

TOP OFFICIALS RECEIVE COVID VACCINE



Bottles of COVID-19 Vaccine – Getty Images

By Mateo Feola

Many people have received the vaccine for COVID-19, including very important people. Some things to know – there are three vaccines: America is using the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, while the United Kingdom is using the Oxford vaccine. So far, millions of people have received

the vaccine, including Dr. Anthony Fauci. Dr. Fauci received the Moderna vaccine, alongside former Secretary of Health and Human services, Alex Azar. Fauci has publicly urged people to get the vaccine, as cases rise. Secretary Azar has called the vaccine, “Nothing short of miraculous.”

Many politicians and world leaders have received the vaccine, including Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip. Buckingham Palace revealed that the 94-year-old queen and her 99-year-old husband were given the vaccine by a palace doctor. The palace

has not said what vaccine they have taken. In America, President Joe Biden received the Pfizer vaccine. He has urged Americans to get vaccinated and pledged to help struggling people and businesses. Others who received the vaccine include House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, Vice President Kamala Harris, Senator Mitch McConnell, and Senator Bernie Sanders. Hopefully, we will have enough people vaccinated to resume a normal lifestyle.

For more information on the COVID-19 Vaccine, please head to www.cdc.gov

Mr. Barletta – A Freeland Icon

By Ben Assad

I was recently able to interview Mr. Barletta through email about his amazing career at FEMS. The following are his answers to my questions:

How long have you been a principal at FEMS?

I have been the principal here for 25 years.

What do you think you will do in retirement?



Well, I will definitely have more time to improve my golf swing. Traveling is something that I love to do, so I'll be doing some of that once I can. I can't wait to spend more quality time with my grandchildren. That will be great. And hopefully visiting

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Basketball in the Age of Covid

By Ben Assad

In all my years of going to school activities, I have never seen kids go wilder than the pep rallies and games for the school basketball teams and cheerleading. It's amazing! Even the 1st and 2nd graders have a great time. It's a great atmosphere. The pep rallies and games inspire the 5th and 6th graders that they could do this in a year or two and that's great to...

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THE AGE OF MOVIE STREAMING...ARE THEATRES ALL BUT FORGOTTEN?



Disney's *Raya and the Last Dragon*

Movie streaming is not a new concept. In fact, Netflix began in 2007; however, in the last year during the Coronavirus pandemic, it was

practically impossible for people to see movies in a theatre. Production companies were forced to be creative so that the millions of dollars spent on making the movies that were planned to be released in 2020 would not be lost.

Cue services like Netflix,

Amazon Prime Video, and Disney+. Many films were released directly to these streaming services, giving viewers the chance to watch from the comfort of their own homes.

So, what will ultimately happen to movie theatres? Perhaps people will return once it is a bit more safe to do so. Or perhaps people might just enjoy watching a new release with their own snacks in their pj's.

BASKETBALL

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...see. Now all of this is put on hold for as long as we know it? As I think back to the beginning of the year before the pandemic, my mind always drifts back to one place – the high school gym. Freeland was playing against Heights Terrace in the first round of the anthracite playoffs. I remember saying to myself that in a year, that'll be me down there, on the court instead of the stands. Little did I know that in a few weeks the worst was about to happen, and basketball among other things, might have to be put on hold.

During the summer, there wasn't much to do except play basketball out in my driveway. I was out there pretty much every day. I got my hopes up high that we would come back to school in September, and that I would have a chance to play. When I heard that we would be virtual for a while, I didn't know how to handle it. I missed my friends, and I didn't feel like doing school on my laptop. It took me a while to get used to the change, but the



thought of possibly coming back helped me pull through. I basically asked Mr. Sones every day if he heard anything about basketball and for a while, he didn't know any more than I did. I kept checking the Facebook page for any notifications, but for what seemed like forever, there was nothing. Then, my cousin sent my Mom a picture of a Facebook post showing all the paperwork that I needed to fill out to play. I felt great, all about some paperwork that would have me stressed out for the next week to come. Open gyms started on November 13th and 18th. You also needed a physical to try out. Then the season was postponed until December 1st due to the paperwork needed to play not being turned in. There were no Covid-19 issues within that period that affected the season, so I thought that this would be the only cancellation we would have. Once the season started...

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SPRING CLEANING CHECKLIST!

With spring officially here, it's time to start thinking about cleaning out the areas of your home that really need tidying up! Use the following checklist as a guide for your kid spaces:

BEDROOM

- ☐ Dust Furniture
- ☐ Remove Sheets and Bedding for Laundry
- ☐ Clean Under Bed
- ☐ Organize Toys
- ☐ Donate Old Toys
- ☐ Organize Drawers
- ☐ Donate Old Clothes
- ☐ Wipe Down Walls
- ☐ Vacuum/Sweep

PLAYROOM

- ☐ Dust Surfaces
- ☐ Vacuum/Sweep
- ☐ Organize Books/DVDs
- ☐ Wipe Down Walls
- ☐ Clean Windows
- ☐ Organize Toys & Art Supplies
- ☐ Donate Old Toys

BARLETTA

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Freeland once in a while. I'd love to see how everyone is doing, because I will miss being at Freeland.

You have impacted the school in so many ways, do you think the school will change greatly with your absence or very little at all?

I am hoping that not many changes will take place. I'm hoping that we continue to keep the great culture that we created and our atmosphere for learning. I always look at it that we've created a team here – a team of our students, parents, and community.

I know from experience that when I was in kindergarten and 1st grade, my peers and I looked up to you a lot. Do you have any words for the younger students who are going to miss out on their years with you as students at Freeland?

I will also miss that part of my job where I meet them in their first school experience. I know they will do great things.

I know that all of the teachers are working hard through this troubled time to try and make this as close to regular school as possible. What would you say to them on how they have done?

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CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the 8th grade members of the Boys' and Girls' Basketball Teams and the Cheerleading Squad on a wonderful season!



Pictured: Kaitlyn Puzetti, Summer Casey, Hannah Mundo, and Karlii Laurel



Pictured: Ryan Racho, Darian Haraschak, Gavin Perkosky, Estarling Melenciano, Nicholas Ledger, and Bryan Ferreira



Pictured: Milena Chicalese, Gianna Catrone, and Macey Gasper

BASKETBALL

continued from B2

...back up again, we got right into the swing of things. We had two weeks to prepare for our first game. Within the first week of playing games, we would have our season opener and two other games within that first week, so we had to get in shape fast. Everything went well for the first week. Then when we arrived at the gym on Monday, coach told us that we were postponing the season again, this time until Christmas break was over. It was the worst timing. We had gotten some good conditioning in and now everything we had learned in that week would unfortunately be forgotten. The YMCA closed and snow was starting to fall so we couldn't practice at least some of the stuff we had learned in that first week of practice. I felt anxious and I felt like I needed to get some exercise. So, I started doing a P90x3 home workout routine. It sucked for the first week, but after a while I got stronger, faster, and even more anxious to get back on the court.

Not playing for a month

wasn't fun, but I do think it helped the team. I think when we came back, we looked better than we did before we left. We resumed practice on January 7th, and we ran our plays repeatedly until we got good enough to start focusing on our defense. We became very well-rounded, and we got in good shape fast. We were hungry for a championship that we knew we had a good at getting. The Freeland Whippets Boys' team went undefeated this season, beating every team they encountered. If there's anything I've learned this season it's that anything is possible and that we will get through this harsh time together.



BARLETTA

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I think that they have done a great job. I have been stopping in and doing virtual visits, and like I said, I think they've been doing great. They've made a great transition from in-person teaching to virtual teaching and I'm very proud.

Return for students is scheduled for April 12th of this year. That gives the students and teachers basically two months to return and try to gain some sense of normalcy. Do you think they will be able to do that in that time?

I believe that the teachers can do

"...I will miss being at Freeland."

that. Again, it will be an effort on the administration, the teachers, the parents, and the students. It'll be a big team effort.

Thinking back to all of your years of service, do you have a specific memory that comes to mind as being your favorite moment at FEMS?

There are so many wonderful memories I have made here at Freeland. Some of the ones that immediately come to mind are my years of coaching basketball, all of the National Young Readers' Day programs, the various assemblies we've had where we were able to meet with members of our community, and when the student body taped me to the wall for a fundraiser. The one moment that really stands out though as my fondest memory is when the whole school threw me a surprise birthday pep-rally. It was so touching for me, and it really got me emotional. That was great. It was probably my favorite memory.

LEARNING AMONG US

"Among Us" is an online multiplayer game in which participants need to find out the traitor in the group. Participants are randomly given a role when they start the game and become either a Crewmate or the Imposter. As a Crewmate, you are instructed to complete tasks all while trying to figure out who is being "Sus" around you. The Imposters are supposed to sabotage those tasks and trick others by making them think they are just a regular crewmate.

Although this game was created by Innersloth back in 2018, it really did not emerge as a hit until most people were in lockdown during the Coronavirus pandemic. Many people, out of boredom, began downloading more games to play and Among Us became an overnight sensation!



3rd Grade Teachers, Mrs. Hartz, Mrs. Kasarda, Ms. Marinock, and Mrs. Staruch, conducted a Virtual Parent Engagement Activity on Wednesday, March 10, 2021. Students and parents or any family member were encouraged to participate and work with their children. An original Among Us Scavenger Hunt was presented and hosted by each homeroom teacher.

Students and parents/family member had a "blast from outer space" working together to solve riddles and find important items to help "The Imposter" get the guests and the students back to Earth safely! They are proud to share the fun they had working together for everyone to see!



We wish Mr. Barletta the best of luck in his retirement and thank him for everything he has done for us!

GEORGIA SENATE RUNOFFS MAKE HISTORY

By Mateo Feola

On January 6, 2021, Jon Ossoff and Reverend Raphael Warnock defeated incumbent senators David Perdue and Kelly Loeffler in runoff elections for the United States Senate. The runoffs were made official when neither candidate in each election reached 50% of votes. Let's learn more about these elections.

The first race called was the runoff for the special election between Rev. Warnock and Sen. Loeffler. Warnock won 50.8% of the votes. He will be the first African American Senator from



Rev. Raphael Warnock pictured in his church in Atlanta.

Georgia. Warnock previously was the senior pastor of the historic Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once preached. Loeffler, was appointed by Governor Brian Kemp when Senator Johnny Isakson resigned

due to health concerns. She also is the co-owner of the WNBA team, the Atlanta Dream. Rev. Warnock will hopefully represent the great state of Georgia well.

Later that day, Jon Ossoff defeated incumbent Sen. David Perdue with 50.4% of the votes. Ossoff will become the youngest senator since Joe Biden at the age of 33. Ossoff was the runner up in the election for U.S. Representative in Georgia's 6th district a few years ago. Perdue was elected in 2015 and was the former owner of Reebok. Hopefully, Ossoff will also represent Georgia well.

BREAKING THE MONARCHY

The Duke and Duchess of Sussex, Harry and Meghan, conducted an interview with Oprah Winfrey about the events and situations that led to them giving up their royal life in England. They spoke about how treatment by the media and by their own family members made them realize that a private life is what they would prefer for themselves and their children.

"You have no idea what's going on for someone behind closed doors. No idea. Even the people that smile and shine the brightest lights," Meghan stated.

The couple revealed many personal details from the last few years, such as how stressful working as a royal was for Meghan and how their son,



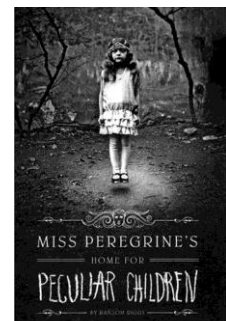
Meghan and Harry during the interview with Oprah

Archie, would not be given a royal title nor personal protection. Meghan said that she felt she had nowhere to turn when she was struggling and was not allowed to seek help from friends or from professionals. They also said that many of the stories in the tabloids are just completely false and hurtful.

They now reside in California with their son, Archie, and are planning the arrival of their second child.

NY TIMES BEST SELLER'S CHILDREN'S SERIES

1. *Miss Peregrine's Peculiar Children*
2. *Diary of a Wimpy Kid*
3. *Harry Potter*
4. *Who Was/Is...?*
5. *The Twilight Saga*
6. *Percy Jackson & The Olympians*
7. *Grisha Trilogy*
8. *Wings of Fire*
9. *Magic Tree House*
10. *The Last Kids On Earth*



HOROSCOPES 2021

WEATHER – Freeland, PA



ARIES – Aries children are expected to blossom out of

their shell this year and become more confident. This can take on many forms: making new friends, exploring new ideas, or branching out with new hobbies and adventures. Aries kids will definitely have fun in 2021!

(March 21-April 19)



TAURUS – Taurus children are expected to gain popularity

and friendships this year. They might act out if they are feeling unseen and misunderstood, so make sure to give some attention to the Taurus in your life. Taurus children will also need some help prioritizing what really is important, especially in 2021.

(April 20-May 20)



Average Temperature: High 55°F and Low 37.9°F

Average Precipitation: 3.98"

By April 30, 2021, the Sunrise will be 6:01 am and the Sunset will be 8:00 pm

TODAY IN HISTORY

April 3, 1860 – The 1st Pony Express mail traveling by horse and rider teams leaves St. Joseph, Missouri. Ten days later, it arrives in Sacramento, California.

April 8, 1974 – Hank Aaron breaks Babe Ruth's all-time home run record. By his retirement, Aaron had 755 career home runs.

April 14, 1865 – John Wilkes Booth shoots Abraham Lincoln at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C.

April 17, 1970 – Apollo 13 returns to Earth after a disastrous mission. After oxygen tank #2 blew up in the spacecraft, the three crew members landed safely in the Pacific.



April 23, 1564 – The great English dramatist and poet William Shakespeare is born in Stratford-upon-Avon.

April 30, 1993 – The World Wide Web launches in the public domain. Created by Tim Berners-Lee, it became the first means of browsing the network that develops into the internet.

COMICS

ELEMENTARY LIVE MEETING



MIDDLE SCHOOL LIVE MEETING

