completely honest with myself, they were beginning to sink into my heart too.

How long could I keep going on like this? Staring down at the tears in my gloves and feeling the tremors in my spine, recalling the memories of earlier today.. Of yesterday... of the days before. Why do I go on...

I look up. I hadn't even realized- I was almost there.

It should have been a comforting thought. Frankly, I wasn't sure.

With a sigh, I entered the premises, a heavy heart, eyes to the pavement.

Reluctantly, they rose.

My heart stopped. Then it commenced beating-slow at first, then faster and faster- unnaturally so, but how could it not, at the sight in front of me?

As a flush rushed into my face and through my body, the memories came back, the realizations.

My journey had ended. My aim has been reached.

I began to walk forward, slowly.

There it was, quite literally standing right in front of me.

The frost fell out of my body.

I ran for the second time, into the open arms of my Reason.

LOSS

by: Yuahn L.

Sensitive Topics : Death, implied suicide, and blood.

The bullet struck through the chest of his rival, crashing to his knees. M.H lowered his pistol, still smoking at the tip in the cold crisp air. His ears filled with the sound of his enemy gasping for his breath. Blood pooling into the snow, tears falling as the man fought to speak. He couldn't watch. How could he? He heard it all, every gasp, every breath and every failed attempt to pull himself up. The charcoal cotton soaking up the colour of rubies under the night sky.

"M-MERCY! JUST END ME NOW!"

The foe begged. The voice of a dying man, fragile and desperate. But all M.H did was turn away. Robotic in a way, perhaps even finalized.

"YOU CAN'T JUST WALK AWAY! END ME OR HELP ME!" The adversary wept, clawing for his heel, ankle, anything. The person grasped tight once he got a hold, trying to crawl up onto his knees. Each muscle tensing and relaxing in every move. Aching, burning and grueling. Knees loose, even stiff. M.H didn't fight the enemy who crawled up and swung an arm over his shoulder. The hot breath of his rival, harsh, uneven with every breath up against his ear. The foe's throat was drying up, yet wet with ichor. "You're gonna help me.. Right? Come on.. Please..." His adversary mistaken his surrender for backtracking. Like some kind of renewed murderer.

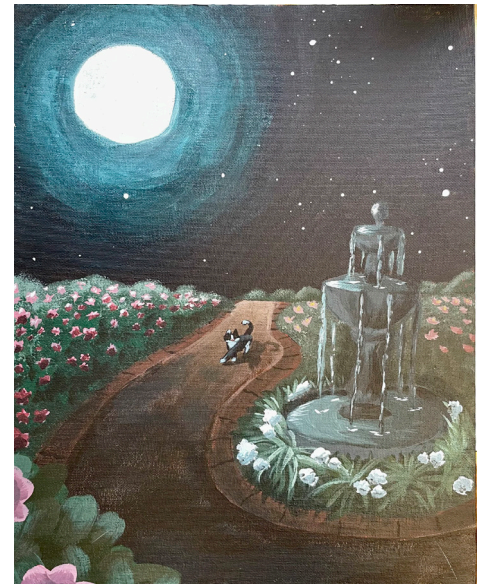
"I won't tell anyone if you just bring me to the hospital. Just please..." His rival pleaded. Red hot crimson pressing down onto M.H's back. Mixing into a shadowed indigo of his blue sweater. The sun was falling already over the blankets of snow, the orange hues softened over his eyes as the silence followed. The man's face was blurred, unrecognizable even in the copper sun. The second bullet rang out through the man's skull, a muted thud of snowflakes cushioning the harsh blow. The last thing his adversary heard was the wintry mix crushing under his boots. Each step echoing, starting to sound like soldiers marching. Flashing of white and black in his nemesis's visions. A swirling

of a typhoon, a hypnodisc of M.H, pacing away. Not daring to look back to the eyes of his rival.

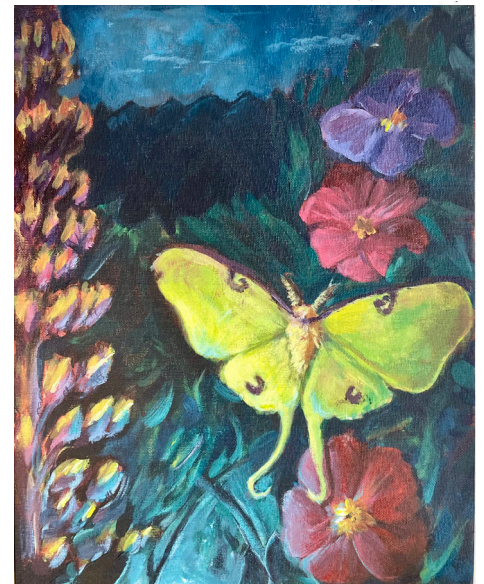
Each step took him into downtown, Christmas lights, carolers and smiles. Some smiles with tears, some with teeth visible and others lips filled with candy canes and chocolate sweets. M.H slugged through the crowd, millimeters away from crashing into people. No one met his gaze. No questions to the darkening patch of blood or how he held a pistol with his wrist angled down to the cobble streets. No screams, fear or care. Peppermint, gingerbread and cinnamon filled the senses of every pedestrian who stroll on through. For M.H, the smell was missing. Right at the end of the tunnel, but just out of reach. The tips of his fingers nearly grazed that smell. Or perhaps it was wanting to smile in a festive event as such. But again, it slipped past his fingers, smoke from nearby folks flowing through the air and past him. He couldn't feel it. Even the rough cobblestone streets felt flat, or maybe uneven? It wasn't clear. The feeling of the texture was just slipping away from him. Like how a numbing cold slithered down his bones when a certain chill forced itself through him. M.H turned to the display window to his right. There were purses, clothes. Ordinary things.

Nothing that really caught his eye till his eyes refocused. The reflection shone, glossy with the frosty icy edges. His hoodie was bloodied, the raven colour was nearly black cherry. Was his hoodie blue just moments prior? His memory was escaping him, streaming down the river from his reach. He reached up to touch the spot on his hoodie, just to have painted his fingertips to a brick ember. He met his own gaze in the window and saw the gaping hole through his own forehead. The same brick ember dripped down his own face. Hadn't he felt that? Unsure. The view in the panes was morphing, distorting in cursed ways. Even an experienced sailor would dizzy at such a sight. M.H stumbled back, only to have found himself holding zinnias. His hoodie and jeans, replaced with a black suit. That black hole through his face was patched up, just enough to look decent even as his skin felt dull, practically greying. He frantically looked all about, expecting to meet the eyes of smiling

citizens and Christmas cheer. The morning light had shined down on M.H. The merry cheer was wiped away, the snow was beginning their plans to melt away in the incoming February heat. Ding. M.H turned to the sound, a bell. A large one off in the distance. A beat past before it rang again, ding. The last one rang as a blinding light filled his vision, he crashed to the floor as his ears drowned in the sound of that final ring, ding.



Abe
artists
by Anastasia K.
by Ivy B.



COMIC

by: Phoebe O.

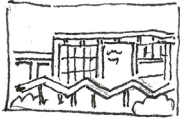


COLOURING SHEET

by: Olivia K.

by: Max C.

PUZZLES



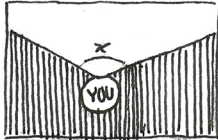
Puzzle Page



• THE ADVOCATE •

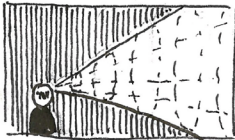
• BY MAX C. •

FIND SEVEN ANI-
MATED MOVIE TITL-
ES IN THE WORDFIND



- ☐ EVERYTHING YOU CAN SEE
- ☒ EVERYTHING YOU CAN'T
- ☒ THEIR ANGLE

QUESTION: HOW CAN YOU DETERMINE WHAT
X IS FOR YOU?



- ☐ EVERYTHING YOU CAN SEE
- ☒ EVERYTHING YOU CAN'T

WHAT IS THE VOLUME OF EVERYTHING
YOU CAN SEE AFTER N AMOUNT OF
DISTANCE?

			4
2			3
4		1	2

UTWNOFHAPPYFEETZ
LPSAKIRATIFLOWSR
XCOCOSWMJFINPON
ISEASHAOKFLTMO
CHITLRLANQE VKE
EOTNKE LNR PPOAM
AZOLGKEAMORIZ
GCLOOONSFN CNOR
EOZNMPEQUMPAZY

1	2	3		
4			5	
6				7
	8			
		9		

DOWN

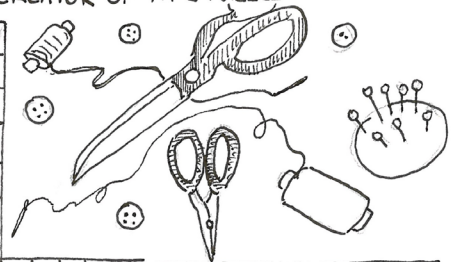
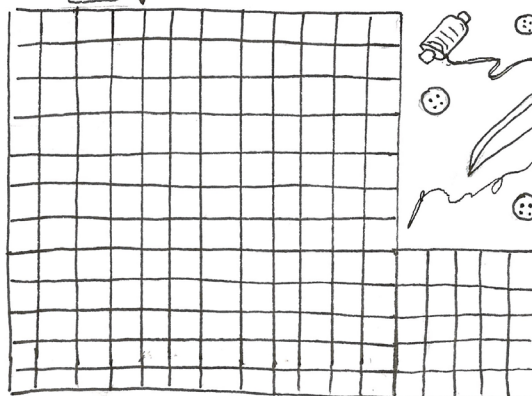
1. CASUAL DENIAL
2. WAS IN DEBT
3. VILLAGE PROTECTOR, IN MINECRAFT
5. PERUVIAN CAPITAL
7. A KISS, A HUG, AND ANOTHER KISS

ACROSS

1. INGREDIENTS: DAIRY, SUGAR, EGG, AND NUTMEG
4. A SOLDIER'S IRISH EXIT?
6. THE SHAPE OF INHERITANCE
8. A SMALL TASTE OF A GAME
9. CREATOR OF THIS PUZZLE

FREE IN CA-
FETERIA AT L-
UNCH HOUR

SHEET



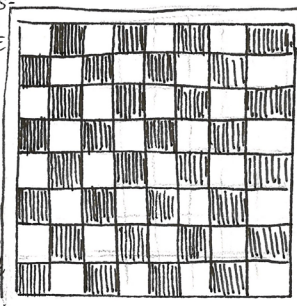
ANSWER

DRAW GIFTS IN THIS BOX

OH NO! JOHN WASTED ALL HIS
MONEY ON XMAS DECORATIONS
AND NOW CAN'T BUY PRESEN-
ENTS FOR HIS KIDS!
DRAW HIM SOME
GIFTS TO GIVE
HIS KIDS!



WHAT IS A WAY YOU CAN CUT THIS
SHEET INTO 3 PIECES SO THAT THEY
CAN BE REARRANGED INTO A PERFECT
SQUARE?



HOW CAN YOU PLACE THESE 8
QUEENS ON THE CHESS BOARD SO
THAT NONE OF THEM CAN
ATTACK EACH OTHER?

