
The Pacific Grove High School

NEWSBREAKER

Breakers Survive First Round of Finals!

Volume 1, No.2

So It Begins

by Noor Benny

Witness finals—a week filled with stress in which students pull all-nighters to reverse the slacking that has killed their grades. When students at Pacific Grove High School were surveyed about their opinions on finals week, responses varied from individual to individual.

Freshman Melody Roach wisely stated, “If you work hard and study hard, you’ll do well.” Another freshman, Tessa Merrick, questioned the purpose of finals. Citing the Myth Notebook as an example, Merrick claimed that “there might be a better alternative [to a final exam], like a final project.”

The sophomores, who have taken finals before, seemed slightly more relaxed. Booker Catlin described finals week as “just another day” in school because he “doesn’t stress about much.” Having a positive outlook, Catlin said that the best part is “not checking the [final] grade after.” Cameron Powley agreed with Booker and said that “envisioning when it’s all over” helps him get through the week.

Junior year can be the most difficult year for finals, but that didn’t seem to stress Gaby Giraldo. Giraldo took a more laid back approach to finals and claimed that “if [she] doesn’t know it by now, [she’s] never going to know it, so why study?” You can’t beat that logic!

At this point, the seniors knew the drill. When asked to reflect on the past three years of finals, Brielle Ambrosia explained that finals are “frustrating because [students] put hard work and time into classes, but a large amount of [students’] grades rely on one test.” Ambrosia went on to mention that there are better ways to assess student knowledge, such as “projects and presentations instead of paper tests.” Wendye Roach agreed with Ambrosia, claiming that finals “stress kids out for no reason.” On the other hand, senior Sydney Overstreet responded that she is “struggling to care because senioritis is kicking in.”

If finals are so unpopular, then why do teachers administer them? Leadership, English, and Psychology teacher Dr. Haggquist explained that finals are a “necessary evil.” However, he went on to challenge the worth of long term memory. Haggquist stated that in this day and age, “creativity is the commodity of the future.”



Freshmen Maria Moore (left) and Tyler Dearmin (center) write an essay for Mrs. Selfridge for her Honors English I class.

Boys Soccer Begins at PGHS

by Will Coen

On Monday, November 25, Pacific Grove High School’s boys soccer teams started off the season with back-to-back home games against Palma and Carmel. This year, Pacific Grove has both a varsity and a junior varsity team. Following the first two games, both the varsity and junior varsity teams have a win-loss-tie record of 0-1-1.

Pacific Grove’s varsity team consists of players from all grades. The team is led by head coach Nicholas Lackey, a long with senior team captains Sergi Rodas-Mendoza and Robertson Rice. The team’s season opener against Palma was a non-League preseason game; the team’s first League game was not until January 13. Palma came out with the victory over the Breakers in the preseason game, 3-1. Sophomore John Garcia scored the Breakers’ only goal. Team captain Rodas-Mendoza stated that the team “was eager to start playing games against some solid opponents,” but nevertheless had “first game jitters” during the tough loss to Palma. Despite this season-opening loss, Rodas-Mendoza claimed that the varsity team bounced back with “a very close 1-1 tie” against Carmel, with sophomore Kevin Esparza-Ortiz scoring the team’s goal on a penalty kick. Rodas-Mendoza added that “the game could have gone down either way.” After the opening games, team captain Robertson Rice was pleased with the team’s performance, but stated that there is “always room for improvement.” Rodas-Mendoza also considered the start of the season to be “very successful” because “everyone is working really hard in practice to make each other better.”

The junior varsity team is made up of freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, and is led by head coach Ryan Nevis. In the team’s first non-League preseason game, the Breakers tied Palma, 2-2. Freshman Robert Reynolds scored both of the team’s goals, including a free kick goal late in regulation to tie the game. After the opener against Palma, the junior varsity team fought hard in a close game against Carmel, eventually losing 1-2. Freshman Brandon Crespino scored the team’s goal on a midgame free kick. The team took many solid shots on goal, but was only able to score on one of the attempts. Varsity captain Sergi Rodas-Mendoza stated that having a junior varsity team “allows for a lot more development for a lot of players” and “keeps...[the Breakers] prepared for the future.”

Rodas-Mendoza claimed that it is essential for everyone on varsity and junior varsity to remain “healthy and injury free for the rest of the season.” These opening games are only the beginning of what should be an exciting and successful boys soccer season for Pacific Grove High School.

The Breakers continued their season with another non-League preseason game away against Santa Cruz on Monday, January 2.



The PGHS boys soccer team.

Cartoon Column

by Seth Knoop



Despite Carmel's 16 point lead into the fourth quarter, the Breakers continued to fight. While attempting a layup, Carmel's Amir Brown fouled out after charging into sophomore Zach Armas. Carmel's excessive fouling led the Breakers to a double bonus (two free throws on non-shooting fouls). Dunking a second time, Padre Kai Lee showed his appreciation for his fans by pointing at the Carmel student section as he hung from the basketball hoop. Even though Carmel was clearly in the lead, the Padres pressed the Breakers until the final seconds. In the end, Carmel ended a four-game road losing streak to Pacific Grove with a 64-43 win. Together earning over half the points for the Breakers, freshman Jamar Howard scored 16 points and sophomore Zach Lewis scored 13 points.

Despite the loss, the Breaker Boys never backed down. While Howard has fueled the offense for most of the season, Samuels and Lewis have stepped up their scoring. Filled with underclassmen, the Breakers have provided a glimpse into Pacific Grove's potential.



Zach Lewis walks alongside Padre Ethan Fletcher.



The BreakerBots intently watch the game reveal.

Breakerbots Punch It Into Build Season

by Mitali Chowdhury

In a workshop (not so) far, far away...the BreakerBots are heading into the 2020 Build Season. Each year, the PGHS robotics team, along with thousands of teams around the globe, anxiously awaits the reveal of the FIRST Robotics Competition game. Teams then have about six weeks to build a 125-lb robot from scratch, after which time they compete at regional tournaments. Unlike previous years, teams will not have a set date at which they must stop building; they can continue working on their robots until the competition. After the regional competitions, those who qualify will head to Houston, Texas for the Houston World Championship Tournament.

This year's theme, Infinite Recharge, is set in a Star Wars based world facing an incoming asteroid. Robots must work with their alliance of two other robots, competing against an opposing three-robot alliance, to repair and power a Shield Generator to protect the "city." Teams collect Power Cells, medium-sized yellow foam balls, and shoot them into a target at either near ground level or about eight feet high. To advance through the three stages of game play and energize the Shield Generator, robots must also rotate a colored wheel called the Control Panel. At the end of the match, robots get their Shield Generator operational by hanging from a Switch, earning points for raising it above the ground and for levelling the fulcrum to which the Switch is attached.

On January 4, the BreakerBots joined their mentee team, Deep Space from Hollister, and team alumni for a pre-kickoff breakfast party. Since the game reveal, the team has been in the midst of designing and prototyping mechanisms for a robot to complete the various aspects of the game. The members will then begin assembling their final robot, and then program both automated and remote-controlled functionality. The first regional competition that the team will attend is the Central Valley Regional in Fresno. The team will then compete at the second annual Monterey Bay Regional (MBR), where the BreakerBots ranked second overall in 2019. This year's MBR will be March 25 to March 28 at Seaside High School, and the tournament is open to the public. If you're ready for some robot action, then these are the droids you're looking for!

Boys Basketball: Future in the Present

by Noor Benny

On Wednesday, January 8th, the Breaker Boys went head-to-head against the Carmel Padres in basketball. Carmel's top rank in the Gabilan Division motivated the Breakers to work harder than ever before. Prior to the game, JV boys basketball coach Jordan Gasperson commented, "Carmel is really good, but hopefully we [the Breakers] will play well against them."

As spectators filled the bleachers, starters Reed Samuels, Maximilian Podell, Zach Lewis, Jamar Howard, and Jack Canning did not disappoint. Breaker fans were filled with hope when Pacific Grove was up by 5 points in the first few minutes of the game. However, by the end of the first quarter, Carmel had a 14-12 lead over Pacific Grove.

Tensions rose in the second quarter when Carmel's leading scorer Kai Lee dunked. Pacific Grove's Zach Lewis responded by making three foul shots in a row. Scoring 19 points in the second quarter, Carmel opened up a 33-21 halftime lead. During halftime, the Breaker Cheer Team enthused fans when flyer Juniper Newhouse successfully balanced on a base of cheerleaders.

Fans remained optimistic that the Breakers would bounce back in the second half. In the third quarter, the breakers closed the scoring gap when they earned 12 points and the Padres earned 16 points. Carmel heavily relied on Lee to open up a 49-33 lead over Pacific Grove.

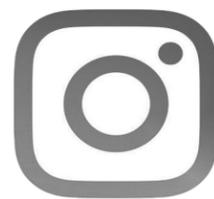


Zach Armas drives the basketball against Soledad.

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Impeachment Trials of ASB President Adrian Clark Begin

General News

Midway: An Action-Packed History Lesson

by Nathan Binder

Midway is a movie detailing the Battle of Midway, which occurred from June 4 to June 7, 1942, between Japan and the United States during World War II (WWII). The movie is directed by Ronald Emmerich, and it gives the audience an entertaining experience and some important history lessons.

Midway accurately portrays the history from the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor to the U.S. victory at Midway, with multiple drama scenes in between. The special effects provide a realistic and action-packed representation of the battle. Some of the best special effects occur during the various nose-dive scenes, as the U.S. attacks Japanese warships. These scenes give the audience a free-falling sense as the airplanes drop vertically, dodging flying bullets from the Japanese. The audience can clearly imagine the bravery of the pilots during the actual Battle of Midway. To replicate the actual battle, airplanes explode in the air, crash in the water, and perform other thrilling effects. With special effects, some airplanes even barely strike the water, and then quickly thrust back into the air. *Midway* is definitely a movie worth seeing, whether or not you are WWII enthusiast.



Frozen II: A Sequel To Be Proud Of

by Cassidy Novack

Nearly six years ago, the movie *Frozen* released in theaters around the world. The story, characters, and fun songs had everyone of all ages hooked. Now, over half a decade later, these same aspects return in *Frozen II*.

Spoiler alert! The basic plot of *Frozen II* is that a voice in Elsa's head calls her into the Enchanted Forest, home to an old war between Arandelle and the native Northuldra tribe. Ever since that conflict, the forest has been cursed by a barrier of mist blocking the outside world. The classic group of Elsa, Anna, Kristoff, Sven, and Olaf venture into the Enchanted Forest to find answers about who Elsa is, the truth about which side started the war, and how to break the Enchanted Forest's curse. Besides the main plot, Kristoff also goes on his own side adventure trying to find the perfect way to propose to Anna with the help of his reindeer Sven. The movie ends with Elsa finding her true identity and spending the rest of her days in the Enchanted Forest, while Anna marries Kristoff and becomes the queen of Arandelle.

I think that for a sequel, the story was well done. However, I felt that the writers were trying to cram as many details and answers into the plot as they could. The plot elements of the Enchanted Forest, the voice in Elsa's head, and the truth-containing river Ahtohallan seemed only to connect by a thin thread. I also felt that Elsa's true identity as the fifth spirit came out of nowhere, considering that the fifth spirit was only mentioned briefly. Despite these problems, I was glad that the plot, although mainly presented as bright and happy, was still dark and deep enough to be appealing to all ages.

The soundtrack for *Frozen II* was exceptional. "Some Things Never Change," performed by Kristen Bell, Idina Menzel, Josh Gad, and Jonathan Groff, was a bright and fun song to start off the movie, reminding everyone of all of their favorite characters. "Into the Unknown," performed by Idina Menzel and featuring Aurora in the movie and the group Panic! at the Disco in the end credits, was definitely the "Let it Go" of *Frozen II*. Even though it is sung in a higher register, it is definitely catchy enough that everyone will be belting it out for the next few years. Aurora's vocals combined very well with those of Menzel to make the song truly remarkable. Olaf returned with another fun, but somewhat disturbing, song called "When I Am Older," performed by Josh Gad. Kristoff also had his own funny 80s-style song that featured many reindeer called "Lost in the Woods," performed by Jonathan Groff. The peaceful and moving "Show Yourself" and the emotional "The Next Right Thing" conclude the tracklist of the movie.

Frozen II seems like it will be close to as successful as its predecessor was. Whether or not this sequel's success will lead to a third movie in the franchise is currently unknown, but if there is, hopefully it won't take another six years to release!



A Review of Jumanji: The Next Level

by Will Coen

On Friday, December 13, 2019, Columbia Pictures released *Jumanji: The Next Level* to theaters across the world. The film, directed by Jake Kasdan, features a cast including Dwayne Johnson, Kevin Hart, Jack Black, and Karen Gillan. *Jumanji: The Next Level* is rated PG-13 and earned 71% Rotten Tomatoes along with 7/10 on IMDb. The movie's plot line is interesting, although somewhat similar to that of the original story. However, the film certainly still offers an enjoyable experience.

In *Jumanji: The Next Level*, four teenage friends reenter Jumanji, a game which they barely survived in the first film, *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*. This time, the teenagers have to complete the game's second level. The main characters are helped by friend Jefferson McDonough, the grandfather of Spencer Eddie (one of the teenagers), and Eddie's ex-friend Milo. The characters face many challenges over the course of the film. Furthermore, the characters often switch avatars during the game, meaning that Jumanji's different avatars are controlled by different people at different times. Similar to *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*, the sequel *Jumanji: The Next Level* includes many comedic moments, with the film's leading cast contributing to the movie's hilarious jokes and gags. Over the course of the film, the main characters improve their teamwork skills while navigating through the video game, as they learn to appreciate each other for their different strengths.

Although some people may consider the film merely a trite sequel, I found that *Jumanji: The Next Level's* interesting storyline and funny characters create an exciting and comedic watch. I would definitely recommend this film to anyone looking for great action, adventure, and comedy.

Impeachment Inquiry Updates

by Nathan Binder

Many of us have heard the basis of President Donald Trump's impeachment inquiry: Trump had a phone call with Ukrainian president Zelensky on July 25, 2019, demanding an investigation of a political rival's son in exchange for military aid. Since then, evidence from public hearings with some key witnesses led the House Intelligence Committee to draft their findings in a document entitled "The Trump-Ukraine Impeachment Inquiry Report" to the House Judiciary Committee on December 3. From there, the House Judiciary Committee evaluated the Intelligence report and decided to send it to the full House of Representatives for a vote.

A report was released on December 7th that provided evidence against Trump, and it was heard by the Intelligence and Judiciary committees two days later. This report highlighted impeachable actions stemming from the president's call with Zelensky. Even before the committee conducted its hearings, Trump called this process a "phony witch hunt." On December 13, the Judiciary Committee passed two articles of impeachment, one for "abuse of power" and the other for "obstruction of Congress." The creation of these articles set in motion a vote by the full House, resulting in the impeachment of President Trump on December 18. Trump thus became the third president in all of American history to be officially impeached.

Released government emails from the Center of Public Integrity corroborate the charges laid against Trump. Mike Duffey, a White House official in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), sent an email to select Pentagon and OMB officials explaining that Trump's decision to withhold aid would cause concerns. Other documents reveal that Elaine McCusker, a Department of Defense Comptroller, stated that a continuation of the hold on aid would lead to Duffey releasing the aid on September 11, 2019. More information is being presented and will continue to filter through with several released emails emerging by court order under the Freedom of Information Act.

The impeachment of President Trump is significant because of its historical precedent. If confirmed by the Senate, Trump would be the first president in American history to be not only impeached, but to be also removed from office. I believe that the impeachment process has demonstrated Trump's dubious and illegal actions. With new evidence revealed each day, we will have the opportunity to evaluate the official documents and form our own judgments of the legality of the president's actions.



Breaker Candid



Photo Credits: Noor Benny, Anneka Keller, Mitali Chowdhury, Jenn Erickson, Angel Soto.

Featured NewsBreakers

Noor Benny
Journalist

Noor Benny is a senior at Pacific Grove High School. A lover of sports, she participates in the girls basketball team, cross country team, and track and field team. Noor is also a member of Pacific High School's mock trial team and National Honor Society. As the daughter of two immigrants, Noor is bilingual. She is excited to join the NewsBreaker for the first time.



Anneka Keller
Photographer

Anneka Keller, a sophomore, has grown up in PG her whole life. She is actively involved in various extracurriculars, such as varsity tennis and varsity swimming, various clubs on campus, and the high school's robotics team the BreakerBots. Anneka is also very passionate about conversation, and she can commonly be found volunteering at the Monterey Bay Aquarium, typically helping out with the sleepovers. Whenever Anneka gets a break, you can find her cooking, reading, relaxing with her pets, or hanging out with friends. This year, she is very excited to be a photographer for the NewsBreaker.

