



# ***Pine Views***

**JULY 2024**

*Published by the PINE VIEW ASSOCIATION*

PINE VIEW SCHOOL



## Graduation 2024

The 155 members of Pine View's Class of 2024 graduated on May 19 at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall. Principal Dr. Stephen P. Covert read a summary of each senior's accomplishments and a thank-you message to their families. Highlights included musical performances from the seniors in Pine View's Band and Orchestra, the seniors in Pine View Chorale, a piano and vocal solo by senior Cyrus Kuhn, and speeches by Dr. Covert, teachers and Class Advisors Haley Brown and Sharon Salomon, and Senior Class President Shannon Hickey.



*Photos by  
Sarasota County Public Schools*

# About Pine Views

Pine Views is the official newsletter of the Pine View Association. Five issues will be published each school year. The issues will be mailed to our current families and be available in the Pine View front office. The issues are also available online at [www.yourpva.org](http://www.yourpva.org) under the Pine Views tab. To become a PVA Member, which is free and open to all Pine View parents and guardians, go to [www.yourpva.org](http://www.yourpva.org) and click on “Join Today.”

## Publication Schedule 2023-24

First Quarter: August/September  
Second Quarter: November/December  
Third Quarter: February/March  
Fourth Quarter: April/May  
Year-End: June/July

Students, faculty, staff and parents are encouraged to submit articles and photos. **Photos must be high resolution JPEGs or PDFs. Flyers and all other submissions should be high resolution PDFs and all names and grades of students must be submitted with photographs. All submissions are due one month before publication.**

**Please submit articles/photos to [pineviews@yourpva.org](mailto:pineviews@yourpva.org)**

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A graphic with a yellow-to-orange gradient background. At the top is the "Sir Speedy" logo in red and white. Below it, the text "PRINT | SIGNS | MARKETING" is written in black. At the bottom, the text "Color Cover provided by Sir Speedy" is written in blue.

# About PVA

## Pine View Association (PVA) Mission Statement

The Pine View Association is Pine View's own organization of parents, teachers, staff and friends.

*The Pine View Association, working with the Pine View community, supports and advances the excellence of Pine View School.*

The PVA encourages volunteerism, raises and disburses funds, promotes communication and cooperation with the school, provides input to the school on issues of concern to parents and supports gifted advocacy issues on a local and statewide basis.

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# Parent to Parent

## *Executive Committee*

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Elementary:

Andy Vitkus

Middle:

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High School:

David Mannino

### **Alumni Reps.**

Dr. Manav Malik

Ben Turoff

Paige Wyant



Dear Pine View Families,

I hope this issue of Pine Views finds you well and enjoying a restful and rejuvenating summer break! I am certainly relishing the unscheduled days of summer and taking advantage of the slower pace to spend quality time with my newly minted high schooler and middle schooler!

PVA would, again, like to extend heartfelt congratulations to the incredible Class of 2024 on its graduation! Check out pages 14-15 of this magazine to discover the post-graduation plans of our exceptional students. We also congratulate the Classes of 2028 and 2031 on their respective promotions from 8<sup>th</sup> grade and 5<sup>th</sup> grade — welcome to high school and middle school!

Over the past school year, PVA remained dedicated to its three core focus areas and made huge strides in each of them. For Academic Support and Partnerships, we continued to back clubs, activities and improvements at the school supporting items such as Odyssey of the Mind, Jungle Robotics, Business Professionals of America, Veterans Day, the World Language department and the new Pine View marquee, just to name a few! In College and Career, we hosted a highly successful parent panel in May, where high school parents gained valuable insights and perspectives from senior parents on the college admissions process. Additionally, in the realm of Community and Culture Building, we implemented our new Grade Representative committee, which has significantly fostered connections among students, and we hosted multiple parent social events that brought our parent community together. We are excited to continue to build on these successes in the upcoming school year!

Since the new school year is only a few weeks away, I would like to take a moment to encourage all of you to make the most of your summer break and enjoy this incredibly special time with your children. Summer offers a unique opportunity to create lasting memories and engage in activities that might be overlooked during the busy school year. Whether it's a family vacation, a day at the beach or simply enjoying a quiet evening together, these moments are so precious. At the kids' 8<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade moving-up ceremonies in May, Dr. Covert reminded us all of how few school days remain until their graduations — and it never feels like it's enough. It was a poignant reminder to cherish each day and make the most of every opportunity to be present with our children, as these years will pass by more quickly than we can imagine.

Thank you all, as always, for your continued support and dedication to our school community. I am looking forward to another wonderful school year with each and every one of you. Please enjoy the rest of the summer and we will see you on the first day of school on August 12!

Warmest regards,

Puja Dhanraj

# Principal's Perspective



July 8, 2024

Dear Pine View School Parents, Students, and Friends:

What a wonderfully busy close of the 2023-2024 school year, and we hope that everyone has enjoyed the start to a relaxing summer- ready, rejuvenated, and excited to begin another amazing year at Pine View *continuing our tradition of excellence!* We want to take this opportunity to celebrate some of the amazing achievements and successes at Pine View, and look forward to the new school year in 2024-2025! We closed out a wonder year with a graduation ceremony at the Van Wezel on May 19- graduating an amazing senior class, celebrating their achievements, next stages in their educational journeys, the two military academy appointments, the over \$6 million in scholarships and merit, as well as 20 National Merit Finalists!

This same time last year, I was pleased to announce that our school grade scored the highest number of total possible points in the school grade calculation by the State of Florida- and an increase over the previous year. This year, preliminary data suggest that will continue and our student scores have increased, again! Our Advanced Placement data demonstrate that we administered almost 2,000 AP exams in 32 subject areas, and the overall pass rate (*students scoring a 3 or higher on the internationally standardized exams*) was an incredible 98%! In addition, a remarkable 73% scored a 4 or 5 on the exams. Increasing our overall pass rate is a wonderful accomplishment, and doing that while also increasing the number of students sitting for highly rigorous college level courses and exams is truly noteworthy. Kudos to these students and teachers. Our school grade data on FAST English Language Arts (ELA) and Math assessments is equally celebration worthy as not only did our percent of overall total points earned increase, our students and teachers did this while ensuring that Learning Gains in both ELA and Math increased, as well. I anticipate that Pine View will once again, have the highest grade in the state, and will continue to be recognized a School of Excellence.

This summer, our faculty and administrative team has been hard at work recruiting some incredible new colleagues to join our Pine View family to replace a few retirements, as well as to address increases in enrollment. We look forward to our community getting to know the new faculty and staff hired this summer, and we will introduce them soon! Also, please, join me in welcoming our new High School Assistant Principal, Mrs. Kira Bryant. Mrs. Bryant has a Mathematics background, and was an Assistant Principal for Curriculum prior to joining Pine View. She is very excited to work with our high school students and families. Ms. Lana Marcotte will be continuing as our Assistant Principal for Curriculum, supporting grades 2 through 12, and we are excited that she is continuing in this role.

One last celebration, we have been notified that our schoolwide PBIS plan has been recognized as a Platinum Award winner for this year! This was the first year that Pine View submitted our plan for evaluation to the state, and following an audit and on-site review, the state has recognized Pine View with the highest award level. Kudos to Ms. Grace Madden, our Behavioral Support Facilitator, and the entire PBIS team, for their work in helping to set high expectations for our students daily- "be kind, be strong, and be well!" There will be a recognition ceremony at a future School Board meeting.

Our theme for the coming year at Pine View is, "Where curiosity sparks innovation!" We have already begun working on our School Improvement Plan for the coming year, and there is always room for growth in improving the experiences and opportunities we provide for our students at Pine View, and we look forward to a wonderful 2024-25!

We appreciate all the positive support from the Pine View School parents and our community, and look forward to another great year- continuing our tradition of excellence! *Go, Pythons!*

Stephen P. Covert, Ph.D.  
Principal

*"Continuous effort - not strength or intelligence - is the key to unlocking our potential."*  
— Winston Churchill



# News from the Board Room

The Pine View Association met in May. In addition to the standard reports from PVA committees and Dr. Covert, the board heard presentations from several of the clubs, teachers, and students that PVA funded during the year.


They included:

- Business Professionals of America,
- Speech & Debate,
- the Class of 2024,
- the Veterans Day celebration,
- the Florida Studio Theater performance,
- Jungle Robotics,
- and the Ping Pong Club.

PVA also reviewed and approved a request on behalf of the non-profit Take Stock in Children for two scholarships of \$5,000 each. The grant will help deserving Pine View students to attend college and attain a degree that will change the trajectory of their lives.



*At the annual Laura Roberts Luncheon, PVA continued its tradition of recognizing a dedicated parent volunteer whose student graduates this year. This year, PVA honored a team, Dave and Darla Gulliver, for their work on behalf of the school and its students. Dave has been a PVA board member and editor of Pine Views for three years, while Darla has been a volunteer for the Pine View Band for six years and president of the Band Boosters for two years.*



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# Parents of PV Seniors Share College ‘Lessons Learned’

With the college application and admission season behind them, a group of Pine View parents presented their “lessons learned” in a May 21 panel discussion sponsored by PVA. More than 100 parents attended the session, moderated by Pine View’s lead college counselor, Lance Bergman. Participating were Keri Kuhn, Anna Nekoranec, Adrienne Rans, Kathleen Suchora, Ange and Rene Sprunger, and Dave Gulliver.

There were two overarching themes of the evening: First, that your student’s college choice is not a trophy to be won, but a match to be made, and so it needs to be the right fit. The other was that ultimately the college choice is up to the child, not the parents. As Kuhn put it: “If you have a high school junior or senior this year, practice saying this: ‘Your dream, not mine.’”

Following are some major points of the two-hour conversation.

## **Beginning the College Search**

The process starts in earnest during junior year, but parents and students should be planning standardized tests, extracurricular activities and campus tours even earlier.

The student should begin by exploring their interests, with a goal of developing a list of what they want in a college, and then narrowing down the list through research. One way is for the student to think about what college looks like to them: Size, demographics, location, majors, class sizes, student life, “feel.” One parent said her students wanted a college with big events like sports that bring everyone together. Another said his students didn’t care about sports but wanted a place with an “intellectual” feel like Pine View.

## **Building Your Case**

Panelists agreed that students should start building a resume as early as sophomore year. The goal is to build a “theme” or “story” that pulls together academic and extracurricular interests. That can start as early as freshman year. Their choices should reflect an interest in a field of study or career path. Parents also noted that many students volunteer at the hospital or run a club, so it can help to achieve a “standout” activity.

## **Applications and Recommendations**

Most colleges, Florida and out of state, use the “Common App.” Its seven choices for an essay question are essentially the same each year. The application opens on August 1, so students should draft their responses before senior year starts, which gives them time to revise and seek help from teachers. Parents warned that there is a lot going on in the fall and it takes more time than students realize to write their essay. Also, most colleges will want at least one more supplemental essay, and some want four or more.

Students should talk to their teachers about letters of recommendation well in advance – at least one month but hopefully even longer, said parent and PV math teacher Mrs. Suchora. She said most teachers will limit how many letters they write, because of how long it takes to write a great letter – she spends six to 10 hours per letter

## **Where and How to Apply**

Parents agreed that students and families should not cast a wide net, but instead be intentional in choosing schools where the student will apply. “If you really aren’t serious about a school or can’t afford it, don’t apply,” one parent said, to complete agreement. There were two reasons given: One is that college admissions staff are looking for students that truly match their school, so they see through the “shotgun” approach. Second is that it hurts Pine View when students apply year after year to colleges, receive offers, and pass up on them. The colleges track this and start accepting fewer and fewer Pine View students.

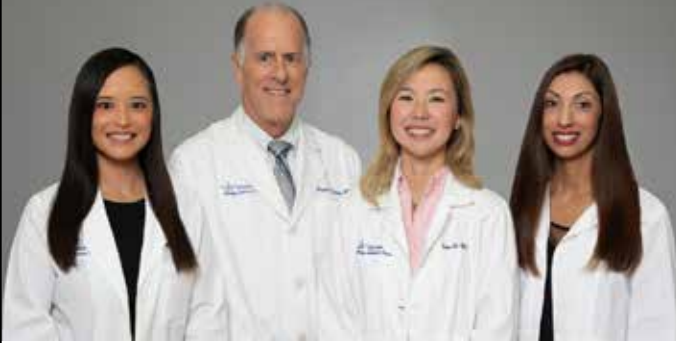
One parent cautioned that “early decision” and “likely” or “safety” schools are not what they used to be. Submitting an “early decision” application can boost a student’s chances of being accepted at many top colleges, but at the most elite schools, it may only improve odds by a few percentage points. Meanwhile, many schools that might seem “sure bets” may see your student as overqualified and unlikely to attend, and therefore decline or “wait list” the student.

## **Communicate - But Not Too Much**

The college application process is stressful, and leaning on your students too much can make it even worse. The discussion’s most-applauded recommendation: Choose one night a week to talk to your kids about colleges and their progress on applications, and hold to that.

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Cost: \$260

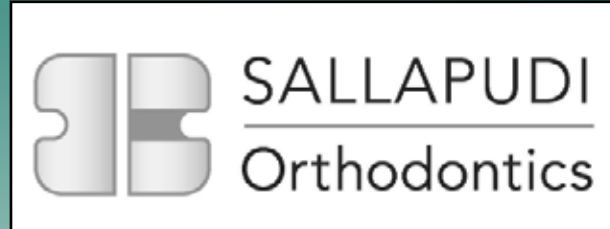
All camps are on Pine View's campus. For more information, please email: daedalussolutions2023@gmail.com



\* This program is private and not a part of Pine View School's summer curriculum. \*

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# College Destinations for Pine View's Class of 2024

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---

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### Florida Atlantic University

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### Ringling College of Art and Design

Yeonho Kang

### Florida Institute of Technology

Jayden Zhang

### Rollins College

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Ethan Chan

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Spencer Cohen

Naomi Dale

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Colin Greise

Charlie Anne Gullick

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Shireen Kaveh

Arrommy Leung

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Maria Melo Fontoura

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Maya Schultz

Rigzin Smith

Addison Stewart

Madison Thomas

Tyler Tricarico

Stella Votrubova

Melis Wiesinger

Joshua Wood

### Tallahassee Community College

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Liam Foley

Sebastian Kepez

### University of Central Florida

Wahu Cordero

Gavin Kunda

Reagan Lok

Ava Marano

Marlowe Meredith

Kai Sprunger

Gita Upendram

### University of Florida

Brook Ahlberg

Tian Jiao Doherty

Michael Girgis

Lauren Gross

Jacobus Hazelhoff

James Hunek

Sonia Legare

Edden Levy

Victoria Liu

Andrew Lo

Nelson Lu

Ava Pappas

Sandra Piskor

Divya Puthanveetil

Amaana Quadir

Margaret Toth

Kody Tran

Nishalle Uthuppan

Lilyanna Wang

Kathleen Wu

Forest Yeh

Alexandra Zawrotny

### Santa Fe College

Kuentsen Dorji

Mark Schroeter

Rudi Zhang

### University of South Florida

Ezra Disz

Shanika Farah

Annika Fretz

Kathryn Hamill

Daniel Hartley

Monica Hennawy

Shannon Hickey

Adrienne Johnson

Leo Lenerz

Pooja Magesh

William Murphy

Elena Navarro

Afrin Pajulullah

Niklas Pinto

Ahmari Scherer-Dogancay

Arianna Skevington-Oliver

Payton Sweet

# College Destinations for Pine View's Class of 2024

## *Out of State*

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<b>Agnes Scott College</b> Hayley Peace	<b>Northeastern University</b> Gwen Hazel Sanjana Prakash Tristan Rans Natalia Twarowski	<b>University College London</b> Hannah Schuh
<b>Art Center College of Design</b> Paige Florand		<b>University of California-Los Angeles</b> Arya Doshi
<b>Brown University</b> Quinn Gulliver	<b>Northwestern University</b> Sophia Sanchez	<b>University of California-San Diego</b> Grace Chung
<b>Bucknell University</b> Cyrus Kuhn Lucian Rominiecki	<b>Pennsylvania State University</b> Nicolas Rojas	<b>University of Chicago</b> Juan Pelaez Arredondo
<b>Carleton College</b> Devin Gulliver	<b>Princeton University</b> Roland Bonaparte Mitchell Czarnecki	<b>University of Connecticut</b> Isabella Kulawik
<b>Columbia University</b> Daniel Brokate	<b>Rice University</b> Courtney Nelson	<b>University of Illinois</b> Asha Sallapudi
<b>Davidson College</b> Simon Yochum	<b>Rutgers University</b> Joshua Fernandez	<b>University of Massachusetts-Amherst</b> Maeva Ginsberg-Klemmt
<b>DePaul University</b> Winter Gray Sonee Patel	<b>Savannah College of Art and Design</b> Jake Turner	<b>University of Michigan</b> Ella Pappas
<b>Drexel University</b> Hamza Memon	<b>Smith College</b> Claire Critchett	<b>University of Notre Dame</b> Jade Firlie
<b>Georgetown University</b> Patrick Collins	<b>Spelman College</b> Aliciana Harvey-Lopez	<b>University of Pennsylvania</b> Samantha Fineman Cole Reyes
<b>Georgia Institute of Technology</b> Miles Benson Abigail Pereira	<b>Stanford University</b> Henry Zhou	<b>University of Tulsa</b> Dorian Carter
<b>Massachusetts Institute of Technology</b> Lana Ghamra Adriana Maiotti	<b>The George Washington University</b> Ethan Stocker	<b>University of Virginia</b> Nemmo Ciccone Chloe Niebuhr Sofie Niebuhr Ethan Ooi
<b>New York University</b> Amy Kim Dahlia Mankovich	<b>Trinity College</b> Sophia Lopez	<b>University of Wisconsin-Madison</b> Guenevere Cushman
<b>North Carolina State University</b> Anthony Napolitano	<b>Trinity College Dublin</b> Tanner Isaacs	<b>Wesleyan University</b> Neela Ravindran
	<b>United States Military Academy</b> Ethan Wang	<b>Western Carolina University</b> Allison Layendecker Casie Ryan
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## PV's Odyssey of the Mind Team Goes to World Finals (Again)!

Pine View's six Odyssey of the Mind (OM, for short) teams were true to the event's name and spirit, working for months to solve technical challenges, hone their (quick-thinking, improvisational) skills, create a drama performance and craft the needed sets and costumes, and then take their shows on the road across the county, state and even the country. The High School team and one Middle School team advanced from the February regional competition to the April state competition in Orlando. The High School team placed second at the state competition and competed at the World Finals in Ames, Iowa, in May. It was their second trip to Worlds, following last year's appearance in Michigan. For the uninitiated, OM is a program where students learn to harness their natural creativity to solve imaginative challenges. In the long-form competition, teams – with no help from parents or coaches, and on a minuscule budget – spend months responding to a themed question with a solution that involves writing, design, construction, and theatrical performance. In the “spontaneous” section, the team must think quickly and creatively to solve a problem they've never seen until that moment.

*(continued on page 18)*



*The World Finals yearbook photo of the high school team in their long-term performance costumes*



*The high school team at World Finals right before their Spontaneous competition*

## PV's Odyssey of the Mind Team Goes to World Finals!

Amy Kim, the high school team's captain (now headed to New York University) fielded questions on OM and the team's year. She also was selected as one of two student speakers at the World Finals, and shared her speech with us.

### **Can you share a favorite moment from practice or preparation sessions?**

Odyssey of the Mind is a club where you have almost eight months to work together as a team to create an eight-minute play that satisfies the event theme in the most creative way possible. With so much time to work on this play, surely we'd be able to have completed plays a week before the deadline. Right?

Wrong. With three days before our statewide competition, our team did not have a finished set. The only solution in these trying times was to pull several all-nighters. And while working together to somehow pull off a remotely presentable play was fun, my most treasured memory comes from a time when we decided to let off steam.

We were exhausted beyond belief at 1 a.m., but knowing we still had so much to finish, we decided to take a trip to a restaurant called Munchies. Sleep-deprived and drama-hungry, we entered this mysterious establishment and played a perilous game of Dare or Dare. Our dares ranged from the fairly innocent (dancing in the middle of the restaurant) to the dastardly (sending texts to people we liked).

As we winced and grimaced with each successive dare, it became apparent how much we truly loved one another. And despite our issues with procrastination, we excelled at OM because of our strong, playful bond. OM was never a task for us, but an outlet for us to express our creativity, become closer as friends, and grow as people. It's perfect for anyone with big ideas who wants to improve their social skills.

### **Think back to when your team first got together.**

### **What was your feeling about your teammates, and in hindsight can you see how it all came together?**

To be honest, at our first meeting, we were all kind of awkward around each other. We mostly talked with the people we were already friends with and didn't mesh well as a team yet.

It took going to each other's houses, watching movies, and spending time with each other outside of an OM context for us to really unlock the synergy that took us to Worlds in our second and third years as a team. But now, I can't imagine our team without each specific person: We wouldn't have our creative costumes without Sanjana, our immaculate makeup without Victoria, our impeccable set structures without Sophia, our stunning set design without Asha, or our captivating leading lady without Aashima. Our fantastic OM team didn't click overnight; it took months of getting familiar with one another and putting in the effort to truly know each other better, which got us to where we are today.



*The high school team en route to the World Finals.*



*A dinner get-together during World Finals with the high school's "buddy team" from Shanghai, China*



*The high school team preparing before the regional competition in Ft. Myers*



*The high school team at World Finals with coach Pam Novak just after their Spontaneous competition*



*The five high school girls who graduated during the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals 2024 graduation ceremony*

## **PV student Amy Kim's speech at the 2024 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals:**

If you had told me three years ago that I would be speaking in front of a bunch of strangers in Iowa, I would've told you that you had the wrong Amy. Three years ago, I was a girl of many ideas and few words. Today, I stand before you a girl with many ideas and even more words! The culprit? Odyssey of the Mind, of course!

It's difficult to describe OM to people who haven't participated in it. Yes, we're like a drama club, but it's also a competition? And there's an aspect of it that we can't prepare for that is essentially 5 minutes of improv? It's an admittedly strange club that doesn't get treated with the same legitimacy as organizations like Speech & Debate or Model UN.

But while those clubs build speaking skills by having several competitions and meets each year, OM builds teamwork, creativity, and a variety of other skills during every single moment you devote to it. Whether you're pulling all-nighters to finish a set or discussing a script for hours, every choice you make as you do OM tests your ability to problem solve, think outside of the box, work with other people, make your desires known, and put skills unique to you to use! As I began doing OM, I realized the value of my own voice as a collaborator, writer, and even an actress!

But really, what I think makes OM far unlike any other club I've been a part of is the emphasis on the people you do it with. My teammates Aashima, Asha, Sanjana, Sophia, and Victoria are now some of my closest friends who I can't imagine my life without. I have watched them grow as actors, artists, costume designers, builders, makeup artists, and most of all, as people throughout my three years doing OM with them, and they've helped me grow as a person in return. You can have all the skill in the world, but you cannot make it far in OM if you cannot form bonds with your teammates. And I think that's true to life: No matter how smart or talented you are, you cannot make it far in whatever you do if you cannot get along with the people around you.

As graduates of both high school and of OM Division 3, I hope we keep in mind the lessons OM has taught us as we move onto the next stage of our lives and pursue the field of our choice. Let's keep thinking outside of the box, making our voices heard, and doing our best at what we love! And most of all, let's keep forging connections everywhere we go! Let's go, OMers! We got this!



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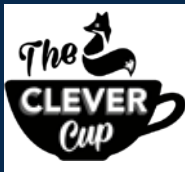
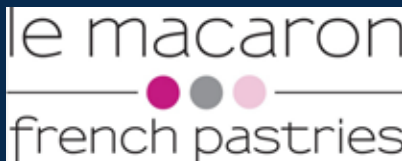
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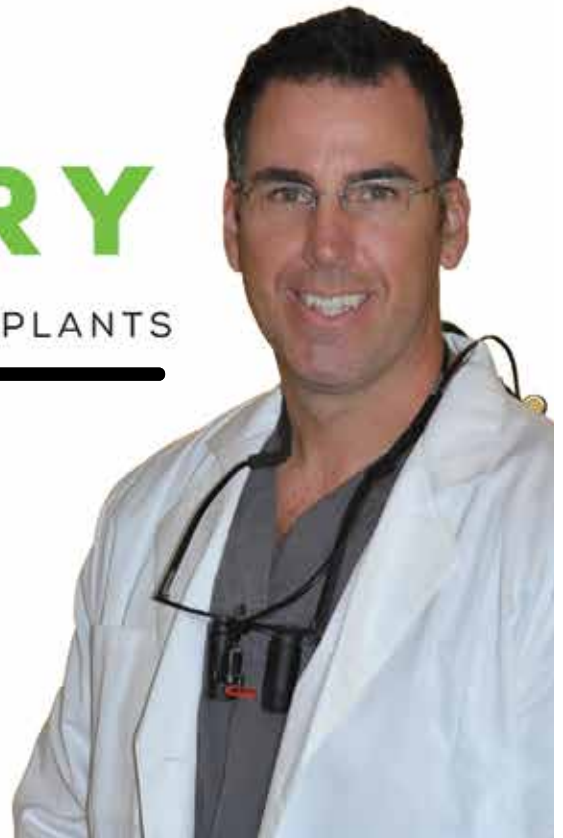
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Roy Sprinkle  
Asst. Principal, Gr. 2-5

Melissa Abela  
Asst. Principal, Gr. 6-8

Kira Bryant  
Asst. Principal, Gr. 9-12

Lance Bergman  
College Resource Advisor, Grade 12,  
Teacher, Special Assignment

Dr. Lori Wiley  
College & Career Advisor, Gr. 8-11,  
Advanced Placement Coordinator

Eileen Cabrera  
ESE Instructional Facilitator/Admissions

Kristin McCombie  
ESE Instructional Facilitator/ESOL, EP

Lynn Halcomb  
Guidance Counselor

Alan Regar  
Guidance Counselor

Eugene Williams  
School Resource Officer

## Office

Denise Valentine  
Admin. Assistant  
Principal

Sue Manders  
Registrar

Health Room Aide  
Carole McLaughlin  
Admissions Secretary

Nadine Feraco  
Admin. Assistant  
Asst. Principal Curriculum

Cheryl Germinerio  
Registrar Assistant

Gina Verdino  
Attendance Secretary

Alycia Poteralski  
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Asst. Principal Gr. 9-12

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Bookkeeper

Candice Garutti  
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Gena Bufkin  
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Faith Kona  
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Mary King  
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ES Guidance Secretary

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Katherine Servidio  
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Media Center Hours: 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM

Activities Calendar .....	Nadine Feraco
Activity Bus .....	Theresa Dixon
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Announcements .....	Nadine Feraco
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Custodial Assistance .....	Front Desk
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Medical Attention .....	Misty Wells-Wimbush, LPN; Katherine Servidio, DOH RN
Student Parking .....	Theresa Dixon
Student Sign In/Sign Out .....	Front Desk
Student Activities .....	Pat Morgerson
Student ID Badges .....	Guidance Dept.
To Report Theft or Vandalism .....	Officer Eugene Williams
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### Regular Class Schedule

Period 1	7:21 AM - 8:13 AM
Period 2	8:18 AM - 9:10 AM
Moment of Silence	9:15 AM
Period 3	9:15 AM - 10:10 AM
Period 4	10:15 AM - 11:07 AM
Period 5	11:12 AM - 12:04 PM
Period 6	12:09 PM - 1:01 PM
Period 7	1:06 PM - 1:58 PM
Period 8	2:03 PM - 2:55 PM
Period 9	3:00 PM - 3:52 PM

### Advisory Day Class Schedule

Period 1	7:21 AM - 8:13 AM
Period 2	8:18 AM - 9:10 AM
Moment of Silence	9:15 AM
Advisory	9:15 AM - 10:01 AM
Period 3	10:05 AM - 10:46 AM
Period 4	10:50 AM - 11:31 AM
Period 5	11:35 AM - 12:16 PM
Period 6	12:20 PM - 1:01 PM
Period 7	1:06 PM - 1:58 PM
Period 8	2:03 PM - 2:55 PM
Period 9	3:00 PM - 3:52 PM

### Pine View School Mission Statement

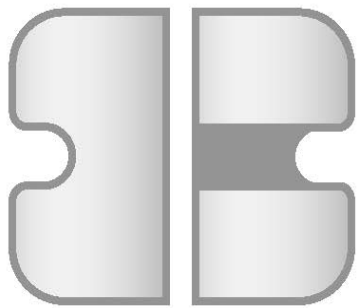
The mission of Pine View School is to provide a qualitatively different learning environment that nurtures a passion for intellectual curiosity, encourages risk-taking, independence and innovation, and is committed to a tradition of academic excellence and social responsibility.

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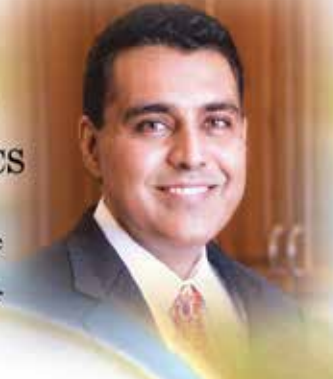
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# WALL OF FAME — APRIL 2024



**Grade 2: Dean Hobbie**, our exceptional second grader, is being honored with the 212 Award this month for his remarkable dedication and kindness. He consistently goes above and beyond, always prepared and ready to lend a hand to his classmates. Dean's thoughtful and considerate nature brightens our classroom, creating a positive and inclusive atmosphere within our school community. Congratulations, Dean, on this well-deserved recognition of your outstanding character and contributions!



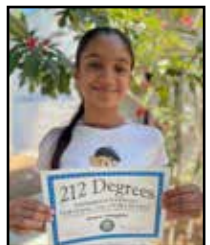
**Grade 3: Nolan Smith** displays the extra degree in the classroom by being a leader, participating in class discussions and helping others. He has proven to be very responsible and trustworthy. His sense of humor and inquisitive nature make him a joy to have in the classroom. Nolan strives for 212 in his attitude and helpfulness to his peers.



**Grade 4: Jasmine Awadallah** is a hard-working problem solver. She is persistent and doesn't give up. Jasmine always reaches above and beyond to extend her thinking and pushes her classmates to do the same. She is an eloquent speaker and presenter. In the classroom, Jasmine is a leader and collaborates well with her peers. She shares her culture openly and is always willing to educate her peers on her traditions. She starts each day with a smile and has endless joy and energy that brighten everyone's days.



**Grade 5: Elise Morgan** stands out as the ideal candidate for 212. She embodies kindness, helpfulness, and impeccable organization. Always fully engaged, she consistently proves herself as an extraordinary collaborator, readily sharing her wealth of knowledge on the subject matter. Among her wonderful character traits, her exceptional politeness and profound respectfulness stand out, qualities that educators greatly value.



**Grade 6: Maiitry Viramgama** is an amazing young lady who truly exemplifies the Pine View 212 philosophy. Maiitry's teachers state that she is an exemplary student who is kind, thoughtful and creative! Maiitry always goes the extra degree for all her assignments and often goes more than just one or two extra degrees! She is dedicated and detailed, always making sure she has done her best for all the assignments in all her subject areas. Maiitry has a positive attitude; she is always nice and kind to both her peers and teachers. Maiitry demonstrates great leadership skills in any given setting, as well as follows directions and acts as a role model for her peers. Maiitry demonstrates these behaviors by being an active member of the Middle School Student Council as well as a WEB leader. She is a true team player! It is our pleasure to nominate Maiitry for this honor.



**Grade 7: Ellie Darling** is a wonderful student who smiles all the time. She goes above and beyond in her work and is constantly trying to improve her knowledge in all subject areas. Additionally, Ellie has wonderful creative potential and exceptional writing skills.

# WALL OF FAME — APRIL 2024



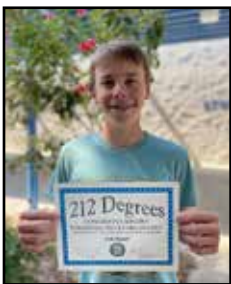
**Grade 8: Anna Zhang** stands out as a student who consistently exceeds expectations and embodies the 212 philosophy. Her meticulous annotations and written work reflect her exceptional work ethic and dedication. Anna’s commitment to excellence extends to her science projects, where her thoughtful approach and creativity shines through in every assignment. Beyond academics, Anna fosters a collaborative environment by assisting her peers during group reviews and sharing her proficiency in Chinese class. Her willingness to go above and beyond, demonstrated through her frequent voluntary assistance during lunch breaks, embodies her genuine desire to support both her classmates and her educators.

Anna’s contributions enrich our learning community and exemplify the spirit of teamwork and dedication. Congratulations, Anna!



**Grade 9: Gabriella Pina’s** exceptional performance across various subjects makes her an outstanding candidate for the 212 Wall of Fame. In both AP World History and AP Human Geography, she consistently delivers stellar work, with test scores that consistently rank among the highest. Her creativity shines through in her projects, earning them special recognition. Gabriella’s willingness to assist struggling peers and contribute to class discussions demonstrates her remarkable character. Additionally, her dedication to excelling in Spanish class, coupled with her polite and respectful nature, sets a positive example for her peers. Gabriella’s thoughtful consideration of diverse perspectives and

responsible approach to learning make her a standout student. Gabriella, you truly embody the spirit of 212. Congratulations, Gabriella!



**Grade 10: Cole Reuter’s** exceptional achievements across multiple disciplines is proudly celebrated. In AP Physics 1, he grasps intricate concepts and generously supports his peers during experiments, showcasing both his intellect and his collaborative spirit. His outstanding performance in Spanish class this year underscores his unwavering commitment to mastering the language. In addition, Cole’s dedication extends beyond the classroom to his participation in crew, which is a major commitment of both time and spirit. Cole’s enthusiasm, selflessness, and pursuit of personal improvement embody Pine View’s 212 philosophy. As one teacher notes, “I cannot express enough how grateful

I am to have had Cole as a student in my class. His outstanding performance, positive attitude, and overall commitment to his studies make him a true asset to Pine View.” Congratulations, Cole!



**Grade 11: Sebastian Rosa** is a wonderfully engaged student; both academically and socially. He is an outstanding student in all subject areas, with a specific flair for history. In his AP U.S. History class, Sebastian is seen by his peers as someone who has a mastery of the subject and who is also always willing to help. Sebastian is also known for his positivity and his sense of humor. Sebastian’s presence in class is always cheerful and powerfully uplifting.



**Grade 12: Hayley Peace** personifies Pine View’s 212 philosophy with her academic achievements, her involvement within the community, and her philosophy of helping those around her. Hayley is keenly aware of and dedicated to improving environmental issues locally and globally. Her involvement with the Mote Marine Laboratory has been well received and speaks to her passion for improving environmental conditions as well as improving the conditions for all living things.

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# Bidding Farewell To Beloved Teachers

## Fifth-grade teacher Melissa Bennett moves north, leaves a legacy

by Ava Lenerz / Assistant Editor-in-Chief, Pine View Match

With tears welling in her eyes, fifth-grade teacher **Melissa Bennett** reflected on her time at Pine View School, which has been nothing short of remarkable. For the past 17 years, Bennett has been an integral part of the Pine View campus as a friend, a mentor, and a beloved second, third, and fifth-grade teacher.



Bennett has a passion for teaching and has taught almost all subjects while at Pine View, her favorite being Social Studies. Though she enjoys educating students, Bennett loves the non-academic activities, too.

“I love when we have our class parties, I think the kids getting the chance to just hang out and be themselves is fun,” Bennett said.

This includes field trips too, like the fifth-grade end-of-year trip to Kennedy Space Center. This memorable experience is all thanks to Bennett. Kennedy Space Center was her end-of-year trip when she was in fifth-grade, so she started the trip at Pine View

when she learned they didn’t have a final field trip.

“The kids really like it, it’s a field trip that I get to plan, and I always hope that it’s something that they leave and remember,” Bennett said.

One of the reasons Bennett stands out is because she connects with her students on a personal level.

Fellow fifth-grade teacher Cynthia Wozniak has noticed this over the years, as well.

“She sees herself in these kids and she has an understanding of what they’re going through and a patience that few teachers have,” Wozniak said. “She understands that every student is different, and she always finds that one thing to connect with a student...”

Luckily, this is not the end of Bennett’s teaching career. Her departure from Pine View comes from the choice to move closer to family.

“My grandkids live in northern Florida, and I want to be closer to them,” Bennett said. “So I had to make a tough decision to leave the job that I love and move somewhere that’s new. And it was a hard decision to make, but I think, in the end, it will be the right one.”

She found a new job teaching seventh-grade civics, but that’s not to say the move won’t be bittersweet. “I’m going to miss that my big kids see me on campus and they say hello. I’m going to miss so much about here...and I’m going to miss just watching you guys grow up,” Bennett said.

Bennett has left some pretty big shoes to fill, as she has put in much hard work and dedication into Pine View, but mainly she hopes her past students... “don’t forget [her]. I’m hoping to touch somebody’s life. That’s my whole purpose of this job. I just want to make somebody’s day better.



## Fifth-grade teacher Peggy Barber set to retire after 22 years at Pine View

by Isabella Kulawik / Editor-in-Chief, Pine View Torch

When students reminisce on **Peggy Barber’s** fifth-grade class, they often remember making s’mores with solar cookers or sending bottle rockets through the air. After 22 years at Pine View and 42 years of teaching overall, Barber is retiring from her position as an elementary school teacher.

After graduating from Miami University in Ohio, Barber has taught a variety of grades and ages. “I knew when I was born, literally, from the time I was growing up as a very young girl, I just knew I was going to be a teacher,” Barber said.

Having taught students from a variety of backgrounds, Barber is very experienced in different areas of teaching. Some of her most impactful memories came from when she taught summer school in Ohio.

“...Another student went to jail... he hand wrote letters to me, (continued on page 32)

*(continued from page 31)* ‘Miss Barber, could you please come visit me and give me some books to read’ ... and he said, ‘Miss Barber, I’m so bored. Could you please bring me books, but also bring me the journal so I can summarize.’ And I would bring him books, four at a time,” Barber said.

One of Barber’s goals in teaching has always been to inspire. “I still want to make a positive difference and contribute to the positivity and make our world a better place ... That’s been my goal and it will continue to be my goal,” Barber said.

Former colleague James Ross taught alongside Barber for 20 years before retiring in 2023. Their respective teaching styles complemented each other, ensuring that students were prepared for the next steps in their educational journey. “Well, I can just say that she was an exceptional teacher,” Ross said. “She was dedicated to it ... She is a great asset to Pine View, and she’s going to be sorely missed, I’m sure of that.”

In retirement, Barber looks forward to traveling around the US and Europe. Though, she will also miss the students greatly. “I learned so much from these kids and I’m going to miss that the most, and their excitement, enthusiasm over learning,” Barber said.

## **Jagdish’s Teaching Career Travels Full Circle**

*By Robyn Schoenberg / Entertainment Editor, Pine View Torch*

Colorful booths are set up all around the quad, decorated with flags, games, and souvenirs from many countries, as elementary students collect stickers and learn about each country’s culture. It’s Pine View’s World Day, and AP Human Geography students have been preparing for months, researching and putting together the different elements that reflect what they have learned all year.



The World Day project is the creation of Roma Jagdish, who taught AP Human Geography and AP World History at Pine View. She retires this year after 35 years of teaching, 20 of those years at Pine View.

Jagdish plans to return to Singapore, where she grew up and began her career. She didn’t plan to teach, she wanted to work for the foreign service, but later found herself a librarian. After a year of that, she began looking for another job, and found teaching. In college, she studied political science, sociology, and philosophy, so she got her bachelor’s in education during her first year of teaching.

“I thought I would be there only for a year, two years. Two years, became three, then became five, then became ten, because I realized I wasn’t looking at the clock,” she said. “I was so present ... time passed very quickly.”

She was at first skeptical about the stress of classroom management but began to notice something about students.

“I found them very funny, very, very funny. It always kept me young, and that’s why I’ve been in the profession for so long,” Jagdish said. “There’s something very infectious about their laughter, a kind of innocence. Yet, they’re so mature in their outlook, even more than adults can be.”

After 10 years of teaching in Singapore, she moved to the United States. After four years of classes, substitute teaching, and teaching in Manatee County, she started looking for a job in Sarasota County. Pine View was the first school to interview her, and she took the job.

“I just fell in love with it,” Jagdish said. “I loved the creativity offered to me and that I could put it into fruition.”

She applied this creativity with projects that engaged and educated students uniquely. *(continued on page 33)*

“Jagdish cares deeply about what goes on in class, about whether her students are intellectually stimulated. So, there’s always an intense environment around her because you know that she’s passionately feeling something on a daily basis,” said John Schweig, a social studies teacher who has been working with Jagdish since she started at Pine View.

One of Jagdish’s favorite classes she’s taught is Philosophy. She took this class to the Dali Museum, had them paint their favorite topic, and took them to beach Yoga to immerse them in the experience. In other classes, she has also started projects like the Travel Fair and the Global Call to Action Fair.

These projects have impacted students like tenth-grader Liam Dingman, Jagdish’s student for two years. For his World Day project, he chose Japan, and as a Japanese student he said the project was one reason he started learning Japanese.

Focusing on multiple cultures is an important part of Jagdish’s classes, and her background contributes greatly.

“The kids are getting lessons that they wouldn’t get in other classes because of her life experience, because she’s from Singapore, because she’s lived with different cultures and different experiences,” Schweig said. “Her historical lessons will include things that we don’t know and perspectives we don’t have. It’s a real value for kids to have her and it’s a real loss for us to lose her.”

Her students say they have learned so much from her, about curriculum and life, and recognize her value.

Tenth-grader Mirai Mehta is another student of Jagdish, and he shared a lesson he’s learned from her.

“She said, ‘Don’t waste your youth,’ ... she’d always tell us if you want to take a gap year, take a gap year, just go out and explore the world, and I kind of want to do that,” Mehta said. “She gives so much advice...that’s why we have the podcast, so that all her good advice is there for us to listen to anytime.”

When Mehta, Dingman, and this reporter found out that Jagdish was retiring, we wanted to document her last year at Pine View with a podcast called “Fridays With Ms. Jagdish.”

“She is transmitting her wisdom because she’s obviously gone through so many unique life experiences,” Dingman said. “Since she had such a big impact on us, we also wanted to pay it forward, and get to know her better, and let everybody in the school know her better.”

Jagdish has left a lasting impression on Pine View and is now moving on to the next chapter of her life.

“I’m actually going to Singapore, and I’m finally going home...after 30 years. I moved here in 1994 in July, and my whole life, my family is back home,” Jagdish said, “So, for once, I can start being a part of my family’s life celebrations.”

She is looking forward to immersing herself in her culture again and sharing that with her daughter but still plans to continue working.

“I really never think of retiring. I’m someone who’s just going to work as long as I can...when my health goes a little bit, I’ll probably scale back...that’s the beauty of teaching,” she said. “You can tutor, you can do that in the comfort of your home.”

While she has made her mark on the school, the community here has also impacted her.

“What I have here, it’s very special. I consider myself very fortunate to have had this time to teach in a school like this,” she said. “The fact that it’s a major part of my teaching career, I don’t take that for granted. I’m always very appreciative.”

## Mr. Mongillo Concludes Pine View Performance

by Isabella Kulawik / Editor-in-Chief, Pine View Torch



Stepping into the Pine View band room for the first time, a student is welcomed by a variety of sounds from brass, wind, and percussion instruments, along with an array of awards and photos on the wall. When students leave the room for the last time, they walk away learning much more than an instrument — skills that will last a lifetime. This is thanks to Victor Mongillo, who, after 16 years of teaching at Pine View, is retiring from his position as the Pine View band director.

Mongillo, known as “Mr. Monge” by his students, has dedicated much of his life to music. Having played the trumpet since he was eight years old, graduated from Florida State University with a degree in Music Education, and performed at many venues across the country, he is very experienced in music pedagogy and is a respected performer.

Throughout his 36 years of teaching in schools in the Chicago and Sarasota area, Mongillo has inspired young musicians to not only keep music in their lives after they graduate but also to pursue it as a career. Isaac Mingus, a 2015 Pine View graduate, began playing bass with the encouragement of Mongillo and the orchestra teacher Christopher Mink. Mingus now plays professionally around the state.

“He’s a great teacher, a fabulous teacher, but he’s also a stunning professional trumpet player, probably one of the best I’ve heard statewide, you know, just going all around the state doing gigs,” he said.

Over the years, Mongillo and Mingus have kept in touch and even played in the orchestra pit together last season for the musical “Crazy for You” at the Asolo Repertory Theatre. “It was incredible to watch him turn beet red a few times just hitting these incredibly high stratospheric notes, but to do so without ever missing, he just never misses,” Mingus said, recounting his experience playing together.

Not only is Mongillo there for students musically, but he is also there emotionally.

“When I was in high school, my father passed away when I was a sophomore. And he and Mink were always just wonderful to me,” Mingus said. “I mean, I was a student of theirs, and I was a bass player that was up and coming; I ended up becoming a professional. You know, I was practicing and trying to be a good musician, but they were very flexible with me and just lovely people as well as teachers.”

A great part of this is the way Mongillo encourages students. He helps them improve and also supports them from wherever they are in their musical journey. Alumnus Connor Wozniak, who played tuba before transitioning to trombone, did not realize how much of an impact joining the band would have on his life. “Some of my fondest memories can be traced all the way back to picking up a tuba in eighth grade and having Monge sit with me with a tuba for a half hour just getting the very basics,” Wozniak said.

These phenomenal teaching abilities are noticed not only by his students but also by fellow faculty members. Mink has been teaching orchestra alongside Mongillo throughout his time at Pine View. “I’ve learned more about teaching from Mr. Mongillo than I did when I was in college,” he said.

Additionally, he recognizes the care Mongillo has for his students. “The one thing that I’ve noticed that makes Mr. Mongillo mad is when someone isn’t giving it their all. He cares. He wants the best for his students,” Mink said.

The students are what Mongillo will miss the most after retiring from his position.


“I’m going to miss the students immensely; it’s great... You’ve been with many of these students here for seven years. I mean, you get to see them grow up... I’m going to miss that the most, just working with them and their sense of humor and just who they are. There are so many great young people here at Pine View,” he said.

In retirement, he looks forward to traveling and continuing to perform. He has undoubtedly left a lasting legacy on the music program for years to come. So, as Mongillo takes his final bow on the Pine View stage, he leaves his students with a lifelong impact.

“Music can change lives, it absolutely can,” he said.

*More than 250 past and current students and their families turned out for the Pine View Band Boosters’ farewell party for Mr. Mongillo on June 2 in the Student Union. Here are a selection of photos from the event and from Pine View Band moments over the past two years. Photos courtesy of David Jemison except as noted.*





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