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The Phoenix Times

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The Official Publication of Albuquerque School Of Excellence
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VOLUME NO: 1

ISSUE NO: 7

FEBRUARY 2021

ASE starts phased hybrid re-entry by: Camree Volk

The Albuquerque School of Excellence - Governing Council (ASE-GC) approved Phase 1 and Phase 2 of a phased re-entry plan during the GC meeting held last February 20, 2021. Phase 3 was not approved.

The phase 1 hybrid re-entry plan was approved by the GC council with a vote of 3-1

and started effective Monday, March 1, 2021 for Grades K-3 and 6.

The phase 2 hybrid re-entry plan was approved by the GC council with a vote of 3-1 and will start effective Monday, March 8, 2021 for grades 4, 5, & 7.

The phase 3 hybrid re-entry plan for grades 8-12 was not approved having a 2-2 votes.

ASE has passed the New Mexico Public Education Department's Covid-19 re-entry guidelines.

Students who opted for the hybrid platform are divided into 2 groups, cohorts A and B.

Cohort A goes to school on Mondays and Tuesdays while cohort B on Thursdays and Fridays.

Social distancing, mask wearing, temperature check, and other important Covid-19 protocols are put in place.

All ASE buildings are sanitized on a regular basis and scheduled Wednesdays and Fridays for deep cleaning.

All students will have the option to remain online.



WAITING FOR YOU! Desks with plexiglass and chairs 6 feet apart in preparation for in-person learning (February 2021) Photo Credit: Ms. Angela Lopez



ASE partners with PITSCO for STEM-based career preparation By: Marwa Zameer

Albuquerque School of Excellence (ASE) has partnered with PITSCO Education to bring together hands-on learning experiences that prepare students with a skill set that can help them be successful in their future career choice.

PITSCO Education partnered with ASE to move the Modules labs into the future with Career Expeditions - the latest in progressive inquiry-based curriculum that enables students to gain valuable experiences with a variety of

careers, which provides a platform for students to practice the collaboration and creative problem solving required in today's global society; which **cont. on p3**



YOUNG SCIENTISTS—be ready! PITSCO delivers educational materials at ASE—Elementary campus. (February 2021) Photo Credit: Ms. Jasmin Arias

2021-2022 ASE enrollment application continues

by : Jackson Tiesi

Albuquerque School of Excellence (ASE) will have its live enrollment lottery for school year 2021-2022 on April 21, 2021 at 3:00 in the afternoon.

The enrollment applications started last January 15, 2021 and will close at midnight of April 15, 2021.

Available slots vary between grade levels and siblings of current ASE students are given a priority level.

Other family members of current students, such as cousins, are not eligible for sibling preference.

Prospective students can apply **cont. on p2**

ASE launches E-Sports amid pandemic – Sydney Koranyi

The E-Sports league has drawn Albuquerque School of Excellence's (ASE) students and community together throughout these challenging times due to the Covid-19 pandemic with a new and modern sport.

Students and teachers have been able to form new connections and gain new knowledge in technology and entertainment.

There are 30 members who joined the club, who meet through the Discord platform.

6th to 12th grade students is eligible to join.

The E-Sports league meets every Wednesday and Thursday from 3:15 to 5:00 in the afternoon. Participants in the E-Sports league play games such as Rocket League and Minecraft, and plan on starting League of Legends next year.

Within the next year, ASE hopes to purchase new gaming consoles, better graphic packs, and gaming chairs.

The league also hopes to begin in person

practices later this year or over the summer.

Once in person practices and competitions begin, there will be tryouts as the seat numbers will be limited.

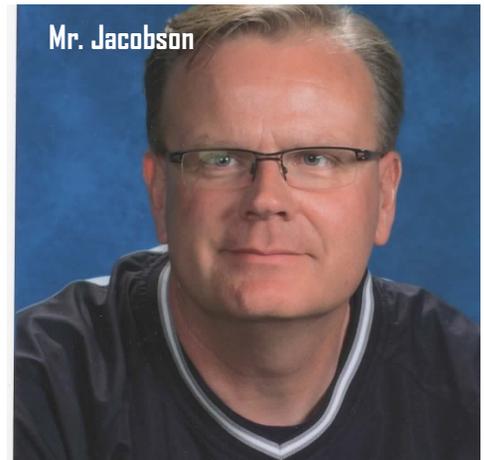
Mr. Curt Jacobson and Mr. Jordan Schweitzer are the organizers of the ASE E-Sports league.

This is Mr. Jacobson's sixth year at ASE as coach and sports director and Mr. Schweitzer's first year teaching 6th grade World History.

According to Mr. Schweitzer, being an organizer of the E-Sports League has personally helped him by building relationships with his students in a less strict way; and said that he is able to enjoy pursuing one of his hobbies with others.

Mr. Jacobson also said that he has learned new technical aspects of computers and has really felt a community being formed.

For more inquiries, contact the organizers.



Mr. Jacobson



Mr. Schweitzer

(Cont. – 2021-2022 ASE enrollment)

via the ASE website under "Enrollment Application."

For current ASE students who are returning, parents are advised to follow re-enrollment guidelines.

The re-enrollment applications started last February 15, 2021 and will close on March 31, 2021.

Currently enrolled ASE students must re-enroll each school year to keep their spots.

To re-enroll, parents/guardians need to create an account via SchoolMint at <https://abqse.schoolmint.net/signin>.

After creating an account and entering child's information, then log in via the same website and select "Returning."

There is no additional re-enrollment packet, though the system prompts a button for it; all current students' information is already in the database.

ASE looks forward for school-related bills to pass by Jackson Tiesi

The 55th annual New Mexico Legislative Session started on Tuesday, January 19, 2021 and will wrap on Saturday, March 20, 2021.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, most of the sessions are taking place virtually; though some of the legislators are at the Capitol Building in Santa Fe, many are still working remotely.

The incoming Representative Meredith Dixon (D) and Senator Martin Hickey (D) are representing NM District 20, where Albuquerque School of Excellence is.

Some critical pieces of legislation currently being discussed are House Bill (HB) 163, HB 175, and Senate Bill (SB) 51.

HB 163, relating to public education: allowing financial management to count as an elective in sixth through eighth grades; amending graduation requirements; requiring one-half unit of financial management prior to graduation, which will

allow schools including ASE to add classes on financial management-related courses.

HB 175, relating to public school finance: holding school districts and charter schools harmless in Fiscal Year 2022 funding formula calculations for effects of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Pandemic on enrollment and transportation; providing for a supplemental distribution from the state equalization guarantee distribution appropriation, which will allow the schools not to be financially affected due to the number of students who have disenrolled in the current school year.

SB 51, relating to charter schools: providing an enrollment preference for students whose parents are employees of the charter school, which will allow children of employees to have a guaranteed slot during an enrollment period, thus giving schools an easier teacher recruitment and retainment.

(Cont.—ASE partners with PITSCO...)

includes cloud-delivered multimedia curriculum, use of the existing collaboration ready environment at each school, and supporting professional development to ensure teacher and student success.

In partnership with PITSCO, ASE – Elementary Department will be provided with STEM Units, STREAM Missions, Smart Buddies™ coding solution designed to increase diversity to Code Cube™, a wearable coding tool that brings equity and access to all students, to the SEL skills inherent in Smart Buddies, as well as to the hands-on activities in the Microduino MIX Kits. "

PITSCO Education offers age-appropriate,

student-centered K-12 learning solutions in STEM. Math and Science. acceleration is composed of standards-based, relevant hands-on activities delivered via a student-focused learning process which are equally robust and engaging.

The ASE – Middle School Department will be offered courses in STEM design and Career designs, which will include Artistic Communication, Mechanical Makers, Remote Aquabotics, Top Dog Architecture, Under Pressure, and Vital Signs.

The ASE – High School Department will be offered courses under Project Lead the Way (PLTW) and Biomedical Science, which will allow students to solve real and pressing

questions, which include Automation and Robotics, App Creators, Principles of Biomedical Science, Human Body Systems, Medical Interventions, and Biomedical Innovation.

These courses will help students work together in teams to find solutions for different questions and learn skills such as critical thinking and communication.

Diversified Educational Systems, Inc. (DES) is proud to represent this well-recognized and trusted brand in education which is the sole Authorized Educational Reseller for PITSCO Education "Systems" products in the mid-Atlantic.



PITSCO MAKER-SPACE READY TO ROLL! PITSCO delivers educational materials at ASE—Elementary campus. (February 2021) Photo Credit: Ms. Jasmin Arias



EDITORIAL

Is it worth the risk? by Camree Volk



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New Mexico's Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham recently allowed the option for New Mexico schools to return to hybrid learning starting February 8th, 2021.

Albuquerque School of Excellence (ASE) held a Governing Council Meeting on February 20th, 2021 to make the decision on whether to return to hybrid learning.

After extensive consideration, the Governing Council approved Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the hybrid re-entry plan at ASE, allowing students from Kindergarten through 7th grade to attend hybrid classes. Phase 3 on the other hand, which would have allowed students from 8th through 12th grade to return to hybrid was not approved.

The decision on whether to re-open for hybrid or not was an exceedingly difficult decision, and many valid points have been made in both directions. It has been almost a complete year since the school went online due to Covid-19. It has been a whole year since students have been engaged in a classroom, spent in person time with their friends, and so many student's mental health has declined. On top of all that, students' grades have been suffering as well. Face to face education is the best way possible for students to be successful. There were many concerns brought up, specially with regards to the

safety of everyone; yet the school is PPE prepared and passed the state's walkthrough with flying colors.

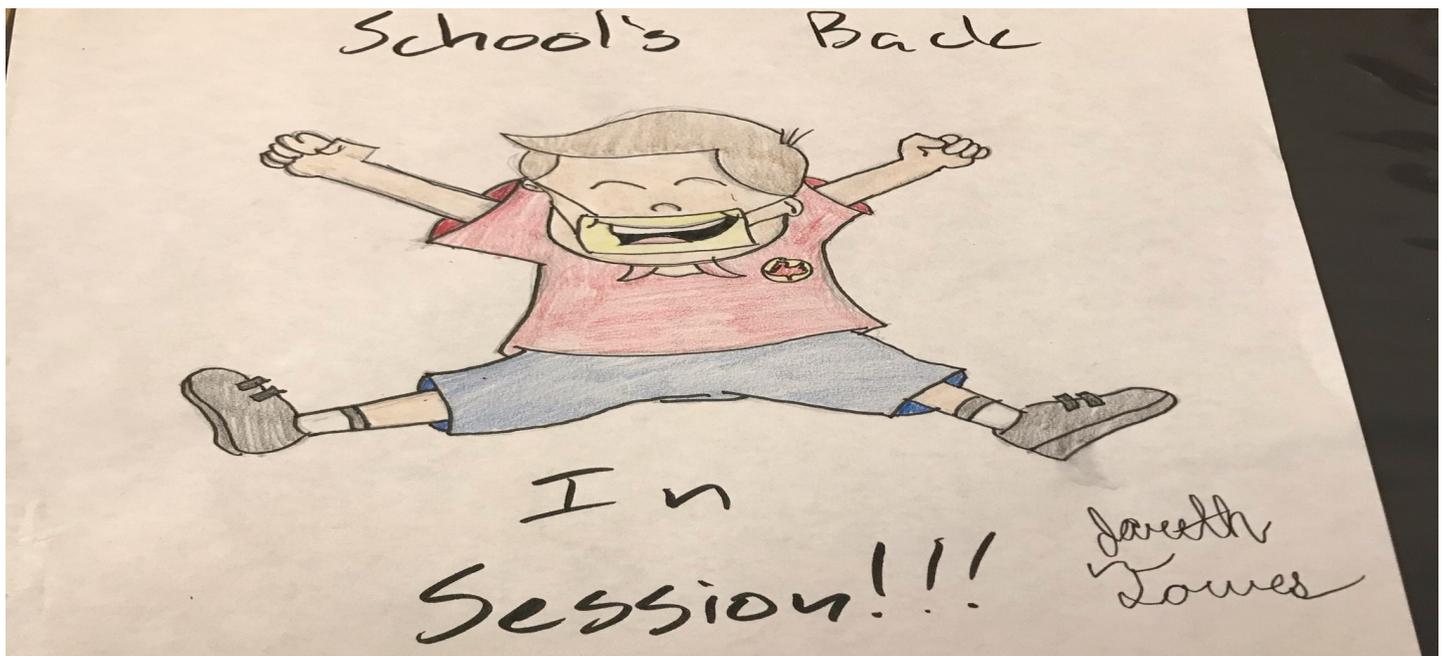
Many parents, students, and teachers believe it is imperative that students return to school, even if it is only for two days of the week. The risk will always be there, but with proper Covid-19 practices, ASE hopes to make it successful.

As for the students' grades, summer intervention has been suggested for those struggling with online school. There is also concern about the quality of education, as hybrid may be harder for teachers and may make it more difficult for them to teach effectively. With only 40 more days in the school year, some wonder if going hybrid would even be worth it in the end.

Likewise, Covid-19 is still here, though it is declining. Spring break starts soon, and since a quarantine is not being required, more people are now very eager to travel, causing higher risk for anyone in contact with those who travel.

The question remains, is the risk worth the reward? After considering all the points made, it seemed essential that at least some of the students could return to hybrid. ASE hopes to see happier, more well-rounded students after the return to hybrid. They hope

to create a risk-free safe environment for those who choose to return, and still provide the best education they can for those remaining online and those who choose to stay online.



Human Invention Lands in Mars by Sydney Koranyi

As Neil Armstrong once said, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," we have made another giant leap for mankind with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Mars Perseverance Rover.

The rover landed on the Jezero crater located on Mars on February 18th, 2021. The Perseverance Rover has six wheels and is the size of a car.

The Perseverance's mission is to gather more data about geologic and atmospheric conditions. Scientists at NASA are looking for signs of ancient microbial life and to see if life ever inhabited Mars. The groundbreaking feature of the Perseverance Rover is being able to take the first ever panorama of Mars capturing a 360 view of the "red planet".

The first panoramic photo was produced

on February 20th, 2021 by stitching together 142 images into one large panorama. This panorama view shows a crater rim and cliff face.

The rover is equipped with the Mastcam-Z which is a high quality dual-camera system, enabling the camera to zoom in, focus, and take high-definition videos and pictures, in addition to full color panoramic view and 3-dimensional photos.

Through these cameras, scientists will be able to study close and distant objects, identifying rocks and sediments deserving of a closer inspection and what would be worthy samples to bring back to earth.

"We're nestled right in a sweet spot, where you can see different features similar in many ways to features found by Spirit, Opportunity, and Curiosity at their landing

sites," quoted Jim Bell, the instrument's principal investigator.

The camera team talked about the new panorama shots during a question-and-answer period on Thursday, February 25th, 2021. It was held live on NASA Television and other social media outlets. Speakers included Jim Bell of Arizona State University's School of Earth and Space Exploration, the instrument's principal investigator, Elsa Jensen of Malin Space Science Systems, who leads the uplink operations team that sends commands to Mastcam-Z, and Kjartan Kinch of the Niels Bohr Institute of the University of Copenhagen, who led the design, construction, and testing of Mastcam-Z's color calibration targets, which are used to tune the instrument's settings. Anyone can still view these discussions on some of the platforms such as YouTube.

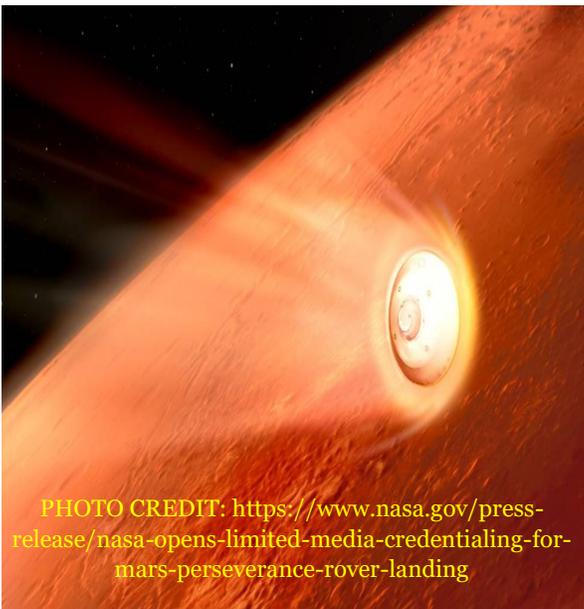


PHOTO CREDIT: <https://www.nasa.gov/press-release/nasa-opens-limited-media-credentialing-for-mars-perseverance-rover-landing>



PHOTO CREDIT: <https://www.nasa.gov/press-release/nasa-invites-public-to-share-thrill-of-mars-perseverance-rover-landing>



PHOTO CREDIT: <https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/thumbnails/image/pia24264-supplement-crater-rim.jpg>

Art is Everywhere By: Abigail White



Ms. Lisa Marie Barren can make her students comfortable as well as productive. She makes her class more enjoyable by playing music and being silly with her students, "I think they can see that I'm human... So, I think it is a little bit more relatable," she said.

Most of her unique ways of teaching and running her classroom have persisted, but because of quarantine, everything changed in some way. One of the things that has been affected most in her class are the materials.

Although there are obvious obstacles, her

art students have adapted well to using things that they can find around their own homes.

It is very apparent that art and teaching are a particularly important part of Ms. Barren's life, but there is a lot more to her than just her work. She is a very energetic and sometimes talkative person. Her hobbies include reading and listening to scary stories, whether they are real or fake. She also enjoys legends and mythology from all kinds of different cultures. She likes to spend time with her dog Trixie as well as her teacher friends.

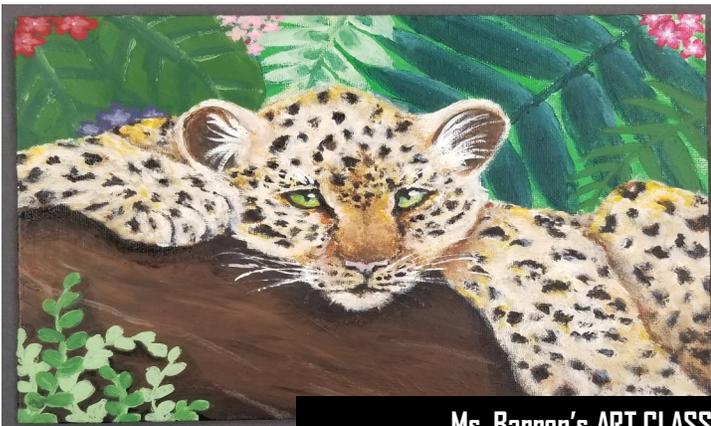
Ms. Barren gets along well with the staff and it is not surprising considering how long she has worked in Albuquerque School of Excellence.

She has been working at ASE for almost eleven years now. She says that the staff are kind and friendly. She can be herself and teach the way that works best for her students and she has never felt any judgment from the ASE staff.

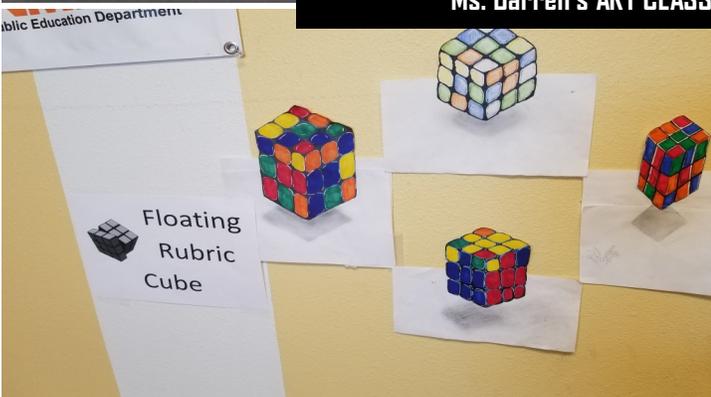
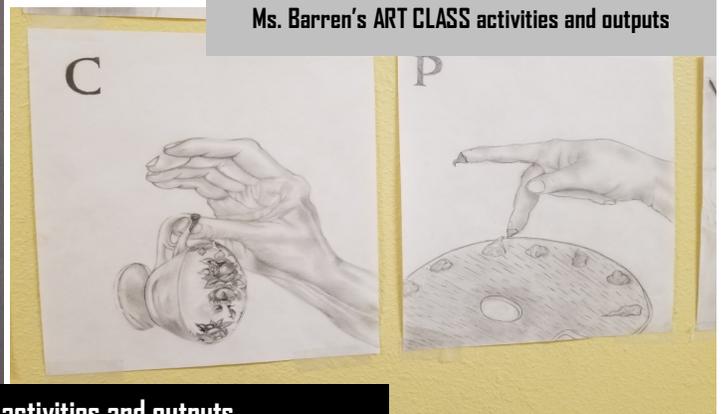
Ms. Barren is able to find art in everything and incorporate it into her everyday life and that is one of her strengths not only as an art teacher but as a person. One message that she always tells her students and plans to tell future students is, "You will always have art, it's always there. No matter what, no matter where you are. It is always there to be experienced, for you to experience... You don't need to get a degree in art to live every day as an artist." **cont. on p7**



Ms. Barren's ART CLASS activities and outputs



Ms. Barren's ART CLASS activities and outputs



(Cont.— Art is Everywhere)

Ms. Barren has a long history with teaching, more specifically teaching art.

She used to work at a shop on the UNM campus where students would always come by. Ms. Barren was incredibly involved in their projects that she was able to feel creative through their creation of art; it all just came so naturally for her.

Eventually, she started working at a gallery where she was asked to watch a class because the teacher was no longer going to show up. Instead of just watching the class, she taught them and ultimately started teaching that class full time.

Ms. Barren is incredibly gifted in art. She has a bachelor's degree and a master's degree in Fine Arts, as well as a K-12 teaching license. Although Ms. Barren herself has not won any awards she is not disheartened at all, "Right now, it's more about the students entering in competitions and them winning something," said Ms. Barren.

Her students do join competitions. Some of the competitions that they regularly join are the Hispanic Heritage Youth Art Contest, National Aviation Youth Art Contest, Endangered Species Youth Art Contest, University of New Mexico Youth Art Show, and Doodle for Google.

Ms. Barren allows her students to find their own art style and makes a space where their creativeness can thrive. She does this by not only encouraging them to join the art contests but also by using her grading system.

A lot of art teachers will teach students by showing them a piece of art and telling them to copy it to get a good grade, not Ms. Barren, she gives them the liberty to create their own art.

One of her most important class policies is that they are always encouraged to do their own work and put their own spin on the prompt or lesson; but because there are not boxes to fill out in terms of grading the kids' work, she came up with her own system for grading and it mostly boils down to

participation and effort. The system has three tiers: above average, average, and then there is the under level.

Above-average means that they are putting in the effort to do good on their art projects and then some more effort to further understand the lesson. Average means that they are putting in the effort to do their project and understand the lesson, but they are not necessarily going out of their way to do anything. The under level means that the student's behavior was inappropriate and/or disruptive and there was no effort to complete the work or understand the lesson.



Ms. Barren's Art Class Competition entries and winners



STUDENTS OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER & JANUARY

Taylor White



STUDENT OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER

Taylor White - 12th Grade

She is enthusiastic about her education, willing to work hard to improve her analysis and writing skills. She has excellent attendance and great communication skills. **By Ms. Katherine Hurst**

STUDENT OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY

Zoey Feliz - Kindergarten

Zoey Feliz is wise beyond her years. She can read between the lines and explain the real message of lessons with respect and kindness to others. Zoey knows that giving is better than receiving. During zoom meetings she uses her voice to share her feelings concerning personal hardships, life lessons, and appreciations of others. She is not afraid to speak up when she hears an incorrect response to something she knows for a fact. Zoey's role models are front line workers, and it shows. Zoey has been dealing with on-line learning from home, hybrid learning at school, as well as zooming from a location away from her family. Yet she continues to attend all classes consistently, focus and participate in all tasks and discussions independently, and complete homework assignments on time. Zoey is an extraordinary Kindergarten student. She is confident, articulate, determined, and focused. Zoey also expresses how important it is to maintain social distancing, wear a mask, and keep everything clean during this challenging time. I'm confident that Zoey Feliz is destined to do great things in the future.. **By Mrs. Catherine Boone**

Shalome Meried - 1st Grade

Shalome sets her own timer to make sure she makes it to every class, even my intervention/reading times. She is very responsible and follows all my directions, mostly on her own as mom and dad both works. Another aspect of Shalome that makes her outstanding is she is kind to her fellow students and watches out for everyone. I am grateful to have her in my class. **By Mrs. Lisa Aniello**

Malania Salazar - 2nd Grade

I am nominating Malania Salazar. Having Malania in class has been a joy. This is the second time I nominate her. Malania is an ideal student. She attends each day, completes her work in time with a positive attitude, and maintains very good grades. What I love most about having Malania in class is her enthusiasm for completing her homework on Seesaw. She makes great videos in which she explains her thinking, shows her steps, and is careful and neat with everything she turns in. Malania has excellent manners and shows respect to her classmates. She waits her turn on Zoom, raises her hand, and is sure not to interrupt the teacher or others. Malania has shown growth in all areas of school, especially in her 1st station goals, surpassing them in both math and reading. She is a strong student with a love of learning. **By Ms. Cristina Sherman**

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY

Lane Johnson - 3rd Grade

He is always ready to learn and he is responsible with his assignments and willing to answer questions in class. **By Mrs. Leslee Landavazo**



Lane Johnson

Rylee McClain - 4th Grade

Rylee is a very dedicated student who cares about his education. He volunteers to read and participates in class and is always willing to help his peers. Most impressive has been his ability to focus on Zoom and do his lessons well when his house was under remodeling construction in the background! **By Mrs. Lorette Lambert**

Allison Zamora - 5th Grade

Alli is a fantastic ASE student. She always has her best effort when she comes to class. Her upbeat and positive attitude affects the class in so many ways. Alli works with the other students, gives them positive statements and helps them with explanations and ways to figure it out. Alli strives to do her best every time we meet and her performance in zoom and other work is outstanding. She is aware of her struggles and is open in learning how to learn from them. Alli adds to our discussions, reads out loud with voice and comes to class ready to learn. She is a joy to teach. **By Ms. Patti Martinez**



Allison Zamora



Zee Switzer

Zee Switzer - 6th Grade

Seriously she deserves it. I cannot even explain how stellar she is. She is always on top of her stuff. She participates when no one else will and over all she is just such a positive influence on her peers. **By Mr. Jordan Schweitzer**

Simora Belone - 7th Grade

Simora is a good student who attends all Zoom sessions and participates frequently. **By Shawn Mrs. Graybeal-Sellers**



Simora Belone

Jarom Wallace - 8th Grade

Jarom has good academic standing. He actively participates in Zoom and submits all assignments on time. **By Ms. Judy Ma**

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY

Antonio Paulson



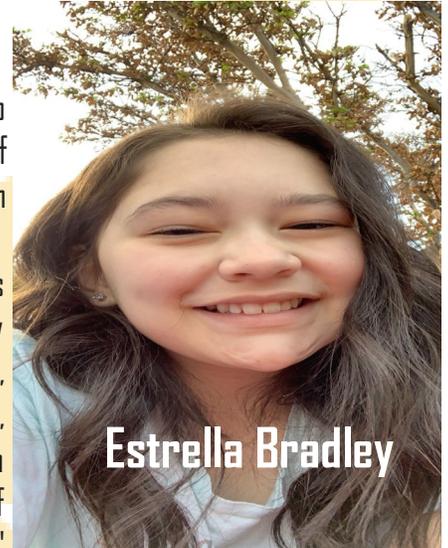
Antonio Paulson – 9th Grade

Antonio always shows up ready to participate in class. He always has an easy-going disposition and demonstrates a sense of humor by wearing goofy hats. He is a good role model, turning on his camera for each class. He goes over and above to perform academically, maintaining straight "A"s in my classes.

By Ms. Patricia MacDonald

Estrella Bradley - 10th Grade

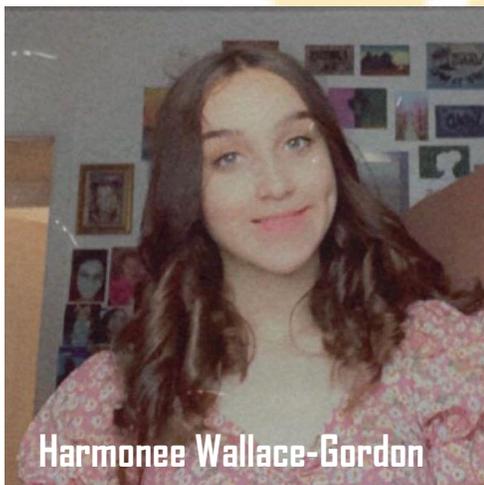
Estrella is a conscientious student who advocates well for the learning needs of herself and her classmates. She is always a joy to have in class! By Mrs. Mary Tither



Estrella Bradley

Estrella is hardworking polite, and a very responsible student. She is always willing to help when I ask her to and serves as one of the best examples of "how things should be done" in my Algebra II class. She consistently does excellent work, and her level of communication is excellent during a tough time. On top of all else, she is an excellent math student, she usually is exactly where I need her to be in both the class and the lab, and is usually achieve remarkably high scores on most, if not all, of her assignments, quizzes, and tests. She is a great student and person!"

By Mr. David Naylor



Harmonee Wallace-Gordon

Estrella is an excellent student. She is committed to her education and often goes above and beyond the required classwork. She is eager to improve her writing, and takes initiative in finding ways to do so. She accepts challenges with determination and a growth mindset. She is also very kind and extremely creative." By: Ms. Katherine Hurst

Nominated By Mr. Hakan Sisek

Harmonee Wallace-Gordon - 11th Grade

Harmonee is an excellent student. She works hard and attends all Zoom sessions. By: Shawn Graybeal-Sellers

Tayshaun Begay - 12th Grade

Tayshaun's artistic creativity is really showing this year. His English Literature teacher, Ms. Hurst praised him for his excellent work on Haikus in their poetry section. His attendance all year has been outstanding—no "senioritis" here! He is leading the senior class by his efforts to keep his grades up this semester and we are all proud to see him graduate from ASE! By Mrs. Karen Madsen

TEACHER OF THE MONTH FOR DECEMBER

ELEMENTARY LEVEL

Ms. Jaynee Hall

by Beau Weaver

"So be sure when you step, step with care and great tact. And remember that life's a great balancing act." -Dr. Seuss.

Meet Ms. Jaynee Hall, a K-3 teacher at Albuquerque School of Excellence (ASE).

Ms. Hall has 13 years of teaching experience and this is her first year of teaching in ASE.

She earned her bachelor's degree in Education and her master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction from the New Mexico State University.

Ms. Hall has been married for 6 years and has two beautiful daughters. She took two years off from teaching to spend time with her family. "This is my first year back and it's been challenging, but I love teaching," she said.

Ms. Hall and her husband own four restaurants located in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

One of her main hobbies is to run in marathons. In fact, she has run 13 marathons and 10 half marathons. She has also qualified for the Boston Marathon 3 times.

Ms. Hall also loves to bake with her daughters; she spends lots of her free time in the kitchen.

Ms. Hall is thankful for how kind and helpful everyone is in the school community.



HIGH SCHOOL LEVEL

Mr. Curt Jacobson

by Sarah Adi



As an ASE staff, this man can easily be recognized, because of his height and his affiliation to the ASE basketball team.

Mr. Curt Jacobson teaches PE and Health to 6-12 grade students in Albuquerque School of Excellence (ASE). He is the man responsible for developing the ASE basketball team as coach over the years and is presently one among the

advisers of the Esports League.

He taught in the Business and Hospitality Department of Central New Mexico Community College (CNM) for seven years and has been a part of ASE for six years now.

"ASE has changed tremendously over the years. When I started, we only had about 200 students. The amount of change is astonishing," Mr. Jacobson said.

"Coach Jacobson" as he is used to be called earned his bachelor's degree in Comparative Politics from the University of Puget Sound Tacoma, WA and his master's degree in Hospitality Management from Purdue University. He also got the chance to study in Denmark and Poland.

Students and faculty at ASE know him for developing the boys' basketball team over the years, as well as his height. "I am easy to spot because I am the tallest person at ASE. Everyone asks me how tall I am etc. If they want to know I am 6'6", 230 pounds and wear a size 16 double extra wide shoe," he said.

His hobbies are mountain biking, fishing, hiking, camping, and generally about anything outdoors. He has three kids that keep me busy and active when he is not coaching.

When asked about what he feels right now, he said, "I can't wait to get sports going again. Hopefully, next year, we can add soccer and Esports to our competitive programs. Maybe this summer we could start practicing again. We will have to see."

MEET The Phoenix Times Editorial Board

Celeste Bivens



My name is Celeste Bivens. I am an 8th grade student here at ASE. I am in the class of 8RTGERS. I am a cartoonist and a feature writer for The Phoenix Times. I have gone to ASE ever since I was in Elementary school.

Some of my favorite hobbies include drawing and hiking. I really like to go camping and enjoy the outdoors a lot. I play piano and guitar and hope to get better at it. I especially like to watch movies and shows. Reading is also one of my favorite hobbies as well.

My favorite subjects in school are math and science. I aspire to be an engineer when I grow up, so learning math and science will help me greatly.

Travelling to foreign places is something I have done ever since I was little. I have visited the Philippines ever since I was 4 years old and went to Japan and South Korea three years ago. I enjoy travelling a lot and hope to travel more in the future after Covid-19 is gone.



ASE is a great school and I enjoy coming here. The teachers here are great, and ASE provides many great learning opportunities.



I will be going to high school here next year and I am gladly looking forward to it. My life will be a difficult one, but I will always try my best to overcome it.

Ericka DeFazio



I am Ericka DeFazio, an eighth-grade student at Albuquerque School of Excellence. This is my first year at ASE, and I am incredibly happy with the sense of community it has. I am part of the Editorial Board of The Phoenix Times and write short stories.

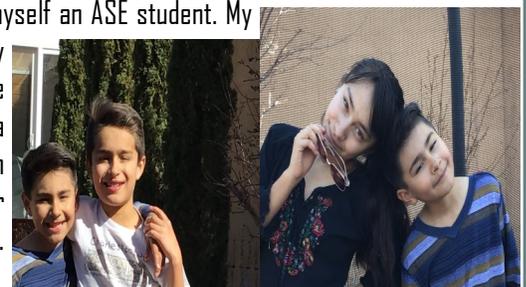
I love literature, and it is an exceedingly rare occasion when friends and family do not catch me with a book in hand! My latest obsessions have been dystopian and historical fiction. I also enjoy writing short stories, and I am working on a full-length novel. Playing the violin is a very calm and mindful activity, and it brings me together with amazing orchestra members and a private teacher. Family and close friends play an enormous role in who I am today, and we have so much fun together.

With two younger brothers, life is *never* boring. Although they are very rowdy and loud, we enjoy playing and reading together. Sometimes we construct their numerous Lego sets, and others, we just play pretend.

My family does have a work-life balance, however. My parents expect me to love learning and work hard at both violin and my studies. It is mostly enjoyable; I have many helpful teachers and peers to ask for help. English, Math, and Art are currently my favorite subjects, although History and Science are both interesting and engaging.

The outdoors is one of my favorite places to be. Over the past year and a half, my family and I have spent countless hours in the mountains behind our house. We bike and hike in many places, including the state parks in our area. Exercise, especially with my family, clears my mind and makes me more active during the day. When I want alone time, I jog or jump on the trampoline at our house. Traveling, though sadly limited during the pandemic, is such a big part of my life. My family and I have treasured memories from the Bahamas, Orlando, Bolivia, Hawaii, and so many other places. These trips bring us together, and with other relatives, and really makes us indulge in teamwork.

ASE is an amazing place to learn and grow, and I am immensely proud to call myself an ASE student. My teachers and my peers encourage me to build a great foundation in both character and responsibility.



CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

1st African-American Astronaut: Mae C. Jemison - By Rebecca Hernandez



PHOTO CREDIT: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mae_Jemison

"Never limit yourself because of others' limited imagination; never limit others because of your own limited imagination." - Mae C. Jemison

Mae C. Jemison was born in Decatur, Alabama on October 17, 1956, which means she is currently 64 years old. Mae C. Jemison had the glory to be the first African American woman to be an astronaut.

When she began attending high school, she was interested in biomedical engineering. After high school, she went to college, and applied for the NASA training program.

After the program, she went up in space with 6 other crew members on September 12, 1992. They were experimenting on the effects of motion sickness and being weightless. They stayed up there for eight days working on that experiment.

After she became an astronaut for NASA, she made a company called Jemison Group to conduct research on technology. She thought that it was critical for people to know that both women and men have a big contribution to society if they are given opportunity.

Her achievements proved that anything is possible if you have the imagination to do it.

For students, especially students of color, Mae C. Jemison serves as an inspiration to dream big, strive hard, and aim for success.

News Credit: Biography.com editors. "Mae C. Jemison." *Biography.com*. A&E Networks Television, 17 Feb. 2021. www.biography.com/astronaut/mae-c-jemison#:~:text=When%20Jemison%20finally%20flew%20into,an%20the%20crew%20and%20herself.https://www.inspiringquotes.us/author/9349-mae-jemison



PHOTO CREDIT: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Mae-Jemison>



PHOTO CREDIT: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mae_Jemison#/media/File:Mae_Jemison.jpg

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Katherine Johnson - By: Marwa Zameer



PHOTO CREDIT: <https://www.nasa.gov/content/katherine-johnson-biography/>

Katherine Johnson worked as a mathematician at NASA. She has been one of the most celebrated black women in space science. The reason for that is because she was a critical part in sending the first spaceship and astronauts into space. She was the mathematician who calculated the orbital mechanics of the U.S. crewed spaceflights. She has been known for mastering complex manual calculations. She has been noted as "historical role as one of the first African-American women to work as a NASA scientist."

Katherine Johnson was born on August 16, 1918, in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, U.S. From an incredibly early age, she developed strong math abilities and graduated from school at age 14. She graduated college with a Ph.D. at the age of 18 and started her career as a teacher in a black public school in Marion, Virginia. Later, after marrying James Goble, she left her job and enrolled in a graduate math program but quit a year after becoming pregnant and decided to take care and focus on her family. She was the first African American woman to attend graduate school at West Virginia University in Morgantown, West Virginia.

After hearing about NACA (National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics) hiring African American mathematicians at the Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory, based in Hampton, Virginia, she decided to work there. Despite racial discrimination, there were also gender inequalities, but Katherine Johnson ignored them. As the years went by of her working at NACA, she proved that she could solve overly complex math. She solved the trajectory for the May 5, 1961 space flight of Alan Shepard.

She has also received many awards. Some of them include the following. One, NASA Group Achievement Award. Two, Presidential Medal of Freedom (2015). Lastly, Congressional Gold Medal (2019). As a result, she had received many awards in her life-

time.

She has been an inspiration to many for the following reasons. One, she had a critical role in sending the first Spaceship to space. Two, despite racial and gender inequality, she succeeded in what she wanted. She fought for her rights. Lastly, she did not give up. Therefore, for all her heroic acts, she has been an inspiration to many people.

She passed away at age 101 on February 24, 2020, in Newport News, Virginia. Reference Credit: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Katherine_Johnson



PHOTO CREDIT: <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/katherine-johnson-the-girl-who-loved-to-count>



PHOTO CREDIT: <https://www.ft.com/content/8727b506-5a09-11ea-abe5-8e03987b7b20>

FEBRUARY: HOLIDAYS, OBSERVANCES, AND CELEBRATIONS

Black History Month - February 2021



Photo Credit: <https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/black-history-month>

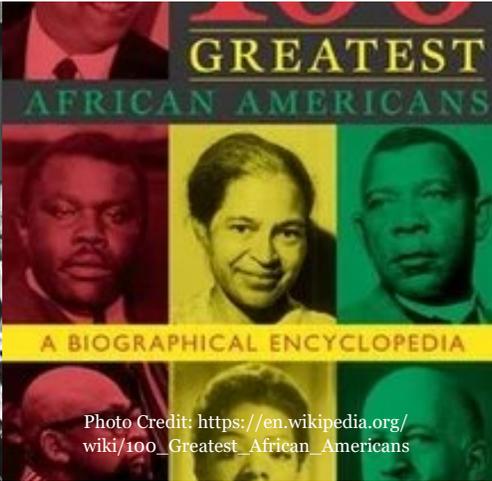


Photo Credit: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/100_Greatest_African_Americans

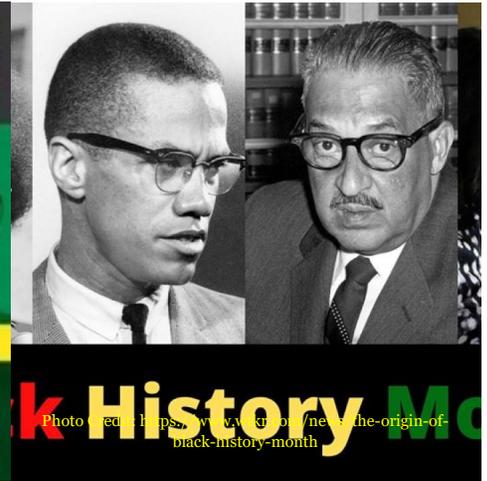


Photo Credit: <https://www.fox.com/news/the-origin-of-black-history-month>

Valentine's Day - February 14, 2021

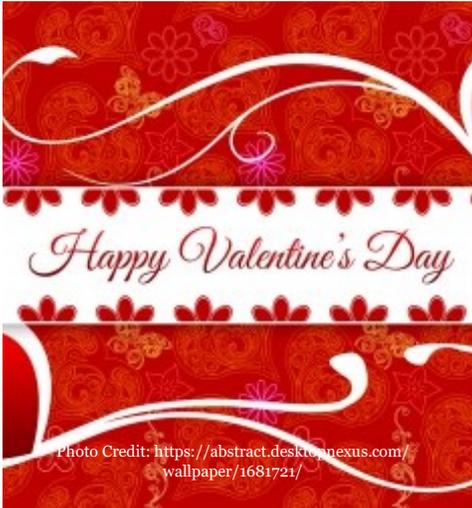


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President's Day - February 15, 2020

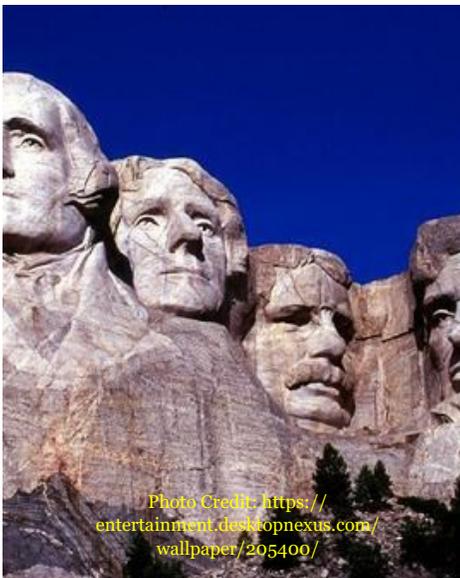


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Photo Credit: <https://www.briannia.com/foibles/Presidents-Day>

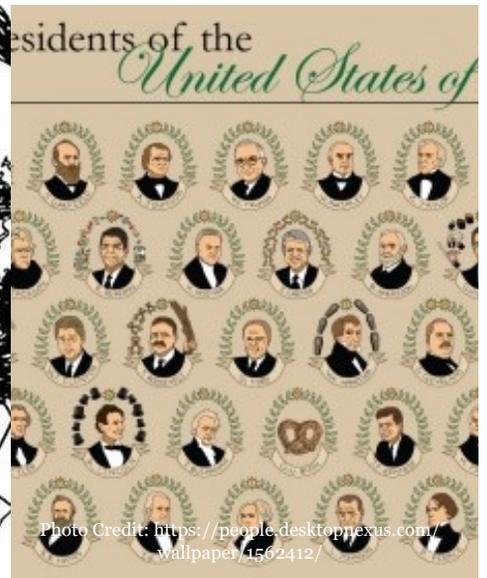


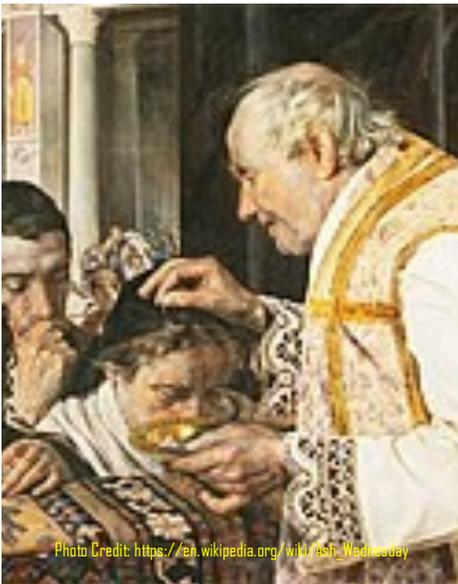
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FEBRUARY : HOLIDAYS, OBSERVANCES, AND CELEBRATIONS

Mardi Gras – February 16, 2021



Ash Wednesday – February 17, 2021



Purim Starts – February 26, 2021



THE SUN WILL RISE *Written by Ericka Defazio*

Chapter 5: Burn

Hours and hours of pasting, cutting, gluing, repairing, and getting more of the reflectors were exhausting. Michael was out of breath by the fortieth one. The girls kept pasting them on mechanically, never stopping.

After two hours, Raymie hurtled up the stairs. "Girls! Michael! Come inside now. It's starting to happen!" Everybody dropped their work, and one girl screamed. Raymie grabbed Michael's hand and pulled him to the dormitory.

"You have to stay here, Michael, and I mean it. The sun is getting closer, we must take care of the rest of the people, fools that they are. If the Lieutenant comes and asks you to do something, do it."

He nodded. She spun around and disappeared.

Michael opened the door, disobeying her orders, but instead of causing trouble, he went to find Lieutenant Madison. She was there, looking haggard and frustrated. When she saw Michael, she walked over and started ranting.

"What is *wrong* with you people? Raymie has tried making everyone go inside, but they are *refusing*! Do they want to *die*?"

Michael shrugged his shoulders. "They're not used to it. If someone in a white spacesuit came out and started yelling at you to get inside, would you think they were crazy?"

The lieutenant glared at him. "No, I would take their advice and get inside before being burned alive!"

A loud beeping noise startled them both. She rushed toward a large computer that was in the lab. She gasped. Then, using a silver walkie-talkie, she bawled to Raymie. "RAYMIE! GET OUT! GET INSIDE, THERE'S NO POINT ANYMORE! HURRY!"

Michael's blood ran cold. "What? What's going on?" Lieutenant Madison kept yelling, pausing to answer him. "The heat has gone up fifty degrees. It's climbing, and if Raymie doesn't get out..."

Her fear was reflected in his eyes. He ran to the changing room, got into one of the white spacesuits, and rushed out. The Lieutenant ran after him. "Michael! It is dangerous! No! STOP HIM!"

The doors were closing, but Michael sprinted. Ducking through people's outstretched arms, pausing only to speak into a voice-controlled opener, he threw himself through the slit in the door. The doors were now locked, the people inside could not open them.

Michael ran into the street. Masses of people were everywhere, panicking. Already, even with the protective clothes, Michael had broken into a sweat. He could not imagine how the people outside were feeling. He pushed whatever people he could into buildings, cars, anything that would offer any kind of protection. He stared around wildly for Raymie.

"RAYMIE!" he bellowed. Not that it was effective, everybody else was yelling as well.

He searched every street he could find. People seemed to be getting the idea, the crowds had thinned out into nothingness, only an occasional person scurried into a building. Raymie was still nowhere to be found.

When the first fire ball hit the street, it blew him off his feet. The suit was soaked in perspiration, it fell into his eyes and made them sting. Smoke was everywhere. And then finally, he saw a spacesuit just like his. "Raymie!" he coughed.

She was helping a little girl, who seemed unconscious. As soon as she had stuffed her into a deserted truck, she turned toward the sound.

He saw the fire before he felt it. Raymie's eyes were round with surprise. He saw her mouth his name. Michael tried to get his burning throat to warn her, but they would not come. It was getting closer; he could feel it.

And then the ball of fire hit right where she was standing. **BE CONTINUED IN THE NEXT ISSUE...**

Spanish Poem - Justo Fuera de mi Ventana

Escrito por: Ericka DeFazio

Un aleteo
 De un patrón de colores
 El palpitir silencioso
 De una docena de alas
 Justo fuera de mi ventana.
 El tuiteo de las aves
 Los susurros del viento
 Una tormenta aullando
 Justo fuera de mi ventana.
 Aromas encantadores
 Vistas deslumbrantes
 Hermosas imágenes
 Justo fuera de mi ventana.
 Justo fuera de mi ventana.

English Translation - Just Outside my Window

Written by: Ericka DeFazio

A fluttering
 Of a pattern of colors
 The quiet beating
 Of a dozen wings
 Just outside my window.
 The tweeting of birds
 The whispers of wind
 A howling storm
 Just outside my window.
 Lovely scents
 Dazzling sights
 Beautiful pictures
 Just outside my window.
 Just outside my window.

Photo Credit: <https://abstract.desktopnexus.com/wallpaper/977804/>

(Spanish Poem with English Translation)

CINQUAIN

Libro

Escrito por: Camree Volk
 Página, papel
 Leer, relajarse, calmar
 Un escape de la realidad
 Publicación

Book

Page, paper
 Read, relax, calm
 An escape from reality
 Publication

Chocolate

Caramelo, azúcar
 Comer, hacer, degustar,
 Una explosión de sabor
 Cacao

Chocolate

Candy, sugar
 Eating, making, tasting,
 An explosion of flavor
 Cocoa

Verano

Playa, sol
 Calentador, emocionante, relajante Un tiempo para vagar libremente
 Temporada

Summer

Beach Sun
 Warming, exciting, relaxing A time to roam free
 Season

Photo Credit: <https://nature.desktopnexus.com/wallpaper/705982/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS!!!

- January 15, 2021 to April 15, 2021 - Start of Enrollment Applications for the 2021-2022 School Year Lottery
- April 21, 2021 - Schedule for Enrollment Lottery
- February 15 - Re-enrollment of Current Students begin
- We pay tribute to loved ones who lost their battle against the coronavirus, contact us to share your story.
- Send us photos of your family members who are frontline workers, first responders, and/or essential workers and we will include them in the next issue.

TO JOIN THE PHOENIX TIMES, OR FOR COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS OR ARTICLE CONTRIBUTION:

Please email Mrs. Ma. Gloria M King at mking@abqse.org

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