

ABOUT THE GAZETTE

The Griffin Gazette is The Academy at Palumbo's student-run newspaper, dedicated to keeping our community informed about news and events in our school and across Philadelphia. We aim to amplify student voices and spark meaningful conversations.

The Griffin Gazette

NOTHING LESS THAN SUCCESS

WANT TO JOIN?

The Griffin Gazette welcomes any interested students to join our team of dedicated writers, editors, and photographers. Meetings are the first Tuesday of the month in room 329.

LOOKING BACK: PALUMBO'S FALL FEAST



Photo from Sidney Leach

BY SANTINA RAMUNNO

This year, Palumbo held its annual Fall Feast before Thanksgiving break, where students bring in food and share a meal together. The students responsible for executing this event are the NHS and Griffin Ambassadors, who take on jobs from handing out food to picking up trash. Of course, this feast would never happen without HSA and other Palumbo parents that take the time out of their busy schedules to organize this event and donate food.

Winston, a sophomore, said that the Fall Feast is his “favorite event at Palumbo!” Freshman Bruce Levin shared, “it can be appalling to connect with people in a new high school, but events like these make it easier. I've made so many amazing friends.”

As winter break approaches, it's clear that students look back on the Fall Feast fondly. Without this tradition of gathering and celebration of different cultures through food, many new connections and conversations at Palumbo would have otherwise never happened.

BOYS' BASKETBALL GEARS UP

BY JADE POTTS

With basketball season right around the corner, the Griffins boys' basketball team are lacing up for tip-off. The team went 7-10 during their last season and they are gunning for way more this year. Although they lost some powerful seniors they had last year, such as Matthew Brown and William Garwood, there will be many players coming back who are looking to show up and show out for the team. Returning are seniors Julius Pommells and Faheem Denby, as well as juniors Kamau McGill and Theo Chaney.



Senior player Jules Woolsey

I had the pleasure of speaking with Head Coach Murphy about this team and their upcoming season. “I am hopeful that this year's team will adapt to our new style of play,” Murphy said, confidently. By switching over to a more uptempo and aggressive play style, it is evident that the team will go further than they have in the past. “I think they have a chance to be one of the top teams in our division.” When taking a look at the numbers and statistics, Murphy says this is the deepest team he has had yet at Palumbo, “Considering this, we should be able to fly around and make plays.” When asked what he is doing to contribute to the team's success, Murphy said, “being present, accountable, physical, and maintaining a positive attitude. After all, we do it together.”

During the offseason, this team was able to bond, form stronger connections with each other, as well as win a championship. These players were able to compete in many competitions' championships, and were the winners of the 2025 Ricky Tucker Summer League. This is definitely something that they will carry with them throughout the rest of their basketball careers. This team is way different from the last; Coach Murphy expressed that they are stronger, take on all challenges, and believe in each other. “They are eager to learn. There have not been any arguments, despite this being our most aggressive training camp. The guys are accepting the task at hand and helping each other through it.” The future is looking bright for the Palumbo boys' basketball team. Everyone believes they are ready for tip-off.



TENNIS CHAMP

BY MELISSA GOLDING

This fall, sophomore Madina Yuldasheva, a member of Palumbo's tennis team, won the overall Public League singles championship. From the league, top players advance to districts and then to states. Madina started playing tennis around four years old and has grown her love for the sport ever since. She describes tennis as a central part of her life—one she couldn't imagine living without.

As a player, Madina emphasizes the importance of balancing improvement with enjoying the sport. She describes winning to be “almost like a drug,” and that the pressure and stress of the sport is part of what makes winning special. One of tennis' greatest challenges, she says, is that it is largely played alone, requiring players to be their own source of motivation and mental stability. Because tennis is such a mental game, battling one's own thoughts can often determine the outcome of a match. No matter the challenges, Madina hopes to continue playing tennis long after high school, whether at a top college or as a professional.



Photo from Chacko Scarpelli

GIRLS ON THE MAT

BY ELIZABETH DORNEY

Palumbo has a huge sports community, with many of our teams being some of the best in the district. One team that is especially unique is our wrestling team, not only because we have great players and experienced coaches, but because it is one of our few co-ed teams.

Although anyone is welcome to join the wrestling team, the activity remains extremely male dominated. We decided to reach out to Senior Raven Waring, a former team member, about her experience being a girl in a male-dominated team.

Raven, who was on the team for two years, joined her sophomore year with no prior experience. She continued the sport through her junior year, before deciding that she would not return for her senior season.

Raven stated that there were several reasons for her leaving the team, but ultimately gender did play a big role in her decision. She cited that due to the lack of girls in the sport, she often had to wrestle boys, which made it harder to succeed. Raven explained, “Technique of course plays a big role in wrestling, however physical strength is also a big factor. Having to wrestle guys at matches



sucked because we had a bigger chance of losing since the guys were just naturally stronger than us.”

Despite her experience, Raven does not wish to discourage other girls from participating in wrestling or other male-dominated sports. “I hope girls have the courage to participate, and I hope they love it enough to deal with any issues that come. Have confidence in yourself and what you do.” Raven hopes for a more inclusive sport in the future, “Hopefully someday Palumbo will get its own girls’ team!”

STRIKING A CHORD

BY THÉA SALERA-OKDEH

The Academy at Palumbo Rock Band club is hosted every week by Mr. Kennedy in room 329, where students from every grade attend and split into individual groups to practice. The results of this dedication are seen at school wide performances, where songs like Mayonaise, Wonderwall, and In The Aeroplane Over The Sea play for the entire school. I interviewed two students from one of the untitled freshman bands, Zaliyah Simpson and River Barker.

Both students stated that they were enticed by the idea of Rock Band so they could hone their talent on their respective instruments. “Creating music is one of my passions and I’m very interested in continuing to improve my skill,” Zaliyah stated. t wasn’t all great however, seeing as the other student I spoke to, River, quit Rock Band initially, stating that he

disliked the supposed lack of structure, and found it hard to find a group he could stick to due having previous experience with a rock band in middle school that was larger and wasn’t split into individual groups. He rejoined recently, saying “The Fall Feast performance was cool, and I wanted to join again.”

Both students ended their statements saying they want to remain in Rock Band for the rest of their time in high school for the community of other musically inclined students. Though I couldn’t get a statement from everybody, the obvious talent of everyone in the club sets the stage for what will be an impressive showcase the next time they hit the auditorium floor.



Photo from Alice Ramunno



Photo from Una Cutrone

MEET MR. ROSA

BY AHMED AHMED

This year will be Mr. Rosa's first time ever teaching here at Academy at Palumbo, and he teaches U.S. History and Social Science. As a high school student, Mr. Rosa attended a small private school in Maryland before receiving his bachelor's degree from the College of William & Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. Teaching was not Mr. Rosa's first choice; originally, he wanted to become a lawyer. But while he was in college, he changed his mind, and he saw a passion for teaching which led him to have an interest in becoming a professor or high school teacher.

Mr. Rosa found his passion to become a teacher after many high school teachers and college professors inspired him and pushed him to do his absolute best. This led him to enjoy learning new things, reading, writing, and helping others. Today, Mr. Rosa’s favorite part of his job is working with students and getting to know them on a deeper level. Moreover, Mr. Rosa enjoys learning from his students as much as he loves teaching them.

Fun Fact: Most people don't know that Mr Rosa is a pretty good dancer!

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: BEA KAEI

BY UNA CUTRONE

In an interview, soccer MVP Bea Kaeli shares her experience at Palumbo both on and off the field. As her time in high school comes to a close, Bea reflects on the connections she’s made with her teammates that will last long after graduation.

“I’ve been on the soccer team since my freshman year, and I was Co-Captain this year alongside Nina Ramunno. It’s probably been one of my favorite teams to work with, everyone is very supportive.” Bea’s dedication to the team was recognized recently, as she won the title of All-Public MVP. More than the new title, Bea shares that one of the most rewarding moments of playing for the team was her final game against Franklintown this year. “Though we did lose, enjoying that last moment of being on the soccer team, and telling everyone how proud I was of them, was really bittersweet.”



Bea is also a member of Palumbo’s basketball and flag football teams, both of which have provided her meaningful friendships. “With basketball, it’s a smaller team. There’s not as many players on the court. So you need to be more intimate with your teammates, and you really have to connect with them because it’s a more compact group.”

“What I love about flag football is how me joining the team was honestly random. I didn’t know what I was going to do in the spring, until Coach Donnelly recommended flag football. But playing for the past three years has been amazing. I never thought I’d love it so much.”

Although Bea is a pro at sports, she isn’t a natural at everything. Bea shares that her role as a Griffin Ambassador has taught her a lot about presentation and public speaking, which used to be one of her weak spots. “At first, it was actually intimidating. I’m not the best public speaker. But I just like sharing about school. Now that I’ve been doing it a while, it comes easy to me now, so I think it’s been a good thing to help me get out of my comfort zone a bit.”

Whether she’s scoring goals or giving tours, Bea has made the most of her time at Palumbo. “I’ll definitely miss the teachers and friends that I grew up with, but I’m looking forward to meeting new people and broadening my horizons.”



THE FLIGHTLESS BIRDS

BY ABRAHAM WRIGHT

It was just the 23rd of November when the Philadelphia Eagles were 8-2 and up against the Dallas Cowboys 21-0. Yet since then, the team has managed to lose three games in a row, including that Dallas game, each of which resulted from a lack of execution by the Eagles.

Ask around, and fans are divided on where to place the blame for these fumbles. The main topic of conversation is the newly hired Offensive Coordinator, Kevin Patullo. After being a part of the Eagles’ staff for five years, Coach Nick Sirianni assigned him the role of calling plays for the offense, which has been unfavorable as the Eagles’ offense has often been predictable. Other teams sniff out the inside handoffs to Saquon Barkley, and the curl routes done by the wide receivers are part of the reason why the Eagles rank among the NFL’s worst in third-down conversions.

Another figure who has drawn criticism is Super Bowl 59 MVP Jalen Hurts. It is without question that the play calling by

mediocre, with inaccurate passes and poor decision making. This was highlighted in the December 8th primetime game against the Los Angeles Chargers, where the Eagles lost 22-19 in overtime and Jalen had a total of 5 turnovers, two of which occurred in the same sequence. Fans cringed watching Hurts fumble the ball himself after just recovering the ball from an interception.

Similarly, the Offensive Line has not been up to par. The Eagles lost a key piece in Mekhi Becton during free agency, and with injuries occurring almost weekly along the line, it has become increasingly difficult for Saquon Barkley to be as explosive as he was last season. Couple that with AJ Brown dropping passes, and you have little to no productivity in the offense.

With playoffs nearing and the lead in the division shortening, the Eagles need to have more consistent offense. It is the hope that the Philadelphia Eagles get it together sooner rather than later to salvage their season from a distasteful collapse.

THE GRIFFIN GRID

BY AARON COHEN

Fill in each box with a Palumbo teacher that meets both qualifications. Answers can be found on the Griffin Gazette bulletin board outside of room 329.

	Bilingual	From NY	Brown Hair
0-3 Years at Palumbo			
Teaches 2 Different Classes			
Plays an Instrument			

WINTER WARFARE

BY RIANNA YANG



INSIDE STUDENT TEACHING

BY AARON COHEN

I have had the pleasure of talking with two student teachers at Palumbo, Mr. Ngo and Ms. Pierce, as well as Ms.Bennett, a previous Palumbo student teacher who now works here full-time. They handed down useful information for those interested in becoming teachers.

Q: How has Palumbo readied you to be a full-time teacher?

Mr.Ngo: Having to adapt and learn in a very community-based way was a great environment to start teaching in. The work and student culture in general has taught me a lot.

Ms.Pierce: I got to learn from multiple teachers who are friendly, helpful, and positive. Creating relationships with students prepared me for positive classroom management.

Ms.Bennett: I had a fantastic mentor, Mrs. Compo-Martin. I got lots of constructive feedback that allowed me to take risks and try new teaching methods.

Q: How do you plan to apply what you’ve learned into your own teaching?

Mr.Ngo: I’ll use systems from fellow teachers and adapt lesson plans and ideas that I think could work in the right environment.

Ms.Pierce: By using what I learned about time management, patience, lesson planning, and skills to facilitate discussions.

Q: What have you liked about Palumbo as a student teacher?

Mr.Ngo: I like the environment and the community. I like that Palumbo has a student body and kids who want to learn. I think Palumbo is more relaxed, and the culture in general makes it a fun environment to learn in.

Ms.Pierce: I like that all students want to be here to learn. My first wave of students were funny, respectful, smart, polite, and talented. I love all of the community building, fun assemblies, and that student success is acknowledged.

Q: What motivated you to pursue a career in teaching?

Mr.Ngo: A lot can be better in schools, and the role of a teacher and their impact is very important. The teacher is the most accessible and meaningful change in school, and helping students learn and feel comfortable in a school environment is important.

Ms.Pierce: I want to build positive relationships, and encourage students to consider injustices that are relevant in modern society.

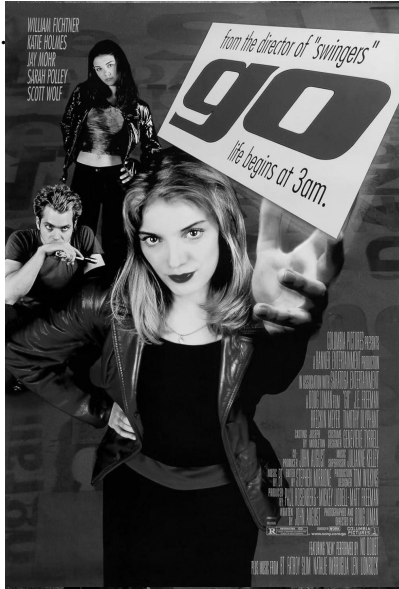
Ms.Bennett: Every time I think about what I can do in my life other than teaching, there's kind of nothing; it's what I want to do. Helping others figure things out. I loved books, and I chose teaching high school for deep conversations and intellectual thinking.

COHEN’S CORNER: WINTER MOVIES

BY AARON COHEN

As winter break approaches, here are my recommendations for some holiday movies to get in the holiday spirit.

Die Hard:At an office Christmas party, John McClaine, a New York policeman played by Bruce Willis, discovers a ploy by a group of terrorists who take over the high-rise building. As police try to control the situation, McClaine realizes he is the only one who can save the hostages. Bruce Willis delivers some memorable and funny moments that still get referenced today. The villain Hans Gruber, portrayed by Alan Rickman, gives one of the better performances of his career. Overall, Die Hard is an action-packed and fun winter movie that you don’t need to think too hard about to enjoy.



Go (1999): Go is a crime-comedy that revolves around four people's perspectives of events leading up to a Christmas themed rave. The movie takes place in both LA and Vegas, following the life of a supermarket cashier trying to make rent, a Brit on his first trip to Vegas with friends, and two soap opera actors trying to get out of jail time.. Go is a cult classic that showcases rave culture at its peak and characters that, despite the split storytelling, remain memorable throughout.

Krampus: Despite the usual cheer during holidays, a young boy, Max, and his dysfunctional family make him resent Christmas, which releases a mythical demon from European folklore, Krampus. As a blizzard rages around town, Max and his family must band together to survive what was supposed to be the jolliest time of the year. Krampus is one of the rarer holiday horror films that doesn’t get talked about enough. While many Christmas themed films revolve around an evil Santa, Krampus relies on folklore, effective horror, and suspense while utilizing bits of humor.



Grand Budapest Hotel: A writer stays in a renowned hotel, where he strikes up conversation with the owner, Zero Moustafa, who tells his tale of rags to riches. Zero takes viewers back in time to the 1930’s, where he was a lobby boy for the hotel’s concierge, Gustave. After a client mysteriously dies during her visit, there is a manhunt for Gustave. What follows is a story of loyalty, friendship, class, and morality which makes one of Wes Anderson’s highest praised movies. It’s an enthralling experience with great acting and cinematography that will certainly move viewers.

