



"It is a fair, even-handed, noble adjustment of things, that while there is infection in disease and sorrow, there is nothing in the world so irresistibly contagious as laughter and good humor." -Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*

Ace Finals Fine Arts Spotlight Get to Know the Assistant Headmaster Gladiator Sports NPX Helps Community and more...



Retiarri celebrates a win. Photo by Spencer Hahn

Gladiators Compete in First Field Day of The Year

By Miranda Waters

On November 27th, Gladiator teams and high school teams faced off in one of the biggest school wide competitions of the year: field day! With the hard work from both the Senators and the Lanista, field day was a huge success that included fun games like "Dodgeball" and "Win." The rankings changed dramatically for the Gladiator teams after the final points from field day were totaled. Retiarri came in 1st place, Bestiarii came in 2nd place, and Thraeces came in 3rd. This has now changed the top three year round rankings to be Velites in 1st place with a score of 241, Bestiarii in 2nd with 237, and Retiarri in 3rd with 234. The spirit sword was triumphantly taken away from Mr. Fleming and Dimachaerus, and rewarded to Cestus! Dimachaerus was awarded popsicles for best attendance, with 96% of their team showing up to participate. This year highschool teams were led by the seniors and were given creative names like the Lumberjacks and the Incredible Gladiators. For the high school teams, in 1st place was Team Christmas, in 2nd place were the Slammers, and in 3rd place were the Shadow Benders.

The spirit award was given to the Shadow Benders and the attendance award went to Team Christmas. Pierre Younan (Team Sportsball), when asked what his favorite part of field day was, responded, "Definitely trash talking Jordan Black in ultimate frisbee." What makes field day memorable and fun is the team spirit and competitiveness of the students. Until next time, go Gladiators!

**Super
semester
edition!**

Why Learn Spanish?

By Ms. Woelzlein

These are the most common motivations for my students.

- 1) Spanish is the second most spoken language in the world, and in the United States. It is actually the third most common language on the Internet!
- 2) Spanish is an influential and growing language: Spanish is the official language in 21 countries, and it is a commonly used language in other territories such as the United States, the Philippines and Brazil.
- 3) Spanish will help you in your professional career: If you are looking for a new job or want to improve your current position, knowing Spanish will help you stand out among other candidates.
- 4) Spanish will submerge you into a new culture: Studying Spanish opens an entire world of opportunities where you can enjoy and understand Great Works and contributions to literature, history, fashion, art, cinema, sports and music.
- 5) Spanish will allow you to explore the world: Granted that one can travel to Latin America and Spain without speaking a single word, your experience would be more enriching if you knew the language. Pronunciation can be simple and many English words also appear in Spanish.

Have questions about high school Spanish? See Ms. Woelzlein in Room 619.



Spanish II students. Photo by Sophia Braccio

'Tis the Season for Concerts at NPX

By Miranda Waters and Sophia Braccio

This holiday season, all middle and high school Great Hearts students taking music class are spreading cheer by putting on wonderful winter concerts. The middle school concert on December 5th (directed by Ms. Foglesong and Mr. Crowley) had beautiful pieces including piano solos performed by Nicolas DeSiva, Stella Meyers, Aaron Osborne, and Leslie Lee, as well as vocal solos by Roma Pagani, Kara Fulton, Fiona Juanillo, and Cydney Jackson. There was even an original piece called *Now I Live* written, sung, and played on the piano by Sydney Swanson (8th grade). Alongside the piano and vocal solos were recorder pieces, most of which were written by the Baroque artist Johann Bach. Taylor Ferro (10th grade) said, "The middle school concert was an enjoyable experience, showing the commitment and hard work the NPX music program puts towards their students. I also appreciated that some students were allowed to have time to showcase their individual talents."

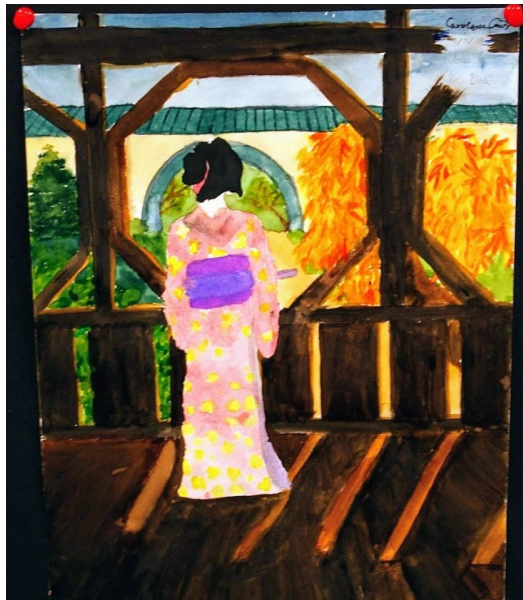


Photo by Jalen Walker

On December 11th the High School music students showcased their talent with a concert of their own. Freshmen, Sophomores, Honors Choir, and the Middle School Girls Choir, lead by Mr. Herrera and with the help of Mr. Lang, joined forces to delight audiences with a great assortment of holiday carols. The pieces sung included classics such as *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*, as well as multiple works in different languages. The concert concluded with a spectacular and festive all choirs performance of *The Little Drummer Boy* which was enhanced by the accompaniment of a snare drum and symbols. Ms. Poduska, who looks forward to the winter concerts each year, said, "This was honestly a breathtaking show. When we talk about what truth, beauty, and goodness is, that's Mr. Herrera and his amazing choirs."

Student Art Show Spotlight

By Sophia Braccio



These paintings are just a small portion of the impressive variety of student art displayed at the Cabinet of Curiosity art show on Thursday, November 21. Congratulations to Mr. Black and all of the featured art students on an excellent evening!

Right: Russel Roberts

Top left: Carolynn Gagliano

Top right: Judah Hegenbarth

Photo by Ms. Woelzlein



You'll Laugh, You'll Cry: NPX Takes on Poe in Shuddersome

By Mr. Fleming

"Contemplating one's death is good for your life. That is why we picked that show," Ms. Foglesong said to me. While those reflective words rang with sobriety and clarity, Shuddersome: A Tale of Poe was a perfectly perplexing spectacle for the viewer.

How could any NPX show follow-up the sold-out, highly acclaimed Hamlet? Apparently, with more tales of ghosts and insanity. A Tell-Tale Heart was brought to life by Katie Herrington and a Greek-style chorus, echoing their madness back and forth and filling the MPR with their twitching and shaking and eccentricity. This madness was alleviated by Brian Martins' "like a stone!" and Pierre Younan and Nathan Szeto's police act.

The Oval Portrait demonstrated that there is something peculiar and mesmerizing about a silent act: you want to watch more closely, being unable to rely on the lines to guide us. James Lippincott's broad brush strokes as the painter and Olivia Gortych's dancing allowed us to follow along, making lines seem almost altogether unnecessary. The Bells was a disturbing act, each line just discordant enough to make the audience uncomfortable. The Raven proved to be the classic it is; a highlight was Nathan Szeto's staunch deliveries.

Shuddersome also introduced me to a little-known satire of Poe's named Lionizing. Here, Rocco Berbetti had the audience doubled over with his portrayal of a stuffy, large-nosed man destined to study "Nosology." The act had a delightful jab our upperclassmen could most certainly appreciate: "He observed that all fools were philosophers, and that all philosophers were fools!" During the concluding piece, The Masque of the Red Death, Pierre Younan, swaggered about the stage like a young Freddie Mercury, demanding the attention of the audience. It was all fun and games and light shows until the lowering presence of the Red Death (well-manifested by Ben Walker) arrived on stage. The Red Death, taking over the stage and dropping the party goes one by one, brought the play to gruesome, cacophonous end.

Kudos to the middle school Drama Club, the production crew, Ms. Foglesong, and last but not least, Anna Pesheva for filling the stage with charm and personality as the narrator who guided the audience from scene to scene. The reward greatly overshadowed the risk of the work, like a statue raven above a chamber door.

A Hopeful Season for JV Soccer

By Bianca Rodriguez

Many students participate in soccer at North Phoenix Prep. Now that we are in the winter sports season, JV Soccer can take their skills and sportsmanship to the field! According to Aliyah Arkawi, a player on the JV Soccer team, the team “hasn’t won any games so far [at the time of when this article was written], but the team has improved since last year.” When asked if there were any significant moments during one of their games, she answered, “our game at Anthem Prep was significant because Gabi Herrera scored a goal and it was really exciting!”

Aliyah has been playing soccer for two years, but, she says, “I have always loved the sport; soccer has been something I enjoy playing a lot,” she went on to add, ***“the team has a fun time playing, no matter what.”***

The team certainly has a chance of winning a game this season. The most important part about being on a team is teamwork and positivity, and the JV Soccer team definitely has these qualities. Everyone should go support the team at their future games and cheer them on. Go Gladiators!

Gladiators Run to Victory at State

By Jack Miller



Cross Country runners at state meet. Photo by Miranda Waters.

Our Gladiators’ High School Cross Country had a strong season with a very sweet finish at the State Championship. Our boys won the D4 State Championship with Jordan Black (Senior) in first place, Sam Johnston (Sophomore) in third place, Richie Johnston (Junior) in tenth place, and Rocco Berbetti (Senior) in eleventh place. The girl’s team fared well too, securing ninth overall, and Grace Tipton (Junior) getting second place. All our athletes were cheered on to success by our enthusiastic Pep Squad and other loud, dedicated students.

When asked of his team’s season, Cross Country coach Brad Curtis said: “Our boy’s team was one of the strongest small school teams in recent years heading into the season. We had a couple early-season setbacks due to injury that could have derailed our season, but the boys were determined and never gave up hope of competing for the state championship. At State, we had our best showing of the year from our Top 5 runners and dominated the D4 race, winning by an impressive 40 point margin. This was 5 years in the making and our boys put everything they had into securing our school’s first team state title... Our girl’s team had their best state finish coming in 9th as a team. We were led by a strong effort from Grace Tipton, who finished 2nd in the race. She is now our top state performer of all time on the girl’s side. Mia, Katie, Cora, Alana, and Dagny all had great races and helped contribute to the team’s strong state finish. We should have a good shot at moving up in the rankings again next year.” Though our Cross Country season is at an end, we can look forward to our success for years to come with the same hard work and dedication that our athletes demonstrated this season.



Photo by Spencer Hahn

Varsity Basketball Starts Season by Crushing Basis

By Sophia Braccio

The future is looking bright for Varsity basketball. On November 25th, the team was joined by an enthusiastic crowd of students, teachers, parents, and their number one fan, Gaius the Gladiator, to play the Basis Phoenix Firebirds in the NPX gym. Varsity player Isaac Trinidad described his team’s attitude going into their first game of the season: “We were feeling really excited and ready to win. After such an unsuccessful season (last year), we were ready to beat Basis- especially after their trash talk.” Though they were well-matched by the Basis team, the Gladiators played hard, and, driven by an eagerness to redeem themselves from last year’s season, won every quarter, ending the game with a score of 55-40. Isaac and his teammates are on a mission to prove their team to the school this year. He told the ACTA GLADIATOR, “We have a good team and a good coach and we’re tired of losing, so we’re going to go out every game and fight to win.”

The Gladiator teams need your help to ensure more victories like this one! Listen to announcements for more information on game opportunities to cheer them on.



Varsity basketball team plays the Firebirds. Photo by Miranda Waters

North Phoenix Prep Students Celebrate the Season of Giving

By Sophia Braccio

Students at North Phoenix Prep demonstrated their generous hearts this past November and December by helping the local community in multiple ways. In doing so, they not only helped others, but also worked to fulfill and exemplify the mission of our school: "To cultivate the minds and hearts of students through the pursuit of truth, beauty, and goodness."

The Northern Lights Middle School Girls Choir and North Phoenix Chorale (formerly known as High School Honors Choir), led by Mr. Herrera and Mr. Lang, rung in the holiday season at Orchard Point Assisted Living on November 11th. They were welcomed by a joyful audience of residents from the home and an entourage of family and friends from the NPX community. Sophomore Kendall Kartler, who made her soloist debut at the concert, told the ACTA GLADIATOR, "Whether I was singing my solo or with the choir, it was so great to see everyone's smiles and watch them sing along with some of the songs." The audience provided an excellent addition to the choir as they joined in enthusiastically for a sing-along of "Deck The Halls". The opportunity not only served as practice for the choirs, it was also a gratifying experience. Kendall added, "I could easily tell they loved having us there; their happy expressions said it all."



NPX community members prepare to go caroling. Photo by Mr. Herrera

The music department continued to prove how music can be used as a way to brighten the community on December 7th, during NPX's first ever Wassailing party. Students, staff, and family gathered to make up a caroling party of approximately 33 singers. They then proceeded to bring holiday joy to the neighborhood behind the school.

In addition to music, the NPX community recently rallied together to help the less fortunate through two Key Club sponsored outreach projects. From November 11th through the 22nd, students participated in a school-wide canned food drive. The collected items were donated to St. Vincent de Paul, a food bank that caters to the underprivileged from around the Phoenix area. Together the school donated over 1,000 items! Proud of their successful drive and eager to do more, Key Club then kicked off their annual Angel Tree project on December 2nd. The project aims to provide a merry Christmas season for students at Palomino Primary School by raising gifts and money for a class of less fortunate children. It ends today (December 13th), and Key Club members are hopeful that the project will have similar success to the canned food drive and raise a feeling of humble gratitude in the school community.

Why the West?

By Mr. Olsen

Why, at our school, study the Western canon instead of studying great works from other traditions? I've been asked this question many times, especially in recent months. By "the Western canon," I mean simply the Western works of mathematics, science, philosophy, literature, music, art, drama, poetry, and history that have most influentially shaped the culture in which we live. Some students assume we forgo the study of Eastern greats like Lao Tzu and Rumi because we consider them lacking in truth, beauty, or goodness. Others assume the average NPX teacher grew up

sequestered in a candle-lit log cabin, reciting Shakespearean sonnets at breakfast and memorizing Euclid Propositions at bedtime, entirely ignorant of everything but the stuffiest, most opaque works of dead white men. In my experience, these assumptions unfairly represent the attitudes of most teachers. The best reason for focusing our studies on the West is much more sensible.

Fundamentally, we study the West because we seek to know ourselves. We live in a Western culture. We speak a Western language. We adhere to Western traditions. Whether we are aware of it or not, we harbor Western attitudes and think Western thoughts. It is impossible to know oneself deeply without knowing one's cultural context,

and ours is primarily Western. Attempting to know oneself without this context is a bit like studying fish without studying the waters in which they live. Our waters are Western, and the currents in which we swim are the currents of our common Western culture. Does this mean we should abandon the ambition to expand our minds beyond our immediate cultural heritage? Certainly not. But one cannot expand beyond what one has not attained. True education is a life-long process, and it is my hope that studying the Western tradition secures for us the prerequisite context and foundation to competently pursue any intellectual interest.

Teachers Say the Darndest Things

By Sofia Golubic

Welcome back, everyone! Apparently, you all loved seeing the weird things your teachers say, so I have returned with the funniest quotes from our school's beloved professors!

"Communism." -Mr. Shisler

"Happy birthday, Bob, you're turning fifty. Into the incinerator you go!" -Mr. Gray

"Bring me pictures of Spider Man."
-Mr. Fleming during a journalism club meeting

"Are you a Dodger's fan? Well then, you're on my hit list." -Dr. Bain

Get to Know Ms. Stone

By Miranda Waters

Ms. Stone is the new NPX Assistant Headmaster after working for Great Hearts for four years. She grew up in Phoenix, moved away for college, and taught in Los Angeles, California for ten years. She attended the University of Colorado for her undergraduate degree and majored in Psychology there. A few years later, she obtained her Master's degree in Education at Pepperdine University in Malibu, California. That degree allowed her to be a classroom teacher for ten years until she decided to pursue Special Education by enrolling in NAU where she earned her Master's degree in Special Education. She loves being a mother and raising her five year old son. In addition, her hobbies include being outdoors: whether it's sledding or skiing in Flagstaff, gardening, exercising, or reading.



Photo by Sophia Braccio

How did you come to Great Hearts and what makes it such a special workplace?

"Curriculum aside, it's what we do for our students. We cultivate relationships. We cultivate a pursuit for all things true, good, and beautiful. We listen. We value. We love. We support the formation of a student's moral character as much as we do their intellectual being. At a Great Hearts academy there is no such thing as one straight line with defined starting and endpoints for every student. Our teachers are tasked to listen, to love, to inspire, to coach, to intervene, to care. This is why I believe NPX is a special place to work."

Why/how did you transfer from ESS (Exceptional Student Services) to being an Assistant Headmaster?

"While I loved my role as ESS Coordinator at NPX, I was motivated by the opportunity to work with the entire student body in the role of Assistant Headmaster. I miss the 1:1 work I was able to do within the ESS department, but am really enjoying this new role this year."

What advice would you give to your high school self?

"Having worked in a high school setting these 4 years, I have thought back to my time in high school a great deal. One key piece of advice I would give myself is delve deep into the curriculum and not just be motivated by the grades I receive. I probably spent too much time caring about the grade versus the rich content that I was learning. I miss high school!"

What do you enjoy most so far about being assistant headmaster?

"This role allows me to serve all students and teachers on a daily basis. I enjoy being able to listen, advise, problem solve, and coach each and every day. We have an incredible faculty, committed students, and a wonderful parent community. I am fortunate to be a part of this special place."

What is one thing about yourself that students wouldn't ever guess?

"I love going to concerts! I have been to 100s of shows (many to see the same band!)"

How to Ace your Finals

According to the experts

By Saloni Godse

Finals are right around the corner... as well as the holidays! But first, how should you prepare for your finals? Preparing for finals consists of two major components: how to study for them, and how to take them. Here are some tips for finals provided by our faculty, administration, and seniors.

To begin with, you must plan out when you have your exams and give yourself time each night to practice. Review all

your material, but more **1. Avoid Procrastination** importantly, focus on

the topics, ideas, and skills that challenge you most. "Do NOT procrastinate!" says Ms. Stone, our assistant headmaster. "It is important to interact with your teachers and ask questions," says Dr.

2. Ask Questions Bain. Moreover, ask questions about the topics that will be on

the exam and how to study for them. This will help you use the time you set aside to study more effectively.

Ms. Lentz stresses the importance of old tests: "Old tests are a great

tool for your finals. **3. Use your recourses** study It's important to study the questions you missed thoroughly, as we tend to simply brush over them." Ms. Jensen, our Academic Dean, suggests studying in groups. Research has shown that teaching one another topics rather than reviewing them helps retain information better!

Now that you know how to study for finals, how do you take them? It is important that you stay healthy around the time of your finals. Getting sick

4. Rest up around finals puts you in jeopardy of not doing your best in your exams. By not procrastinating, you should be able to

get a good night's sleep, leaving you well-rested for your finals. Dr. Cort is a firm believer in resting well! According to Ms. Poduska, throughout her years of experience, she has learned that keeping a calm, positive, zen mindset will help you unlock your best self and do the best on your finals. A tip from seniors Vishesh Kumar and

Brian Martins, which they **5. Keep Calm- You've got this!** believe has helped them for their exams, is that you should stay

calm and positive knowing that you have put in your best effort to prepare for these finals. Give these finals a calm, confident attitude. Last, but not least, some words wisdom from Dr. Mann, "Consider your finals as you would consider a reunion with an old friend: make sure to show them your best self; show them with pride how much you've grown."

Good luck on your finals!

**Happy Holidays
from the staff of
the ACTA GLADIATOR!**



Comic artists wanted...

Calling all students who love art and appreciate humor! Contact Sophia Braccio or email npxnewspaper@gmail.com if you are interested in pitching a comic strip idea for our next edition!



The *Acta Gladiator* wants your help! If you have an article lead or would like to advertise, email us at npxnewspaper@gmail.com.

Attention Middle Schoolers



New Gladiator Team t-shirts are here! Just \$15, or \$10 if you trade in your old shirt. Ask your Lanista for additional details.



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Gladiator Team Rankings

1. VELITES– 241 tickets
2. BESTIARI– 237 tickets
3. RETIARI– 234 tickets
4. THRACES– 233 tickets
5. DIMACHAERUS– 231 tickets
6. EQUITES– 227 tickets
7. PROVOCATORES– 211 tickets
8. CESTUS– 186 tickets
9. MURMILLONES– 150 tickets
10. SAGITARIUS– 135 tickets

A Night in New York City!
High School Winter Semi-Formal Dance
January 25th *Archway North*
7-10pm *Phoenix Prep*
MPR
Ticket information coming soon...