

A SHOT IN THE ARM. Eighth grader Elia Harmens-Ross receives her vaccination. "I'm being vaccinated for my family, so my mom and dad don't get sick," Harmens-Ross said.

The hot topic this summer was vaccines. They were highly recommended and in high demand. By early May, the hope was to go "back to normal," and by the end of May, 12 to 15 year olds were approved for vaccination. As of August 16, 2021, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that 168.7 million people had been fully vaccinated in the US, which represented 50.8% of the population and 59.4% of the vaccine-eligible population.

For many, vaccines were the way to confront Covid-19. "We know that

the FDA-approved vaccines are extremely safe and have remained highly effective, even against new variants like the delta variant," stated authors Gypsyamber D'Souza and David Dowdy of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. Then, omicron developed, and we were right back to checking vaccination cards and wearing masks again.

As reported in the New York Times on August 14th by Alyson Krueger, "Months after people thought they had left the pandemic behind, they are masking up in indoor clubs...and

partying like it's 2020 again. Clubs and party hosts are being cautious, checking for vaccine cards at the door even before many local governments are requiring them to do so."

Students here at Drake were also impacted. "Over the summer I went to Mexico and I had to show proof of a negative test to come back. I also went to Las Vegas, and my whole family got COVID except me," Ellie Martinez (6) said. The summer really didn't go as expected with going back to masks and vaccines, but at least it didn't go completely back to living like it was 2020 again.

# BEST PARTS OF SUMMER The ins and outs of what happened in the community over the summer.

"ELITCH GARDENS, WE LOVE YOU!" goes the slogan for one of the oldest consecutively operating amusement parks in the United States. Elitches has long been a memory maker for kids growing up in the Denver area. "I remember that Elitches was only about a 10 minute drive away," said ELA teacher Kimberly Perko. "My favorite ride was the Rainbow. I miss that!"

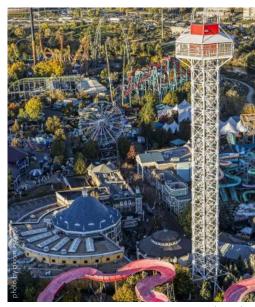
But, when changes were made to the 131 year old institution in July of 2021, many in our school were not happy.

Denver's Elitch Gardens, known by the public as Elitches, decided that people 16 and under would be required to have a guardian (21 or older) by their side the whole time. "Elitches is supposed to be fun for [kids]to have a little freedom," said Megan Martin (6). "Since

the rules have changed that kids have to have a parent on every ride, Elitches is going to lose a lot of customers." 87% of our students agreed with her.

"This summer, my 17 year old son took a date to Elitches, and they had to leave at 7:00 PM because of the new regulations," said drama teacher Laurel Wicke. "It was a lot of money to pay for such a short day."

In our survey, 13% agreed with the new rules. Zoe Atkins (6) said, "Who knows what teenagers can get into these days. Having these rules force them to act the correct way." 7th grade social studies teacher Michelle Johnson, disagreed with these changes. "I think that Elitches should find another way than having parents with older kids all the time." Clearly it was a controversial decision.



ELITCH GARDENS BY THE DATES. 1890: John and Mary Elitch open Elitch Gardens as a zoological park. 1892: The Elitch Theatre opens. 1916: Denver businessman John Mulvihill purchases Elitch Gardens. The Mulvihill family runs the park for four generations. 1928: The hand-carved carousel, which still operates today, is installed. 1965: The famous "Mister Twister" roller coaster is built. 1995: The New Elitch Gardens opens at its new location in central downtown Denver.

summer - SUMMER STORIES

created by - HANNAH THEXTON, CAITLYN NGUYEN, SADIE WEBORG

### summer

### Clubs provide unique summer fun. By Kelly Spraggins

During the summer, due to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), which was signed into law March 27, 2020, the school district was able to offer students summer clubs at every school. At Drake this included clubs involving theater, hiking, mountain biking, health and wellness, and even math. "I believe it was just giving students a chance to connect with students. And also it gave teachers a chance to do what they are passionate about while connecting with students," said Sean Hoorelbeke, the 6th grade assistant principal.

SHOW US THE DRAMA. In Musical Theater Club, the students rehearse to perform a short musical called "In the Middle." "We learned about singing and how to perform. During the performance we had a lot of fun," said Scarlett Zamora (6). WATER BREAK. Kylia Warren (8) and Sienna Kittles (8) take a break after biking the Stanley Trail. "I had a lot of fun in the Colorado Adventure Club, and it kept me from being bored over the summer," said Warren. GET YOUR MATH ON. Teacher Roxanne Smanyaphirak leads students through math skills exercises. "We would do a little bit of math and then go outside to play. Then we'd come back in and do some more math. I just got to know the students on a more personal level and have some fun," she said. YOGA FUN. Students in Health and Wellness Club try the tree pose under the summer sun. Said teacher Susan Schmelzer, "What I discovered is that we could have spent another two hours daily just enjoying each others' company."







\*photos donated by drake staff

### THE COMPETITOR

Q: We hear you played in a few tennis tournaments this summer. How did the competition go?

A: I thought I played well. In every competition I do, I always can work on it. It's fine if I win or lose; I just try my best.

Q: How did you get into tennis?

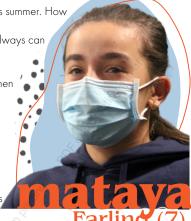
A: Mostly my grandpa. He started playing tennis and then our whole family just decided it's a great sport for the family, and we will do it together.

Q: Is there a coach or athlete you look up to?

A: Yeah, well, actually two of my coaches. They have taught me since I was six, and they're always trying to make sure that I get the best out of my practices.

Q: How often do you practice per week?

A: I try to practice three times a week, but sometimes it's





A brief overview of how these Dragons spent their free time during a summer of

### THE BEACH LOVER

Q: What is your favorite memory of visiting Mexico this

A: Hanging out at the beach and pool because it's hot in Mexico.

Q: Were you seeing relatives?

A: Yeah, my grandpa and my cousins, but I have lots of family in different parts.

Q: What was your favorite food there?

A: Definitely tacos and strawberry daiquiris.

Q: Do you speak Spanish?

A: Not very much, but I'm taking Spanish now.

Q: Any advice to future travelers?

A: Bring lots of swimsuits if you go to Mexico.

## Frederico (8)

### THE SIGHTSEER

Q: We understand you went on a trip this summer to Las Vegas. What did you do while you were there?

A: I went on a bunch of roller coasters.

Q: Who came with you?

A: My dad and my brothers.

Q: On a scale of 1 to 10 how would you rate your trip?

A: It was really fun, we did mostly roller coasters, but we also just drove around, sightseeing.

Q: What is your favorite memory of the

A: Probably when we accidentally got lost

Q: Why did you go to Las Vegas?

A: Just to have a fun time.

