The Addams Family is Back
by Luci L’Oiseau

2020 Crockett cast of The Addams Family

This year Crockett will be performing The Addams Family. This play was planned to be performed in 2020 but was cancelled because of Covid-19.

Addams Family History

The original Addams Family was a television series that first aired on ABC from 1964 to 1966. It ran for two seasons and was based on the Addams Family book written by Charles Addams. The producer was Nat Perrin. It was an American sitcom that showed how a ghoulish family’s odd ways differed from those of the outside world. Its characters consisted of: Morticia, Gomez, Wednesday, and Pugsley Addams as well as Grandmama, Lurch, Uncle Fester, and Thing. However, this wasn’t the only Addams Family production. In 1973, the animated Addams Family series was launched. It had the same characters but a different intro than the original. Then, in 1991 a live action Addams Family movie was produced. The most recent adaptation is the animated 2019 Addams Family movie with it’s sequel (Addams Family 2) released on October 1, 2021. This version of the well known story was made more modernized by showing things like social media and giving Thing a smartwatch, but it still showed how the Addams family was very loving and accepting of each other, and was willing to be accepting of others as well, no matter how weird or creepy they looked.

How to be a part of the action

To become a part of the stage, sound, lighting or art crews, please see Ms. Pell in B12. The show is different from adaptations you may have seen in the past. It focuses on Wednesday as a young adult. She has fallen in love with a “normal” boy named Lucas Beineke, and she is afraid to tell her parents about the romance. Lucas will be played by Colin McLaughlin and he is very excited to be a part of the production. Lois L’Oiseau, former actor of Alice in the play said that, “my favorite thing about doing the play was how welcoming and fun being onset was, it’s definitely something I will miss when I leave Crockett.” Feel free to contact Ms. Pell, Ms. Michaels, or Dr. Karen Williams with any questions and/or concerns. Sign up for the Addams Family play today! The play will run from March 24 - March 26.

Holidays by: Daniella Chanchavee Ruiz, Katie Martinez, and Alba Calderon

Diwali is a holiday celebrated by Hindus, Sikhs, and some Buddhist. Diwali starts in mid November and lasts approximately five days. A quote that is part of the Diwali festival is, “victory of light over darkness, good over evil.” At the beginning of the festival families clean their homes and make patterns including flowers using rice, sand, and powdered limestone which represent joy and positivity and life in a household. Some activities kids participate in during Diwali are candle making, lantern making, jewelry making and storytelling.

Dia De Los Tres Reyes is celebrated by many Hispanics. Los Tres Reyes is celebrated on January 6th every year. Dia de Los Tres Reyes is celebrated with gifts from the kings and by eating a cake called rosca de reyes. The Rosca de Reyes has an oval shape to symbolize a crown and has a small doll inside, which represents baby Jesus. This holiday represents the day the Three Wise Men (Los Tres Reyes Magos) gave gifts to Jesus Christ, and the day closes the Christmas festivities. It’s also the day the people of Mexico exchange gifts.

Chinese New Year is celebrated in China and other Asian countries. The holiday is celebrated on the first new moon in the Lunar calendar, Chinese New Year is celebrated by cleaning and decorating the house, enjoying a family reunion on New Year’s Eve, setting off firecrackers and fireworks, and exchanging gifts and red envelopes. The symbols of Chinese New Year are associated with the Chinese zodiac cycle which includes 12 animals in the order of Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig. Some traditions of Chinese New Year include not washing your hair or clothes, as it means you’ll, “wash all your fortune away”, don’t eat porridge for breakfast, as it means you’ll “become poor in the upcoming year”, and, “don’t sweep up on New Year’s day, otherwise you’ll sweep all your luck away.”
Veganism; Is it Right for You?
By: Ryleigh Johnson

"There are many ways to embrace vegan living. Yet one thing all vegans have in common is a plant-based diet avoiding all animal foods such as meat (including fish, shellfish and insects), dairy, eggs and honey - as well as avoiding animal-derived materials, products tested on animals and places that use animals for entertainment" (The Vegan Society 1). Could veganism be the solution to some of the world’s problems? There is no short answer, although veganism has many perks to health and the environment, there are also many downsides of the entire population going vegan.

First, everyone not eating meat would lead to overpopulation in livestock. On the other hand, cutting our livestock and relying mainly on fruits and vegetables would cut greenhouse gas emissions by about 66%. Greenhouse gases cause climate change, because they trap heat, and contribute to respiratory disease from smog and air pollution. These gases also increase wildfires. (Vegan Society)

Health benefits from a vegan diet are staggering. Converting to veganism can lower the risk of cancer, coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes and strokes. But, we won’t get the vitamins we need; there are certain vitamins a plant-based diet can’t provide for us. For example vitamin B12 is only found in animal-sourced products such as eggs, milk and meats- it is essential for developing red blood cells and maintaining normal brain function.

Another reason making it hard for the entire population to become vegan is the fact that not everyone is willing to convert. Some cultures rely on meat for symbolic or spiritual value in cultural meals, while other religions don’t support eating meat. Would you actually go vegan, not consume, own or use any products that are made of or tested on animals? Some of those things include meats, eggs, milk, dairy products, leather, botox or certain brands of makeup (which is tested on animals). (Vegan Society)

Some might propose, why don’t we go vegetarian (not eating meat, but food sourced from animals) and slowly decrease our livestock so there is no overpopulation? But what would you do about butchers who make their living off selling meat? Or farmers who spend their time and resources raising the livestock so they can sell it to those butchers and make a living? You would put thousands out of their jobs.

As you can see, there really is no clear answer to this question. There are pros and cons to every aspect of this topic. Some people and scientists are all for it, while others are completely against veganism. Veganism could be a dietary superhero or a villain.
The story The Ballad of Songbird and Snake is a prequel to the best selling Hunger Games series and it starts off in the familiar dystopian civilization of Panem. Panem is separated by Capitol and districts. The main character is 18 year old Coriolanus Snow. You might know him as President Snow - the main antagonist in The Hunger Games series! But this is before all that - back when he was just another young man in love with a pretty girl. He was assigned to mentor the district 12 tribute, Lucy Gray Baird in the 10th Hunger Games. When it got down to her and the final tribute (Reaper) in the arena, Reaper drank out of a puddle that Lucy Gray had poisoned with rat poison. This made Lucy Gray the winner of the tenth Hunger Games! After the games, Coriolanus got in a lot of trouble for giving Lucy Gray the rat position because that is cheating. So, as punishment he got sent off to be a Peacekeeper in district 12. He was sad that he did not get to see Lucy Gray after the games because he started to love her. After a longtime, fate intervened, and he saw her again. He went to a show, and Lucy Gray was singing there! Coriolanus and Lucy Gray decided to run away from the horrible districts. When they got to the spot where they were going to stay, Lucy Gray went outside and Coriolanus could not find her. He kept looking, but she was gone. While looking, he got bitten by a poisonous snake. He ended up in the same Capitol hospital where he was born. When he was there, he visited Dr. Gaul: the head of the academy who had assigned him to mentor Lucy Gray during the Hunger Games. Dr. Gaul told him that he was going to go to the university and was going to become someone high up in the Capitol. That set into motion the events of the Hunger Games trilogy.

Reading The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes will change how you see almost everything about the plot in The Hunger Games series. I think Collins did a great job describing the characters’ intense feelings, and she could have easily made the book into two, but I love how she fit it all into one. While I was reading the book, I noticed that it went by very slowly at times. You may get bored at some points, but it does add up in the end. If you are choosing to read this book, I would recommend you read The Hunger Games series first because it is the prequel of that series. Star rating: 3 out of 5 stars

Review of The Nightmare Before Christmas

By: Daniel Opalski

Have you ever watched the movie The Nightmare Before Christmas? It’s a great movie for the fall, but it is enjoyable any time of year. It is currently available on Disney Plus along with Hocus Pocus. You can check out The Witches on HBO Max.

The Nightmare Before Christmas is the type of movie that is not quite scary, but it is a little creepy. It also has some Christmas scenes in the movie. Jack Skellington is the main character in the movie. He is a part of Halloween Town. His character traits are: creativity, enthusiasm, and introversion. Jack Skellington is played by two people; Danny Elfman is his singing voice, and Chris Sarandon is his speaking voice. Jack Skellington discovers the holiday Christmas and wants to participate in it, but it all goes downhill. Sally is a humanoid ragdoll created by Dr. Finkelstein. She is made from various pieces stitched together, with dead leaves used as stuffing. Sally is voiced by Catherine O’Hara. I would recommend this movie to both Halloween and Christmas lovers.

Pumpkin History by: Daniel Opalski

The History of Pumpkins dates back centuries. Starting in France and then to now. The French used to call it a “pepon” and then later the English turned it into a pumpkin. Pumpkins are usually thought of as scary objects but they can also be funny.

Pumpkins are a popular decoration in the fall - we see a lot of them from Halloween until Thanksgiving. The History of the Jack O’ Lantern goes back many years. It started off a turnip. The Turnips weren’t easy to carve, so people changed them to a pumpkin. According to legend, it is said that there was a man named Stingy Jack, and he was a trickster. Apparently, he even tricked the devil himself. The Devil was not happy about Jack’s trickery, so he sent Jack out into the night and Jack carved a face into a turnip and he became it. Ever since then he was forever a Jack O’ Lantern. So, the next time you carve a pumpkin - think of Jack.

In Ireland, where Halloween originated, people used to carve the turnips with a scary face on it, and then they put them in their window or by the door to scare off bad spirits. Maybe even Stingy Jack. Once the pilgrims went to the new land, (America) they brought over beets. But then they saw that pumpkins were easier. The Natives used to make the Pumpkins into mats and also ate them. They later figured out how to burn them with water and make pumpkin pie. And that’s where Pumpkin Pie came from!
One chilly October evening, a little girl went to play outside with her pet dog, Oreo. She and Oreo had a blast! Meanwhile, at home, Mom and Dad were sitting by the fireplace with a batch of fresh-baked cookies—the chocolate chips were still warm and gooey. It got dark out, so they called their daughter to come inside, but there was no one there. They kept calling her name again and again but there was no response. Now they were scared. They rushed to the house phone and dialed 911. They explained to the cops how their daughter was missing, and how the dog was with her. One hour later the police came back with disturbing news, their daughter along with their dog had gone missing…

5 Years Later

BEEP! BEEP! BEEP! Today is the first day of school! Millie gets out of bed sleepy and starving. She calls for her dog, it’s time for his breakfast. Milly gets changed, eats, kisses her dog goodbye, and leaves the house. She takes the bus and sits alone. No one wants to sit next to her. She had arrived at her destination, Crockett Middle School. She goes to homeroom and smiles at her teacher, Mrs. Tyler. She takes attendance and then the bell rings. She heads to her first period, Art with Ms. Howe. Millie loves to paint, in art she made a gorgeous pastel flower. For second period she goes to Science with Ms. Thomas. They learn about astronomy. BEEP! It’s time for lunch! Milly goes to her locker, but hears a voice following her, then all of a sudden she gets shoved into her locker and the door smashed closed. Milly started crying and then cried for help.

She could overhear kids laughing and giggling, fading away down the hallway. About 10 minutes later, Mr. Jones hears her screaming, he takes his keys and lets her out of the locker. Millie was so grateful and hurried to the cafeteria, she was hungry! She sits at a table by herself. She felt alone until some kids came by and sat with her, it made her day! Then for recess, she sat in the bleachers and drew. Then it was time for math with Ms. Turkewitz. Millie was in the middle of learning fractions when all of a sudden a deep ominous voice came on the loudspeakers... "Hello, children. Unfortunately, your principals have gone missing" He chuckled a little, "So in that case, I will be replacing them. To start... can Millie please come to my office, you are in BIG trouble." Then the light bulbs went out and fumes came out of the walls which made Millie faint...

She woke up in a pitch-black dull room. She saw a clown with bright red lines on his eyes and a colorful outfit. "Where am I? Who are you?" "Well, Millie..." Said the clown, "Do you know the story of how you became an orphan child?" "Well, no..." "Millie, you ran away." said the clown. "No! I don’t even have memories of them!" "Yes, you do, but your memories were taken away" "By who? Who would want MY memories?" Then there was silence. "Me..." the clown replied with a big smile on his face. Then, right before she could say anything, two random strangers she had never seen before had entered the room. "Oh my god, Millie! Is that you? We have been so worried!" the man said. "Who are you guys?" Millie looked around but the clown had disappeared. "Millie, do you not remember us? We are your parents! Mom and dad, remember?" Millie could see a tear running down the woman’s face. Next thing you know, Millie gets a flash of memories of her dog Oreo, and the same two people who were her "parents". Millie ran to her parents until she touched them. They were holograms. She heard the same laughing from before on the loudspeakers and woke up. Everyone was around her asking what happened but Millie kept saying that she was fine. Milly made it through the first four days, until Friday the 13th

Millie was just on her way to PE until someone pushed her into the janitor’s closet. She banged on the door, but there was no one. She was trapped in the janitor’s closet for periods 6-8 then it was time for dismissal. She was still trapped in the closet. She gave up, everyone had left the building. Millie wept in the corner of the closet but then she heard that same laugh. She turned around and the clown was there except it had bright red and black paint all over its face. “AHHHHH!” The clown started walking towards her. She banged on the door hoping there was a janitor! Somehow, the door creaked open. She slammed the door closed and tried to find her way around the school. It was pitch black and Millie couldn’t see a thing! She heard footsteps and someone put their hand on her shoulder. “AHH!” a light approached her, she tried to run, but then she realized the school was packed with clowns. After running for a while she ran into Mr. Jack. She begged for help but he said something that would change Millie’s life forever... “Please! Mr. Jack, there are clowns everywhere? Are you too blind to see them?!” “HaHa... you children are so funny.” “This isn’t a joke! Please help me! There are clowns after me!” “Clowns? What are you talking about?” He grinned a little and said, “Those are my people”

TO BE CONTINUED
1. Is the track and field program new to Crockett?
   This is the 2nd year that this wonderful program has been (running). Intramural Middle School sports started back in 2019. Due to the pandemic we weren't able to participate last year.

2. What is your experience as a runner?
   I started running track during my middle school years with a summer program many (miles) ago. I participated in High School Track at Hamilton High West. I ran the 100, 200, 400 and I was the anchor in the 400 relay. I also did hurdles and high jump. I also ran at Penn-State track and field during my summer months of high school. I currently just jog around the track to stay in shape.

3. What made you want to coach track and field?
   Enhancing the growth of children is a passion of mine. Whether in the classroom or on the track, I love to see children reaching their full potential. I love track also and this helps me stay connected to another passion of mine!

4. Who will Crockett compete against this year?
   Crockett Cougars will compete against the other two Middle Schools in the district: Grice and Reynolds.

5. Can we come cheer Crockett on at meets?
   YES! We will have one big meet at Nottingham High School, tentatively Saturday, November 20 and all students, staff, family, and friends are encouraged to (hurdle) over and cheer on our Crockett Cougar Track and Field Team. We would love to have our Crockett Family support!

6. What are some of the different events track and field athletes compete in?
   This year students are able to participate in the 100 yard dash, the 400 mile run, the long jump, and shot-put

7. Can anyone join track, or do athletes have to try out?
   All Crockett Students are encouraged to participate in track and field. There are no try outs.

8. What are some of the health and wellness benefits of running?
   Running is a form of exercise that is important for everyone's health and wellbeing. It is a great way to ensure children get some exercise. Running helps build cardiovascular health and improves the immune system. Running will help you learn commitment, dedication, and discipline. Running teaches you hard work. Another benefit of participating in running as a middle schooler is the opportunity to work with other students, developing social skills as well as communication skills. It is stress-relief from a busy day and it's fun!
   THE GREATEST BENEFIT IS WORKING WITH THE BEST COACHES!

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Spotlight on Mrs Grochowski by:
Daniel Opalaski

1. Did you always want to be a teacher?
   “Yes.”

2. How long have you been teaching at Crockett?
   “31 years.”

3. What is your favorite thing about our school?
   “It always felt like a second home and getting to spend time with my students and colleagues.”

4. What is your favorite topic to teach about?
   “I love teaching novels and narrative writing.”

5. What is one interesting fact about you that most of your students probably do not know?
   “I was almost named Christmas because I was almost born on Christmas day and because my last name was Carol - So it would be Christmas Carol.”

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A Christmas Carol
by
Charles Dickens

New York & London