

AHI VIENE CASCARRABIAS

UNA REVISTA LÚDICA VIRTUAL PARA APRENDER Y CONOCER.

ENERO

*Nothing
behind me
Everything
ahead of me*

Jack Kerouac

SUPLEMENTO
ESPECIAL: LAS
ORQUÍDEAS
SUSURRANTES DE
MISS FI

EDICIÓN

R E D A C C I Ó N

Valeria Alcocer

Lianna Bernal

Makenna Brissette

Sebastián Guth

Kara Heiniger

Gabrielle Lumpkin

Jaden Shirley

Armando Uría

Brenda Zazueta

C O O R D I N A C I Ó N

Lucía Bonnin

Kyliel Casillas

Rocio Gómez

Kara Heiniger

Romina Lara

Brenda Zazueta

D I S E Ñ O

Romina Lara

P O R T A D A

Yvonne Gámez



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GUEST SPEAKER

DR. JULIETA FIERRO GOSSMAN
MEXICAN ASTROPHYSICIST
AND RESEARCHER

Whale Watching

By: Lianna Bernal

Right now, one of the most unique things you can do in the Bay of Banderas is watching whales splash and play. Witnessing their power and gracefulness attracts travelers from around the world to our city.

Whale watching has become a popular hobby that can be done in countries all over the world: US, Spain, Britain, Australia, New England, Alaska, Mexico, etc. Some of the most commonly sighted species are blue whale, humpback whale, bowhead whale, gray whale, fin whale, and minke whale. Whale watching has become extremely profitable but has also brought awareness about the current state of endangered whale species to millions of people. Some whale watching businesses and organizations use part of their income to help fund whale conservation and awareness programs aimed at helping these marine mammals recover from their endangered status.

Whale watching tourism dates back to 1950 when the Cabrillo National Monument in San Diego was a place where visitors could observe gray whales. Since then, whale watching has become an annual billion-dollar business as people all around the world go just to see these amazing animals. This has also become a popular method to attract tourists to developing countries in hopes of economic stimulation and growth.

Whale watching in Puerto Vallarta is very popular. The most common whale to be found is the humpback whale, and around 2,000 of them visit every year between December through March. There are many tours available on a daily basis that take you out to sea to enjoy a beautiful day watching whales. These tours can last up to four hours. During this time, you can experience different behaviors. They sing, show off their backs, slap the ocean surface with their flipper or pectoral fin, and breach as they jump out of the water and land on their backs.

Some locations where you can go whale watching in Riviera Nayarit are Nuevo Vallarta to Bucerías, Punta Mita, Sayulita, Guayabitos, and all the way up to the Pacific coast. If you find the time, I definitely recommend you go on one of these tours to experience this amazing moment yourself. It's a once in a lifetime opportunity that you don't want to miss.



¿Qué pasó con el INE?

By: Valeria Alcocer

El día 9 de noviembre la Comisión de Presupuesto de la Cámara de Diputados aprobó el dictamen de recorte de presupuesto (recorte presupuestal) para el 2022, para el organismo conocido como INE. La suma fue de 4 mil 913 millones de pesos. Lo preocupante aquí fue que el INE había destinado 3 mil 800 millones de pesos, tal como la Corte lo instruyó, para poder llevar a cabo la consulta de revocación de mandato que tomaría lugar en marzo de este año.

¿Cuál es el conflicto aquí?, el INE (Instituto Nacional Electoral) está obligado legalmente a llevar a cabo esta consulta, un recorte en el presupuesto podría representar un impedimento para oficializarla. La revocación de mandato (Artículo I de la Ley Electoral) es un mecanismo meramente democrático por el cual los ciudadanos tienen derecho a ejercer su soberanía para retirar de un cargo público al pasado candidato electo, en las ramas del poder ejecutivo o legislativo federal, siguiendo una serie de requisitos impuestos por la ley. En caso de que dicha consulta no tomará lugar los integrantes del consejo serían sometidos a juicio político, desacreditando las instituciones electorales.

Un juicio político es un procedimiento de orden constitucional realizado por ambas Cámaras del Congreso (Cámara de Diputados como órgano de acusación, y la Cámara de Senadores como órgano de sentencia), cuando un funcionario público comete negligencias hacia los intereses públicos o viola la Constitución. Todo esto está señalado en el artículo 110 de la Constitución, donde se defiende que los servidores públicos no están por encima de la ley cuando se trate de ejercer sus cargos inequívocamente/erróneamente. Regresando al tema del INE, el grupo que recibiría la denuncia penal sería el Consejo General del INE (conformado por Consejeros Electorales, Consejeros del Poder Legislativo que cuentan con voz pero sin voto, y Representantes de los Partidos Políticos), quienes velan legalidad, imparcialidad, e independencia electoral.

El presidente de la Cámara de Diputados, formalizó una denuncia ante el órgano de control interno del INE, por supuestas irregularidades administrativas en las que ciertos funcionarios de la entidad nacional autónoma “participaron”. Esto se vio como una acción unilateral por parte de la Mesa Directiva, que según no fueron discutidas con los demás grupos parlamentarios. Afortunadamente, toda la situación tomó un giro cuando el gobierno de López Obrador decidió retirar inesperadamente la denuncia en contra del instituto. Si MORENA hubiera conseguido desacreditar a la institución electoral, esto le hubiera permitido que su gobierno llevará a cabo dicha sesión de revocación de mandato donde no se garantiza la imparcialidad, por el conflicto de intereses involucrado, ya que no habría control sobre el seguimiento de los requisitos y formalidades.



NASA's New Space Toy

By: Sebastian Guth

NASA's James Webb telescope was launched into space from the French Guiana this past December 25th. The telescope was created to replace the Hubble telescope, and it is single-handedly NASA's largest and most powerful telescope with an estimated cost of 10 billion dollars. At first, the budget for this project was estimated to be 1 billion dollars when they originally began the project.

The name of the telescope was given in honor of James E. Webb, the administrator of NASA from 1961 to 1968 who also played an integral role in the Apollo program. The James Webb telescope has four primary objectives: to find the light of the first stars and galaxies that were formed in the universe after the Big Bang, study the formation and evolution of galaxies, comprehend how stars and solar systems form, and last but not least, study the planetary systems and the origins of life.

NASA received backup from the Canadian Space Agency and the European Space Agency to reduce the possibilities of failures in the mission. They also obtained help from Austria, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States.

The telescope started its journey withdrawing from Earth around 7:20 a.m. EST. As of right now, the telescope is on its way to a point in outer space nearly 1 million miles away from its origin on Earth. On its journey, the telescope needs to assemble itself since it was launched folded up inside a rocket because of its size. NASA stated that there are over 300 potential technical problems that could end the mission sooner than expected and would be a devastating failure.

Compared to the Hubble telescope, which has seen light that originated 450 million years after the Big Bang, the Webb telescope has a capacity to detect light that appeared just 250 million years after the Big Bang. This difference is a huge step for astronomy since it is a time where the first stars were born. Scientists call this time period the "Cosmic Dawn". Another key difference between these two mind-blowing telescopes is their size. While the Hubble telescope is about the size of a school bus, NASA's new telescope, the James Webb, has the size of a professional tennis court. Another advantage the Webb telescope has over the Hubble is the type of light it detects. There are different types of light in the universe: gamma, x-ray, ultraviolet, visible, and infrared. The Hubble Space Telescope has a capacity to observe and collect visible light and ultraviolet light. On the other hand, the James Webb telescope was created to collect infrared light, especially since that type of light undergoes a phenomenon called redshifting which ultimately leads to it lasting longer, therefore allowing us to see more in the past. However, infrared telescopes also have their disadvantages. For them to work properly, they need to stay extremely cold with a temperature under -223.2°C (-369.7°F). This is achieved by placing liquid helium inside of the machine so the instruments don't overheat.

The James Webb telescope has a lifespan of about five years and scientists have a goal of making it ten years. This will definitely be a challenge since the telescope is not serviceable, meaning that astronauts will not be able to fix it or swap instruments if one fails. Overall, the telescope is a huge step for humanity and understanding our origins as well as the origins of the universe. Hopefully scientists around the globe will be able to collect the valuable information provided to us by the innovative telescope.

NFTs

By: Jaden Shirley

Although NFTs have been around since 2014, it rose in popularity and grabbed public attention in early 2020. Due to the hype of owning these NFTs in the first half of 2021, they've made \$2.5 billion in sales within six months. But you may be wondering, what exactly is an NFT?

An NFT stands for a Non-Fungible Token, meaning that it is a unique asset that can belong to you and nobody else. Every NFT that is bought is automatically shown on different blockchains, the most popular being Ethereum and Solana. A blockchain is a system where information is recorded each time an online transaction is made. In addition, it is also a decentralized system, meaning that instead of having the bank or government control it, it is run by its users. In a way, it's similar to a piece of artwork due to the fact that owning an NFT shows proof of ownership and the real thing. For instance, if you were to create a replica of the Mona Lisa, you wouldn't actually have the artwork because the real artwork is in a museum with proof of who created it.

NFTs first rose to popularity in 2021 with the artwork of Mike Winkelmann, also known as Beeple, an artist that drew 5,000 different pieces of artwork, uniting all of them into an NFT. He called it *Everydays: The First 5000 days*. This non-fungible token was later sold for \$69 million dollars, and it shocked the art industry, sparking curiosity as people wanted to know more about what this was and how to make money with it. Soon after, tons of celebrities wanted to get in on the action and create or buy NFTs. People like Eminem, Snoop Dogg, Messi, and Steph Curry have either bought their art from collections or have created their own to sell to the public.

Non-fungible tokens can be bought on sites like Open Sea, Crypto.com NFT, and Foundation. In order to purchase, you will need a crypto wallet, the most popular being Coinbase, Exodus, Binance, Crypto.com, and Bitso. From there, you will need to create an account and set up another crypto wallet provided on any of the NFT sites. The most popular wallets used are Metamask and Coinbase. Users can then auction, buy, create, or sell from any collection provided. You may have heard of collections such as Bored Ape Yacht Club, Crypto Punks, Doodles, and Cool Cats. Everytime you purchase, list, or bid you will need to pay a gas fee, which is a certain amount of money charged based on the amount of people and energy it takes to make a transaction on the Ethereum Blockchain. Gas fees depend on the time of day. It is best to purchase NFTs during the night as the gas fees can be lower than usual.

As for the future, more and more projects will come out showcasing artists' work, and only a small few will make it, but it seems like NFTs are not going to stop anytime soon. This artwork is an investment and can be used to purchase digital land in the metaverse which is accessible through virtual reality in which you will be able to interact with other people who own land as well. Apart from this you will be able to purchase cars, and even houses, if it is rare and valuable enough. It is predicted that NFTs will become a massive asset towards the economy and a way of having proof of ownership over certain things, making them quite valuable.



Avatars from the Bored Ape Yacht Club website

Alcatraz

By: Armando Uría

From 1934 to 1963, Alcatraz was America's premier maximum-security prison, where America's most notorious criminals were placed. Alcatraz is a place of contradictions, today it's one of San Francisco's most prominent landmarks and tourist attractions due to its grim past and interesting history. Some of America's most infamous criminals called Alcatraz "home", among those who served time in the facility were the notorious gangster Al Capone "Scarface" and murderer Robert Stroud "Birdman of Alcatraz."

Alcatraz has a lot of history behind it. It was a Civil war fortress, military prison, federal prison, bird sanctuary, the first lighthouse on the West Coast, and the birthplace of the American Indian Red Power movement. Alcatraz served as a federal prison from 1934 to 1963 and served as a prison for some of the most dangerous civilian prisoners. Among these were Al Capone, George "Machine Gun" Kelly, Arthur "Doc" Barker, Alvin "Creepy Karpis" Karpavicz, and Robert "The Birdman" Stroud. The Alcatraz penitentiary was able to house 450 convicts in cells which measured about 3 by 1.5 meters. There were never more than 250 prisoners on the island at one time.

Escape attempts were quite rare in Alcatraz, many very intelligent inmates planned escapes, but their plans would mostly end up in dead ends. A few inmates actually did manage to escape from the island, but it is unknown if they were able to survive the currents of the bay.

Using the unlikeliest of supplies, Frank Morris and brothers John and Clarence Anglin made the most creative escape attempt in the history of Alcatraz. Placing dummy heads made of soap, cement, and paint under their blankets in the middle of the night, the escapees crawled out their cells through the small vents, scaled the utility corridor to the roof, slid down a pipe, and crept to the shoreline.

The three men had reached the bay. As they slipped into the water - using a raft fashioned out of a raincoat - they met an icy current rapidly ebbing out to sea. They were never seen again.



ENTRETENIMIENTO

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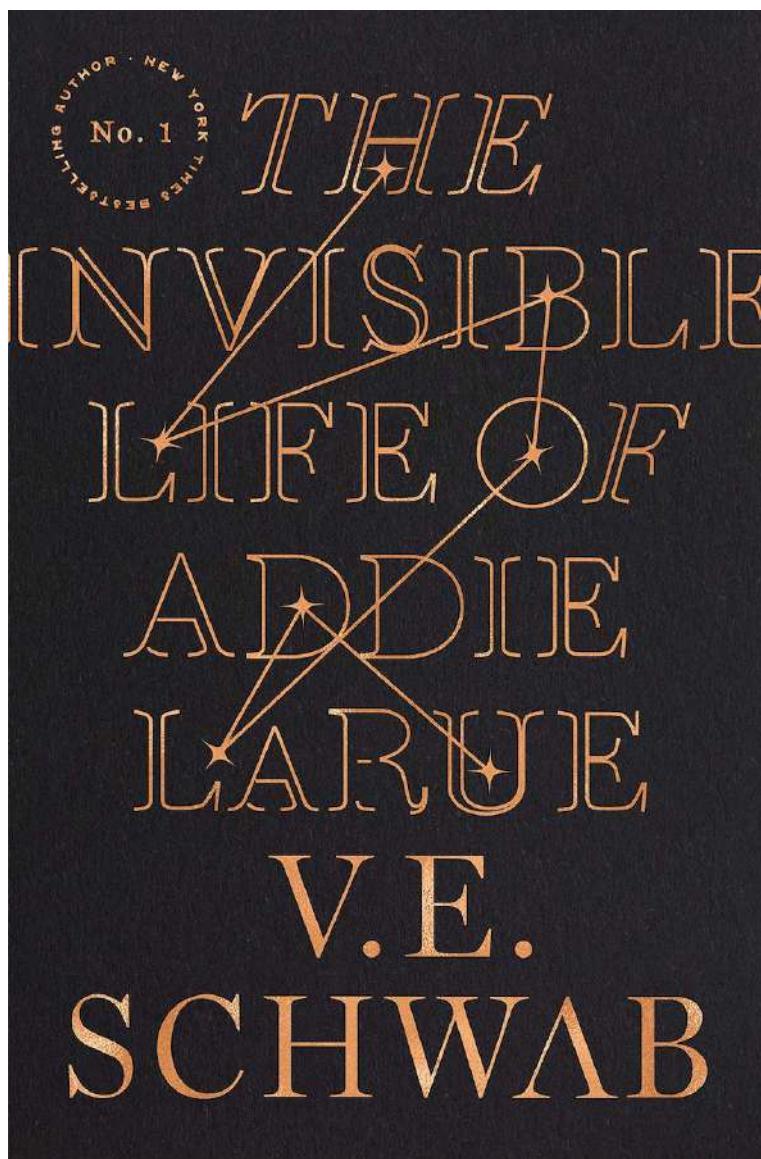
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ASPV Reads: An Invitation

By: Kara Heiniger

All high school students are invited to February's book club meeting. We will be discussing the novel *The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue* by V.E. Schwab, which follows a woman named Addie who in exchange for the ability to live forever is cursed to be forgotten by everyone she meets. Her story spans centuries with dazzling adventures around the world, reflecting both history and art through the years. As she tries to leave a mark on the world, she stumbles across a young man, who against all odds, remembers her name. Her story shows how we all want to be remembered and make a difference in the lives of others.



*The ASPV book club will meet on Tuesday, February 22 during high school lunch in Ms. Heiniger's room. There will be treats!

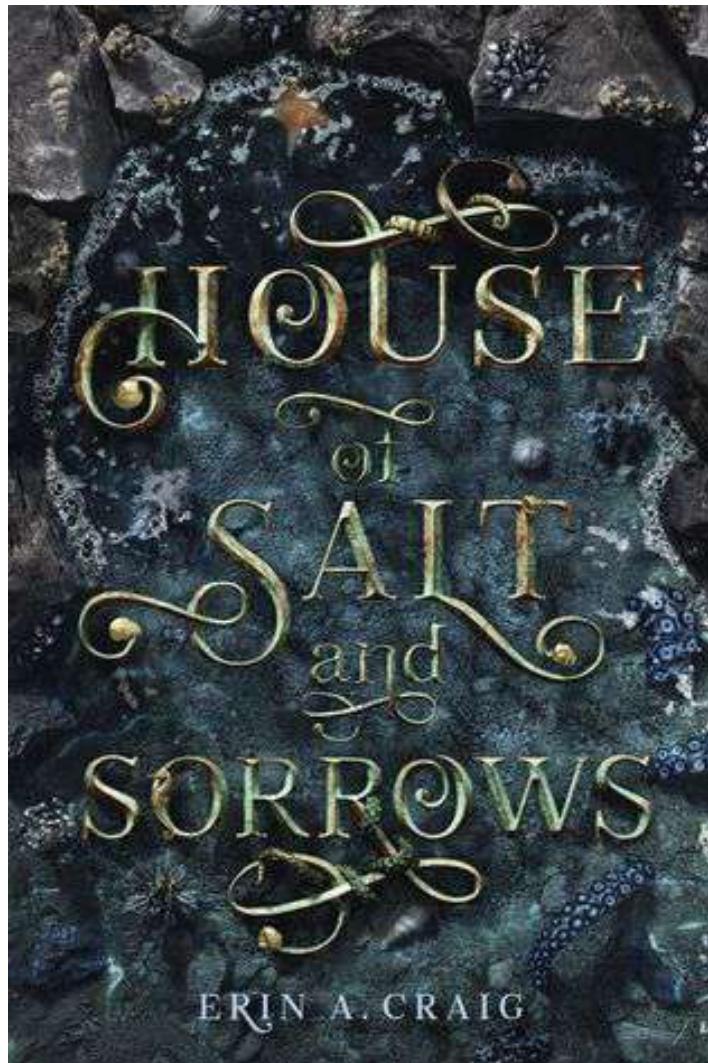
The House of Salt and Sorrows

Book Review

Review by: Gabrielle Lumpkin

Written by Erin A. Craig, *The House of Salt and Sorrows* is a fairytale retelling of *The 12 Dancing Sisters*. Our main character, Annaleigh, the sixth daughter of Ortun, their country's ruler, is an ambitious girl who is starting to realize that the death of her sisters might not be just a coincidence. After the mysterious death of her elder sister, Eulalie, Annaleigh begins to question how her sister's death occurred. Whenever there is a death in Highmoor, it is tradition that the family of the lost one will go months mourning them. With the family fed up with the long amount of time mourning due to multiple deaths occurring so close to each other, they decide to celebrate instead. Annaleigh, who is against the idea of celebrating instead of mourning, soon goes on her own journey and tries to figure out the true cause of the sisters' death. As she looks further into this, she soon figures out that her own sister, Verity, has visions that may be related to their deaths. As the tale progresses, the daughters come across a secret door that will take them to any place they desire, which is a place filled with dancing. The girls dance all night long and wake up with shoes that are torn and worn out. Their father, Ortun, notices and offers up his daughters to potential suitors as reward for finding out the mystery of how their shoes get in such a state. With the mystery of the curse and the shoes, the author takes the readers on a wild ride to find the missing pieces to the puzzle.

This book presented several fun and different twists and turns in such an eerie and sinister tale. You get to grow with the characters as they take you to a place filled with magic and wonder. Starting the book, there are only eight sisters as the oldest four have died. Among the sisters are Camille, Analeigh, the triplets, and the Graces. Camille is the fifth daughter but the oldest at the start of the book with Annaleigh following after. Next, are the triplets. These three sisters, Rosalie, Legia, and Lenore, act as a unit. Everything they do has to be done together, and if they aren't together, they might not make it. Finally, the youngest three are the Graces — Honor, Mercy, and Verity — who are all too young to be involved. Along with the sisters is their father,



Ortun, and recent stepmother, Morella. Ortun and Morella reveal their pregnancy which is one of the causing factors to the families celebrations during such a sad time. Which leads to conflict on what should be done as a result of the good news. Overall, the characters create a variety of different perspectives in conflicts similar to this.

Although it is not talked about, magic is very relevant and alive in the atmosphere of this book. In my opinion, the magic is somewhat tied to the theme, with one of the most recognizable themes being holding true and the fact that not everything is as it seems. Holding true is a theme meant to be about how the main character never gave up on the real reason her sisters died. Even with her family trying to push the idea away, she never forgot and she was persistent. The second theme presented itself in the rumors of the family curse and the magical balls that the Thaumas daughters would attend. As the girls dance at the balls all night, they find the balls to be very pretty and elegant on the outside, but no matter how exciting it may seem, there is still something very odd about it all. While the truth unravels you very quickly discover how tricky your beliefs can be.

The storyline of this book turned out to be more intriguing than I thought it would. Not having such high expectations for this book may have factored into my opinion, but this book contained great detail and really came through with the supernatural element, especially the creepy and almost paranormal behavior. The only negative thing I have to say about this book is that some of the characters were off putting to say the least. I absolutely recommend it to anyone who is into fantasy with a little hint of romance, which is present but not the main focus. I also liked how I felt like I solved the mystery when it turned out to be something completely different.

In conclusion, the tale of these sisters is quite an interesting one. The author captivates you in the beginning and has you on the edge of your seat wondering what's going to happen next. If you think you know, you really don't. In the end the plot twists and character growth were very well written and incorporated into the story.

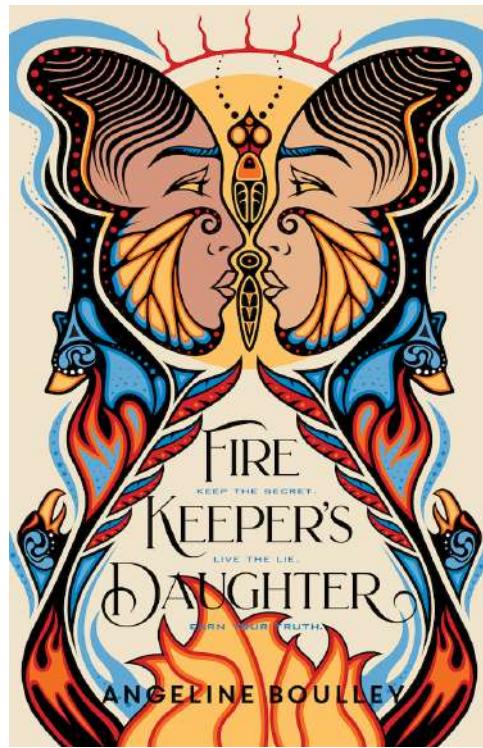


Firekeeper's Daughter

by Angeline Boulley

Book recommendation by: Kara Heiniger

Eighteen-years-old Daunis Fontaine is finishing her years at home and on the nearby Ojibwe reservation, but when tragedy strikes her family and community, she'll get involved in a local mystery and investigation that reveals the dark side of those she thought she knew. Combining a love story and true crime, the story highlights the struggles of women and indigenous communities in the US.



Maid on Netflix

Show recommendation by: Kara Heiniger

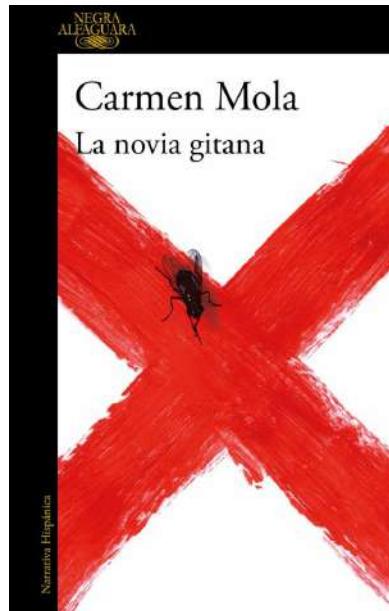
Eighteen-years-old Daunis Fontaine is finishing her years at home and on the nearby Ojibwe reservation, but when tragedy strikes her family and community, she'll get involved in a local mystery and investigation that reveals the dark side of those she thought she knew. Combining a love story and true crime, the story highlights the struggles of women and indigenous communities in the US.



La novia gitana de Carmen Mola

Recomendación de: Brenda Zazueta

Me gusta la intriga y el suspenso y este libro lo tiene todo, una muerte violenta de una mujer en un lugar histórico de la ciudad de Madrid, lo que desata una investigación de un asesino en serie. Tiene una narrativa fluida, es una novela en la que siempre están pasando diferentes situaciones que lo hacen muy entretenido y fácil de leer. Lo recomiendo para aquellas personas que les gusta las descripciones necrofilas, ya que es muy detallista en la violencia de los asesinatos.



Lo curioso del libro es que no se sabía quién era la escritora, durante varios años no se sabía quién era Carmen Mola, nadie sabía de ella, ni cómo era, ni quién era. Sólo a través de correos electrónicos podías comunicarte con ella, y cada vez que le preguntaban cuándo te vamos a conocer, ella contestaba cuando el cheque tenga varios ceros. Ese día llegó cuando fue nominada al premio PLANETA 2021 por un millón de euros, la sorpresa fue, que Carmen Mola no era mujer, era hombre y eran 3, los escritores eran 3, el mundo se les puso en contra por usar el nombre de una mujer para poder ser leídos.



La serpiente en Netflix

Recomendación de: Brenda Zazueta

La serpiente en Netflix, está basada en la historia real de Charles Sobhraj y su novia Marié Leclerc. Esta pareja lleva a cabo una serie de crímenes en distintos lugares del Sudeste Asiático.

Es una historia exótica, espeluznante de unos asesinos en serie que cambian de identidad, el ritmo es bueno y la narración es inquietante que hace difícil ver el capítulo 4 y 5, es lo más aterrador que he visto.

Lista de libros recomendados por el Club de Lectura de Puerto Vallarta

Hambre, de Knut Hamsun

El Brujo del Cuervo, de Ngugi wa Thiong'o

El ruido y la furia, de William Faulkner

León el africano, de Amin Maalouf

El reflejo de las palabras, de Kader Abdolah

El Arte de desgranar alubias, Wiesław Mysiński

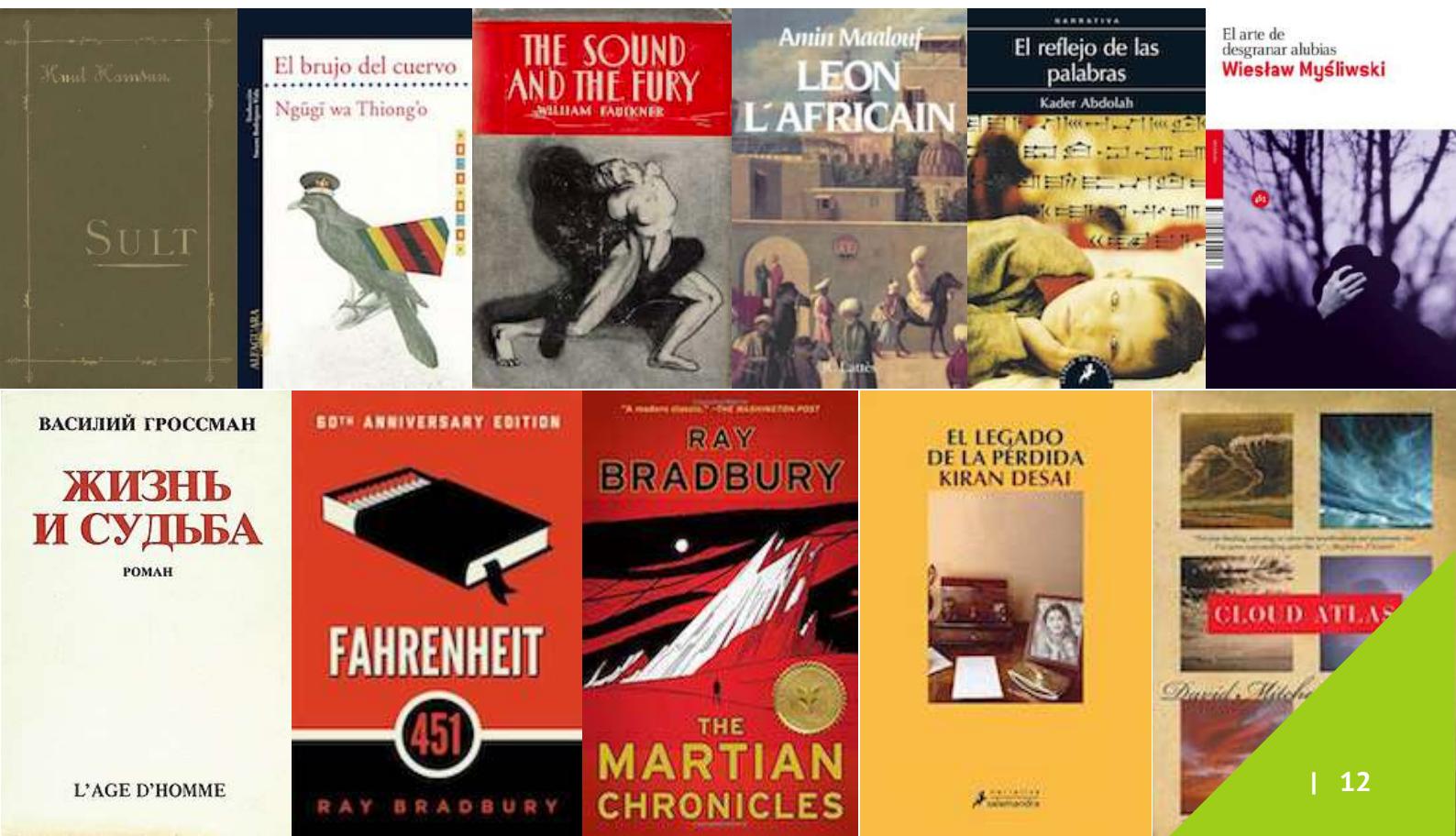
Vida y destino, de Vasili Grossman

Fahrenheit 451, de Ray Bradbury

Crónicas marcianas, de Ray Bradbury

El legado de la pérdida, de Kiran Desai

El atlas de las nubes, de David Mitchell



ARTES

VIRTUAL GALLERY

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*La sección de *Alter Ego* regresará con una nueva edición el próximo mes.



Virtual Gallery

By: Makenna Brissette

Welcome to Art!

This semester marks the beginning of our 7th graders journey in Art! While other classes began their work online this January, these children had their first art classes after taking Music for two quarters. Their first project? To introduce themselves!

Miss Mary Robinson says, “The two projects are both introducing their names in different ways. The first is a graffiti inspired art work where students learned how to create interesting letters and blend colors. The second is a radial symmetry piece, which is each student's name repeated 8 times to create an abstract pattern.”



Frida González



Mairim Ávalos



Maya Ellsworth



Camia Zayas



Chloe Ellsworth



Polette López

Several works demonstrate the early talent and artistry of the group. She continues to say, “I'm really impressed with the level of skill and creativity already that the 7th graders have shown and am very excited to see what else they create over the rest of the school year!”

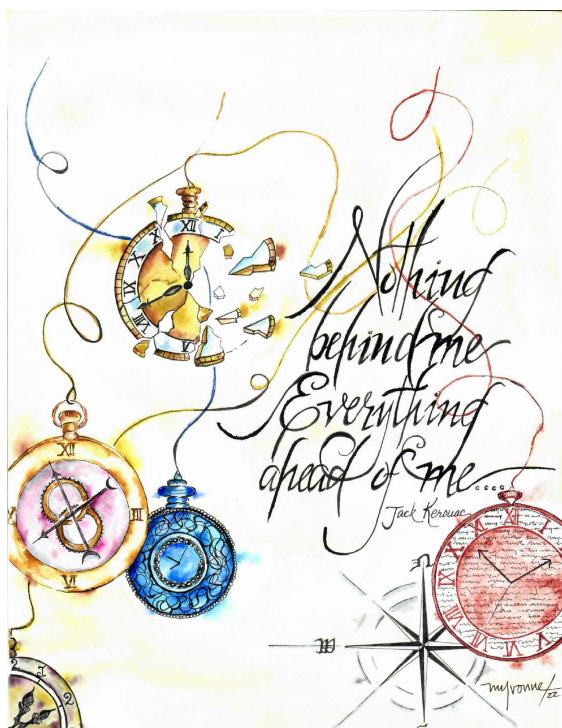
Wow, good luck to these young Picassos!

Sobre la portada

Artista: Yvonne Gámez

Técnica: acuarela

Con el inicio de año y la frase del novelista y poeta Jack Kerouac (Jean-Louis Lebris de Kérouack 1922-1969), de su famoso libro “On the Road” (importante influencia para las bandas de rock de la época como The Doors, Jim Morrison entre otros) los relojes representan los momentos en que la vida avanza y simbolizan la confianza en el tiempo para dejar lo malo atrás y ver hacia un futuro más prometedor.



Yvonne Gámez: viajera incansable, diseñadora gráfica de profesión con especialidad en imagen corporativa. Apasionada por las diferentes técnicas de ilustración hechas a mano, que me han inspirado a lo largo de mi vida, y el haber vivido en diferentes países y continentes; sin uso de la tecnología, dedicando tiempo y que dan tanta inspiración como en este caso la acuarela.

STEM NHS Presents STEM in the Community: An Interview with Miss Mary Lou

Interview by: Lianna Bernal

Written by: Makenna Brissette

For as long as she can remember, Mary Lou Zaghner, known by most at ASPV as “Miss Mary Lou,” wanted to be a math teacher.

Growing up the oldest of six children from what she hails as “farm country,” she grew up in the Bay City-Saginaw Area of Michigan, where she attended a two-room schoolhouse through eighth grade. There were a total of four students in her class.

For high school, she switched to a nearby town for her education, where her freshman class totaled an impressive 700 students. However, no matter the school, she recounts having an early talent and passion for mathematics, saying, “It’s interesting because going to that little school I had never seen a variable or a signed number. And I went into that big city and half of those kids had already taken Pre-Calculus. They tested me and said I could be in Honors Algebra, and I asked ‘that’s math, right?’”

She described her love for the subject, even when it’s incredibly complex: “Math was always just something that fascinated me, that I loved and challenged me. It’s hard for me to stop if I have something I can’t figure out, I just keep after it until I get there.”

She graduated sixth in her class of 600, and attended Michigan State University for her bachelor’s, where she pursued a degree in mathematics. Her mother, who had been a teacher in a one-room schoolhouse for a couple years before marriage, and her father, a farmer with a particular interest in the business aspect of the trade, were quite determined that their children would all go to college. Five of their six children ended up attending MSU, though Miss Mary Lou was the only one to move abroad.

With both her bachelor’s and master’s degrees providing her with a thorough background, Miss Mary Lou applied her knowledge of mathematics to a variety of fields; her work took her to the likes of Florida, Texas, and Minnesota, before settling in Mexico.

In addition to being a mathematics teacher, Miss Mary Lou was a programmer and a systems analyst for companies, working for businesses doing financial modeling. She describes how she worked with “incredibly smart PHD students through finance and economics,” even though she didn’t have any prior experience in those areas. “But because of my math background and my ability to work between the technical side and the business side, I really liked doing both of those things,” she says.

She proceeded to speak of one particular interesting detail of the job, pertaining to how technology has transformed over the years. “When I started programming, computers took up whole buildings, literally, and I had a terminal [a device to input data and commands into a computer] connected to it,” she continued, “I worked for a technology company and I programed in a language called ALGOL, which is like Fortran, which you’ve probably never heard of, and in COBOL. Those were two of the kinda original languages that came after just doing machine language stuff.”

The transformation of technology was good timing, she says, as it was beneficial to making businesses more efficient, as programmers were able to create systems specifically tailored to business needs. “They knew the business people were collecting all this information and it needed to be stored, so they would have them fill out these forms, and then it would get punched in cards, and then it would be put into a computer.”

Miss Mary Lou found interest in the intersection of these areas, but observed that the tech people didn’t like to communicate with the business people. “They needed someone to talk to the business people and who understood their workflow, and could put it online onto a screen they could use. And not just collect it, but organize it in a way that made sense in terms of how they did their work.” She worked to allow this communication to occur, stating, “I really was fascinated by the business, and how people did their job and using the computer as a tool to do so.”

She continued on to become a technical writer, as well as a business analyst and getting involved in testing: “I was pretty much in the IT world. I was one of few women in all of those positions. And because I kept changing what I was doing, I kept working with 20 and 30 year olds; meanwhile I was in my 40s to 60s.”

As a woman in STEM, Miss Mary Lou didn’t always expect to be thought of as an outsider or a minority, citing the fact that she grew up with four younger brothers and was used to being the boss of them. Though she can vividly remember one instance in which she believes she didn’t get a job in Washington D.C., specifically because she was a woman: “I could tell by the questions asked, there was concern that I was female.”

However, she didn’t let this stop her, and seemed to gravitate towards more diverse, welcoming areas anyways, she says, and found she didn’t belong in the ultra-competitive, male-dominated fields. “For the most part, I just barged through and kept going. I also found that the places that I best fit were the places that were looking for diversity, so that meant that I had less of a struggle.”

One place she found she especially gravitated towards was Puerto Vallarta. After visiting from several business trips to Guadalajara and vacationing, she decided this to be the best place to retire. “I just felt like I belonged here... I tell people that living here keeps you young, because there’s something new everyday that you’ve never seen or faced before, especially if you drive a car,” she jokes.

Although moving here to retire, she says she’d get bored if she wasn’t doing something, and connected with Lisa Shalla to start tutoring mathematics here, adding one more title to her endless list of pursuits. In regards to the diverse jobs she had, she says, “I spent the majority of my working life outside of teaching. But every job that I had, every profession that I was in, my role really was one where I was a bridge between non-technical and technical people.”

Despite the fact that Miss Mary Lou describes a common theme throughout all her work as such, underlying even that is a significant theme of building bridges to create effective communication for people to better understand. This is best demonstrated through her work in tutoring, where she could use her passion for mathematics to help others better understand.

“Math is beautiful. Not many people feel that way. And I enjoy the tutoring side because even though most of the people I tutor never come to love math the same way I do, they usually fear it less, and they like it at least a little bit more, because they are able to do it.”

She says the biggest challenge she sees as a tutor is finding which way is the best to explain a concept to a person, “because there’s always multiple ways and people learn in multiple ways.” She continued on to describe how she sees math as patterns, in both the problems and how you solve them, and how she enjoys teaching people to detect such patterns.

She cites her first love being “working with students and doing math,” and has worked as a tutor for ASPV for over twelve years. “Working with high school students and the faculty and the staff here, I just think it keeps my mind going, and I really enjoy it.” She has tutored everything from 5th grade to 12th here, with nine current students she sees regularly.

Miss Mary Lou’s passion and dedication to helping others better understand mathematics is admirable. In a life-long career of building connections for effective communication and learning, we’re glad she’s decided to share this blessing with us here in Vallarta. Without doubt, she has become a remarkable pillar to the community of students and teachers here at ASPV. Thank you!

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