The Mirror

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What's New in Space Exploration

by Sawyer Ivchenko

#1 The DART Mission

The (DOUBLE ASTEROID REDIRECTION TEST) or DART mission is a test mission to test whether we could move an asteroid off course if it were in a collision course with earth. This mission is being tested on a smaller asteroid that is orbiting a larger asteroid. Scientists are trying to see if they can knock the asteroid slightly off course. Don't panic if anything goes wrong because the asteroid that they are testing this on will



never hit earth and scientists say that there is no chance that it will hit earth after they nudge it. This is proving to be a very big step closer to being able to stop an asteroid from hitting earth if an event like that ever occurred.

#2 The Artemis Missions



This is one of NASA's most ambitious missions ever. I would even argue that this is their most ambitious mission, even topping the Apollo missions, because of the decreasing amount of funds for NASA. For those who have not looked into anything space-related for the last few years, the Artemis missions are a series of missions that are designed to get humans back on the moon by 2024. The first mission (Artemis 1) is going to be an uncrewed mission that will orbit around the moon and then return to Earth. The first mission is set to launch in early 2022, but the exact date has not yet been determined. These missions are a sort of test run for getting to Mars. This is a very exciting move in moving off this planet and to Mars.

#3 The Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer

The Imaging X-ray Polarimetry Explorer or IXPE is a telescope that is measuring the polarization (or the property of light) of X-ray in objects such as neutron stars, pulsar wind nebulae, and supermassive black holes. They will also mechanic for x-ray production in pulsars. The launch was on 12/9/21 and the satellite is currently in orbit over earth. The mission was a joint collaboration between NASA (who made the satellite) to learn more about the universe and how it functions.



Sources: NASA, spaceX, Space.com, IXPE: Home

Mental Benefits of Reading

by Lauren Jameson

Reading can help your somatosensory cortex

A 2013 study had study participants read the novel, 'Pompeii' in nine days. Researchers found that reading this novel increased brain activity, especially in the somatosensory cortex. The somatosensory cortex is the part of the brain that responds to movement and pain.

Reading can prevent age-related mental decline

Age-related mental decline occurs when older people start to cognitively decline. Another 2013 study found that people who engaged in mentally stimulating activities (such as reading) all their lives were less likely to develop plaques, protein tangles and dementia.

Reduces Stress & Depression

In 2009, a study conducted by professors at the Seton Hall University in New Jersey and the University of Texas found that just 30 minutes of reading lowered blood pressure and resting heart rate, thus reducing stress.

For depression, doctors have found that depression leads to feeling alone and empty. Reading, however, creates a mental world in your head that ends up reducing their depression by 16%!

Longer Life

For 12 years, a group of 3,635 adults were monitored, and it was learned that people who read books often can live at least 2 years longer than those who do not read books frequently.

Reading literally makes you smarter

Most people have heard this saying before, "smart people read", however, is that really true? Studies have shown that people who read print books score higher on comprehension tests and remember more of what they read, compared to digital readers.

Sources:

Heidi Moawad, "Benefits of Reading Books: For Your Physical and Mental Health", Healthline, https://www.healthline.com/health/benefits-of-reading-books

Denise Rizzolo, Genevieve Pinto Zipp, Susan Simpkins, Doreen Stiskal, "(PDF) Stress Management Strategies for Students: The Immediate Effects of Yoga, Humor And Reading On Stress", ResearchGate, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229431397 Stress Management Strategies For Students The Immediat e Effects Of Yoga Humor And Reading On Stress

Lockers!

by Anna Maiale

New Paltz Middle School students have lockers! Lockers will 100% help you stay organized and focused. Being organized makes everything else easier. It helps you get to work faster without wasting time looking for stuff. If you keep your assignments and class information organized by subject, school will be a lot easier. Many kids can't focus at school because they are too distracted that nothing in their folder, locker, or backpack is organized! For students, being organized is particularly important since it helps them learn how to prioritize activities, set and achieve goals, and reduce stress. Staying organized also helps you stay more productive and positive. So, if you want to keep your locker organized, you should follow these tips about keeping your locker organized.

- Get bookshelves for your folders, journals, planners, and books
- Have magnets for any important papers
- Decorate it a bit, decorating will help you stay happy and positive
- Don't have any loose papers, keep everything in a folder or binder
- Section it off for every subject, it will make it a lot easier to get to classes
- You should also keep a schedule in your locker, mapping when to go to it. Between which periods should you go to your locker?
- If your locker is very messy and unorganized, clean it out during recess
- Keep labels on things in your locker, so in between classes you can get things fast
- Buy locker organizers! This will help you so much, because they are designed for lockers!

Lost and Found; It's lost and found, not gone forever

by Sonia Levy



After a recent trip to the lost and found, I have realized that when people lose something, they might think the worst and not look for it. The lost and found is overflowing with bike helmets, shelves and piles of coats, and beautiful and expensive water bottles. There are thousands of dollars worth of lost things that people are constantly replacing. This is very wasteful if you lose things a lot, because it takes energy to make new things, so next time you pass the gym, check to see if you recognize anything, whether it is yours or a friend's.



Lonesome water bottles in the lost and found

How to prevent losing things

- Don't bring anything more than you need to. The less you bring, the less you lose.
- If you lose things very often, you can purchase a label maker which prints labels of your name so you can put them on your things.



Baking and Crafts

by Mckenzie Patterson

Peanut Butter Cookies

My favorite food to make is definitely peanut butter cookies. Here is how to make them. You are going to need ½ cup granulated sugar, ½ cup brown sugar, ½ cup peanut butter, ¼ cup shortening, ¼ cup softened butter, 1 egg, 1 ¼ all-purpose flour, ¾ teaspoon baking soda, ½ baking powder, and ¼ teaspoon salt.

- First, mix granulated sugar, brown sugar, peanut butter, and egg.
- Once that is all mixed, mix the rest of the ingredients in
- Cover the dough with plastic wrap and set in refrigerator for two hours
- Preheat oven to 375 °F
- Make dough into 1-inch circle balls
- Place on ungreased cookie sheet
- Take a fork and dip it into sugar and make criss cross patterns with the fork
- Bake 9 -10 minutes until golden brown and take out
- Let the cookies cool for five minutes and then take them off of the cookie sheet and cool for another five minutes
- And eat!

Peanut Butter Cookies Recipe - BettyCrocker.com

Paper roll penguin craft



Want to know how to make a fun craft for whatever holiday you celebrate?

What you're going to need is:

- Paper roll, black paper or (black paint), orange paper, scissors, googly eyes and glue
- First, let's do some cutting! Cut a strip of black paper in the same width as your paper roll it has to be long enough to wrap the paper roll. Naturally, you can also paint the paper roll black.
- Cut half an oval shape out of white paper. Also cut out a beak shape and two feet out of orange paper.
 - Cut two wings out of black paper.
- Also, glue the black paper around the paper roll. Glue on the white paper. Stick on two googly eyes, beak shape, and two feet out of orange paper.
- Glue on the beak. Glue the legs on the inside of the paper roll. Last, but not least, glue on the wings. Let the glue dry completely before using this toilet paper roll penguin craft for play.
- Directions and photo from: Winter Crafts for Kids to Make Fun Art and Craft Ideas for all ages.

Pizza Bites

- 1 (8 ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup grated Romano cheese
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ¼ teaspoon garlic salt
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 (14 ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
- ½ cup frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- ¼ cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Lightly grease a small baking dish.
- In a medium bowl, mix together cream cheese, mayonnaise, Parmesan cheese, Romano cheese, garlic, basil, garlic salt, salt and pepper. Gently stir in artichoke hearts and spinach.
- Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking dish. Top with mozzarella cheese. Bake in the preheated oven for 25 minutes, until bubbly and lightly browned.

And eat!

Mass Quarantines Cause Mass Hysteria

by Noah Solano

As you probably know, there have been multiple cases of coronavirus at our school so far this year. The most recent one to be found caused a sixth grade mass quarantine on Friday, December 3. Classes got much smaller and students were forced into remote learning once again. I spoke to one of these students, Della Sheridan, on December 5. When I asked her how she was feeling about the mass quarantines, she replied "I have nothing better to do than hit myself over the head with a ukulele." She paused for a moment and then continued with this startling statement "And I haven't seen the sunlight in five days." This is not actually true, because she had been put in quarantine only two days prior. She later told me that she does not like remote learning, and is anxious to get back to school (she has now returned). She also said she is jealous of the students who were not put in quarantine.

But not all students feel this way. In fact, DJ Cuevas felt the exact opposite. He did not get put into quarantine, but is jealous of the students who were! When I asked him why, he explained that he wanted a break from school, although some quarantined students felt like they were going nuts! When I asked Della if she wants to go back in person, she said "YES! I'm going insane, and it's only been one day! Two days! See!" Della has had very strong emotions about these quarantines, which is not surprising, as she's been quarantined twice. This is what she says about when she found out she had to go into quarantine again "I was angry. I was really, really mad. To the point where I gave my dad the silent treatment for a really long time." This truly shows how terrible the situation was, as Della's father did absolutely nothing to cause it!

I also spoke with Willow Swan, who says that being in quarantine was "boring" and "depressing, because I couldn't see my family for Thanksgiving".

The quarantines are making many students feel very nervous. When the first one happened, I watched as students were sent to the gymnasium to wait for their parents. Many of the remaining students wanted to go home, hurrying to call their parents. Classes dwindled to a fraction of their regular size, one student even saying that she was the only student in one of her classes! Most teachers gave students free periods, having them play games or watch movies.

Although some students think being in quarantine is fun, quite a few are getting bored. When I asked Della what she'll do to pass the time, she said "Go on Google Classroom," and "Probably try and see the sun."

But quarantines aren't just affecting students. Parents are also having to deal with suddenly having their children at home. One parent, Robyn Stout, told me that she felt relieved when her daughters were in quarantine, because she knew she could keep them safe.

There are also a few strange circumstances around these quarantines. One student I spoke to said that she found out what student tested positive for covid (she asked the student, who confirmed for her that they were the one who caught the virus). She also said that she sits directly next to him in one class, yet she was not put in quarantine. Another strange thing was that a few students were sent to the quarantine room to wait to be picked up by their parents, but were later told that they were not needed! At least one was sent back to class several periods after he was called.

As of the Mirror's publication, coronavirus cases are on the rise across the country. Winter break is speedily approaching, and students will be traveling once again. But remember, we don't want any more quarantines, so stay safe, everyone!

James's Space Section #1: Exoplanets!

by James O'Sullivan

NASA said that "exoplanets are the words orbiting other stars and they come in many different sizes from gas giants larger than Jupiter to small, rocky planets about as big around Earth or Mars". After twenty years of finding the first world orbiting a similar star scientists have found the most earth-like planet ever - Kepler-452b.

As of December first 2021, there are 4,877 exoplanets confirmed in 3,604 planetary systems, with 807 systems having more than one planet. Most of these exoplanets were discovered by the Kepler space telescope.

Kepler 452b, also known as Earth's cousin, was discovered on July 23, 2015. It is the most earth-like planet to date. It is 60% bigger than Earth and is only 1,402 light years away from earth. (lightyear into miles = 5.879e+12)

Scientists say that the planet might also have a thick atmosphere and have clouds covering most of its surface. NASA doesn't know what the atmosphere is made of, so we might not be able to breathe on the planet. Coincidentally, the Earth and Kepler 452b are at just the right distance from their stars which makes water on this planet an actual possibility. So we might be able to breathe and to have running water over time on the planet. But what does inhabiting the planet look like, how would we get there, and is it a good thing?

Traveling to Kepler 452b is not possible. Whatever spacecraft we use in modern day time would run out of fuel or the power source we need. This means that we would need to use a different power source; one that would never run out.

Inhabiting Kepler 452 b would take over 30 million years; it would take 30 million years just to get there. It would waste resources and materials to make the spacecraft to do the project.

Last but not least, is it a good thing? Yes and no. Yes, because something might happen to Earth and if so, what would we do? We would have to evacuate to Kepler 452b or any other planet. No, because it would waste a lot of power, resources, and time. I will be writing about a new planet every week so when the next issue comes out there should be two or three.

James's Space Section#2: Exoplanets!

by James O'Sullivan

This week's planet is Proxima Centauri b. This exoplanet is a rocky exoplanet and is 4.24 light years away from earth. The orbital period of proxima centauri b is 11 days. It was discovered by Mikko Tuomi on August 24, 2016. The temperature of this planet is $(-39^{\circ}\text{C}; -38^{\circ}\text{F})$ and the coordinates of this exoplanet is R4 14h 29m 43s | dec - 62° 40′ 46″.

Proxima Centauri b is an exoplanet that orbits its star Proxima Centauri which is a red dwarf star. This exoplanet is in this star's habitable zone. Proxima Centauri is the closest star from the sun and is part of a triple star system with Alpha Centauri. It is also the closest exoplanet in the solar system.

Is Proxima Centauri b habitable? Although Proxima Centauri b is in the habitable zone of its star and is the closest exoplanet in the solar system, it is not a habitable planet. We don't know if this planet has water. It is at the right distance from its star, but that does not mean it has water, it means it could.

This planet is the closest exoplanet in our solar system which makes it really cool and we might discover new things about this planet, maybe life changing events in history but for now all we can do is hope. And with that this article is over. Hope you enjoyed reading.

Willow's Book Column

by literary correspondent Willow Swan

Books to read while quarantined!!!

We all know that people are being quarantined left and right, and people may be looking for something to do while they are at home. These books have thick plots (and spines!) so get ready for some serious(ly enjoyable) reading!

- The *Harry Potter* series by J.K. Rowling This was my quarantine reading project, and I found it highly enjoyable to revisit this (for about the 7th time).
- War and Peace by Leo Tolstoy I truly admire your bravery if you decide to embark upon this 1,225 page book (my edition has tiny print and is closer to 1,650 pages for some reason).
- *Echo* by Pam Munoz Ryan Although this book is not as long as many on this list, it has an amazing plot and many people consider it to be very long. It is the story of 3 children growing up in different time periods connected by their love of music. This is my favorite book (and I have read A LOT of books) so I highly recommend it!
- *The Candymakers* by Wendy Mass This book is not extraordinarily long, but it is somewhat. There is also a sequel that is also as large. This book has many exciting plot twists and is similar to *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

Fun fact: It takes an average of 32.63 hours to read Leo Tolstoy's War & Peace and 60.23 hours to read the entire Harry Potter series of books.

I hope anyone who may get quarantined can use this list as a reference!

Also, please use <u>this link</u> to submit a book recommendation to be featured in **The Mirror**!

What my room currently looks like:







Willow's Book Column

by literary correspondent Willow Swan

New books to the library!

I bring to you some very exciting news: The library has received new books! You may have seen the new books being unpacked in the library, their spines glistening, pages giving off that new-book smell...

I interviewed Ms. Perez about the new books in the library!

What was the reason for getting new books?

I started as a new librarian last year and wanted to update the collection to represent the diverse community we live in.

Who picked out the books?

I take student suggestions, teacher picks, and the advice of other librarians when making my selections for new titles.

When will we be able to check out the books?

A new area for new books is being created. It is on the shelves next to the classroom. Students will be able to check out the books as of December 13th.

Were there any themes in mind when picking out the books?

I want to represent the diverse community we live in. We try to choose books that are windows, mirrors, and sliding doors. A window is a resource that offers you a view into someone else's experience. A mirror is a story that reflects your own culture and helps you build pride in your identity. A sliding door allows readers to enter the story and become a part of a world they haven't experienced before.

Are there any new nonfiction books?

We are creating a new list right now for a brand-new nonfiction order that will help students researching social studies, science, ELA, and all areas of the school curriculum. They will also be able to learn about special interests and topics that were not previously represented in our collection. These books will be available in the new year when we return from holiday break.

Click this link to see a FULL LIST of the new books coming to the library! I now have even more books to add to my (ever-growing) reading list!

P.S. PLEASE go to <u>this link</u> to submit a book recommendation to be featured in **The Mirror!**

What Is A Fossa? Issue #1: Uncovering Exotic animals

by Marc-David Sobia

What really is a fossa?

The fossa is a miraculous animal, it is part of the Eupleridae family. The fossa has a body shaped like a Feline yet it isn't one. The Eupleridae family consists of the mongoose, the malagasy striped civet and more.

Where is the fossa from?

The fossa is native to Madagascar. Madagascar is an African Island below the equator. This island is filled with many species of animals, and people. There are approximately 27.69 million people living in Madagascar at the moment.

What does the fossa eat?

The fossa is a carnivorous animal and hunts both day and night, it travels up to 16 miles in search of prey. 50% of what it eats is lemurs. The food that it eats consists of:

- Lemurs
- Rodents
- Lizards
- Birds



Where would a fossa rest?

Fossas rest in tree hollows, caves, or abandoned termite mounds. Fossas sleep a lot during the day so you will mostly find one napping. They like warm shady spots on warmer days. You may also find them resting on sun patches.

Photo credit: https://animals.sandiegozoo.org/animals/fossa

The fossa is a phenomenal animal. Thank you for reading.

The Bulgarian Election

by Lauren Jameson

If you live in the slavic region, including countries such as Ukraine, North Macedonia, Belarus, and Russia, you may know about Bulgaria's long history of political issues. However, Bulgaria is a small country in comparison to most countries, and it is uncommon for Americans to know about Bulgarian politics.



Please note: This has no political bias on either side, American or Bulgarian, this is simply what is occurring in Bulgaria.

Bulgaria, a slavic country, is facing a large election on November 14th. The GERB party is currently in the lead, ahead of the other political parties. However, the GERB party has ignored the Coronavirus 19 crisis occurring in Bulgaria. The other 5 Bulgarian political parties are falling behind, the party titled 'Stand up, Mafia get out' being the furthest behind.

The centre-right party, the GERB, is predicted to win. However, none of the parties, including the GERB are predicted to win seats in the European Union. This stems from the fact that Bulgaria is one of the poorest countries in the European Union - however, not the poorest, since Ukraine currently holds that seat. The poverty of Bulgaria is due to the fact that Bulgaria has low education standards and low working wages.

Many Bulgarians state that the GERB is corrupt, since it has been the leading political party for a decade. The growing dislike of the former GERB prime minister, Boyko Borisov, is evident in view of the fact that his approval rating in November 2021 was up 23.5% since July. Borisov's approval rating in July was at 0.6%. That's about a 40.16% increase.

The leading candidate is the Socialist, Rumen Radev, who is a jarring critic of Boyko Borisov, who has an approval rating of 47.6%.

Resources:

Stoyan Nanov, "Bulgaria's GERB party leads ahead of November 14 election", Reuters, https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/bulgarias-gerb-party-leads-ahead-nov-14-election-survey-2021-11-06/

Carnivorous Dinosaurs

by Emmett DeGrassi

In an earlier issue of *The Mirror*, I talked about herbivorous dinosaurs (calm dinosaurs that ate plants but could be aggressive to anything that posed a threat), so now it's time to talk about the mighty carnivorous dinosaurs (aggressive dinosaurs that ate meat).

So, What is a Carnivore?

Carnivores are animals that eat meat to survive. Carnivores still exist today, although there are no longer any carnivorous dinosaurs alive. A few examples of modern-day carnivores are bears, wolves, lions, etc. Carnivorous dinosaurs were similar to modern day carnivores but bigger. Further, almost every

carnivore was built like a weapon, so they could take down their prey or put up a good fight. Many carnivorous dinosaurs were equipped with features like sharp teeth to dig into flesh and sharp claws to wound, although not all carnivorous dinosaurs hunted prey.

Predators and Scavengers

There were two types of carnivorous dinosaurs that ate meat, predators and scavengers. Predators were carnivorous dinosaurs of all sizes that would use their teeth and claws to take down any prey smaller and weaker than them; sometimes, if predators hunted in packs, they could kill larger prey to eat like sauropods; for an example of a predator, the Velociraptor. Scavengers were carnivorous dinosaurs of all sizes that ate larger dinosaur leftover scraps when the dinosaur was gone or ate a body which died of old age; for an example of a scavenger, Tyrannosaurus rex. Scavengers are different from predators because they would wait for something to die before they ate it, but predators would actively hunt their prey to eat it.

Cryolophosaurus

Cryolophosaurus, also known as Elvisaurus, was a carnivorous dinosaur that was the top predator in its area that had a crest on the top of its head that poofed up (a lot like how Elvis Presley's hair poofed). The Cryolophosaurus's name meant "cold crest

lizard," since the Cryolophosaurus lived in Antarctica during the early Jurassic period and had a crest above its head. Although Cryolophosaurus lived in Antarctica, it wasn't cold, since Pangea (the supercontinent made up of all of the continents) hadn't broken

into multiple continents yet, Antarctica had a more tropical climate, there have even been fossils of leaves discovered in Antarctica. A relative of Cryolophosaurus is the more well known double crested lizard, Dilophosaurus. The only known type of dinosaur that Cryolophosaurus ate was mostly herbivorous dinosaurs like prosauropods. Cryolophosaurus were usually around 8 feet tall, around 20-28 feet long, and weighed around 1000 pounds. They were very large, weird looking carnivores that lived on land that is no longer suitable for it because of the continents shifting.

Monolophosaurus

Monolophosaurus were carnivorous dinosaurs that were predators and had a single crest on its snout; its name means "single crested lizard." Monolophosaurus lived in Asia during the middle Jurassic period and may have hunted in packs to kill larger sauropods. Monolophosaurus was around 6 feet tall and 18 feet long and weighed about 1000 pounds. Monolophosaurus were not related to other crested lizards like the Cryolophosaurus or the Dilophosaurus; instead, they were part of the *tetanurae* clade, a family that includes most theropod dinosaurs like Compsognathus, Mapusaurus, Giganotosaurus, Gasosaurus, and many other theropods. In all, Monolophosaurus was a smaller carnivorous dinosaur that was deadly to other dinosaurs.

Carnotaurus

A carnotaurus was a carnivorous dinosaur that was a predator with two horns on its head, like a bull. Its name means "meat eating bull." Carnotaurus lived in South America during the late Cretaceous period. The Carnotaurus had a short snout and stubby arms like a tyrannosaurus rex. Carnotaurus ate larger dinosaurs, including sauropods. Carnotaurus was in the Abelisauridae family and was related to other carnivores like Majungasaurus, Rugops, Rajasaurus, Abelisaurus, and many



more. Carnotaurus were usually 26 feet long and were usually 10 feet tall. Most adult Carnotaurus weighed around 2,980 lbs. In all, they were fierce, large and vicious carnivores.

Carnivorous Dinosaurs

Although I have discussed different carnivorous dinosaurs of all shapes and sizes, there are many carnivorous dinosaurs that I didn't mention or talk about, like the Ceratosaurus, the Baryonyx, the Alioramus, and many many more. Overall, there were many different types of carnivorous dinosaurs that would hunt or scavenge; many were fierce, many hunted in packs, and many were large, but the one big thing they all had in common is that they all ate meat. Yum.

Myth Maniacs

by Shea Baker

#1 covid vaccine

Do you believe we're being injected with microchips?

Do you believe that the covid vaccine gives you covid?

This article is here to disprove and destroy the myths some may believe.

MYTH: The covid vaccine will give you covid!

This is a myth. There is something in the vaccine called rna but it's not actually bad. It's there to train your cells so that they know this is covid and we're going to kill it.

MYTH: Bill Gates is implanting us with microchips

100% myth. I don't even know how why someone would come up with this myth it's just very weird but the covid vaccine does not have microchips in it

This one isn't really a covid vaccine myth, it's just a covid myth in general.

MYTH: Covid can't transmit in schools

I think we've all had our friends quarantined because some kids are getting sick. The schools are rigorously stopping the transmission but if they didn't, this myth would already be out of water because transmission is a thing in schools.

Sources: sources and more reading

What do you want to change or add at NPMS?

by Sonia Levy

The New Paltz Middle School is a good school. It has a bunch of after school activities like chess club and the newspaper, but some people would like rubiks cube club, and an anime club, so if you have any suggestions or something you want to tell the school, you can fill out this google form and I will write about what you want to change or add. I look forward to reading all of your suggestions!