

MINIPELEX

NEWSLETTER



Issue 63
December 2020

Bedrock Castle Defense, Giving Thanks,
Seasonal Art Showcase, and more.

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From the Editor

Happy December and welcome back to another edition of the Mineplex Newsletter! November feels like it went by incredibly quickly, but hopefully each of you managed to take some time to slow down and practice some self care. For those who celebrated American Thanksgiving this past month (or Canadian Thanksgiving way back in October), I hope you safely enjoyed the holiday.

I know that 2020 has been a difficult year so far, but even still, I'm finding myself thankful for a wide variety of things, major and minor. I am grateful to the Mineplex community for sticking together through a tough year, especially to those of you who read the Newsletter, whether you faithfully read it at the start of each month or if this is the first edition you've ever picked up. Each of you makes producing this Newsletter worthwhile and enjoyable! I am also grateful to the Newsletter team for their work over the past year. Without their amazing effort, I would not have the

pleasure of publishing the Newsletter on the first day of each month, which we have managed to do for the past eleven months. Be sure to check out the team biographies at the end of the Newsletter if you don't already so you know who to thank! I hope that each of you has found something to be thankful for this past month, whether it be something major or something minor. We're even going to be showcasing some of the things our fellow community members are grateful for later on in this edition, so definitely take a look at those!

Like always, my door is always open if you'd like to speak with me privately about something relating to the Newsletter! Feel free to message me on the forums or Discord with anything you would like to say. Otherwise, you can always submit comments or feedback through our [official form](#) or on the thread. I hope you enjoy this month's edition of the Mineplex Newsletter!

Have a nice December!

- AGLThree, Newsletter Program Manager

Bedrock Castle Defense Review

By 510bike & AGLThree

While the Java server sees yearly Halloween updates and games, the Bedrock community had never had a seasonal game before... until this year! On October 31st, 2020, gyroninja announced a new and experimental seasonal game on the Bedrock server: Castle Defense!

Thus far, Castle Defense has proven to be extremely popular among community members and has received positive feedback. The initial release was quite exciting for the Bedrock community, as prior to this, no seasonal game had ever been introduced on the Bedrock network. For those who didn't get the opportunity to try it out, a brief introduction to the game and its major features is provided below.

The game is on the fairly long side. All players start out on the Humans team as either an Enchanter, Fletcher, or Baker. For five minutes, players head into the caves to mine emeralds, which they can then exchange for gear and blocks to build a defense around the

king. Players can also use emeralds to purchase kit items for their teammates. Those with the Enchanter kit can purchase enchanted books to upgrade their teammates gear, players with the Fletcher kit can purchase arrows for their teammates, and players with the Baker kit can purchase health-restoring cake.

After the five minutes are up, night falls and monsters start spawning. Humans must use their gear and defensive constructions to protect the king until sunrise from incoming monsters.

One of the most exciting features about the game is the ability to become a monster. If a human dies, they join the Monster team. Monsters must try and break down the human defenses to destroy the king. They can also kill humans to make them turn into monsters, which weakens the Human team. The list below describes the following kits available to the Monster team.

- **Zombie** - Basic gear and a pickaxe
- **Super Zombie** - Slightly upgraded version of a zombie
- **Skeleton** - Weak pickaxe, chainmail armor, and an infinity bow
- **Wither Skeleton** - Slightly upgraded version of skeleton
- **Creeper** - Weak pickaxe and the ability to self-destruct to destroy walls
- **Charged Creeper** - Slightly upgraded version of creeper
- **Spider** - Weak armor and attack but can climb over walls
- **Cave Spider** - Slightly upgraded version of spider and the ability to poison others
- **Slime** - Weak armor and pickaxe but can jump over walls and split into multiple slimes
- **Magma Cube** - Slightly upgraded version of slime

Reading about the game is one thing, but playing it yourself is an entirely different experience. The Newsletter unfortunately won't be able to provide readers with the opportunity to play the game right here, so instead, we have pursued the next best option: player opinions. In order to learn more about the success of Castle Defense on the network, we sat down with two Bedrock players and asked them about their experience with the game so far.

We had the opportunity to speak with TheArrowsShadow, a level 82 and current Bedrock staff member, and Cheezeburgerfan, a level 56 long-time player and a Bedrock Game Insights and Ideas Team member.

What was your first reaction upon seeing that Castle Defense had been released?

TheArrowsShadow: "When I first saw it had been released I thought it was going to be a new player team V player team game so I was excited to try it out and see what it was all about. When I figured out that it was a player vs monsters game I was looking forward to trying out being all the different monsters and seeing the different perks."

Cheezeburgerfan: "I was really excited. It was the first time Bedrock had gotten a new game in over a year and it was a completely new and unique game, not just a Java game being added to Bedrock. I was excited to try out all the various attacker kits since there are a lot of them and they each have their own unique ability."

What has your experience with playing the game been like so far?

TheArrowsShadow: “I really enjoyed being a monster and having the humans rush me to try and keep me away from the king. Overall I did get bored with being a human and preferred being a monster. I don’t think I would play it as much as other games, but the concept was very interesting to me. Compared to other games I barely play it. I’ll spend a few hours on it, but in all honesty it’s the same thing over and over again and it does get boring. While other games are also competitive, the players are different. When I play Castle Defense, I’m always a monster and King Peter never moves, so the fight isn’t all that different.”

Cheezeburgerfan: “I have really enjoyed it. I played a Minecraft gamemode similar to it called Dwarves vs. Zombies way back in 2012 so it brought back some memories and nostalgia. I personally prefer being a defender since I think it’s more challenging than being an attacker. I also enjoy being able to build my own defenses instead of relying on the preexisting map design like you have to in Castle Siege. It could use a few balancing changes but overall I still enjoy the game and like it in its current state.”

As of now, it is currently unclear whether or not the game will make a return next year. There has also been some debate among members about whether or not the game should be made into a permanent game, but currently there are no plans for that to happen, as the game will be removed shortly. That being said, many people are hoping to see the game come back next year. With the game only being out for a short while, there are bound to be improvements that need to be made. Let’s take a look at what changes TheArrowsShadow and CheezeBurgerFan want to see made to the game.

Are there any changes that you’d like to be made to Castle Defense? Would you want the game to stay on the server year-round or remain only as a limited time option?

TheArrowsShadow: “Nothing specific comes to mind, but I think in terms of what could be improved, definitely the motivation to be a human, because I feel like once you find out you can become a monster right away why would you want to be a human after that? Maybe more if a PvP aspect instead of PvE, like adding a quota of humans the monsters need to kill in order to win. I think it would get more

hype as a seasonal game, and would probably die out as a year-round game. I'd like to see it come back with improvements, but as of right now I don't think it should stay year-round."

Cheezeburgerfan: "I think players should be able to queue for the attackers team in the pre-game lobby so the game can start with a few attackers similar to Castle Siege. I think the defenders should be able to buy different variants of blocks and armor. Some blocks could take longer for the attackers to break such as obsidian and I think this would give the defenders a better chance of winning. I want the game to stay on the server year-round."

Thank you to these two for taking the time to answer our questions! Though their thoughts might not be able to entirely represent the variety of opinions within the Bedrock community, hopefully our conversation with them provided insight into Castle Defense and its presence on the network thus far.

We were beyond excited to finally see a seasonal game added on the Bedrock network and we certainly hope to see more in the future. Castle Defense proved to be a successful addition, one which was unique to Mineplex and to our Bedrock community. It remains unclear whether Castle Defense will make a return next year, but based on the general consensus of the community in the past month, the game hopefully will return with improvements to make gameplay even more enjoyable.

Although the game will not be around much longer this year, all members are still encouraged to share any feedback they have about the game. There is currently a poll available in the Mineplex Discord in #polls asking whether or not members would like to see the game back next year. If you are not in the Mineplex Discord, you can join it [here](#). Additionally, if you have any specific suggestions regarding the game, anyone is welcome to make a thread in the Bedrock Ideas section of the forums. Finally, a huge thank you to gyroninja and the Quality Assurance team for all of your hard work on this wonderful game and for the impact it has made on the community.

Recent Rule Changes

By WowCaleb

In both the real and virtual worlds, there are rules in place to provide a stable environment for communities, promote safety, and maintain fair game between everyone. At Mineplex, we have our very own subteam dedicated to thinking of, discussing, and later implementing rules for Java, Bedrock, and Discord. Known as the Rules Committee (RC), they have the responsibility of bringing in new rules and making changes to existing rules when deemed necessary.

In this edition of the Mineplex Newsletter, we will be taking a closer look at some of the changes that were made as of late while also hearing some feedback from RC, the community, and the lead of the RC team herself. Without further ado, let's find out more about how our rulebooks have changed over the last couple of months!

RC has mainly focused on Gameplay rules over the last while, particularly in relation to Cross Teaming and similar behaviour such as Gameplay Trolling. Whether it's those who play competitively in Cake Wars or casually in Mixed Arcade, most players were pleasantly surprised to hear these long awaited changes had finally arrived:

- Cross Teaming in games with more than 2 teams (Bridges, Cake Wars, Micro Battles, etc.) is no longer allowed under any circumstances.
- Directly hindering your team (even in games with 2 teams) by actions such as not killing an enemy in front of you intentionally, letting an enemy kill you without fighting back, etc. is now punishable under Gameplay Trolling.

Examples of these new rule changes might help in understanding how players will be affected by them. For Cross Teaming, that means that a Red player and a Green player are no longer allowed to fight together in Cake Wars regardless of how many teammates each has left alive. For Gameplay Trolling, a Hunter is no longer allowed to deliberately not attack hiders in Block Hunt.

FuzzyJunior has been a member of RC since June 16, 2020, and had previously been part of the team during his first time as a moderator. Since his return, he has dedicated a huge amount of activity to RC and has lent a great hand in pushing out almost all of the rule updates covered in this article. I

asked him what led RC to believe these Gameplay rule changes were necessary to make.

FuzzyJunior: “The first cross teaming change that affects games such as Bridges was completely necessary. Disappointingly, the ability to create cross teams was heavily abused by players in many different games and thus caused many players to begin complaining about the absurd cross teams later in the game which many saw as unfair. As much as we’d love to trust players to have proper integrity and be fair sports, we simply don’t have that luxury and had to make a decision that was going to ultimately improve the player base. While I’m not as convinced the second change was as necessary as the prior, RC doesn’t make decisions like this for no reason. We’ll simply have to wait and see the community response once the rule is less new.” I also sat down with Toki, the current Admin of RC. I asked her the same question of why she believed it was finally time to change the rules surrounding Teaming, Cross Teaming and similar behaviour.

Toki: “It came down to requests to take action in those areas from the community & staff team, and wanting to make the experience more fair to

all types of players. Including not only people who have been playing for a while, but also players who are brand new.”

I then asked FuzzyJunior whether he believed rule updates were heading in the right direction in light of these recent changes.

FuzzyJunior: “In some ways yes, and in some ways no. It’s evident that more competitive games on the network were in dire need of changes, I am not as enthusiastic about the intense enforcement that could come about in games that generally have a more casual cast of players. Again, though, other members of the RC team made amazing points in our internal discussions and I have no doubt they have Mineplex’s best interest in mind even if I didn’t agree with everything said.”

Those who are familiar with the official Mineplex Discord server will most likely recall the controversy surrounding the deletion of the #rule-discussion channel. This was previously a channel in which community members could discuss potential changes to the rules in a controlled environment. Unfortunately, this environment spiraled more and more out of control, resulting in the RC

lead removing the channel.

I asked Toki what she would say to community members who want to continue suggesting rule changes and have their voice heard despite the deletion of #rule-discussion.

Toki: “Players and staff members can most definitely have their voice heard when it comes to suggestions regarding the rules. However, there is a key difference between listening and being able to actually do what is suggested. While we have always listened to suggestions, we are not always able to make changes based on those.”

Over the last while, the size of RC has grown even smaller with the departure of one or two members. To wrap things up, I asked Toki whether she was actively searching for new staff to add to the team.

Toki: “Not at this moment no, but we are keeping an eye on a couple of people who may make for good members down the road.”

I would like to take a moment to personally thank Toki and FuzzyJunior for their contributions to this article and for providing readers with more of an insight into these rule changes!

Aside from the changes to Cross Teaming and Gameplay Trolling, there have only been two other rule changes over the last while that are worth mentioning. The first was the moving of Discord server invitation links to Medium Advertisement for our in-game platform, with the exception of a solicited invitation in private or party chat, in which case this would not be punishable. The second rule change announced that finding a way to kill players before the grace period ends in UHC is punishable under Gameplay Trolling, as well as finding a way to intentionally kill your teammate at any point during the game.

For anyone looking to suggest a new rule, a change to an existing rule, or to express any concern whatsoever, the best possible method of doing so nowadays is by directly contacting a member of RC found at mineplex.com/subteams under the “Rules Committee” header. While other ways of doing so may no longer be available, this is not to say players will not have a voice in future rule changes. RC cannot be expected to think of everything, and it is always worth anyone coming forward with an idea they strongly believe in, in the hope to make a difference.

Giving Thanks

By jacvb & Marzie

In a time of uncertainty, looking forward and thinking positively allows everyone to maintain tranquility. With American Thanksgiving being here, we decided to ask people what they are thankful for this year. As an American tradition practiced for hundreds of years, giving thanks has been part of this holiday since the very beginning. Though you might not have been able to meet face-to-face with other friends and relatives this past Thanksgiving, we still hope you were able to celebrate safely whilst having fun. Without further ado, here is what the Mineplex Community was thankful for this year:

Cheezeburgerfan: I am thankful for gyro for making so many bedrock updates.

BroActually: I'm thankful for having the absolute best group of friends on Mineplex. I get to go on everyday, casually playing with amazing people who are funny and nice. I'm thankful that I got the opportunity to meet these people and get to talk to them everyday. All of them mean the world to me, and make everyday better.

BizarreAvatar: Being able to be involved with Mineplex as a whole.

LT Tombstone 77: I'm very thankful for my family and friends. I cannot elucidate how important they both are to me. They're always there for me when I need them, and always know how to make me feel better. My family, of course, also supports me financially in life, and just in general. Both my friends and family are something that I'll always be grateful for, and I honestly don't know what I would do without either of them.

Mathuu: Well, since this unfortunate pandemic has come upon us, I have been thankful for my basic survival necessities, such as food, water, shelter, etc. I have also been thankful for friends and family, especially during these times it is important to stay in touch with loved ones. Lastly but not least, I am GREATLY thankful for this community. Y'all have provided so much during these tough times, and gave me another reason for hope, and to keep pushing on.

Jylie: Well, first of all, I'm very thankful for this community. I know that's extremely generic, but it's true. Mineplex fosters this unique environment full of so many different people and holds so much potential. It facilitates a place in which you can form a bond with someone you would never meet otherwise due to location or if you were too anxious to say hello in-person. What's funny is that even though there's such a diverse range of people, you can still find people who are alarmingly similar to you. I've met so many amazing people here, especially this past year. 2020 has been a rough year for a majority of people worldwide, and Mineplex has stood tall and given so many people comfort during these tough times. Most importantly it gave people a place where they feel like they belong, something which can be so hard to come by in today's society, where things constantly change. I cannot express my gratitude for this server enough, and all the opportunities that have opened up to me because of it. I am so lucky to be here today and have all these wonderful people surrounding me.

Thank you to everyone who participated and sent in what you are thankful for! We hope you have a wonderful rest of 2020 and a very happy holiday season!

The Seasonal Art Showcase

By **neotheater**

It's finally that time of year again! With Autumn now complete for those in the northern hemisphere and Spring for those in the southern, it's time to take a look back on some of the best artwork from the season gone by. We will be featuring just a few of the talented artists in the Mineplex community who have really stood out over the past couple of months!

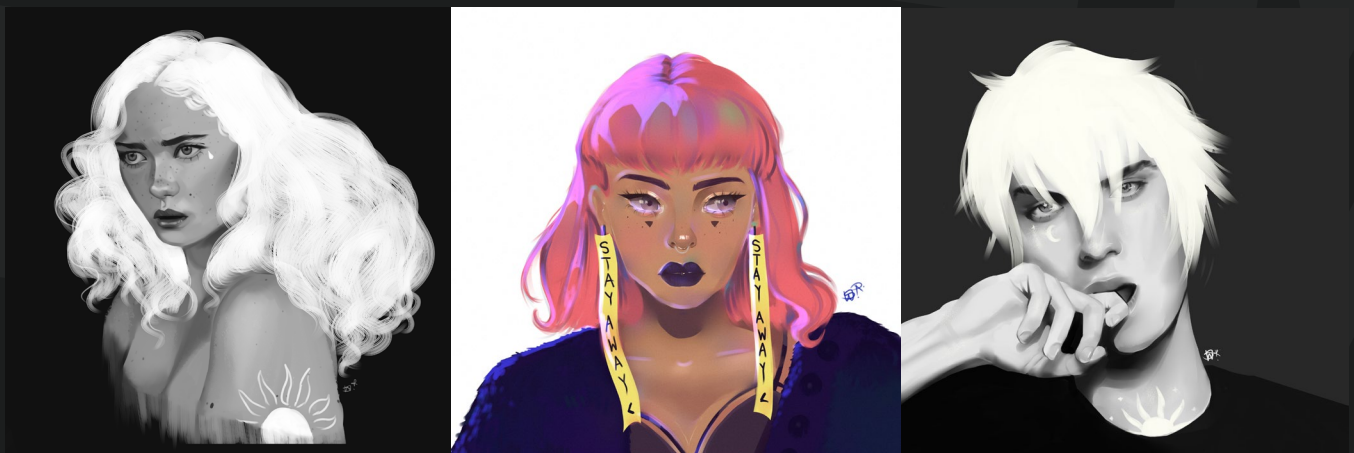
Just as a brief disclaimer, The Seasonal Art Showcase will come out every three months in the December, March, June, and September editions. This gives us enough time to spot artists who have truly stood out over that time period and hopefully will give us a slightly wider range of art to work with, too.

Remember, if you want to be featured in next season's showcase, be sure to post your art in the 'Arts & Banner Showcase' on the forums or #art-club on the Discord so we can see your masterpieces!

Digital Art

This is one of the most impressive and wide-spread art styles out there due to there being so much variety. People can create whole other worlds, people, and creatures through means of digital art. Here are two digital artists that really stood out this season.

maevestarbaby:



TheArrow'sShadow:



We are sure many of you who have been on the forums recently know about Arrow's artwork, and their incredible talent at drawing Minecraft characters as semi-realistic characters. They have created countless pieces of art for members of the community over the past month or so, and so we wanted to ask what got them interested in drawing people's characters:

Arrow: "So I've always been better at drawing people rather than other things, and my motivation during quarantine has been drastically low, so I figured "hey if I have people who want me to draw them, I'll be more motivated because I'm not drawing for myself, I'm drawing for them!" I'll be honest I'm still not as motivated as I'd like to be but in comparison I'm definitely drawing more than I have been over the last few months and that's getting me back in the swing of things"

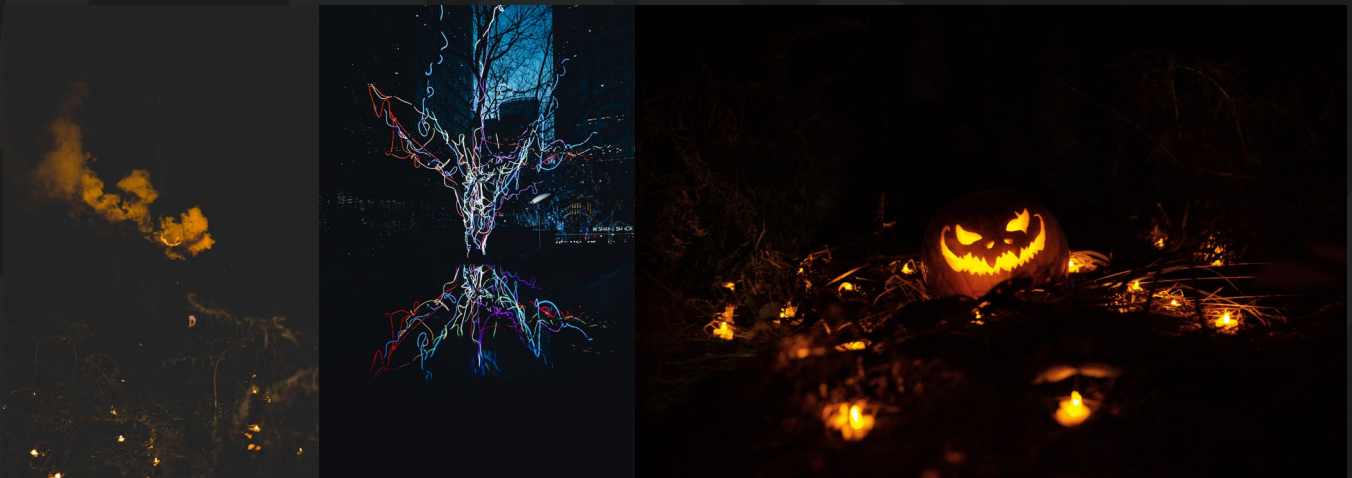
Photography

They say a picture is worth a thousand words, and the ones taken by members of the Mineplex community this season are no exception to that. Photographs can catch the changes of each season as it goes by. Here are three of our favourite photographers from this season.

Hapily:



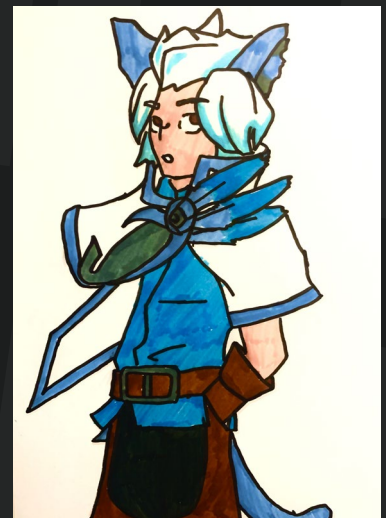
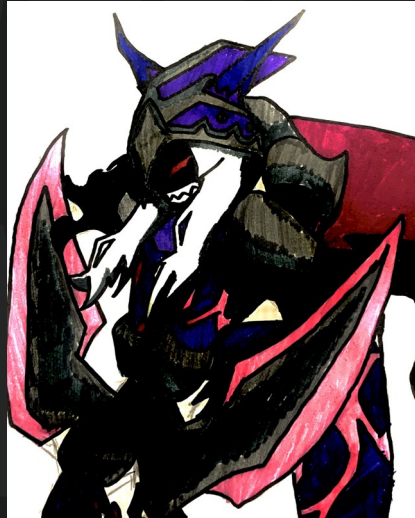
SmhWhy:



Traditional Art

This type of artwork has been around for thousands of years ever since man learned to carve in cave walls. Something about being good at traditional art has fascinated humans for centuries, and being able to draw a masterpiece merely with pencil and paper is a talent that not many of us possess. The following three artists have shown that they have this incredible talent though.

NoSweatPvP:



Dxterity:



We hope you enjoyed this season's edition of the Art Showcase! A big thank you to all of the artists for allowing us to include your work. With this being the last showcase of 2020, we really wanted to go out with something spectacular and the artwork we managed to find was immaculate. We really do appreciate it and we can't wait to see what you do next!



Caption the Image

By neotheater

It's the final countdown: The year is 92% complete, and after a difficult 11 months for us all, we are about to come out the other side and welcome 2021 with open arms whilst maintaining social distancing and wearing our face masks. By no means does that mean everything is over, but the end of 2020 is a big step forward. It is (hopefully) only going to go up from here. Despite COVID causing havoc all over the world right now, we here at Mineplex have full intention of celebrating the end of this forsaken year by going out with a bang!

Some jovial Mineplexians are hosting a party to celebrate the final days of 2020. There's music blasting through the speakers and

colourful lights illuminating each corner of the otherwise dark dance floor. Dancers scatter the dance floor (all socially distant of course) dancing to their favourite tunes. The fireworks boom as celebration of getting through the year really starts to kick off. It's a New Years party that nobody will ever forget, that's for sure. "What do you think the next year will hold?" a strong voice queries over the loud atmosphere, but the party-goers fall silent because nobody knows... Do you think you know? What do you want to happen next year?

Want to share with us your thoughts about what 2021 will bring? Tell us here:

<https://forms.gle/pgmoDHiayc89udbL6>



Last month, we showed you two of Gendo's minions who just couldn't let go of the Halloween spirit for another year, and so to keep it alive they were plotting something so diabolical that nobody would see it coming. We asked if anyone had any idea what they were going to do:

Here are our 3 favourite captions from last month:

Cephalon: "So what's the best way we could really strike fear into Mineplex?"
"Idk, just tell them CS isn't coming back. That should do the trick"

zapig: "Look, I know you're supposed to be the brains and all, but just going in with a bunch of TNT has a literal 0% chance of success."

xGetRekted: "Even Gendo wants some candy!"

November Staff Statistics

By AGLThree

This month, we wanted to issue a huge welcome to all the new staff members who joined us and say thank you to all of the staff members who have sadly resigned for all of their hard work for the network.

Java Trainee

November 14: harrisoniscool_,
XtremeLucas543
November 21: Asteiph, Idut

Bedrock Trainee

November 21: endergamerx1, itsaquaris

Java Mod

November 7: aahad123, Haguenator_5
November 14: BizarreAvatar, Disgruntle,
Hvbble
November 28: affinity0

Sr. Moderator

November 22: oCassi (Forum Management)

Resignations

October 29: HeyItsTay_
November 5: Degagelemming95
November 8: Pakar
November 13: xpfireplayz
November 14: Rilau
November 16: Exclipse (Clans Management)
November 24: Augend (Community
Management)
November 28: reaLLytired (Quality Assurance)
November 30: DaPBillk

1 Year Milestones

November 9: Animalll

2 Year Milestones

November 3: firefox54

4 Year Milestones

November 4: EmmaLie

6 Year Milestones

November 22: Crumplex, Toki

Meet the Team



AGLThree: Hola! I'm AGLThree and I lead the Newsletter Program! I'm currently a Sr. Mod on Recruitment and an RP mentor. I'm a Grey's Anatomy fan and enjoy doing ceramics. Somehow, I still haven't gotten the Connect 4 gadget, which feels statistically unlikely at this point.



Tortelett: 63 newsletters is a lot of news. Almost a full stack.



Arjun: Yo! I'm Arjun and I'm a Rules Committee member and Sr. Recruiter / manager under the Recruitment team. Other than Newsletter, I'm also on Reports Patrol, Game Insights, and the Content Creator Council. Some of my favorite hobbies consist of driving, hanging out with friends, and playing videogames. I hope you enjoyed this month's issue of the Newsletter!



Sophie_OGrady: Hi, I edit the newsletter.

Meet the Team



jacvb: Howdy, I'm Jacob! I'm a writer and an editor for the newsletter and a member of Community Management and Quality Assurance. Outside of Mineplex, you'll catch me listening to a lot of music and watching Netflix.



Marzie: It's a me, Marzie! I am an Ex-FN and a current Event Squad member that runs Staff Events, Content Creator Events and does Website QA/Feedback things for most of my time. On the side, I also do Forum Mod, Reports Patrol Assistance, Ideas Team, Newsletter (writer, ex-editor), CCC, and I also Co-Lead CMP. Learn my entire history with Mineplex and more about me on my profile in the information tab.



EmmaLie: Hiya! I'm Emily and I'm that one weirdo who loves lollipops and doing stuff for the community. I'm currently the admin of Community Management & the Event Squad, so you'll see me a lot in-game, especially in EVENT-1. Outside of Mineplex, a lot of my time goes toward family, friends, Netflix, and Overwatch.

Meet the Team



510bike: Hi! My name is 510bike, and I'm currently a writer and editor for the Newsletter! I'm also currently a Sr.Mod on the Social Media team, a cross-platform staff member, and I am a member of RA, RPA, and FM. Outside of Mineplex, I'm into martial arts, photography, and mock trial! Feel free to say hello if you ever see me around!



neotheater: every inch of me is trembling, but not from the cold. something is familiar, like a dream i can reach but not quite hold. i can sense you there like a friend i've always known. i'm arriving, and it feels like i am home



WowCaleb: Wow, it's Caleb! Let's pretend I didn't say that and start over - I'm a Moderator and a writer for the Newsletter. You'll most likely find me in my natural habitat playing Nano Games, or posting over on the forums. If I'm not on Mineplex, I'm probably banana boating or kayaking down the local river! Be sure to stop by and say hi if you ever see me around!



chhase: Hi!! I'm Chase, a Senior Mod & Forum Manager here at Mineplex! I'm also a member of Reports Patrol Assistance and an editor for the newsletter!!! When I'm not busy, my favorite things to do are watching movies, going hiking, and going on drives with the windows down. Also, I'm very bad at PVP so don't even.