

Fall Back Into School

with the golden standard

Issue #1:
September
2026



CLASS OF '27

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT:

AVA PEREZ

BY JAELYN SIERRA

1. WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AFTER GRADUATION?

I'm going to college to study biomedical engineering but I'm also still keeping my options open.

2. WHAT'S ONE HABIT THAT HAS HELPED YOU STAY ON TOP OF YOUR ACADEMICS AT YWLA?

One habit that has helped me stay on top of my academics is keeping a consistent schedule of due dates on my personal planner and checking it weekly.

3. WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS?

I would tell them to stay on top of their grades early in the year and not only care when they're failing.

4. WAS THERE A MOMENT WHEN YOU FACED AN OBSTACLE OR HAD TO MAKE A DIFFICULT DECISION IN HIGH SCHOOL? HOW DID YOU HANDLE IT?

I was having trouble keeping up with school and work while also having other things going on. I had to learn how to manage my time better overall.

5. WHO AT SCHOOL HAS MADE THE BIGGEST IMPACT ON YOU. FRIEND, MENTOR, OR TEACHER?

The people who made the biggest impact are my friends, such as Sara, America, and Melanie. They've been there for me when I've needed them and made school more fun.

6. HOW DID YOU GROW AS A LEADER DURING YOUR TIME AT YWLA?

I grew as a leader by becoming more confident and learning how to speak up for myself. I also learned how to work with different people and take responsibility when things got difficult.

7. HOW HAS ATTENDING AN ALL-GIRLS SCHOOL SHAPED WHO YOU ARE TODAY?

It has shaped me to be more independent and confident. It has also shown me the importance of supporting each other and stepping out of my comfort zone.

8. WHAT IS ONE TREND OR HABIT FROM YOUR MIDDLE SCHOOL OR EARLY HIGH SCHOOL DAYS THAT YOU LAUGH OR CRINGE AT NOW?

One habit from middle school that I laugh at now is how I used to overthink every little thing when it really wasn't that serious.

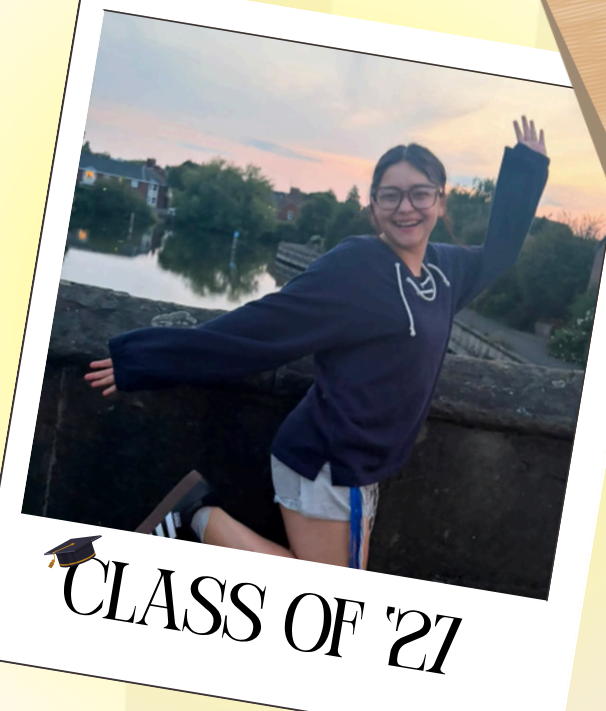
9. WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST "I CAN'T BELIEVE I DID THAT" MOMENT

It was probably when I painted myself grey in front of the entire school and again, but yellow for lip sync.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT:

SARA VIZCARRA

BY ASHLEE VERA



CLASS OF '27

1. WHAT ARE YOU INVOLVED IN AT SCHOOL?

My main clubs are Student Council, where I serve as an officer, and NHS because of the garden. The garden became a place where I made new friends, and it was where I grew close to Arianna Holguin and Camilla Villanueva from the Class of 2026. It was also a place where I knew I could always go if I wanted something calm or fun.

2. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE IN A FEW WORDS?

I think I started realizing it when I looked back and saw all the memories I had made and the friends I had gained. Also, when I started getting opportunities and being accepted into programs that I thought I would get, and it made me realize that even though it was hard it was worth the effort.

3. WHAT'S SOMETHING YOU'VE LEARNED DURING HIGH SCHOOL THAT YOU'LL TAKE WITH YOU AFTER GRADUATION?

I've learned that I will experience bad days, but all that means is that I have something to work towards.

4. WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AFTER GRADUATION?

After graduation, I want to go into psychology and continue learning more about the field. I also want to experience living somewhere new, meet new people, and make new memories while starting this next chapter of my life. I am excited to share my experience with food and share it with others while also learning new things. Nothing is more exciting than making new friends and creating new memories.

5. WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO MISS MOST ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL?

I am going to miss the way all my teachers always had my back and pushed me to do more in school because they believed I could do more. My 8th grade teacher, Mrs. Drewes, was the first teacher who really saw my potential. She was also the reason I met Jin Song - senior of Class of '26 - as well as Ms. Nevarez, and Mrs. Chavez.

6. IF YOU COULD GIVE YOUR FRESHMAN-YEAR SELF ONE PIECE OF ADVICE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Although times feel rough right now and sometimes you'll regret your decisions, don't let that be the reason why you stop following the advice of the people who care most about you. Always stay open to learning, and stay being passionate about the things you care most about.

7. WHAT IS A LESSON A FRIEND HAS TAUGHT YOU?

I tend to be loud and sometimes say the wrong thing, but I'm dedicated when I have a reason to be. My friend Jin always pushed me to do more because she believed in me, and she never stopped reminding me of that.

9. WHAT'S A FUN/RANDOM FACT ABOUT YOU THAT MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW?

"I don't like pizza. Anyone who likes pizza is basic and a poser."



WELCOMING OUR NEW STAFF

BY ANGELINA MUNOZ-BANDA

YWLA has made a warm welcome to our new staff: the CIS Counselor, Officer Candelaria, Academic Dean, and Mr. Cody Johnson. We are happy they have joined us this year! Before we get even further into the year with them, they have some words to share with us.

CIS Counselor (Ms. Serrano)

Our CIS counselor provides support for our students and parents for grades, behavior, and attendance. Our counselor will be setting goals for attendance since having tardies or absences will impact grades a lot. Ms. Serrano has worked with youth and a project called Project Vida to help young adults stay on the right track in life. We are so grateful to have you here with us, Ms. Serrano!



Academic dean (Mrs. Gonzalez)

An academic dean's job is to help the principal manage the daily administration, student discipline, and academic programs of our school. Mrs. Gonzalez has more than 18 years of experience in education; during this time, she has served as a instructional aid, classroom teacher, and instructional and curriculum coach. We are so glad to have you with us at YWLA.

Officer Candelaria

Our officer is a security guard for YSLETA Independent School District. His goal for the year are to build good relationships with faculty and students. Officer Candelaria has previously worked as a nursing assistant for a specialty hospital for about 2 years and applied to be an officer for YSLETA. He comes to us this year from Parkland High School. He might not be a teacher, but he does a whole lot for our community. We thank you for your time, Officer Candelaria!

Cody Johnson

Our Micro-Computer Technician fixes any and all District devices from a simple computer to a TV! His goal for the year is to support two campuses to the best of his ability. Previously, when he lived in Austin, Texas, his neighbor was a student who was a computer science major, and Mr. Johnson started hanging out with his neighbor and fell in love with working with computers and applied for the Micro-Computer Technician at both YWLA and Eastwood Knolls International. We're glad you could come to our campus, Mr. Johnson!



TEACHER SPOTLIGHT:

MRS. KANIA

BY ASHLEE VERA

"Be true to yourself and follow your own path, no matter what someone else is doing. You have to live for what you want."

- Mrs. Kania

Mrs. Kania majored in Interdisciplinary Studies at UTEP with a math and science endorsement. After earning her degree, she taught elementary school until she decided to switch to middle school to make a greater impact on students taking advanced math and science. She exemplifies what it takes to be strong minded and that hard work leads to success. She is straightforward and confident in herself and stating what it means to be successful. She dedicates her work by fully believing in her students; Mrs. Kania shows this in the way she breaks down each concept, ensuring that every student learns and is always willing to go step by step for every one of her students. While students can see her as a stern teacher with high expectations, she puts 100% in all her students, believing in their potential, no matter what. She is a truly extraordinary teacher who will continue to make a meaningful impact on her students and the YWLA community.

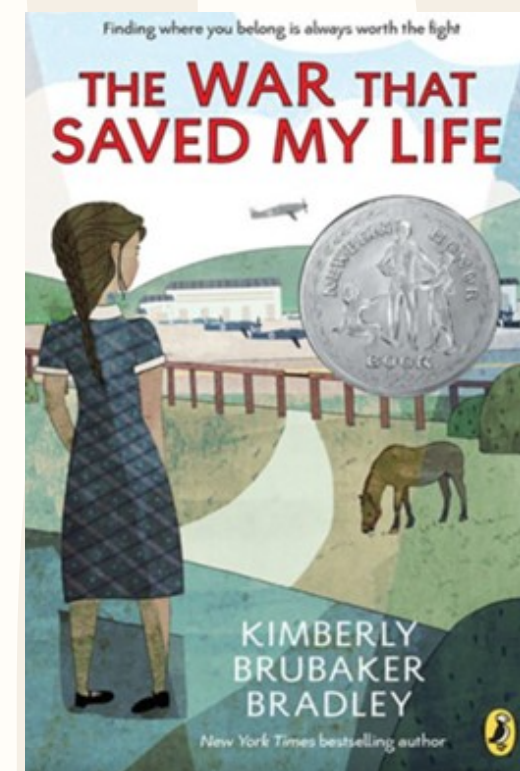
"She shows passion and devotion towards her students by being adaptable and someone students and staff can always rely on. She teaches her students in a supportive but stern manner, while also encouraging students to be authentic and stay true to themselves. She has become the teacher she is today through her years of experience and just by being such a 'mom'."

-Mr. Kania

BOOK REVIEW: THE WAR THAT SAVED MY LIFE BY KIMBERLY BRUBAKER BRADLEY

BY: LAYLA GONZALEZ

A single desolate sidewalk seen through the mesh of a window is all ten year old Ada Smith has ever known. A mother whose hate has defined Ada's life, and a foot that has only ever made life harder.



As Hitler's War looms closer every day, children all across London are evacuated to England's safe countryside. Six hundred thousand children tucked away from the anticipated fear of the war, but not Ada. Who would ever want to take in a "crimped" girl? Deciding to take control of her own fate, Ada finds herself stealing away to the train station with her brother, Jamie, boarding a train bound for the English countryside. In search of something quite foreign to Ada, love and a true family, but can anything so fragile as love survive amid war?

As contradicting as the title may sound, The War that Saved My Life blends themes of love, friendship, belonging, and resilience, shedding light on the ways even the darkest of days, can present new found rays of hope. Bradley's unique writing style tells the story in a meaningful way, as you explore the war-turned world alongside an adventurous and inquisitive Ada.

Ultimately, if you are searching for a highly captivating and truly unique perspective on World War II, featuring a female protagonist whom you can root for all the way through, The War that Saved My Life, may just be your next great read!

EL PASO ARTIST & FARMERS MARKET

BY: CAMILA LOY

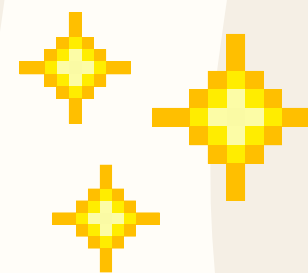


Are you into art, music, or food? Well, here is the perfect chance to get out and do all of your favorite activities. Come and join us at Downtown El Paso every Saturday during the months of March through September at Mills Ave & Main St area around San Jacinto Plaza from 8:00AM- 2:00PM. You and your family can enjoy a fun-filled day with local artist booths, handmade goods, Farmers market produce, cottage foods, live entertainment, performances, and cultural gathering. This is a great event to attend because there is always something for everybody, from dogs to art, from music to jewelry, and there is so much more that you could ever think of. This farmers market is even something that can be the future of your career. You can also sign up as a vendor, so your business can take place at the market. Although this recurring event ends at the end of September, we can't wait to share other downtown events with you like Chalk the Block, Día de los Muertos, and WinterFest! See you there!



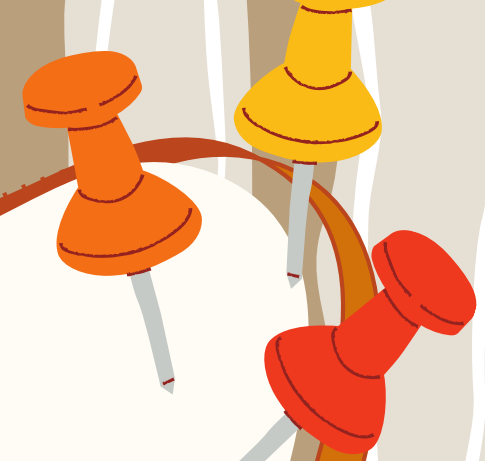
SHOP LOCAL: GAME VAULT

BY: EMELIA COLES



Game Vault: Game Store & Cafe is a local business that beautifully brings together delicious food and family fun in a wonderful environment located on Yarbrough. When there is an amazing place like Game Vault, it doesn't take long to get regulars. One of these regulars has greatly experienced the wonders of Game Vault. She says that "The burgers are amazing" and that one of the greatest things about it is that it is "multi-generational... this is something that allows the generation to unite." She also mentions that Game Vault gives "a sense of community." From the cuisine to the culture, it's clear that Game Vault a charming place to spend some quality time with friends and family.



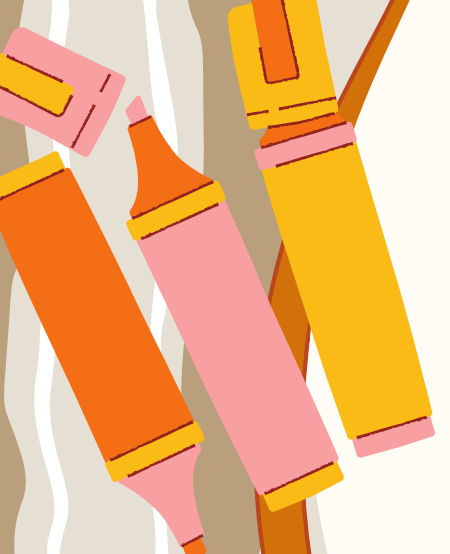


WHY DOES MUSIC SOUND DIFFERENT IN EVERY SEASON?



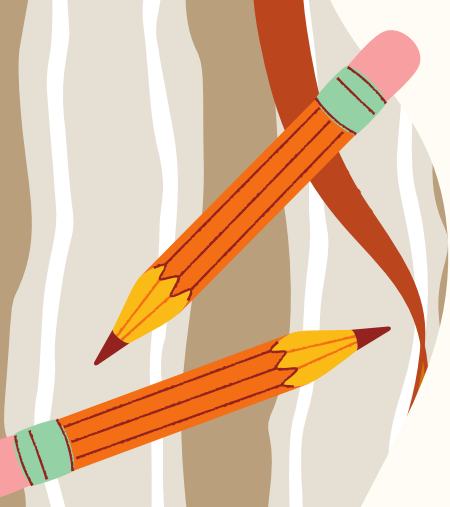
BY: ARIANNA NORIEGA

Have you ever noticed that certain songs just feel better during distinct times of the year? A song you listen to all summer might sound completely different when fall starts. This is because music can connect with our memories, emotions, and even the atmosphere around us.



Fall is a great example of this. As the weather gets cooler, the days get shorter, and school starts again, our mood and routines change. Songs that are calm, nostalgic, or a little emotional can suddenly feel perfect for the season. Listening to music while driving home or studying can make an ordinary fall day feel more special.

Back-to-school season also plays a big part. After a long summer, hearing certain songs can remind us of new classes, old friends, or memories from previous school years. Even a song that has nothing to do with fall can become a "fall song" simply because we listened to it during that time.



Music does not actually change with the seasons, but the way we experience it can. The weather, our routines, and the memories we make all affect how a song feels. Maybe that is why every season seems to have its own soundtrack.

MUSICAL THEATER RIDE THE CYCLONE

BY: ATTICUS MORAN



Have you ever wanted something new to watch? Something other than the usual movies, or shows? Then you should look into musicals! One good musical to watch is Ride the Cyclone, A dark comedy musical on Youtube, with such an amazing and funny soundtrack, you might be familiar with some of the songs! For example "What the world needs", "Noel's lament", "The ballad of Jane doe" and much more! But you might be thinking what's this musical even about? Well five kids from St. Cassian High School Chamber Choir, tragically die on a roller coaster called the cyclone. But they somehow are still..kind of alive! with a time wizard, who says that if one of themselves shows true redemption they will have their life back, but only one shall go on with their life while the others don't. They all take turns showing on why they should be the ones who get brought back to life. They all have their own musical number and we get to see some of their past! Until one more member comes up, and she doesn't actually have a past leaving her as a Jane doe victim. When the other members see this they realize that maybe Jane doe should be the one who gets redeemed since she hasn't had a life. Then as it's finally time to vote who gets redeemed the members all choose Jane doe since she hasn't had a past, and one should get to experience their life. In the end it's revealed who Jane even was, a young girl named Penny Lamb. As for the other members they're all still dead, including the time wizard, but they all realize that maybe death isn't so bad when they all have each other.



HEY BACK TO SCHOOL

BY: ALESSANDRA LOPEZ

Look at that, another year has come to go back to school and we have grown so much, we learned so much, and it's finally time to get another opportunity to accomplish that goal again. Being back at school is a blast! Why? Well because we can start a whole new journey now that we have completed Elementary school. How can we start a whole new journey with a new school you ask? Well, we can start by getting along with our new teachers, doing my work well and completed, and getting to my classes on time, and most of all new opportunities to create amazing new memories with new and old friends!

If you accomplish that goal it might be one of the best school years of your life.

So with this new year lets keep an open mind to all the great new opportunities this year has to offer in all aspects academically, athletically, and socially. May this year be the beginning of a wonderful story full of laughter and growth.

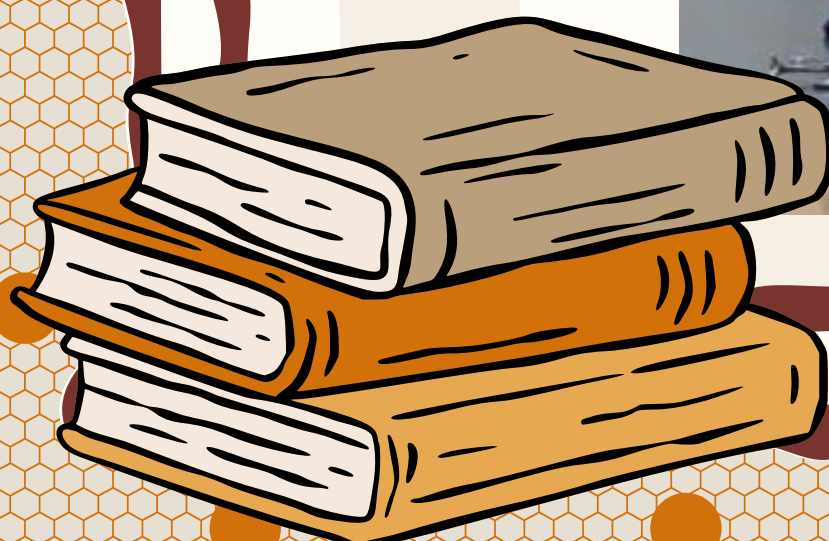


EL GRITO

BY: JAELYN SIERRA

El Grito" is known as the main celebration of Mexican Independence Day. It is celebrated on September 16th, or "El Dieciseis de Septiembre", which marked the beginning of Mexico's fight for freedom in 1810. YWLA celebrates this Mexican holiday by choosing someone to say the cry for independence, followed by the song Viva Mexico, performed by our very own Mariachi Cielo Azul. The cry for independence was declared by Eloyse Blanco this year, proclaiming:

"On the morning of September 16, 1810, Miguel Hidalgo Costilla rang the church bells in the small village of Dolores Guanajuato. and summoned the people to rise up arms and fight for the independence of Mexico. To commemorate this event every year, government representatives and Mexican ambassadors in foreign countries step out onto the presidential balcony and call on the people. Hoy me corresponde a mi el honor de representar a México dirigiéndome a ustedes con el siguiente llamado: ... ¡Mexicanos! ¡Vivan los héroes que nos dieron patria y libertad! ¡Viva Hidalgo! ¡Viva Morelos! ¡Viva Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez! ¡Viva Ignacio Allende! ¡Vivan Aldama y Matamoros! ¡Viva la independencia nacional! ¡Viva México! ¡Viva México! ¡Viva México!"



WE'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU: BY SOPHIA LOMELI

On August 25, 2026, the beloved musician and actress, Dolly Parton, passed away in Nashville, Tennessee following a brief battle with cancer. Dolly's family confirmed this on her official social media pages, leaving many distraught and heartbroken. Though Dolly was known for her music and outgoing personality, there was so much more to her than many know.

Parton was born on January 19th, 1946 in Tennessee. She sang in church as a young child, wrote her first song at just six years old, and began her professional career in Nashville. As a child and teenager, she performed on local radio and TV shows in East Tennessee, including The Cat Walk Show. Initially, she worked as a ghost writer, writing hit songs for other artists before releasing her debut album, Hello, I'm Dolly, in 1967. That same year, Porter Wagoner invited her to join his popular television series, which gave her national exposure toward superstardom.

Ensuing, she scored hit songs like "Coat of Many Colors" and "Joshua" in 1971, giving her the title as the queen of country. And, in 1973, her hit song "Jolene" gave her another hit, as well as "I Will Always Love You" in 1974. This was later Whitney Houston's record in the 1990s for her movie The Bodyguard.

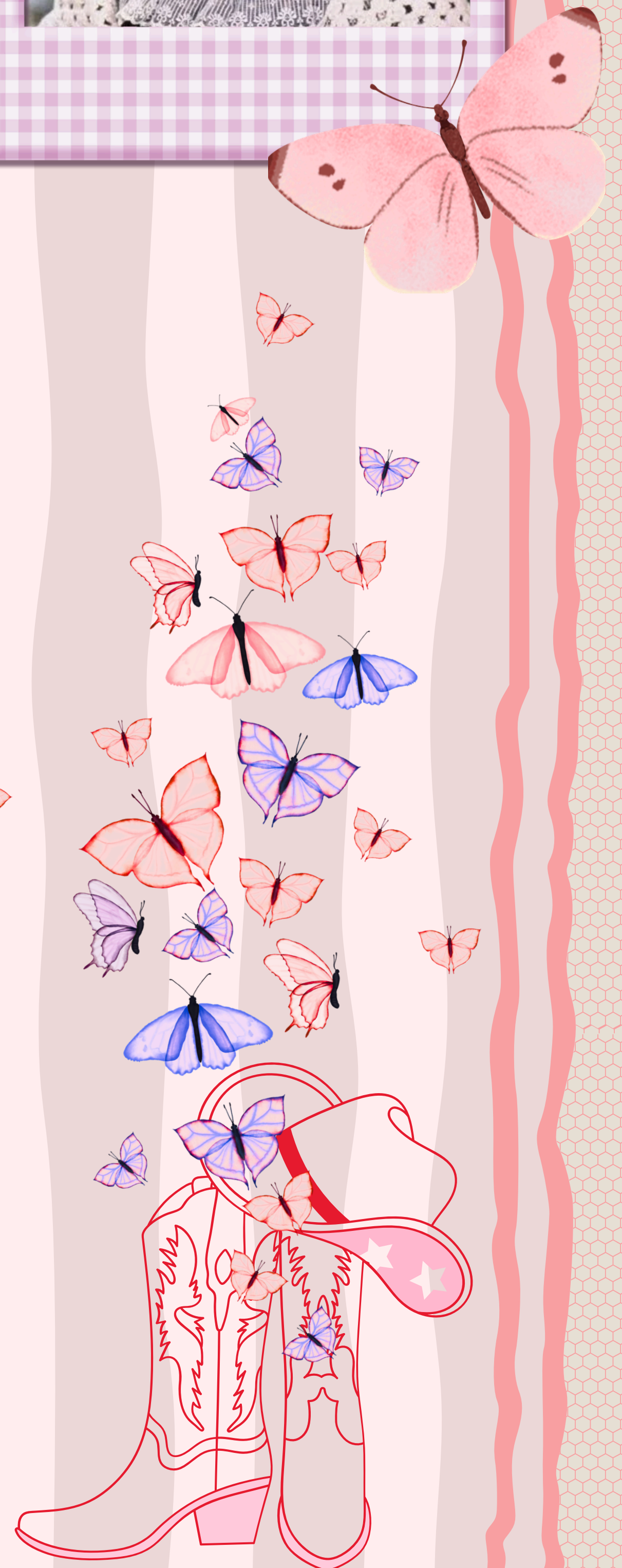
In 1977, Dolly crossed into the pop genre, winning her first Grammy with her hit song "Here You Come Again", and in 1980 made her major film debut starring in 9-5 and sang the famous song, winning her an Emmy. She also starred in the film Steel Magnolia as well.

Beyond her musical legacy, Parton is also known for opening her famous Dollywood theme park in 1986, helping Pigeon Forge, Tennessee create thousands of jobs and generate billions of dollars in tourism revenue. And, in 1995, she launched her Imagination Library, which is a book gifting-program that mails free, age-appropriate books directly to children from birth until they turn 5 years old. It has grown into an international effort operating across numerous countries, allowing young children to read for free.

Even so, Dolly Parton created the Buddy program through the Dollywood Foundation to lower high school dropout rates in her home county, promising to personally give \$500 to every 7th and 8th grade student in the county if they successfully graduated from high school. Students would choose a buddy and sign a contract, pledging to support each other throughout their high school years. This made the local high school dropout rate go from 35% to just 6% percent!

Dolly also donated numerous amounts of money when disasters occurred in Tennessee, and also funded vaccines for covid-19. And, she gave another \$1 million to Vanderbilt Health to support studies on pediatric infectious diseases. She also used royalties from her song "I Will Always Love You" to buy a Nashville strip mall and support a local black neighborhood.

Dolly Parton was a beloved artist, singer, songwriter, philanthropist, and actress, who pioneered the standards for girls and women all around the world. She was beyond what it means to put aside criticism and embrace what makes you stand out. Decades later, she is considered one of the most beloved musicians of all time, who will always be loved and missed.



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A crossword by Aurora Alarcon

autumn

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3

across

down

- 1. What some students take to go to their first day of school
- 4. What fades from leaves to give them their orange, red, and yellow hues
- 5. A gourd that's perfect for decoration and some delicious pie

- 2. A school celebration for school pride; usually includes a sports game, dances, and a parade
- 3. The temperature change during the fall, preparing us for winter

