

THE WARRIOR CHRONICLE

Walters Middle School * Fremont, CA * December 19, 2022

Sheng Thao, a Hmong American refugee, becomes Oakland Mayor

Sara Ben Ali Reporter

Sheng Thao is the newly elected mayor of Oakland and is unique in many ways compared to other previous mayors of Oakland. She has refugee parents and started her life in poverty. She was able to overcome her struggles and rise up to be a pioneer. She is the first Hmong American to be in California's City Council, the first Hmong mayor of a major city, and the youngest mayor that Oakland has had in 75 years.

Principal Graham, who previously taught in Oakland, said that the representation is fantastic. She commented, "We need more diversity in our political system and it starts with our local representatives."

"It's a good setup for refugees to be represented in America," stated 8th grader, Raiden Refuerzo.

Sheng Thao is the daughter of refugees who fled from Laos, a country in mainland southeast Asia, due to the mass genocide against the Hmong people. She was born in Stockton, California and grew up there as the seventh out of ten children. She left home at 17 to live in Richmond. She found herself in an abusive relationship in her early 20s, leaving her as a domestic violence survivor and single mother.

At one point, she was working, raising her son, and going to college at the same time. She went to Merritt College, eventually transferring to UC Berkeley and graduating with a degree in legal studies.

She was elected to City Council in the state of California in 2018. Before then, she had helped establish the Bear Pantry at Berkeley, a food bank for student families with dependent children.



Photo from Google Images

The new mayor of Oakland is the first Hmong American to take part in any California city council.

According to the official website for the City of Oakland, during her time as a council member, she fought for more resources for Oakland's unhoused community and helped pass policies to increase housing options in Oakland, won funding for marginalized/underrepresented youth, fought for wildfire prevention policies, and much more.

This year, she ran in a close race for mayor against Loren Taylor, among others. On January 2, 2023, she will be inaugurated and sworn into office.

As future mayor, Sheng Thao has many projects to work on and problems to solve. Ms. Graham added, "[She] definitely needs to focus on the homeless and displaced population...She has a perspective that other mayors may not have."

Similarly, Jack Waller, an 8th grader, agreed, "She should probably focus on the refugee and homeless problem."

Sheng Thao plans on addressing the homelessness problem more once she becomes mayor. A San Francisco Chronicle article stated, "Her experience with poverty and homelessness will inform how she leads the city as she vows to tackle Oakland's urgent issues, including homelessness, violent crime, dirty streets, and the housing crisis."

"She can definitely help welcoming refugees because she knows what can be improved," Jack said.

"Because she has experience from traumatizing stuff," Raiden added, "she would try to persevere to keep Oakland safer."

With her unique perspective and driven perseverance, Sheng Thao will be able to be a mayor different from all of the mayors that Oakland has had in the past.

WEB Leaders give tours to make new students feel welcome

Sana Wahab Reporter

New students come to Walters every single school year; some come early, some come late. Middle schools and high schools are more complex with their buildings and hard to memorize and get around, so students struggle.

Luckily, we have WEB (Where Everybody Belongs) leaders here. WEB leaders are in charge of making sure all 6th graders, and other new students, are happy and comfortable throughout their first year of middle school. These WEB leaders are giving tours around the school so that students can find their classes easier and get used to their surroundings.

Ms. Gonzalez, the 6th grade counselor, said, "WEB leaders are specifically picked to help new students because (since they are 8th graders), they have the most experience in the school out of all grades, and they are the oldest. Students that become WEB leaders enjoy/love to help out others.

Ms. Gai, the 8th grade counselor, said "When new students get tours from the WEB leaders, they

feel more welcomed and comfortable because they get more tips from the student. The student can also be way happier and less scared/stressed when the other students are giving the tour."

Ms. Gonzalez and Ms. Gai came up with the idea to make WEB leaders help new students because there are multiple WEB leaders, and if the counselors or office T.A's are giving the new students the tours, there wouldn't be enough adults to help the students out.

Monica Real, a WEB leader, said "I've been a WEB leader ever since the beginning of the school year, and I loved every second of it. I love being a WEB leader because I want things to be easier for upcoming students going to Walters. Being a WEB leader means that you need to help out the new students. My favorite part about being a WEB leader is the touring".

Monica mentioned, "When I'm touring a student, I always talk about things that may comfort them. I usually ask them about themselves or stuff at school that may help them. I



Photo by Soundharya Kumaresan
Ms. Gai and Ms. Gonzalez created the idea for WEB leaders to give tours to new students.

say things such as where they're from, their hobbies, interests, etc."

Lastly, Monica added, "I also make sure to tell them about the school. I talk about clubs most of the time, since there are a lot of them. The last thing I do is talk about myself. When I talk about myself, the student gets to know me more and feels more comfortable around me to talk and to share their feelings."

Adopt an Angel collects money and gifts for children in need

Marlee Tubera Reporter

Adopt An Angel is an organization to help children who won't be able to get presents. Adopt An Angel first started in 1987.

Ms. Alves, Leadership and PE teacher, said that they have been doing the fundraiser for about 20 years. The school collects money from students and teachers during the homerooms throughout the week and donates to the foundation. She also added that the foundation grants gifts to the children in need.

Saraj Ali, 8th grade, also said that the Adopt An Angel goes to help some kids who got taken away from their parents/guardians.



Allison Campos, 8th Grade, said that by donating you can give the children gifts because their parents might not be able to get them things that they want. She also mentioned that you can donate by getting coins or cash, they will be passing by people's homerooms to collect the money for donation. She added that it's an organization to help children who won't be able to get gifts for Christmas.



Photos from Google Images
Adopt an Angel have fundraisers for children in need who don't have enough money to get Christmas gifts. Adopt an Angel also collects gifts by having Christmas tree in some stores. You can pick ornaments that have children names on them and what they want for Christmas. You can get what they want and put it under the tree.

Editorial: Real vs. artificial trees for Christmas time

Tristan Kyle Posadas Reporter

It's that time of year again, the time where it gets cold and you snuggle up in your blankets with hot chocolate. The nice, cool, wintery time where everyone is putting up lights and decorations for the incoming holiday. It's December, which means Christmas is soon. Along with Christmas comes the tradition of bringing a tree into your home and decorating it to put presents under, which is a tradition that originates from German Christians bringing nicely decorated trees into their own homes during Christmas.

A large variety of trees are always up for sale somewhere during December. Large firs, pines, and spruces are part of the selection, but artificial trees have been recently added to the selection. As Christmas approaches, many ask themselves and their families the question of what tree they should buy for Christmas. Both artificial and natural trees have many pros and cons, which is something that anyone looking for a Christmas tree should take into consideration.

I think that real, natural trees have many good benefits and qualities, but the cons may somewhat balance out the scale. In an article ksla.com states that, "According to the American Christmas Tree Association, a survey found that the average cost of a real tree is \$46." While a real tree is much cheaper to buy compared to an average artificial tree cost of \$100, as stated by beachpalmspost.com, they only last for one Christmas.

Mr. Sachs, an 8th grade history teacher, explained, "It's cheaper to keep an artificial tree long term." I agree with him because an artificial tree is something you could purchase once and reuse for every Christmas, unlike a regular tree, which can only be used for one Christmas. The fact that they can be reused helps people save money each year.

8th grader Meghan Le also supported artificial trees. She said, "I like artificial trees more because they



Photos from Google Images

About 21.6 million real Christmas trees are sold in the United States and 12.9 million artificial Christmas trees are sold in the United States yearly.

won't have any bugs." This is a statement I agree with because Christmas tree lots are usually out in the open where many bugs and other pests could find their home in the many Christmas trees you might take home. Taking home these Christmas trees means you might be taking bugs or pests into your home when you bring a real tree into your house.

Real trees do have a benefit that artificial trees cannot currently replicate. Christmas trees live up your house as they have a nice smelling fragrance that artificial trees do not have. The warm, inviting scent of a natural Christmas tree may make consumers lean towards buying a real tree rather than an artificial.

Ms. Gai, an 8th grade counselor, stated, "I do prefer a real tree because of the natural scent it brings." I do agree with her statement as an artificial tree currently cannot recreate the cozy aroma a real tree gives off, but I also think that there are more benefits that an artificial tree has that can make up for the missing fragrance.

Another benefit that an artificial tree can bring is the fact that artificial trees come in many different sizes. This means that you can find an artificial tree that fits your needs, from a small 5 foot tree to a towering 9 foot tree and maybe even larger. I like this fact about artificial trees because my family and I could find a tree that fits our needs, especially if we are tight on space.

In the end though, buying a Christmas tree is entirely up to perspective on the pros and cons. I do prefer an artificial tree because of the fact that it can be reused each Christmas. An artificial tree can be bought pre-lit, meaning that buying an already decorated tree can save you lots of time during the holidays. On the other hand, a real tree is much less expensive and has a nice fragrance that it can bring into your home, but the threat of bugs and other pests also accompanies the tree into your home.

Human rights violations in Qatar uncovered during FIFA World Cup 2022

Fernas Zaidan Reporter

Announced by FIFA on December 2, 2010, the 2022 World Cup was to be hosted by Qatar from November 22nd to December 18th. For the World Cup to be held in Qatar, the country needed to build 22 new stadiums costing \$220 billion USD, which makes it the most expensive World Cup in history. They used migrant workers to build these stadiums.

VOAnews.com reported that almost 90 % (approximately 12 million people) of Qatar's workforce is filled with migrant workers. These workers come from countries like India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Egypt, Sudan etc. They come to Qatar for more opportunities or for a better job which provides more money. What the migrants didn't realize is that they couldn't leave.

According to the HRW.com, migrant workers who come to Qatar must pay fees to acquire a job. Qatari officials even take away their passports forcing them to stay in the country. The HRW also reported human rights problems. The workers are often mistreated, put in harsh conditions and are segregated from the rest of the country.



Photo from Google Images
The 2026 FIFA World Cup will be jointly hosted by Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

7th grader Yusuf Walahi stated, "It is very heartbreaking what happens to [the workers] in Qatar."

TheGuardian.com stated that they are paid poorly especially after Qatar passed a law lowering the minimum wage to 1,000 Qar (\$274 USD).

These human rights barriers are not new as well. Since 2020 migrant workers have been facing discrimination. Qatar has continuously failed to enforce reforms and laws making the problem worse. Workers are used as forced labor by directors to build

Qatar's infrastructure. Although Qatari officials stated only 37 workers died building the stadiums, thewire.com reported 6,500 workers died building the stadiums. Migrant workers are put into harsh conditions sometimes working from sunrise to sunset in blistering heat.

7th grader Amrita Sidhu stated, "It is very sad that they work so much and sometimes die." Heat stroke is common and is how many have died.

According to Montclair.edu.com, Qatar's systematic abuse of workers and discrimination of women and LGBTQ members have led many to boycott the tournament. Politics.eu allegedly reported that European teams such as Germany, Wales, England, Belgium and the Netherlands had plans to protest discrimination by wearing rainbow colored arm-bands. The plans were later abandoned due to FIFA's threat of sporting sanctions as homosexuality is illegal in Qatar due to its Islamic law.

As of November 30th, Qatar has continuously failed to stop executive owners from exploiting migrant workers and improving worker conditions.

Kwanzaa unites African-Americans in a celebration of African culture

Ruby Willson Reporter

Kwanzaa is a celebration of African American culture created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, professor and chairman of African Studies at California State University. This holiday was created in light of the recent Watts riots in Los Angeles. Dr. Karenga made it as a way to bring African Americans together as a community and to celebrate their culture and history. Kwanzaa combines several harvest celebrations, all revolving around newly harvested or planted crops.

"It is predominantly celebrated by African Americans in the U.S. and some parts of Africa." said Dana Leuavno, a member of the Health and Safety team at Uber.

Kwanzaa lasts 7 days. It starts on December 26, 2022 and ends on January 1, 2023. According to Interexchange.org, the main parts of Kwanzaa are the principles and symbols.

Kwanzaa has seven main principles, Umoja (unity), Kujichagulia (self-determination), Ujima (collective work and responsibility), Ujamaa (cooperative economics), Nia (purpose), Kuumba (creativity), and Imani (faith).

The symbols are Mazao: crops. Mazao symbolizes the fruits, nuts, and vegetables of collective hard work. The Mazao is placed on the Mkeka, the placemat. All of the other symbols are placed on the Mkeka and represent the foundation of their history and traditions. Muhindi, meaning ear of corn, represents fertility and the idea that children are brought to life, one ear of corn is placed for every child present.

The seven candles are placed on the kinara, which represents their ancestry, the candles symbolize the sun's power and recreation of light. There are three green candles that symbolize fertile land and represent the

future, three red; which represent the blood that was shed in the struggle out of slavery; and one black, representing the people and symbolizing unity.

On the sixth day of Kwanzaa every family member and guests will take a drink out of the unity cup and say "Harambee!" On the seventh day and last day of Kwanzaa, mainly handmade gifts are given to promote self-determination, purpose, and creativity.

Ms. Gai, 8th grade counselor said, "Even if it's not a holiday you celebrate, it's important to be educated on people's cultures and holidays they celebrate."

Gabe Leuavno, a teacher at Newark Memorial High School said, "To be truthful, I don't know a lot about Kwanzaa, but I think it would be great to recognize Kwanzaa as much as other winter celebrations."

Kwanzaa is something that can contribute to building and reinforcing community among African Americans.

Great America's WinterFest has magical experiences for all to enjoy

Megan Helgeson Reporter

Great America is having a Winter Fest, from November 25th to January 1st. The event lets children, adults, and teens have a fun time at Great America. The Winterfest brings magical experiences to everyone with all the fun activities. This event is placed in Santa Clara.

Some of the fun activities they have are ice skating, Christmas crafts. Another activity is making cookies in Mrs. Claus Kitchen. These activities are for all ages and they can have a fun time at the Winterfest. They have more than 60 rides open for everyone.

A lot of people like the joy of being at WinterFest because of all the fun activities there. 7th grader, Paloma Campos, said "I have never been to WinterFest so far but I think



Photo from Google Images

WinterFest has been at Great America since 2016.

I would like to go." WinterFest is a great place to visit for the winter time.

With all the fun activities they have for people to enjoy. Most people would enjoy the fun magical experience being at WinterFest with all the activities. WinterFest has activities for all ages, like sending letters to the North Pole or checking out Santa's workshop. These

activities are great for kids who would enjoy these activities.

Overall, WinterFest is a great place to celebrate the winter/Christmas with your friends and family. With all the rides and activities it's a great place to be there for some fun and magical experiences for anyone.

Fremont plans to give new life to downtown with new infrastructure

Finnegan Barszo Reporter

Fremont is currently working on a new downtown on Walnut Avenue.

"I think it is very important for Fremont to have a downtown," said 7th grader Laelani Fae Hua.

Fremont's new downtown is still under construction but several new buildings have popped up around it. According to fremont.gov, one of these new buildings is the event center and plaza. This area will be used for several local events such as concerts and gatherings. Also, the

event center possibly will have several food trucks where people can eat and enjoy themselves. The event center itself can be rented out for several purposes.

As well as the event center, several townhouses have been built near the plaza. Also, a few restaurants such as Raw ASF and Sliver pizzeria will open around downtown, some of these right next to the townhouses, giving residents several more options for eating out.

7th grader Matt Hugh Lim said that he has been downtown and that he is very excited about the food trucks.

In addition to all these new features, Fremont's official bank is to be constructed close to downtown. This bank is constructed mostly out of glass and will provide new jobs for people all over the town.

This downtown could prove to be a great addition to Fremont for years to come and could be enjoyed by many.

FLAG FOOTBALL

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE LD'S,
JASON AGUSTIN, ANTHONY
BENKOWSKI, ABHINAV BOMMA,
ISAIAH EBRAHIMI, MATT JOSEPH
GUZMAN, AND YUJIN MOON! THANK
YOU TO EVERYONE WHO
PARTICIPATED!



Photo by Kiara Cadelina Moral

First-Hand Account: Creating and enjoying the K-Pop Club

Riya Venkadesan Reporter

The K-Pop Club is one of Walters newest clubs. It's a place where K-Pop fans can listen to music from the K-Pop genre and play K-Pop trivia games to win prizes including, pencils and candy.

The K-Pop Club was created by Aditi Baswapuram, Helena Dylewicz, Biswamohini Panda (Ripun), Medhasuktha Polomarasetti, and me, Riya Venkadesan. All of this began when my friends and I decided to launch a K-Pop Club because we were all fans of the band BTS. We created K-Pop Club because we are passionate about K-Pop and wanted to meet other people who love K-Pop and encourage other people to listen to K-Pop.

The K-Pop Club takes place every Monday during lunch in room 6. K-Pop enthusiasts are welcome to



Photos by Mrs. Lemke and Riya Venkadesan

The founders of the K-Pop club wanted a fun place to meet other people with their same interest and to have something fun to do during lunch. Pictured left to right:

talk about K-Pop, listen to K-Pop music, and participate in Kahoot and YouTube trivia games for rewards.

One 7th grade club member, Kirsten Calleigh Malicad, called K-Pop Club, “an amazing place to listen to K-pop music as well as to [make] K-Pop friends and discover new groups.”

Baswapuram Chaudary, one of the co-founders of the K-Pop Club, commented, “The K-Pop club

is fantastic. I like it because we listen to music.”

Helena Dylewicz, another co-founder of our K-Pop club, mentioned, “I like the k-pop club because it's a great place to share our love for K-Pop with others.”

In conclusion, K-Pop club is an amazing club for anyone who loves K-Pop and wants to meet new people to share their love of K-Pop with. Stop by during lunch on Mondays in room 6 for a fun K-Pop experience.

Second Step lessons work to improve students’ mental health

Qassim Emir Reporter

This school year, all students at Walters will partake in SEL lessons. SEL stands for Social-Emotional Learning. The class in which SEL lessons will take place will rotate throughout the year. This year, the school will be using the Second Step program.

The lessons focus on inclusion, bullying prevention, and planning for your future. For example, one of the 6th grade lessons was about a girl running for student president, but she realized that she wouldn't be able to go on stage to give her speech because she was in a wheelchair and there wasn't a wheel ramp. She decided to make it a point in her speech about adding wheel ramps and became student council president.

Ms. Briggs, a core support teacher, said, “Ms. Raja and I



Photo from Google Images

Second Step lessons work to improve the mental health of students and to make sure that students act kindly to other people.

volunteered to be the Walters site liaisons. We attend meetings, training, and provide staff resources for SEL lessons.”

Ms. Briggs also said, “I believe SEL curriculum can empower students to be involved in their school community and feel connected socially.”

Second Step is meant to spread light on topics like mental

health, bullying, and social conflicts. These things often happen at school, but are not recognized.

Amina Sekai, a 7th grader, mentioned that the Second Step curriculum helps people have a way to express their thoughts. Second Step can help give people ways to express their feelings and thoughts more easily and can help people have more confidence and pride.

Edgar Castillo, a 7th grader, stated, “I think the SEL classes are a good addition to our school because of the way people’s mental health isn’t good lately.”

The Second Step lessons are here to help people at school have a better mindset and better mental health. Mental health is very important and the school district wants students to have good mental health.

Staff Feature: Mr. Hoverter teaches 8th grade history and English

John Perry Reporter

Walters is filled with many brilliant students, teachers, and staff members. Mr. Hoverter is no exception. Mr. Hoverter is one of Walters' special education teachers. He teaches in room 28.

Mr. Hoverter played bass in a band that was called "American Fiction." Mr. Hoverter enjoys gardening, hiking, cooking and working with his hands. His favorite food is al pastor burritos. He enjoys doing archery because it helps him clear his mind.

Mr. Hoverter has been a teacher at Walters for 17 years. He likes teaching history because he finds it interesting to learn about past events. He said that the thing he likes the most about teaching is being helpful to his students.

Mrs. Kooy, his paraeducator, has known Mr.



Photo by Anika Phair

Mr. Hoverter uses his teaching skills in his history and English classes in room 28.

Hoverter for about 17 years. Mrs. Kooy commented, "Mr. Hoverter is a teacher who keeps his students engaged with interesting projects and current news articles."

Mrs. Kooy really enjoys working with Mr. Hoverter. She mentioned that she wouldn't be working with him right now if he wasn't a good guy.

Mrs. Edelman, a special education teacher, stated, "He's a

great teacher and I love working with him because he's patient, encouraging, great at brainstorming, and has great ideas."

Mr. Hoverter is a great teacher that works well with his students and is a good colleague. "Do the best you can with what you have and have a little fun," said Mr. Hoverter.

--Tristan Kyle Posadas also contributed to this article.



Photos by Naveah Mark

The Concert Band and Choir perform on December 9, directed by Mr. Cruz

Congrats to the Choir and Concert Band on their amazing Winter Concert!

Don't let your middle school memories slip away!

Buy a Yearbook!

We sold out last year, so pre-order yours while you can!

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Order # 6803

Prices go up December 23!

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Buy Your Winter Grams!

Have a friend who you want to give a fun, holiday gift to?

Purchase a Winter Gram!

Winter Grams will be on sale from December 19th through the 21st during lunch!

Don't miss out!!

December Event Calendar

December 14-20: Winter Door Decorating Contest

December 19-21: Winter Grams on Sale

December 22: Ugly Sweater/Santa Hat Day!

December 22: Winter Gram Delivery

December 23 - January 6: Winter Break

Thank you so much for reading The Warrior Chronicle. We work so hard to bring you this newspaper and it would be nothing if no one read it. We appreciate every reader greatly. Thank you so much for reading and see you next semester!

-Warrior Chronicle Team

Don't Forget About Winter Break!

December 23 -

January 6

Enjoy your time off school with friends and family!

