



**Sonia Sotomayor**

ON PAGE 5



**The Dancing Plague of Strasbourg**

ON PAGE 7



**LGBTQIAP+ Identities**

ON PAGE 4

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# Mustang Moments

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## The Culture War on Free Speech

By Mrs. Bowman

There is a war being waged across this country. It isn't a war involving weapons of destruction. It's a war over words, and a global one at that. The United States is just one of many countries seeing the attack on a freedom many take for granted.

The first amendment of the U.S. Constitution grants citizens the guarantee of freedom of expression. That can come in the form of protests, demonstrations, news media, film, and the written word. It has become a fundamental human right, one for which was hard fought.

Funny how censorship is now on the rise in just about every state. It's almost as if we are traveling backwards in time, and it's on both sides of the political aisle, from progressives who want to rid the world of any idea they find racist, sexist, or anti-LGBTQ to conservatives who want to ban institutions from engaging in any discourse that involves race, anti-racism, gender, sexuality, even

actual history.

Back in September of 2021, a school board in York, PA suddenly decided to pull books, articles, film and educational materials from the school and library shelves for "evaluation". Many of the materials were anti-racism books and books by or about people of color, citing that the materials were "too divisive, didn't show proper respect for police and taught white children that society doesn't give people of color the same opportunities they enjoy." They have since removed the ban on these materials thanks to the power of free speech.

In January of this year, schools in Williamson County in Tennessee recalled a number of books for "reconsideration" of their use with students. One that made the news was the book, *Maus*, a graphic novel written by Art Spiegelman. The book depicts the horrors of the Holocaust. Some members of the school board chose to object to the book without even



*"I have not seen the book (or) read the whole book. I've only read the reviews." member of a Tennessee School Board*

having read it. School board members ultimately didn't ban the materials in their entirety, but censored parts they didn't want teachers using with students. In the same county, a church pastor organized a book burning, encouraging families to toss into the flames books like *Harry Potter*, *Twilight*, and *Fahrenheit 451*. It's hard to fathom a book burning in this century, yet here we are.

The state of Texas is actively removing books from schools and



Left photo: Holocaust graphic novel, *Maus*, Right photo: Book burning in Tennessee, Photo Credit: Smithsonian Magazine and nashvillescene.com

libraries and rewriting curriculum in counties across the state. Governor Greg Abbott seems intent to completely erase the visibility of the LGBTQ+ community considering that many of the books being pulled deal with gender and sexuality. He isn't playing "favorites" though—there were plenty of books dealing with race and anti-racism and books by or about people of color on his list as well. Abbott also arranged for the removal of all online resources geared

CONT ON PAGE 2

## The Iconic Cherry Blossom Trees

by Mario Lara



Cherry Blossoms and Washington Monument, Photo Credit: nps.gov

Every year the Cherry Blossom trees located around the Capital bloom in spectacular fashion. The official 2022 National Cherry Blossom Festival is starting this month, on March 20. Do you know how the famous Cherry Blossom trees got to Washington DC?

The Cherry Blossoms in DC have been blooming for over 100 years. The trees were brought from Tokyo, Japan to DC in late 1911 and early 1912.

The request for the trees dates back to 1885. Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore was a traveler and diplomat, which was very unusual for women at the time because of social norms. She proposed a plan to have Cherry Blossom trees planted along the Potomac River waterfront. However, her request fell on deaf ears. Over the course of the next 24 years, Eliza approached every new superintendent proposing the idea of Japanese Cherry

Blossom trees.

In 1906, Dr. David Fairchild planted a number of Cherry Blossom trees on his property in Chevy Chase, Maryland. Over the course of a year, he observed how the trees grew and eventually deemed them a success one year later. In 1907, Dr. Fairchild made arrangements with the Chevy Chase Land company to order 300 more Cherry Blossoms for the surrounding area. In 1908, Fairchild gave Cherry Tree saplings to the local school children to plant.

Following Dr. Fairchild's success in 1909, Eliza Scidmore decided to raise money to purchase Cherry Blossom trees and eventually

wrote a letter to First Lady Helen Taft, wife to then President William Taft. Mrs. Taft was familiar with the beautiful trees because she had lived in Japan. She later wrote back to Eliza and promised to plant the Cherry trees along a road.

In April of 1909, the Superintendent of the Office of Public Buildings and Grounds, Colonel Spencer Cosby, ordered 90 Cherry Blossom trees to be



Eliza Ruhamah Scidmore, Photo Credit: nps.gov

CONT ON PAGE 3

## The Scoop on Intramurals

by Natalie Shanker

Are you considering joining an afterschool club? Might intramurals be for you? I had a chance recently to catch a few fellow students who attend intramurals and ask them about it.

Nathan said, "It's fun and we should keep it." Chris told us that it was "cool", fun", and that "you get to chill with your friends".



Mr. Thibeault, Coach, Photo Credit: Natalie Shanker and Shayla Metcalf

All of the students seemed to report positively about their experiences in the intramurals

club. There are many different sports offered. Some are seasonal like softball, basketball, flag football, and soccer but others can be played at any time, like volleyball, ping pong, cornhole, and lifting weights.



Students playing basketball, Photo Credit: Natalie Shanker and Shayla Metcalf

Intramurals run after school most Wednesdays and Thursdays. Activity buses are available on those days which makes them accessible for everyone.

The coach, Mr. Thibeault said that it is "a good way to socialize", that they "play for fun" and that it is a "fun, lively way" for students to get exercise".

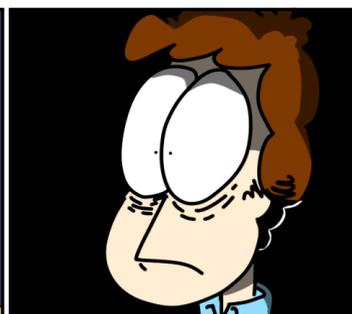


NJHS Logo, Photo Credit: NJHS.us

**Rock the Socks for Autism Fundraiser**

Page 5

Garfield at WOOD



## Free Speech *cont. from pg. 1*

toward youth of the LGBTQ+ community from the state's website.

Governor Ron DeSantis of Florida just signed into law the "Don't Say Gay" bill which bans the use of the words "gay" or "trans" in grades kindergarten through third grade in the Florida public school system. It also prohibits any "classroom discussion about sexual orientation or gender identity". This move is just the latest in the Florida governor's quest to erase the visibility of anything to which he personally objects. A public high school student was suspended "indefinitely" when he distributed 200 Pride flags at a demonstration protesting the bill. These kinds of laws being drawn up seem to be more about the culture of a place than



Protesters during Gov. DeSantis announcement, Photo Credit: Vox.com

about protecting children. It's more about the discomfort some may feel when discussing certain topics.

Republican lawmakers across the country have introduced more than 150 state laws restricting how teachers can discuss race, sexual orientation and gender identity in the classroom. Teachers are censoring themselves out of fear of what may happen to them if they say something that could be used against them. New Hampshire is offering a \$500 bounty to anyone who turns

in teachers for supposed offenses. No wonder teachers are scared.

Social media companies are being forced to re-evaluate their policies surrounding free speech. Once fervent protectors of this right, companies are now choosing to censor some users based on the content of their posts. While this may seem like a good thing (and in some instances it is), how are the determinations made and who is making them? Who gets to decide what makes it through to the public domain? Democrats want to see less disinformation and hate speech being promoted. Republicans want social media to be fairer to the conservative base. It seems that if everyone gets

**"Without free speech, the future will be less free, democratic, and equal—and more ignorant, autocratic, and oppressive" - Jacob Mchangama**

what they want, someone has to mediate it, and that ultimately will lead to what should be avoided—the suppression of ideas.

Spotify was in the spotlight when episodes of Joe Rogan's podcast aired with racial slurs and misinformation about Covid-19. Spotify stood by Joe Rogan. Do we want to hear this stuff being spouted off in the public forum? Maybe no, but letting CEOs of companies decide who gets to share their ideas and who doesn't, sounds like a pretty good example of violation of free speech.

Oftentimes when we disagree, we can boycott or protest. This can be very



Gag Orders in the US, Photo Credit: PEN America

effective. In the case of Spotify, the public chose not to stand by Joe Rogan, making a statement by leaving the streaming service. Some musicians took it a step further and removed their music altogether from the platform—starting with Neil Young and followed quickly by others. It packed a punch, forcing the CEO to make a promise "to do more to provide balance and access to widely accepted information from the



medical and scientific communities".

However you want to look at it, having the fundamental right of freedom of expression is the core of a functioning democracy. As author Jacob Mchangama says in his book, *Free Speech*, "without free speech, the future will be less free, democratic, and equal—and more ignorant, autocratic, and oppressive". That doesn't sound like a place we want to be.

## Top 25 Threats to Free Speech

According to the NCAC

1. Apathy
2. A Net Without Neutrality
3. Self-Censorship
4. National Security Agency
5. Scared School Boards
6. Political Correctness
7. "Juvenoia"
8. Trigger Warnings
9. Government Opacity
10. Blaming Video Games
11. Facebook
12. Department of Justice
13. Texas Board of Education
14. Boycotts of Boycotts
15. Justice Clarence Thomas
16. Fear of Violence
17. Gag Orders
18. Kansas Board of Regents
19. Federal Communications Commission
20. Digital Millennium Copyright Act "Takedowns"
21. Helicopter Parents
22. Mattel
23. War on Whistleblowers
24. Bill Donohue and Tim Wildmon
25. Demise of Tenure



FCC and its Policies, Photo Credit: NCAC

## Dogs on the Job

By Grace Davis

When hearing of a dog with a job many people believe that the term only applies to a police or military dog. In reality there are many kinds of jobs a dog may have, one of which is a service dog (also referred to as an assistance dog in some places).

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service dog as being, "dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities." So what qualifies as a disability for which a service dog may be beneficial? The qualification for having a disability from the ADA is, "a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities. This includes people who have a record of such an impairment, even if they do not currently have a disability. It also includes individuals who do not have a disability but are regarded as having a disability."

What can a service animal do to help their handler? A service dog can be trained to guide a blind handler, retrieve named items, pick up dropped items, alert to a seizure, circle around the handler to keep people away, let a handler know if they're going to pass out, and even lead it's handler to a specific spot or person. In some cases a service dog can be used to detect specific allergens in food or alert a handler to high or low blood sugar.



Guide dog leading handler, Photo Credit: guidedogs.com

While there are many websites that have registries for service dogs that give out registration cards and vests, they're simply scams. A vest doesn't make a dog a service dog; it's the hours and years of training put into them. Though if there is a dog wearing the typical vest those registries give out (some handlers call them "the Amazon vest" as that's where they're typically found) that doesn't automatically make them a fake. Some handlers may buy them because they are cheap. If they have a puppy, it's a good way to not spend a lot on a vest they'll outgrow. While being able to simply order a vest on Amazon may tempt someone into getting a vest for their dog, it's illegal and endangers real service dogs and the lives of their handlers.

At some schools and some jobs there may be a uniform that's required; this isn't the case with service dogs. There is no law stating that a service dog must be wearing a specific vest or harness. It's actually quite the opposite. When asked if a service dog had to wear a vest, harness, or tags that identify a dog as a service dog the ADA's response was, "The ADA does not require service animals to

wear a vest, ID tag, or specific harness." Even with this section of the law, many handlers opt for having their dog wear a vest or harness for the ease of people recognizing it as a service dog. Some handlers choose to have their gear themed around their favorite things! However this law doesn't apply to leashes. According to the law, a service dog needs to wear a leash unless it interferes with a dog's ability to task.



Dogs from Canine Companion for Independence at Disney, Photo Credit: Good Morning America

Diabetic Alert Dogs of America, the Mira Foundation, Little Angel Service Dogs, Canine Companions for Independence, and Southeastern Guide Dogs along with many other programs train service dogs for those who may not be able to train their own. One of the most common types of service dog schools is guide dog school. This is because it's very difficult for a blind person to train their own guide dog to avoid obstacles. Handlers with dogs for other disabilities such as those where an alert or a re-



Yellow Lab Guide Dog, Photo Credit: MassLive

sponse is trained chose to train their own or work with a skilled trainer. Many people wonder if it's possible for someone to train their own service dog. The law states that, "People with disabilities have the right to train the dog themselves and are not required to use a professional service dog training program."

It's rude to distract someone who's working, right? The same rule applies when a service dog is involved. Service dogs have a job to do and shouldn't be distracted as it may end up costing the handler their life. Proper service dog etiquette includes, no petting, not making kissing or clicking noises, not making direct eye contact, not trying to feed the dog while working, making no attempt to talk to the dog, and in general not trying to gain the dog's attention. While service dogs are trained to ignore these types of distractions (and many others) dog's aren't robots so they're not always going to be perfect. Most times it's best to pretend

the dog isn't there at all. There aren't many exceptions to the rule of completely ignoring a service dog, but there is in the case of seeing a service dog alone or a service dog coming up to you alone and nudging or barking at you. Those are both signs that their handler needs help. If this happens the dog will most likely lead you to it's handler. In this case you will want to observe the situation and call 911 if needed.

Often a dog given to a handler by a program is raised and given their basic training by an average person, they may not even have experience training dogs. This experience is called puppy raising. When a person is a puppy raiser they do just that, they receive a puppy (the puppy is typically anywhere from 8-12 weeks) and they train the dog for around a year. During this

CONT ON PAGE 3



Guide Dog in Training, Photo Credit: BluePath Service Dogs

# URES

## Skip the Straws

By Natalie Shanker

February is an amazing month for raising awareness. Not only is it Black History Month, it also includes a fairly new holiday called Skip the Straw Day. National Skip the Straw day landed on Friday, February 25 this year. Every year, plastic straws and stirrers are among the top ten items collected during coastal clean-ups. In fact, volunteers have collected nearly 14 million straws and stirrers from beaches and waterways worldwide over the past 30 years. Unfortunately, many more continue to make their way into our ocean, where they pose a real danger to sea turtles, albatross, fish and other ocean wildlife. Plastic straw use also contributes to global warming since the production of plastic involves the burning of fossil fuels.



Plastic debris, Photo Credit: Dustan Woodhouse

This environmental holiday was created by middle schoolers to raise awareness for global warming and plastic pollution. Nine 8th grade students, called the "Coral Keepers", from Michigan's Whitehall Middle School, entered into the Lexus Eco Challenge. The contest challenges students in grades 6-12 to find an environmental issue that affects where they live and then come up with an action plan to combat it.

The "Coral Keepers" were the Grand Prize winners and their idea of "Skipping the Straws" went viral. Susan Tate, a Whitehall Middle School teacher and the students' adviser, reported that the students were inspired to act once they watched a video of a turtle with a straw stuck in its nose.



Straws collected on beach, Photo Credit: Blue Ocean Society

### "volunteers have collected nearly 14 million straws and stirrers from beaches and waterways worldwide"

Tate said that the students looked over the National Day Calendar and petitioned for a day. The offer was accepted and created the legacy was created. Now every fourth Friday in February is dedicated to skipping the straws. The group created the #NationalSkipTheStrawDay, sold reusable straws at school, organized for paper straws to replace plastic ones at lunch and created a litter cleanup opportunity. "I think they saw how if you're passionate about something, to keep working on it." Tate stated. This is a good lesson to learn that even middle schoolers can make a difference in their community!

There are things you can do every day to keep plastic waste from making it into our oceans or into landfills.

- Stop using plastic straws and other single-use plastics
- Advocate with your favorite restaurants to stop using plastic straws or to only offer upon request
- Get involved and join a group to pick up trash
- Use a reusable water bottle
- Buy in bulk
- Stop using balloons
- Bring your own bags to stores
- RECYCLE



Whitehall Coral Keepers, Photo Credit: Washington Post

## Dogs cont. from pg. 2

time the raiser trains the puppy in basic obedience, exposes the puppy to new sights, sounds and smells, and overall gives the dog a solid foundation that is built upon later in it's training. It's 100% okay if the puppy raiser doesn't know how to train a dog! There are special classes that the program holds every week or so (it varies depending on the program) where they bring the puppy to learn new skills that they then go home and practice. Periodically a trainer from the program will meet with the raisers to have a talk about the dog's training and demonstrate its skills in different settings. If the trainer comes out and determines that the raiser may not be bringing out the dog's potential then they will have a talk with the current raiser and find a new one. At any point in a dog's training it can be washed (washing is a polite way of saying the dog is cut from the program). This isn't to say that the dog is a bad dog or did a bad job; it just didn't reach the rigorous requirements and standards that a service dog needs to meet.



Disabled Vet and his companion, Photo Credit: Canine Companions

After puppy raising, the real training begins. Once the dog's puppy raising is completed the dogs are brought back to the program to receive their formal training. Formal training includes learning tasks that the dog will need to know in order to help it's disabled handler. At Canine Companions for Independent

dence, about 170 dogs graduate per year; that's a lot of trained dogs but when compared to the 400 applications received makes it look small. Many more dogs than that are started each year but end up being washed from the specific program. When this occurs the dog may become a therapy dog, be gifted to a different organization if the dog fits their requirements, or offered to a home as a pet (often puppy raisers get first pick). Once the dog does complete training, they're matched with a handler and many programs hold a graduation ceremony of sorts. When graduations are given the puppy raiser is usually called so that if they would like, they can attend.

In the end all service dogs made it to where they are because they truly have a love for the work. They make the world a better place for their handler, giving them back independence one paw step at a time.



## Cherry Blossoms (con't from page 1)

planted along the Potomac River.

Later in 1909, Dr. Jokichi Takamine, a chemist from Japan who discovered adrenaline and takadiastase, got wind of Washington having Cherry Blossom trees. He asked Mrs. Taft if she would accept a donation of 2,000 trees. The Mayor of Tokyo, Yukio Ozaki, supported the idea. On August 30, 1909, Tokyo informed the Department of State that Tokyo intended to donate Cherry Blossom trees to the U.S.

The Cherry Blossom trees arrived in Seattle, Washington in early January, 1910. Following their arrival, all but 12 were burned because of the trees being infested with bugs. The 12 trees that were saved were also filled with bugs and other insects from Japan. These trees were saved for the sole purpose of being studied.

Following the unfortunate events of the forced burning of the Cherry Blossom Trees, all parties involved met to form a solution to the problem at hand. The Tokyo City Council in 1910 authorized the donation of more Cherry Blossom trees. The Cherry Blossom Trees totaled over three thousand and by 1912 they had safely arrived in their new home.

The first Cherry Blossom Festival was held in 1935 and was spon-

sored by many civic groups. The festival attracted many visitors and Sakikio Saito was crowned queen of the Cherry Blossoms by Melvin Mazen.

What will the Cherry Blossom festival look like this year? The Cherry Blossom Festival will be held from March 20th to April 17th. Some in-person activities include the Opening Ceremony, Petal Porches, Blossom Kite Festival, The National Cherry Blossom Festival Parade, Sakura Matsuri - Japanese Street Festival, Petalpalloza, and the Anacostia River Festival.

For the parade, you can also watch it on television or attend in person on Saturday, April 9, 2022. Marching bands, large and colorful helium balloons, floats, and entertainers march down Constitution Avenue in DC. If you are interested in attending the parade, you can buy tickets right now for the parade at <https://nationalcherryblossomfestival.org/event/the-national-cherry-blossom-festival-parade/>.

You can see the beautiful Cherry Blossom trees blooming either in person or even by viewing the Bloom Cam at - <https://nationalmall.org/bloomcam/>. This live camera allows us to view the trees around the Tidal Basin



Mayor Yukio Ozaki of Tokyo and wife, Photo Credit: nps.gov



First Lady Taft and President Taft, Photo Credit: nps.gov

24 hours a day. The camera is actually positioned on the roof of the Mandarin Oriental hotel and is operated by the National Park Service and Earthcam.

The Cherry Blossom Festival has been running for almost 100 years and most of the original traditions still stand. After reading this article and learning about the history of these iconic trees, I hope you plan on seeing the Cherry Blossoms either in person or virtually. After all, we are so fortunate to be located so close to Washington, DC.



Cherry Blossom Festival, Photo Credit: nps.gov



Cherry Blossom, Photo Credit: nps.gov

## Garfield at WOOD



## LGBTQIAP+ Identities

By Olive Clark

So. The LGBTQIAP+ community. Pretty cool. But many people don't know what the letters stand for. So... let's discuss.

The L stands for lesbian, which means women attracted to women. That's a more selective term, but it can include nonbinary people, depending on how they feel about the label. Nonbinary people are people who identify outside of the gender binary. Some nonbinary people who are only attracted to women may use the label sapphic instead, as sapphic means non-men attracted to non-men, so it has a broader definition.



Photo Credit: Vecteezy

The G stands for gay, which can apply to anyone in the community, but it often applies specifically to MLM people, which stands for men loving men, with the women counterpart being, WLW, women loving women. The counterpart for sapphic is Achillean which refers to non-women loving non-women.



Photo Credit: pinclipart



Photo Credit: StockFreeImages

The B stands for bisexual, which means the attraction to two or more genders. The prefix bi means two but in bisexual it means two or more, as many bi people use the term loosely. Bisexual is an umbrella term and can be used by anyone who experiences attraction to multiple genders, but there are microlabels that fall under the umbrella to specify certain kinds of attraction.

The T stands for transgender, or trans. Transgender means someone whose gender identity doesn't match their AGAB, (assigned gender at birth). A large part of the trans community consists of binary trans people, trans people who wholly identify as a man or woman, but there are people in the community who identify as non-binary. Not all non-binary people identify with the term though.

The Q stands for questioning or queer. Queer used to be a slur, as it means peculiar and people who are in the LGBTQIAP+ community were and are marginalized and that was a way of making them feel excluded.

However, queer has been reclaimed and some queer people use the word to describe their identity, as their identity is simply queer and that's that. Some people still don't like the term though. The questioning part of the q is to include those who are questioning their sexuality or gender identity as that's also valid.

The I stands for intersex, which is a third sex someone can be assigned at birth where their sex characteristics don't strictly line up with male or female. This can be experienced in a variety of ways such as hormonal differences or a difference in chromosomes.



Photo Credit: Shutterstock

Intersex people can identify however they feel, but being intersex isn't inherently queer. However, they're part of the community as their issues with erasure align with the transphobia and misogyny people in the LGBTQIAP+ community face, and the more people fighting for intersectionality, the better.

The A stands for the asexual and aromantic spectrum, and agender. The asexual spectrum consists of people who lack or don't experience sexual attraction. People can experience this differently, which is why it's a spectrum. The aromantic spectrum is similar, just for romantic at-



Photo Credit: Vecteezy

traction. A common misconception is asexuality and aromanticism always coexist. While they can coincide, they don't have to. Agender is similar, instead being a lack of gender. Agender people feel they are without a gender, which is called agender. Fun wordplay, but I digress.

The P stands for pansexual, polysexual, polygender and pangender. Pansexual and polysexual are under the bisexual umbrella, but are their own identities. Pansexual people are attracted to all genders, and gender doesn't factor in their attraction. Polysexual and bisexual are similar, both meaning attraction to multiple genders, but they mean different things to people. Some prefer one label because of the implicit differences. Pangender and polygender are similar, but refer to gender. Pangender people identify with all genders, and polygender people identify with multiple.

The plus includes everything that doesn't have a letter in the acronym, such as xenogender, non-binary, omnisexual, those who are unlabeled, and hundreds of others. The LGBTQIAP+ community is filled with many different people and they're all deserving of love. All their identities and personal interpretations of their identities are valid, and should be respected. Be kind and inclusive and if you want, do some research to make them feel more safe and seen. Be considerate and be good, do good for good.

## NJHS Service Project: Autism Awareness

By Mario Lara

As spring is approaching quickly we must remember that April is National Autism Awareness Month. The National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) will be raising money to support research and programs for this cause. The NJHS will be selling tie-dye socks. By increasing awareness and acceptance of people with Autism, together we can have an inclusive world.

National Autism Awareness Month begins on April 1st and ends on April 30th. During this month we can learn about Autism and how to help and support people and programs in our community. Work is underway for increasing global awareness of Autism, enhancing research breakthroughs, increasing early childhood screening, increasing the transition to adulthood, and ensuring access to reliable information services throughout the



Autism art, Photo Credit: theplaceforchildrenwithautism

world for people with Autism. Around school, you will see posters and other visuals to remind students and staff about Autism.

Some world-known symbols include the puzzle piece, made recognizable by the *Autism Speaks* organization. It is a representation of how people



Autism colors, Photo Credit: theplaceforchildrenwithautism

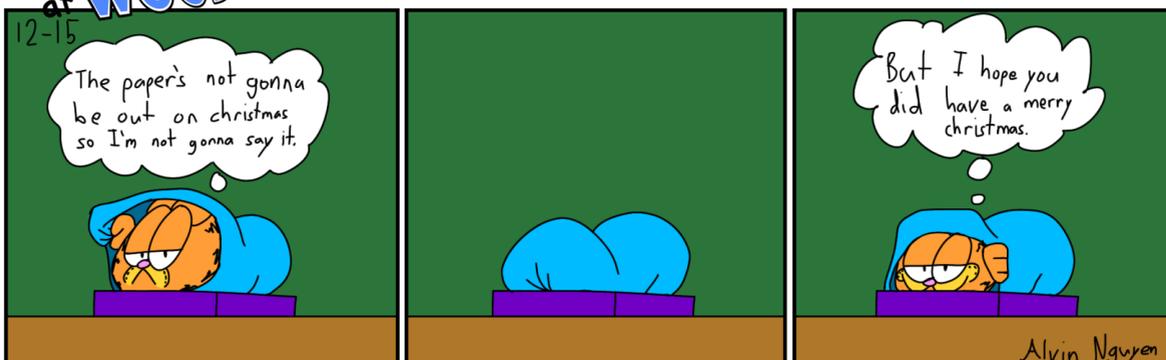
with autism, may not be able to fit in with their community. The color blue is often associated with Autism advocacy and it is associated with a calm feeling. *Autism Speaks*, a popular association, uses their "Light it Up Blue" campaign to encourage people to wear blue.

To reflect the spectrum and diversity of each autistic person, the infinity sign became the new symbol for autism in February of 2018. There are still differing opinions out there about how well the puzzle piece represents the autism community. Some people argue the infinity symbol is better because it encourages autism acceptance instead of just autism awareness.

The Butterfly is also a newer symbol used for autism. Many people have suggested that the

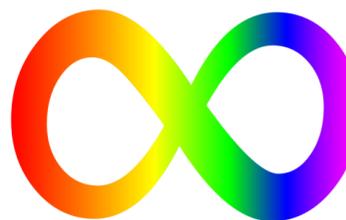


Jack-o-lantern, Credit: ladiesgamers.com



## Autism Facts

1. Autism spectrum disorder now affects 1 in 68 children. Boys are nearly 5 times more likely than girls to be diagnosed with ASD.
2. Autism spectrum disorder is one of the fastest-growing developmental disorders in the United States. ASD is more common than childhood cancer, diabetes and AIDS combined
3. The earlier autism spectrum disorder is diagnosed and treated, the better. Outcomes for children's lives are significantly improved with early diagnosis and treatment.
4. There is currently no medical detection or cure for autism spectrum disorder.



Jack-o-lantern, Credit: ladiesgamers.com

butterfly should replace the puzzle piece as it inspires change and symbolizes the beauty of diversity.

Now that you've learned more about Autism Awareness Month, remember to support this cause by purchasing tie-dye socks during lunches at school or pre-order your pair starting the week of March 28th. The goal is to raise \$500. Please support our cause by donating. All proceeds will go to a local autism organization in Maryland.

# URES

## Sonia Sotomayor

By Mario Lara



Sonia Sotomayor, Photo Credit: news.virginia.edu

In 1992, she was nominated by President Bush and accepted as district court judge in New York City. In 1997, she was nominated by President Clinton and accepted as a judge in the U.S. Second Court of Appeals.

She received Honorary Law Degrees from Lehman College (1999), Princeton University (2001), Brooklyn Law School (2001), Pace University School of Law (2003), Hofstra University (2006), Northeastern University School of Law (2007), Howard University (2010), St Lawrence University (2010), New York University (2012), Yale University (2013), and the University of Puerto Rico at Rio Piedras (2014).



Young Sonia Sotomayor, Photo Credit: npr.org



In front of the Supreme Court, Photo Credit: usatoday.com

March is Women's History Month! Women's History Month was first celebrated in 1987. The holiday was passed to celebrate different rights that women gained. Women's History Month was at first only International Women's Day which was first celebrated in 1911. In 1977, Women's History Week was first celebrated and a few years later, the entire month became Women's History Month.

Many women, including Sonya Sotomayor, laid the groundwork for different people to overcome obstacles. She is the first Latina Supreme Court justice in U.S history, nominated by President Obama on May 26, 2009. She is also one of only four women to serve on the Supreme Court in its 220 year span.

Sonia was born in the Bronx in 1954. Her parents were of Puerto Rican descent. At a young age her mother pushed for her to receive an education following her father's death. Before becoming the first Latina Supreme Court justice, she worked in a private practice, Pavia and Harcourt.



Being confirmed at Judge, Photo Credit: usatoday.com

Sonia Sotomayor has achieved many things. Some achievements include winning the Outstanding Latino Professional Award in 2006 by the Latino/a Law Students Association. She was included in the 75 Most Influential People in the 21st Century in 2008 by *Esquire Magazine*. She also served on the board of the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund. She was inducted into the Women's Hall of Fame in 2019. Lastly, there is a painting of her and others at the Smithsonian Museum in D.C.

A community center called, "The Justice Sonia Sotomayor Houses and Justice Sonia Sotomayor Community Center" was named after her in the Bronx. It has 28 buildings and 3,500 people live in the center. There is also a high school named after her in Los Angeles.

Even though it is near the end of Women's History Month, women's achievements continue throughout the year. We can all be inspired by accomplishments from people like Sonia Sotomayor and others in various professions.

## Top 25 Most "Googled" Women

Ever wonder who the most "Googled" women history makers are? Some may surprise you!

1. Madonna
2. Marilyn Monroe
3. Cleopatra
4. Anne Frank
5. Diana, Princess of Wales
6. Emily Dickinson
7. Joan of Arc
8. Oprah Winfrey
9. Mother Teresa
10. Frida Kahlo
11. Harriet Tubman
12. Maya Angelou
13. Rosa Parks
14. Helen Keller
15. Hillary Clinton
16. Lucille Ball
17. Shirley Temple
18. Marie Curie
19. Amelia Earhart
20. Pocahontas
21. Florence Nightingale
22. Queen Elizabeth I
23. Queen Victoria
24. Susan B. Anthony
25. Eleanor Roosevelt



Marie Curie, #158 on the List, Photo Credit: Getty Images

**"The Latina in me is an ember that blazes forever."  
- Sonia Sotomayor**

## ROCK THE SOCKS FOR AUTISM AWARENESS

Rock the socks! Buy some tie-dye socks in the cafe for only \$8! They are available for purchase or pickup during lunches starting April 26th! Proceeds benefit funding for autism research.



Sponsored by the NJHS!

**Garfield**  
at **WOOD**



# FEAT

## Multiplayer Games

By Mario Lara

Depending on your age, you may have different thoughts about what exactly a multiplayer game is. If you are from an older generation, you may think of Backgammon. If you are from a more recent generation, multiplayer games may be thought of as online games. Available online through a console like Play Station, Xbox, or a Nintendo Switch, multiplayer games are even available on computers. Let's explore the evolution of multiplayer games and learn about how multiplayer games have been played by so many people around the world.



Mehen Board, Photo Credit: oldest.org

Mehen is the oldest known multiplayer board game. Dating back to 2700 BCE, the Ancient Egyptians played this game with 2-6 players. Unfortunately, no one knows how to play the game now. However, a game board was found in King Peribsen's tomb in Egypt. When you look at the game board, it appears to be shaped like a coiled snake and the game pieces are green. Mehen was the snake god in Egypt so the game is named

after him.

Backgammon is another game that has been around for a very long time. Its earliest origins are from almost 5000 years ago and people still play Backgammon today! Backgammon is played by 2 people. It's played around the world and other names for this game are Nard, Gul Bara, and Tapa. The game has thirty checkers, dice, and a board. People like to play it because it's fun, you use your skills and luck. This game can even be played online.

Of course, I have to write about chess. Chess has been around for centuries and is still played today both on a board and online by many people around the world. It originated in India around the 6th century AD. Chess is played by two people on a square board. Each player has sixteen pieces including one king, one queen, 2 rooks, 2 bishops, 2 knights, and 8 pawns. If the player checkmates the opponent's king, the game is over. Even today, chess is very popular and tournaments are hosted around the world. In Russia, it is known as a national hobby. Here in the US, there is a United States



Backgammon, Photo Credit: historyofyesterday.com



Chessman, from Norway, 12th Century, Photo Credit: oldest.org

Chess Federation which has competitions around the US and sponsors many tournaments and clubs for people of all ages.

The Game of the Goose is the first modern commercially produced board game. It can be traced back to Italy in the 15th century. Over the years it's appeared in different designs and similar rules. Basically, it continues to be played by two or more players, and players roll two dices and move pieces around a board. If a player lands on a goose, you can move forward or you can be stopped on the board or moved backward. On some game variations, the first player to land on the last spot or the end of the journey, wins the game. This game is available on a board or online.

by millions of people around the world. In total, the system has 47 games like Table Soccer, Bowling, Chess, Minigolf, and many others!

Fast forward to today, some of the most popular multiplayer games that are available on various gaming systems and apps include *Minecraft*, *Fortnite*, *Apex Legends*, *Rocket League*, and *Call of Duty*. All of these games allow many players in a match. Some multiplayer games can allow thousands of players in a single match at a time. Games have also grown complex with rules and graphics along with users with internet access from around the world. I especially enjoy playing multiplayer games while talking with my friends and family on the XBOX console.



The Game of the Goose, Photo Credit: play.google.com

The PLATO system was one of the first multiplayer video games, it was created in the 1960s at the University of Illinois. The games ran on an internet server and was originally an educational system. But over time it became role-playing games with social chat rooms. *Dungeon Crawlers* was a popular PLATO video game with different layouts for players to interact with each other and monsters while walking around and casting spells all on a computer. Since the 1970's PLATO has grown into the original Yahoo games. Today, it's played

Currently, *Roblox* is one of the most popular games on earth. Originally founded in 2004 by David Baszucki and Erick Cassel, *Roblox* was released in 2006 and it featured player-created games and different game genres. Over time many new players started playing *Roblox* and as new players joined, new games were created. *Roblox* offered a unique opportunity for players to create their own games using the *Lua* programming language. Some popular games in *Roblox* are *Adopt Me*, *Murder Mystery*, and *Welcome to Bloxburg*. All of these games were made by players. Now *Roblox* has over 165 million monthly users and is one of the most played games in the world.

CON'T BELOW

## Multiplayer Games con't

Well, let's get back to multiplayer board games!!! There are plenty of multiplayer board games such as Monopoly, Scrabble, Chess, Clue, and of course, Backgammon. One of my favorite games is Monopoly because I like to strategize about which properties to buy and where to put my houses and hotels! I also like Clue because you can become a detective and try to figure out a mystery. I enjoy sitting around a table while chatting with family and friends face to face and playing board games. We have explored the evolution of

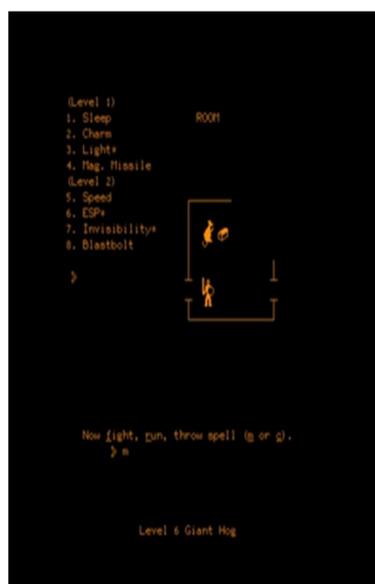


Roblox, Photo Credit: appleinsider.com

multiplayer games and learned about just how long these games have been played by so many people around the world. Many of the same games are available online or by using a board with pieces. After reading this article, I hope this will inspire you to play a multiplayer game later with your friends, family, or online players. Have fun!

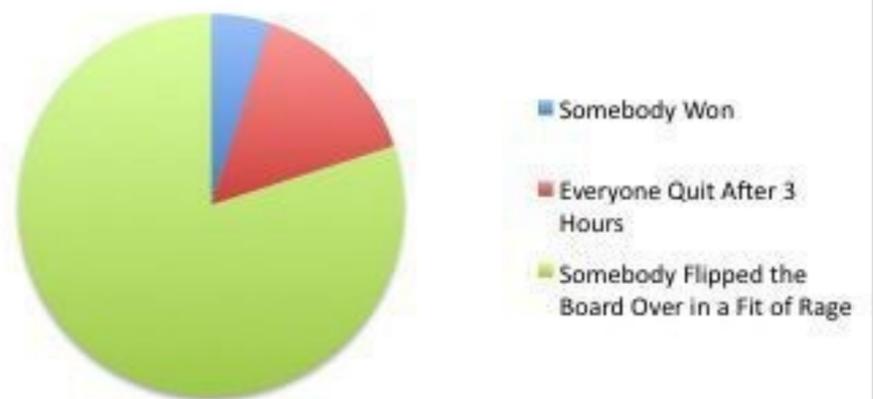


Xbox Live Games, Photo Credit: xbox.com



One of the first multi-player games by PLATO, Photo Credit: historyofinformation.com

## Reasons for Ending a Game of Monopoly



Graph, Photo Credit: BoardGameGeek.com

## Garfield at WOOD



# URES

## Annie Jr.

By Natalie Shanker

The Wood Middle School Drama Department under the direction of Ms. Nancy Somers is presenting “Annie Jr.” this coming May. The production is well under way and I got to snag an interview with one of the stars, Sofia Sanchez-Elosh to see how things are going.

Me: So tell me why you wanted to try out for the lead in “Annie”.

Sofia: So, I always wanted to be Annie ever since I saw the play “Annie” in the Olney Theater. They were around my age, like, eleven to twelve, and I thought, “I want to be Annie when I’m their age!” So when this opportunity came up to be Annie, I was like, I really want to try out. I’ve seen [the play “Annie”] like, a ton of times. When I was really little, I would go over to my grandma’s house and I would watch it so many times—I think, maybe around 20 times.

Me: How do you deal with the all the practice time?

Sofia: It can get overwhelming sometimes because I want to lay down after school and relax. But when I have “Annie” it’s sometimes harder but when I do rehearse, I’m just kinda doing what I love so it kind of like cancels out about how I’m feeling about that.

Me: What happened when you found out you got the part?

Sofia: So, I was jumping up and down and my friends came with me because they were also in the play

and so we were just jumping up and down and we were so excited. We ran back to class and I was like, “I’m Annie!”

Me: So are you excited for the live performance?

Sofia: I’m really excited for it! I can imagine just singing on stage, but sometimes I do think, “What if I forget my lines?” or something like that, like doubts.

Me: Are you performing in every show?

Sofia: No, there are two Annie’s and we work very good together and we help each other out. We’re very supportive of each other.

Me: Did you think you wouldn’t get the part?

Sofia: Before I knew I got Annie, I thought if I didn’t get it, it’ll be a learning experience and I’ll just work harder next year.

Break a leg, Sofia! Opening night is right around the corner!



Annie, Jr. logo, Photo Credit: kidsoutandabout.com

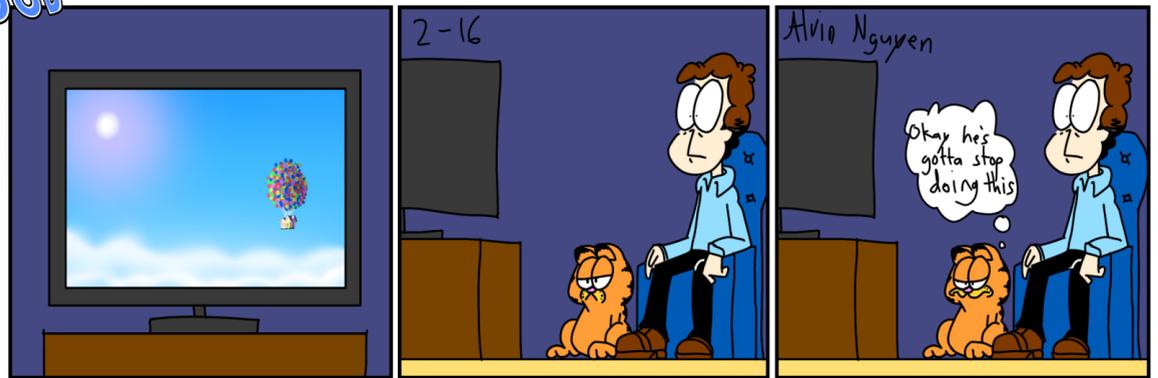
Wood Middle School Drama Department Proudly Presents: Annie Jr.!

Friday, May 20 at 7pm

Saturday, May 21 at 12pm

Saturday, May 22 at 7pm

Garfield  
at WOOD



## The Dancing Plague of Strasbourg

By Natalie Shanker

The dancing plague is a bizarre event in history, yet many have never heard of it. It is a funny, dark, and completely true event that happened in Strasbourg, France in the year 1518. Many citizens of Strasbourg uncontrollably danced until they had heart attacks, strokes, or from exhaustion, simply collapsed.

In June of 1518, a woman who might have been named Frau Troffea went in the street and all of a sudden, began to dance. She danced for another six days, until she collapsed from exhaustion. After stopping to heal, she got her dancing shoes back on and did it all over again. She danced for days on end, soon causing a crowd of other people to dance, too.



Dancing Plague and Mass Hysteria, Photo Credit: The Psychologist

Within a week, 30 or so others were showing the same symptoms and kept dancing far past the point of normalcy. They started to call the “disease” St. John’s or Vitus’ Dance because they believed that the ones who got it hadn’t appeased the saint. The urge to dance started to spread over to several other cities in the Netherlands and Belgium. Soon enough, the city of Strasbourg realized that they must do something about the deadly parade of dancers. Therefore, they had the peculiar idea to bring in more dancers and even musicians, in hopes to solve the situation. This, of course, didn’t work and gave roughly 400 other people the same compulsion. This disastrous (though melodious) event killed many people, but ended by September of 1518.

No one knows exactly why or how this happened, but there have been some theories, including, overheated blood or being possessed by demons, but there are a few that seem to be more reasonable. The most

common theory is that the disaster was caused by a form of psychogenic disorder, which is any dysfunction that isn’t recognizable. They seem to be caused by elements such as stress. Other modern theories include eating bread that was made with rye flour that had the fungal disease ergot, which according to Britannica, “decreases the production of viable grains by infected plants and can contaminate harvests.”

Even to this day, no one exactly knows how it happened. Nevertheless, it was an unforgettable event that killed hundreds of people who died from what you’d least expect: dancing.

## Odd and Bizarre Historical Events

- A flight attendant fell from 33,330 feet (with no parachute) and survived
- Throwing an apple at somebody was considered flirting in ancient Greece
- Women were the first to march for the right to smoke
- Adolf Hitler was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize
- Ronald Reagan saved 77 people from drowning (as a lifeguard)
- Harriet the tortoise met Charles Darwin
- The Romans used human urine as mouthwash
- Turkeys were once worshiped like deities
- Violet Jessop was the sole survivor of Titanic and the Britannic
- Cleopatra wasn’t Egyptian
- The Pope once declared war on cats
- Abraham Lincoln was a marvelous wrestler
- China used more cement in three years than the US did in the entire 20th century
- The current U.S. flag was designed by a 17-year-old student
- Inventor Nikola Tesla was terrified of pearls
- Napoleon was almost assassinated by a horde of bunnies
- The Brits sold their wives (until recently)

History is so interesting....

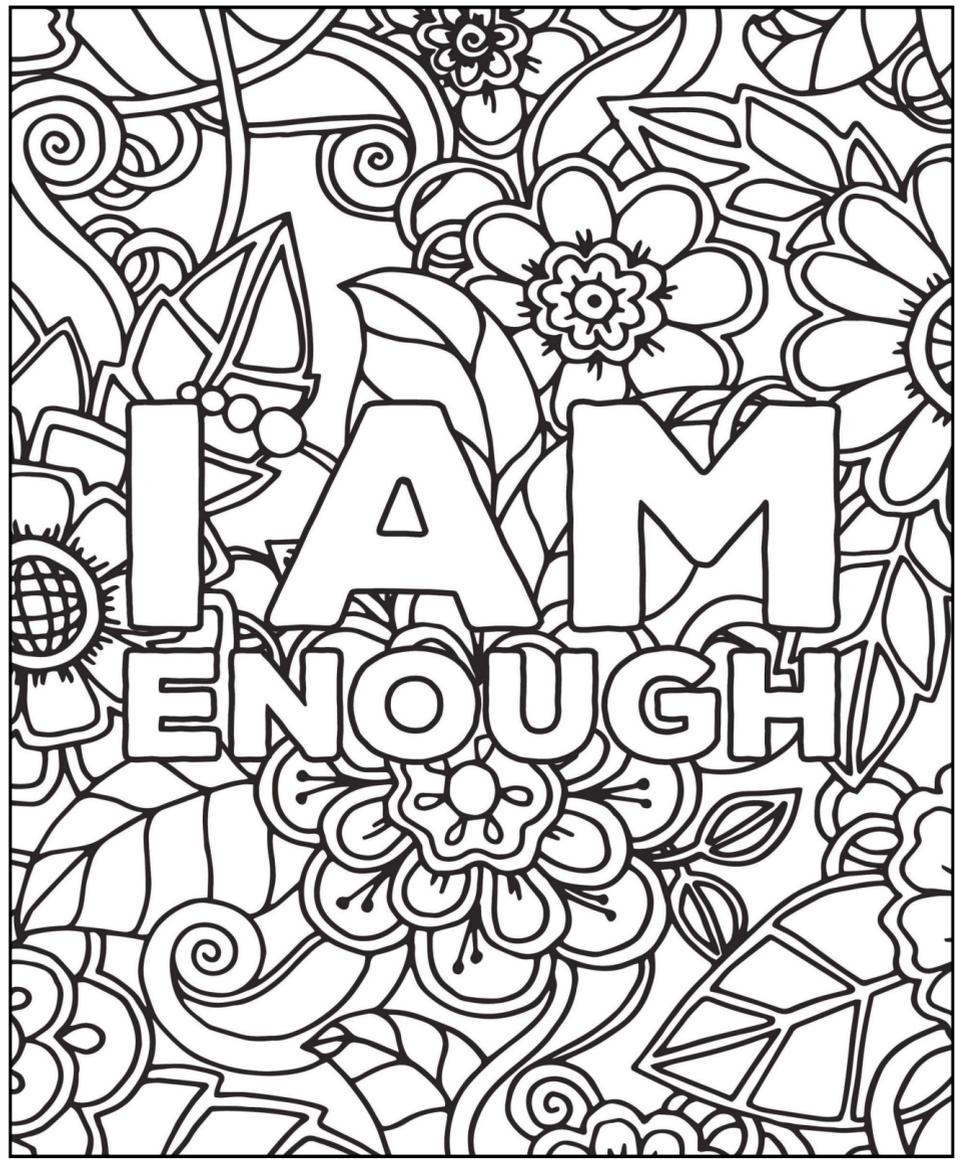
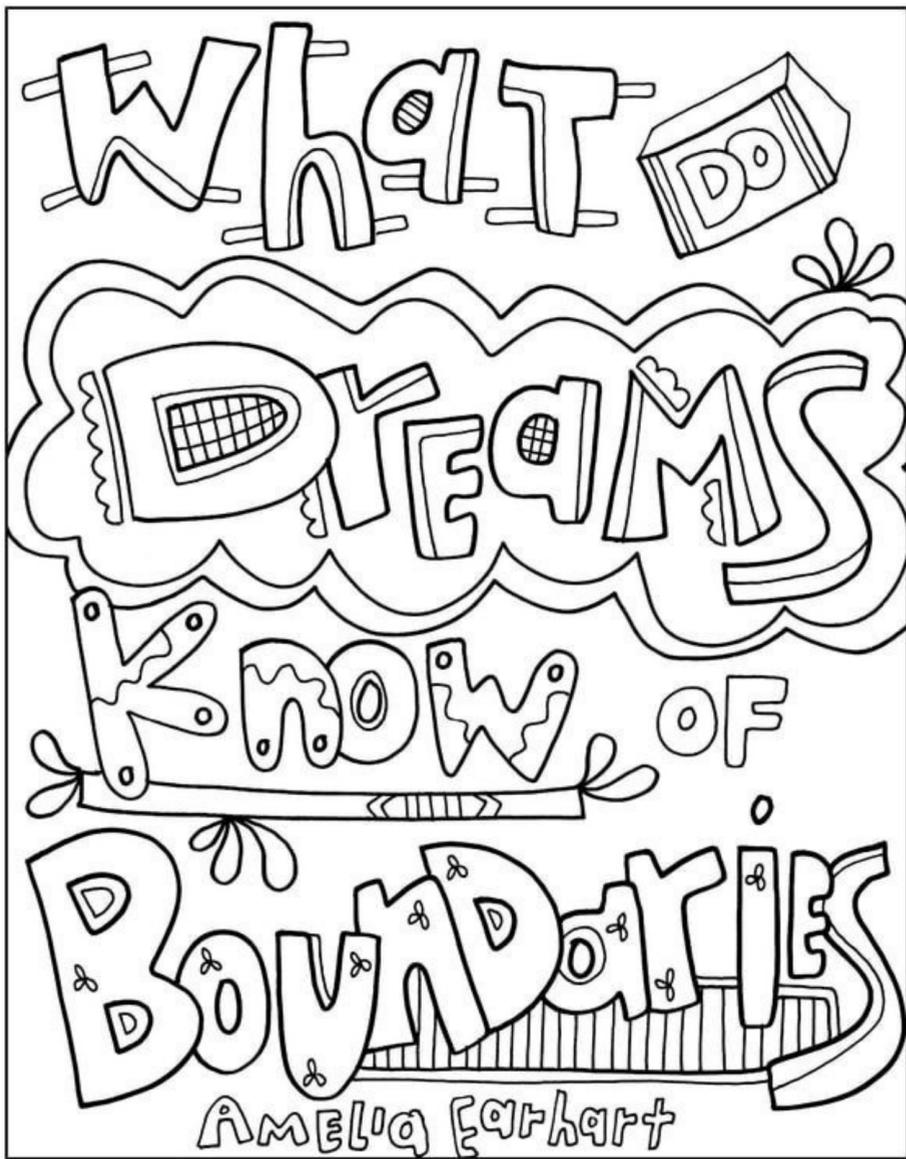


France map, Photo Credit: National Geographic



# The Flip Side

## The Coloring Spot



## Top 10 Most Popular Dog Breeds

According to American Kennel Club

1. Labrador Retrievers
2. French Bulldogs
3. Golden Retrievers
4. Poodles
5. Bulldogs
6. Beagles
7. Rottweilers
8. German Short-haired Pointers
9. Dachshunds
10. Pembroke Welsh Corgis

Labs have been #1 on the list since 1991!

## This Issue's Word Search *by Shayla Metcalf* Saint Patricks day

B	D	L	U	C	K	H	L	H	D	N	S	R	E
R	L	G	H	H	P	E	N	E	U	H	A	T	P
E	O	D	S	C	K	N	S	A	H	M	C	E	P
V	G	S	I	R	D	S	H	S	C	E	E	B	R
O	T	H	R	E	E	C	A	N	E	H	L	L	C
L	E	O	I	L	E	I	H	L	S	B	T	E	E
C	A	R	B	R	N	K	U	N	D	G	I	G	E
H	O	S	P	T	C	C	C	D	E	S	C	E	R
O	C	E	N	P	D	I	H	A	P	E	C	N	A
L	L	S	H	H	U	R	C	A	A	S	R	D	I
I	D	H	E	L	B	T	E	A	R	L	O	G	N
D	V	O	D	L	L	A	R	D	A	M	S	C	B
A	P	E	S	B	I	P	S	I	D	C	S	C	O
Y	N	E	A	S	N	Y	T	A	E	E	H	H	W

- SAINT
- HAT
- BLESSED
- LEGEND
- DUBLIN
- SHEEP
- GOLD
- PATRICK
- CLOVER
- LEPRECHAUN
- RAINBOW
- LUCK
- IRISH
- CELTICCROSS
- PARADE
- CHARM
- HOLIDAY
- GREEN
- HORSESHOE



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