

THUNDERBIRD

HALF HOLLOW HILLS HIGH SCHOOL EAST

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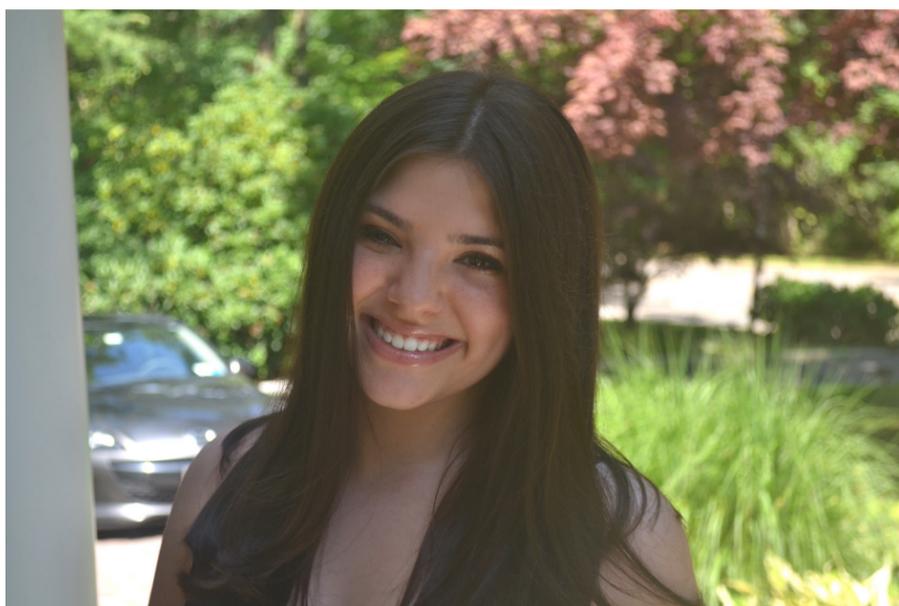
Goodbye Half Hollow Hills, Hello Capitol Hill

Lauren Peller

Editor-In-Chief

It was a Wednesday night at 10pm during my sophomore year of high school, and I was feverishly pounding on my keyboard. My heart was in my throat as I read the fatal error message telling me that my flash drive had been corrupted, and all my painstaking hours of work, laying out my first newspaper, were potentially wasted. All of my efforts selecting titles, design, and photos had vanished. The 16 page paper was trapped inside the flash drive with no apparent way to retrieve it. It was too late to bother my advisors, so I reached out to the only person who could relate to this overwhelming responsibility. I called my Grandmother Carole, whom I had recently discovered was editor of her own high school newspaper many years ago. She laughed and said, "We didn't even have computers back then, but I know the feeling of being responsible to produce papers on tight deadlines." "Get a good night's sleep, and it will all somehow work out in the morning," she said. I arrived at school the next day to find that an earlier iteration was available on the hard drive at school. My grandmother was wise and knew that she needed to plant a seed of confidence in me. She knew that this wouldn't be the last time I would need to navigate a bump in the road. Something seemingly catastrophic became something I knew I could overcome. Little did I realize the challenges and demands that lay ahead as I totally immersed myself in the production of the *Thunderbird*.

I can't remember what exactly motivated me to join the *Thunderbird*. I think it may have been in 8th grade, when my teacher, Mrs. Brosdale (Corso), saw something in my writing and submitted my work for an award. Not only did my teacher encourage me, but I also truly believe that she was the catalyst for my love of expressing myself through writing. It may, however, have occurred in 9th grade because my English teacher was one of the advisors for the school newspaper (thanks, Mrs. Dalton). In the first month of high school, I contemplated: what kind of student was I going to be? Where should I focus my efforts to learn the most and blossom? I was in need of my own personalized map. Once I stepped foot in the library Mac lab, I began to imagine a path that made sense. I watched the editors sitting together and discussing ideas, the



Lauren Peller, Editor in Chief is off to the George Washington University's School of Media and Public Affairs to major in Journalism and Mass Communication

advisors speaking to the staff, and the long list of articles that needed to be covered for the fall issue. This might sound cheesy, and I am rolling my eyes at the moment, but I knew there was nowhere else I was supposed to spend every Thursday after school for the next four years.

For me, the *Thunderbird* is most definitely not a typical extracurricular. After writing articles for the first year and then becoming school news and layout editor in 10th grade, I assumed the role as editor-in-chief my junior year. Whether I was coming up with punny headlines, like "Orange you Glad it's Apple Season," or forming long lists of article ideas for meetings, I was able to foster creativity and inspire broader content. Similar to assembling a puzzle, I spent countless hours editing articles and painstakingly creating a cohesive layout in addition to managing the entire publication process.

Looking at other high school newspapers, I instinctively knew that the *Thunderbird* needed to evolve to an online platform. In order to appeal to a wider audience and keep up with technology, I navigated my way through WordPress and helped the *Thunderbird* find its new home for tech savvy users. As one would expect, in the first attempt of our online version, there was much to learn and refine. Even though there were plenty of bumps in the road for this staff and paper, there were numerous successes as well. Most recently, the *Thunderbird* won a record high number of 20 LI Press Awards, and received a silver designa-

tion for the past two years from the *American Scholastic Press Association*. These awards validated all of the hard work the staff invested in the paper.

Joining the newspaper was an opportunity for me to endeavor. I worked hard at developing my writing and editing skills as well as being a contributing member of the staff. My parents constantly tell me, "The best prize in life is the opportunity to work hard and take pride in your work." As editor-in-chief, I have had the "best prize" to manage a newspaper that has defined my identity as a student and a leader. For the past two years as "Editor Peller," I have found that my experience serving on this newspaper has reinforced the pride one can have in facilitating a collaborative creation.

From what I have learned and experienced while part of the *Thunderbird*, I uncovered my passion and plan on studying journalism and communications in college and beyond. At the George Washington University next year, I look forward to joining one of D.C.'s finest newspapers, *The Hatchet*, and continue to apply the skills and lessons I have acquired.

It has been an honor serving as the editor-in-chief for the past two years, and it has been an incredible experience serving on the staff of the *Thunderbird* for the past four years. I'd like to acknowledge the editors and entire staff who were integral to the production of the paper. I am extremely pleased to be leav-

ing the *Thunderbird* in very capable hands. I look forward to passing off the newspaper to co-editors-in-chief, Bradley Shanker and Emily Disman. Bradley's vibrant personality, dedication, and extraordinary leadership will carry the newspaper to success. Emily's impeccable writing, organization, and direction will lead the staff and paper to even greater accomplishments. I would also like to wish the rest of the new editors and staff the best of luck. I can't wait to see what they have in store for the next chapter of the *Thunderbird*.

Reflecting back on four years, I would like to recognize all of the teachers and administrators who have encouraged me. Thank you Dr. Woodberry for your approachability and positive reinforcement. Thank you Mrs. Davis for your warm and supportive demeanor. I remember sitting in the Mac lab my sophomore year, like a deer in headlights, first learning the layout process. You displayed a great deal of patience and knowledge while sharing your technical skills using InDesign and Photoshop. Next, I would like to thank Mrs. Dalton for encouraging me to be the best version of myself. From a student in your honors english class for two years to working with you on the newspaper, I am grateful for the opportunities you gave me. You guided me in writing and editing in addition to instilling confidence in me to develop as a leader. Facing adversity, I could always count on words of wisdom from Mrs. Dalton. Another teacher who has greatly supported me was Mr. Pitman, my AP U.S. and "We the People" teacher. You taught me how to speak publicly with conviction and collaborate in a group setting. Thank you Mr. Pitman for teaching me to think critically and persevere.

It is amazing how fast four years go by. I guess it's true that time flies when you are having fun. Just like the end of the last chapter of a book, the final chapter of high school is always bittersweet. I am ending this last chapter of my book as a student, club member, volunteer, and editor-in-chief. As this chapter is ending, however, my life story is just beginning. As my time in Half Hollow Hills comes to an end, I am able to approach that end, not with fear, but with gratitude for my past experiences and a bright hope for my future on Capitol Hill.

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Dr. Woodberry is Chartering a New Chapter

Bradley Shanker

Junior Managing Editor

After a successful career at Hills East, Dr. Woodberry prepares for new adventures within the Half Hollow Hills Central School District. I had the opportunity to speak with Dr. Woodberry before he transitions to the position of Assistant Superintendent for District-wide Administration for the upcoming school year. He shared his final thoughts as principal of Hills East, and we discussed his journey in education before moving on to his hopes for the future. It was an interesting conversation that provided me with an even deeper appreciation for our Principal's dedication to our district and further solidified just how lucky we are to have him.

Thunderbird: With all of the possibilities to pursue as a career, why education? When did your love for education begin?

Dr. Woodberry: When I initially went to school (undergraduate) in Buffalo, I decided to major in psychology, and after I graduated, I spent some time working in a psychiatric clinic. Although I found it rewarding, I was not completely satisfied. I decided to look into other fields where I could do similar work but perhaps in a different environment. I've always loved education and the school atmosphere, so I explored school counseling. I eventually pursued a master's in guidance counseling. I spent 5 years as a guidance counselor before moving on to assistant principal and eventually principal.

TB: If you didn't become an educator, what would you have become?

DW: That's a difficult question to answer. I can't answer it with a definitive career; however, I can say that I would have been in a field that allowed me to help others. This has been a part of my nature and passion throughout my life.

TB: Prior to HSE, where did you work?

DW: I worked in the Wyandanch School District for a short while. Before that, I worked in a psychiatric clinic in Suffolk County. Prior to that position, I worked for a non-profit organization in Nassau County.

TB: What brought you to HSE?

DW: When I was finishing my counseling program, I met the former director of guidance, Dr. Deluca, who was one of my professors. He told me about the school district and told me to apply when a position became available. So, I went through the interview process, met with a number of people, was hired by the Principal Mr. James McCaffrey, and the rest is history.

TB: How many years have you been at HSE, and what roles have you held during your time here?

DW: I've been here at HSE for 19 years. My first three years were spent as a guidance counselor, my next 6 were as an assistant principal, and to clarify further, three of those 6 years were spent as an administrative assistant, which was basically an entry level assistant principal position at that time. After the six years as an AP, the past ten have been as principal of HSE.

TB: Why did you stay at HSE for so long?

DW: This district is outstanding in so many areas. Number 1 is the community. The community is one that values education. Our community has very high standards and is very demanding of us [faculty] as educators, and in turn, they are extremely supportive. So that's a good combination to create great results. Our students are super talented, intelligent, hardworking, and diligent, which also adds to the equation of producing great results. Additionally, the educators that I work with here at HSE, and in the district in general, are all talented, dedicated, passionate, and top-notch. When I talk about results, I'm not only talking about standardized

test scores and things of that nature, but I'm also talking about impact. The impact that this school system can have on students, whether it be through teacher relationships, college preparation, extracurricular opportunities, and so on, is unsurpassed in my opinion. The overall excellence of this school is what has kept me here for so long.

TB: If you could use three words to describe HSE, what would they be?

DW: Diverse, excellent, and high-achieving.

TB: Looking back, would you change anything about your time as principal?

DW: I think we have done a lot over the years to improve everything we do at Hills East. Whether it's with academic or extracurricular activities, we've done a lot to change the climate of the building over the past ten years. If I could do anything differently, I would probably include more people in the conversations we had about those changes. For example, I would get more input from students about classes we offer and create electives around students' interests and wants, in addition to what we feel is necessary. Including more voices in different aspects of what we do here at the school is something that I would do differently.

TB: What has been your favorite part of being principal?

DW: My favorite part of being principal is being in the hallways everyday and being able to interact with our students and faculty. That's my favorite part of the job: meeting new people and then connecting and interacting with them.

TB: What will you miss the most about HSE?

DW: The students and the staff. I am going into a position where I will probably spend a lot of time in an office and

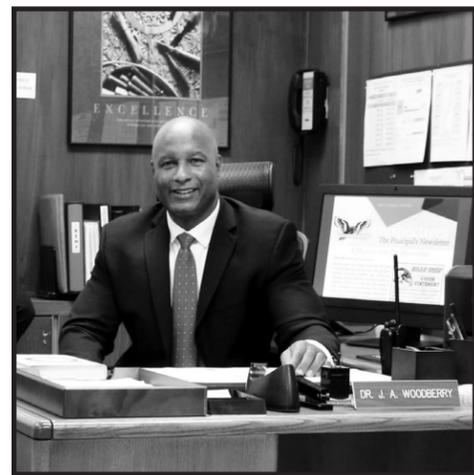


Photo by Allison Utendorfer

that will be strange for me because I love being out and about.

TB: What are you most looking forward to in your next venture?

DW: Getting to know all of the schools in our district and all of the different groups in our school district. I will now not only be dealing with students and teachers at HSE, but also people within central office, elementary schools, and middle schools. I will get a broader sense of what our school district and community is all about.

TB: Do you have any words of wisdom or advice for Dr. Strong?

DW: Dr. Strong and I have worked very closely over the years, and we share a similar philosophy on how a school should function. So, the advice that I would give him would be to keep doing what he does. He is a great principal at West Hollow, and I believe he will continue that legacy here at HSE. I encourage him to keep being creative and continue coming up with new ideas.

On behalf of the *Thunderbird*, we wish Dr. Woodberry the best of luck with his future endeavors. We will miss him dearly, but the entire district is very lucky to have him in such a prominent role.

Superintendent Kelly Fallon Retiring after 33-Year Career

Lauren Peller

Editor-in-Chief

As editor-in-chief of the *Thunderbird*, I had the opportunity to meet with our district Superintendent, Mrs. Kelly Fallon, to get her final thoughts as she prepares to retire. We covered some customary questions, discussed her journey in education, and then moved on to her impressions for the future. It was an interesting conversation that provided me with an appreciation for our Superintendent's dedication to our district and just how lucky we are to have had her for so long.



Photo by Bea Reiser

Thunderbird: When did you realize that you wanted to pursue a career in education?

Mrs. Fallon: From the time I was young, I always wanted to be a teacher. I pursued my BS in Education and was fortunate to be able to student-teach on Long Island at a time when many districts were moving to full day Kindergarten. I was hired by the Bay Shore School District as a kindergarten teacher, and it was the wonderful experience in Bay Shore that sparked my interest to pursue a position in administration in the future.

TB: How long have you worked in the district, and what have your roles been?

KF: I have been part of the HHH school community for 22 years. In 1995, I was appointed the principal of Paumanok Elementary School. I then became the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Assistant Superintendent for District-wide Administration, Deputy Superintendent, and ultimately Superintendent.

TB: When did you become Superintendent? How was the transition?

KF: I became Superintendent in 2011. Having been a part of the school community for so many years, I was able to transition smoothly during this exciting time. Having had various administrative

experiences in the District allowed me to be prepared to move the district forward.

TB: What have you found most challenging being Superintendent?

KF: The District's declining enrollment, as well as the 2% tax levy cap regulation, were two of the most challenging circumstances of my Superintendency. Additionally, managing information pertaining to New York State testing and teacher evaluations was difficult.

TB: What did you find most rewarding in your role as Superintendent?

KF: I have thoroughly enjoyed creating a spark for others - providing opportunities for principals, teachers, coordinators, or directors to really focus on their craft. I have enjoyed experiencing the successes of Half Hollow Hills students in academics, athletics, and the arts, and I have enjoyed watching our HHH students experience an education that is second to none.

TB: Did you have any experiences or mentors that helped you get to where you are today?

KF: I had a wonderful experience as Assistant Principal in the William Floyd School District. While I was there, the school was recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School. Throughout my

career, I have been extremely fortunate to have worked with many great teachers and administrators who helped me pursue my educational goals.

TB: Who is the new Superintendent, and how will the transition occur?

KF: Dr. Patrick Harrigan - currently our Deputy Superintendent - will take on the role as Superintendent, effective September 1, 2017. I believe the transition will be seamless. Dr. Harrigan has touched all segments of the school district and he brings a strong educational background to the position of Superintendent in addition to relationship building skills and the ability to work effectively with large groups of people.

TB: What are your future plans?

KF: My plans - I have worked for 33 years, and I now look forward to recapturing time. I won't say I will never work again, but right now, I want to transition to my home and spend quality time with my family.

Without question, Kelly Fallon will leave her mark on the HHH district. Her pursuit of excellence, knowledge, and leadership will truly be missed. Farewell Mrs. Fallon, on behalf of the *Thunderbird*, we wish you well in the next chapter of your life!

Feeling Blue, but Ready to be a Blue Devil

Rachel Rosenstein

Executive Editor

Now that the end of my senior year is approaching, I've allowed myself to take a step back and reflect on what my journey was like to get to this point. The first thing that comes to mind is how fast the time has gone. It feels like just yesterday that I was getting on that daunting yellow school bus with a massive pit in my stomach. I'm not sure many of you have ever read the book *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*, but in the book it gives examples such as share everything, clean up your own mess, don't hit people, and put things back where you find them. Yes, Mrs. Sherman, my Kindergarten teacher, covered these life lessons as a foundation for my future endeavors.

Fast forward 13 years to high school. High School: the two words that can nostalgically bring out the most amazing and most terrifying memories in anyone's life. Here, I was able to test my academic and social abilities as every decision affects your future. I developed and pursued my true passions at this special place, from joining the Varsity Swim team to being the founder of 'Covers Cause We Care' and 'Baking for a difference' to being heavily involved in the peer ambassador program to developing a love for photography. However, writing has been one of my favorite passions I have developed. I've always been an avid reader and writer, and upon entering high school, it seemed logical to check out what the school newspaper was all about. Never did I imagine four years later that I would hold positions for the *Thunderbird* such as School News Editor, Restaurant Review Writer, and Executive Editor. I've truly enjoyed every role I've had from the actual work to the wonderful people with whom I was

fortunate enough to interact, including Mrs. Dalton and Mrs. Davis. By being able to attend events such as the *Long Island Press Awards* and *Student Press Day*, I enjoyed the knowledge I have acquired in regards to writing and journalism. In the next four years, I am excited to become a Blue Devil, and while at Duke, I plan to continue writing for their newspaper *The Chronicle*.

High school generally offers educational growth, but I didn't expect that I'd grow this much as a person. For me, I can say my four years in high school were anything but ordinary; at times challenging, at times chaotic, but nevertheless they were incredibly valuable. Over the years my viewfinder has become even more pointed at harnessing optimism, empathy, and action. I have sculpted my worldview and crafted an artful and inclusive perspective to make a positive impact. I have to thank every teacher who has ever taught me, Dr. Woodberry, several different coaches, as well as my family and friends for sending me off to college as the person I am today.

Sadly, all good things must come to an end, and although this chapter in my life is ending, it will certainly never be forgotten.



All Good Things Must Come to an End

Maddy Propis

Public Relations/Social Media Editor

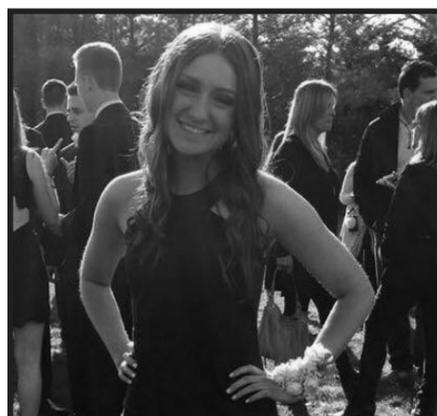
Thirteen years ago seems so far away, but it feels like it was just yesterday. I remember my first day of Kindergarten at Sunquam with my little backpack wondering how I would navigate the school. 13 years later and my journey through Half Hollow Hills is coming to an end. Now, as an almost graduated senior, I reflect back on my 13 years and remember the laughs and the smiles that were frequent, the friendships that I made, and the lessons that I learned.

Throughout the past four years at HSE, I learned many valuable lessons that I will carry with me throughout my life. I learned that school is important, but learning is more important than grades. Students should strive to attain knowledge, because in the end, it is more important to be knowledgeable. I also learned life lessons such as being a good friend. In high school, I found friends who I hope to remain friends with after high school. Although we will go our separate ways, we will always have a special bond.

My high school career was one filled with studying and extracurricular activities, but I also found time to have fun with friends and family. Whether I was preparing dances as the Kickline Captain or leading Future Educators club as president or writing and editing articles and starting social media for

the *Thunderbird* newspaper, I couldn't be more thankful for the experiences I had during the past four years.

With only a few weeks left, it is truly bittersweet. I will miss high school and all of the amazing people I have met along the way, but I know that the real world has so much to offer, and I'm excited to see what's in store for me. For the next four years at Binghamton University and for the rest of my life after college, I will carry with me the lessons learned and memories made. Incoming freshman, don't take these four years for granted and become an active school member. To the graduating seniors in the class of 2017, I wish you all the best of luck in the future. Now, go out there and believe in yourselves - anything is possible if you set your mind to it!



Bittersweet Ending, Bearcat Beginning

Lindsay Korman

World News & Op/Ed Editor

It's hard to believe that there are only a few months left in my high school journey. It feels like just yesterday that I first entered High School East as an intimidated freshman. I remember feeling nervous that I wouldn't be able to find my way, and I genuinely thought that "Freshman Friday" was a real thing. This sense of fear, however, was accompanied by an immense sense of freedom. On a smaller scale, I was finally able to carry a backpack around the school, and I was actually on time to all of my classes for the first time in three years. This growth of freedom was pale in comparison to the strong sense of independence that immediately began to grow within me as soon as I walked through the doors of High School East.

Even though I have always done my work and been a strong student, I can't help but attribute my work ethic to some of the amazing teachers in this school. On the first day of ninth grade, I stayed up doing homework later than I ever had before thanks to Mrs. Cullen's AP Human Geography class. Although this situation was extremely stressful at the time, it enabled me to develop time management skills that will I continue to use throughout my entire educational career. Without a doubt, Mrs. Cullen ended up becoming one of my favorite teachers; this is not only because she did an amazing job teaching the information in all three classes that I had her for, but also because she cared greatly for her students and wanted them to succeed. I am so grateful for all of the teachers in this school who pushed me not only to be a better student, but also a better person.

One of the best opportunities that I was given during my high school ca-



reer was the role of World News Editor for the school newspaper. I was able to combine my interest in writing with my desire to learn more about the world. This position enabled me to freely write my own opinion on topics that I would not have looked into before. I am now more aware of what is going on in the world, and my interest in current events has grown in the past year. I hope to continue utilizing what I learned through this position in the future.

With graduation quickly approaching, I can't help but grow sadder that I will be leaving the town that has been my home for eighteen years. I am dreading the thought of saying goodbye to my friends, even though I know that we have built friendships that will last a lifetime. However, I am extremely excited to create a new "home" at Binghamton University for the next four years of my life. I know that the lessons I have learned in the HSE community will guide me to success and happiness not only in college, but also for the rest of my adult life.

A Future Bulldog Leaving Her Paw Print

Hallie Schuster

Lifestyles Editor

Some know me as vice president of the senior class, some as a chorus kid, some as an editor for the school newspaper, some as the boys varsity soccer manager, some as the one that stays up all night studying for her tests, and some as the health freak that spends her free time researching the newest scientific breakthroughs and trends in nutrition. I know myself as all of these people and more, stuck inside the body of one of the shortest girls in her grade.

High school is the time to be everything you want and pursue anything you want. It is not necessarily a time to find yourself and truly establish who you are. These four years are the last time in a student's life that they are not forced to focus on one specific major or one career path. I often find that people enter high school and think that they are going to figure out exactly who they are and what they want to do with their lives. Yes, some students might figure it out and find their identity, but for the majority of students, that is just not the case. I truly believe students should take advantage of the diverse range of opportunities high school has to offer. Do you like to act? Become involved with the plays. Love a good argument? Join speech and debate. Want to hear my opinion? Here it is: join them all!

My past four years at High School East have been years that I will never forget. Although I did spend countless nights

awake until crazy hours finishing homework and studying for tests in order to maintain the highest GPA possible, I realize that the lessons I learned in and out of the classroom are more important than any single grade.

It is bittersweet to think about graduating. However, I could not be more excited for all that is to come throughout my next four years at the University of Georgia (Go Dawgs!). I am thankful to be able to bring all that I have learned in high school with me, but I will miss the teachers, friends, and opportunities the past four years have provided me with. To the incoming freshmen-take my advice and join all of the clubs and activities that HSE provides for you. To the graduating seniors-good luck with all that the future holds for you; I hope that your high school experience was filled with all that made you happy and more.



*Compiled by:
Madeline Propis*

Congratulations to

A

Abosch, Lyle: Pace University
Adler, Brittney: The Ohio State University
Agrotis, Stefano: Rochester Institute of Technology
Ahangari, Sara: St. Joseph's College
Ait-Haddou, Islane: SUNY Oneonta
Alek, Christian: SUNY Environmental Science and Forestry
Ali, Roger: University of California, Davis
Allsopp, Caitlin: Syracuse University
Alpert, Mackenzie: Cornell University
Aminzada, Reza: Boston University
Andelsman, Alex: University of Tampa
Androsiglio, Marlie: University of Michigan
Anwar, Muhammad: Stony Brook University
Army, Gary: The Ohio State University
Atias, Tali: University at Buffalo

B

Babcock, Arthur: Indiana University
Bacchus, Natasha: American University
Badero, Babafemi: Cornell University
Badra, Elias: SUNY Farmingdale
Bajaj, Natasha: Bentley University
Bakalo, Michael: SUNY Maritime
Baker, Mackenzie: Oakwood University
Bank, Rachel: Cornell University
Barone, Sydney: University of Pennsylvania
Bass, Madison: Hofstra University
Bavaro, Brooke: University of Maryland
Bekheet, Mary: St. John's University
Belous, Jordan: Michigan State University
Berkowitz, Lacie: The Ohio State University
Berkowitz, Rachel: Northeastern University
Bezzina, Melissa: Binghamton University
Bieber, David: Marist College
Billing, Jason: University of Texas at Austin
Black, Omar: Temple University
Blatt, Jesse: University of Pennsylvania
Bockelman, Kyle: SUNY Maritime
Boninti, Christopher: SUNY Oneonta
Bottone, Jenna: University of Rochester
Bowles, Hallie: University of Delaware
Braunstein, Hallie: University of Wisconsin
Breakstone, Jared: University of Michigan
Bresky, Reed: Manhattan College
Bretschneider, Julia: Michigan State University
Brierre, Cassandra: Long Island University Brooklyn
Brown, Maya: Hunter College
Brunning, Hannah: Long Island University
Bruzzi, Natalie: University at Buffalo
Buchanan, Sarah: Stony Brook University
Buck, Allyse: North Carolina State University

C

Calvet, David: Rochester Institute of Technology
Capitano, Nicolina: Washington College
Cappadonna, Anthony: Penn State University
Carfagno, Daniel: University at Buffalo
Carvano, Ryan: University of Delaware
Cassino, Melanie: Hofstra University
Castaneda, Denyss: Suffolk Community College
Castillo, Noelle: North Carolina State University
Cavataio, Kevin: Queens College
Cella, Carrie: University of Alabama
Chavez, Kenny: Asa College
Chen, Bryan: New York Institute of Technology
Chen, Matthiew: Fordham University
Chen, Xidan: Suffolk Community College
Chen, Yanying: CUNY Brooklyn
ChinQuee, Maya: SUNY Plattsburgh
Chironis, Dean: Purdue University
Chizner, Jacob: University of Wisconsin
Chon, Evelyn: Binghamton University
Cohan, Matthew: University of Massachusetts Amherst
Cohen, Branden: Binghamton University
Cohen, Hannah: George Washington University
Cohen, Olivia: SUNY Oneonta
Connell, Andrew: University of Delaware
Constantinides, Eleni: Hofstra University
Cornetta, Bridget: Roger Williams University
Cortese, Francesca: Suffolk Community College
Coyle, Daniel: University of South Carolina
Cruz, Antonio: Suffolk Community College
Cyril, William: New York Institute of Technology
Czazasty, Antosh: Purdue University

D

Daleo, Michael: University of Maryland
Davis, Jordan: Suffolk Community College
DeBiase, Rebecca: CUNY Baruch
DeCicco, Zachary: University at Buffalo
Dejana, Vincent: Univ of New Hampshire
DeSanti, Samantha: Suffolk Community College
DeVilla, Jessica: Harvard University
Devjani, Sanjana: New York University
Dholakia, Andrew: Northeastern University
Diaz, Brianna: University at Albany
Diggs, Jermaine: SUNY Oneonta
DiNardo, Nina: SUNY Cortland
DiVenere, Joseph: The Ohio State University
Dominic, Thomas: Clemson University
Dooley, Noah: SUNY Cortland
Dooley, Patrick: College of Charleston
Duarte, Diana: University at Buffalo
Dubinsky, Allyson: Penn State University
Dubinsky, Brian: Florida Gulf Coast University

E

Eichholz, Hallie: Skidmore College
Ellis, Jacob: The Ohio State University
English, Kevin: Suffolk Community College
Erdheim, Jeremy: University of Miami

F

Filippazzo, Fisher: University at Buffalo
Filippazzo, Jesse: Binghamton University
Fine, Julia: University of Maryland
Fisher, Kolby: Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Fondacaro, Courtney: SUNY Delhi
Francucci, Matthew: Queens College
Freeman, Megan: Binghamton University

G

Galterio, Julia: Suffolk Community College
Gandolfo, Jake: University of Michigan
Garvin, Joshua: University at Albany
Garziano, Jake: Binghamton University
Gassler, Rachel: Washington University in St. Louis
George, Melina: New York Institute of Technology
Gerber, Max: United States Naval Academy
Gershman, Jessica: University of Massachusetts Amherst
Ghai, Manvir: Bentley University
Gillam, Matthew: University of Virginia
Gioia, Ginamarie: Northeastern University
Giuliani, Brittany: High Point University
Glasser, Kevin: SUNY Cortland
Glover, James: Gettysburg College
Goldman, Joshua: Northeastern University
Goldman, Michael: University at Albany
Goldman, Sabrina: University at Buffalo
Goldman, Zachary: Stony Brook University
Goldstein, Elliot: Bard College
Golub, Brian: Indiana University
Gomerman, Ashley: Northwestern University
Gomis, Maia: Temple University
Gomis, Maira: American University
Gonzalez, Luchy: SUNY Old Westbury
Gordin, Alison: University of Massachusetts Amherst
Gordon, Alexis: The Ohio State University
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H

Haddad, James: Adelphi University
Haefling, Dylan: University of Delaware
Hall, Breanna: New York University
Hammond, Tierra: Suffolk Community College
Handsman, Courtney: Binghamton University

Hanzel, Jakob: University of Rhode Island
Harden, Taylor: University at Buffalo
Harris, Sophie: Tulane University
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Hecker, Nicole: Binghamton University
Henderson, Rachel: University of New Haven
Henry, Samantha: New York University
Hidalgo, Anthony: Arizona State University
Hill, Daniel: SUNY Farmingdale
Hodge, Jazmyn: St. John's University
Holzer, Austin: University of Maryland
Hsiao, Ryan: Binghamton University
Hubbard, Ashlee: SUNY Oneonta
Hubbard, Tyrese: Virginia State University

I

Iandolo, Jacqueline: SUNY Oneonta
Ibuzor, Paul: New York University
Im, Noah: Binghamton University
Iqbal, Fatima: SUNY Farmingdale

J

Jablon, Kelli: Tulane University
Jackson, Kyle: Iona College
Jaramillo, Gabrielle: University at Buffalo
Jarvis, Donte: Wagner College
Jean, Wilfred: Temple University
Jenkin, Kyle: Hofstra University
Jenkin, Zachary: Binghamton University
Jeter, Natisha: SUNY Farmingdale
Jimenez, Melany: United States Marine Corps
Joshi, Jai: New York Institute of Technology

K

Kang, Rachel: Syracuse University
Kanofsky, Molly: University of Delaware
Kaplan, Hunter: University of Wisconsin
Kaplan, Jordan: Northeastern University
Karagiannis, Yianni: Florida Atlantic University
Karampelas, Alexander: Suffolk Community College
Kassebaum, Orion: Suffolk Community College
Kelhoffer, Samara: University of Delaware
Khan, Shaheroze: Boston University
Khwaja, Sayed: SUNY Farmingdale
Khwaja, Shaqur: CUNY Baruch
Khwaja, Zabi: New York Institute of Technology
Kim, Anna: Maryland Institute College of Art
Klaben, Max: University of Michigan
Klein, Bailey: Florida Atlantic University
Kobi, Zachary: Syracuse University
Kochman, Alexander: University at Buffalo
Konchinski, Emma: Adelphi University
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the Class of 2017!



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 Parkinson, Tyler: University of Hartford
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 Tufano, Allie: Adelphi University
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 Ulmer, Kristen: Central Connecticut State University
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 Vargas, Jaileen: Adelphi University
 Venezio, Olivia: University of Alabama
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 Volpe, Nicholas: Manhattan College
 Voyard, Stephanie: SUNY New Paltz
 Vozzolo, Korden: Stony Brook University
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Computer Grading: Is it Practical?

Dylan Irwin

Staff Writer

Over time, technology has progressed to points that would not have been imaginable thirty years ago. The first desktop computers were being introduced through the 1960s and 1970s, and they were nothing even close to what we have today. Compared to the paper-thin laptops and desktops used now, the first computers created were huge, did not have nearly as many capabilities as computers do today, and did not have much storage space. With each new computer that was released, each one had something the last did not have. This process continued until we reached the types of computers we have today, and new features are still being added to each release of PCs or Macs.

With an increase in technology over the last couple of decades, products such as computers, tablets, and smartphones are becoming more common in many more households than in previous years. Not only is this normal for households, but classrooms around the United States have also incorporated technology in their curriculums. With smartboards in nearly every classroom in Hills East and laptop access all across the building, it is apparent that technology use is being taken advantage of in our schools.

The question is, should there be a limit to this advantage among schools? Are there certain things that should not be in the hands of technology, no matter how much easier things would be if taken advantage of? New York Times author, Michael Gonchar, brought the public's attention to this issue in his article where he let students weigh in their opinions on this debate. Paula Mira responds, "No, because a computer doesn't know what you wanted to explain, but the teacher can interpret it." Sandra Rodríguez responds, "It would be easier because you don't have to write, but I wouldn't like it because the teacher is more subjective. I think that no because the teacher is more comprehensive than a machine. I will be less likely to trust a computer's grade." Laia responds, "I would like computers grading my essays depending on the subjects. It would be fair because it would grade only the correct answer, but I prefer to get the grades of a teacher, because he can grade also your attitude." With many mixed responses, the main concern everyone has is the fact that teachers know you and can take certain aspects into consideration as they read your essays, such as your personality and the fact that they know your style of writing already.

Of course, having a computer do grading would take a huge amount of stress off of teachers, but that is

essentially like a robot grading the work of students. How would the computer know all of the many different ways a correct response could be expressed by different students? If something was wrong, how could comments be added so the students know what they are doing wrong? This shows how impractical computer grading can be in this case. However, technology has already allowed online grading outlets to grow, but in different ways. Teachers can assign tests or quizzes online through Castle Learning, Quizstar, and many other similar sites that allow teachers to make up their own interactive tests and quizzes, that are then instantly graded electronically the minute they are submitted by students. Computer grading is more practical in this sense because when it comes to a test or a quiz as opposed to an essay, responses to the question are much more specific and less vague than an extended response question. With outlets like this, teachers

do not have to worry about grading as much, and they have more time to perform other work time necessities, such as creating new lesson plans and grading other things that are impractical to be graded online, such as essays and projects.

The future has a lot in store for us. Maybe one day, many years from now, we will be surprised about what will be accomplished through the use of technology. Who would have thought twenty years ago that we would have incredibly advanced smartphones such as iPhones and Androids? Maybe one day, kids won't even be using a pen and paper in class, and everything will be done online. It is incredible to think about how fast we are progressing and how so much can change in a matter of a few short years.



Photo by Bradley Shanker

Junior Outing: A Night to Remember

Emily Metaxas

Public Relations/Social Media Editor

Junior Outing has traditionally been the night that all Hills East juniors look forward to throughout the year. It's the night where girls get to dress up and be pampered, and boys can show off in their suits and ties. This night is the night where we all realize that the school year is coming to a close, summer is around the corner, and senior year is not too far away.

Junior outing was definitely a night to remember and one for the books. The night started off with everyone meeting at the school around 5 pm. We all met in our designated rooms before we made our way over to the Hamlet Country Club in Commack. That is when the fun really began. The night was filled with laughter, dancing, and selfies. As the DJ blasted the latest songs, the dance floor was always filled, and the photo booth flash was snapping pictures all night long. Not only was it a fun and memorable night, it was also a great way for the whole junior class to come together as one.

Every girl looked amazing in their

dress, and every boy donned a perfect suit. All of the hours preparing for the night were definitely worth it. As the night came to a close, the party never died out. By the end of the 3 hours, we practically needed to be pulled off the dance floor. Time really did fly by.

Looking back on the night, it is safe to say that the hours that went into choosing the perfect dress and getting hair and makeup done were totally worth it. Bradley Shanker said, "Junior Outing was a great time with friends and it was awesome to see everyone having fun dancing and celebrating together. I feel that this night was well deserved because of all the hard work every junior has put in this year. It is definitely a worthwhile event that every junior should attend." Outing rewarded us with a night of fun after a long and challenging junior year that is swiftly coming to a close. Nights like this that we spend with our friends are the times we should always cherish. Needless to say, it was definitely a night to remember.



Photo by Emily Metaxas



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Disclaimer: The Thunderbird hereby states that the opinions within this publication are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect those of the staff, administration or school community.

Congratulations to the Thunderbird Newspaper for receiving a Silver designation for the past two years from the American Scholastic Press Association!

Musician Spotlight: Moving on With Jagger

Lauren Peller

Editor-In-Chief

Luke Siegel, 18 and a senior at Hills East, seems to be ahead of the game in establishing himself as a musician. Luke, professionally known as Luke Jagger, is an AP and honors student who works hard in school, has a passion for photography, plays tennis and exercises, but somehow manages to find time to pursue a musical career.

From a very young age, he was tearing up local venues playing the drums, orchestrated by the *School of Rock*. "I was little Luke in the back of the stage, but I wanted to be in the front of the stage. I realized that I wanted to learn how to sing," said Luke. He went in for a voice audition at the *School of Rock*, and ever since, singing has been his main focus. He was able to transition from drummer to lead singer, banking on his innate stage presence and passion for the spotlight. He performed for large audiences at venues including *Highline Ballroom*, *Gramercy Theatre*, and *The Bitter End* in New York City. In 2011, he sang "America The Beautiful" at Nassau Coliseum for over 15,000 spectators. Luke explained, "I love singing in front of big crowds. I love the rush of the emotion; however, in a small venue I can connect with the audience."

To develop his career further, Luke started to write and record music at the *Loft Sound Studios* in Plainview. "I gravitated towards pop and acoustic ballads," he explained. After working with Loft, he realized he needed to expand his repertoire to create a strong foundation. He has trained with Sandy

Valario and is currently training with Diane Marketta in Broadway, classical, opera, and his main focus, contemporary.

One of the highlights of his career was when he worked with Smile Train, a non profit charity that helps children in underdeveloped countries who have cleft palates. "I reached out to the CEO and was asked to write an uplifting song for the children," Luke said. He went on to perform the song at the Smile Train headquarters in NYC with the entire staff. Luke said, "I sang for them and had them join in. It was truly an amazing moment in my career. Helping people through music has always been a dream of mine. Smile Train realized the benefits of using music to help others, and I believe that is what music is all about."

Not only does Luke spend time during the school year immersed in his music, he also continued working on his passion over the summers. He spent the summers of 2014 and 2015 at the Berklee College of Music located in Boston, Massachusetts, perfecting his skills and learning about all areas of musicianship, theory, and vocal styles. This past summer, he attended the American Music and Dramatic Academy located in Los Angeles, California, studying vocal health, dance, and stage presence, in addition to intense vocal training. "I will expand my network and perform across the country during the summer of 2017. I can't wait to see what this upcoming summer has in store for me," said Luke.



Photo by Photographer William Hunt

Today, Luke Jagger is writing and recording original material at *Cove City Sound Studios* in Glen Cove, New York. This is the same studio where Mariah Carey, Celine Dion, Billy Joel, Jennifer Lopez, and Jon Bellion have recorded their music. In addition, he recently released his new album, *Fuse*, which is available for purchase and streaming on iTunes, Apple Music, and Spotify. Definitely check out his latest music video for his song "Bombs Away" on YouTube or visit his website at www.lukejaggermusic.com.

He will continue his musical journey as an undergraduate student at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts. Berklee offers a range of classes in performance and music business

which is the perfect combination for him. Luke believes that "Berklee is the ideal place for [him] to further [his] music education."

Luke added that no one in his family is musically talented or has shown an interest in the arts except for his Grandpa Lou, an illustrator, after whom he is named. He acknowledges how fortunate he has been to have his family and friends support him throughout his journey.

Luke said, "I want to inspire other students to follow their dreams and go for what they are passionate about. Everyone should carve his or her own path in life, and if you practice and put your mind to anything, good things will come."

JoJo has "Mad Love" for Huntington and her Fans

Austin Krach & Rachel Penzer

Staff Writers

Thirteen. That is how old JoJo was when she was catapulted into stardom with the release of her debut single "Leave (Get Out)." She became the youngest solo artist to have a #1 single in the United States. Another popular single, "Too Little Too Late," was a smash hit as well and peaked at #3 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. However, this success soon turned into a nightmare. Soon after JoJo was signed to Blackground Records, she began to have issues within the record label. The label refused to allow JoJo to release music. She did comfort fans with mixtapes such as *Can't Take That Away From Me* and *Agápē*. She even filed a lawsuit with Blackground Records on the grounds of "irreparable damages to her professional career." This battle seemed like it would never end, that is until a loophole was uncovered. A minor law that stated minors cannot sign contracts for more than 10 years in New York State. So, her contract should have ended already. In December 2013, this case was dropped and a mutual agreement was made. On January 14, 2014, JoJo announced that her decade long battle of being in record label purgatory was over and that she signed a new deal with Atlantic Records. JoJo could have used her life story to create an album full of hate and rage. Instead, she decided to channel light and love. Thus, *Mad Love* was released on October 14, 2016. The album is not only named after a track on the album, but is also a term that JoJo uses in her everyday life. She describes it as a love that is so deep and intense that it is hard for others to comprehend. It is used to describe how she feels about

her friends, family, fans, and music. On January 15, 2017, JoJo began her 4 month long world tour entitled the "Mad Love Tour." We had the honor of being able to attend the tour stop at The Paramount in Huntington on May 3.

7:00 PM. After waiting on the queue outside of The Paramount, the doors opened as fans began to rush inside in hopes of getting closest to the stage for JoJo. Before it was time for her set, there were two opening acts. The first was a singer-songwriter named Craig Stickland. Not many people in the crowd knew of him before his set started, but they were fully captivated and in the moment by the end of the set. He had a quality to his voice that reminded me of the "Take Me To Church" singer, Hozier. Throughout his songs, the crowd cheered as he performed. Although he is not a household name yet, I expect him to be very soon. The other opener was Stanaj. He is a pop/R&B singer who had many fans in the crowd. His songs were very catchy, and his set was filled with energy. His very smooth voice led to him hitting many high notes and runs that were very impressive. Both opening acts did a great job of getting the crowd excited for the reason we were all there: JoJo.



Photo by Austin Krach

At roughly 9 PM, it was time for JoJo to take the stage.

Once her band and backup singers took the stage and the tune of her opening song "Clovers" came on, the crowd had gathered as close as possible to the stage and let out screams of excitement. While newer JoJo fans were familiar with this track and its frequent beat-drops because of its release as part of *Mad Love*, fans

who had been through it all with the singer were pleasantly surprised when the track faded into the song "When Love Hurts" from what JoJo likes to call her "tringle," called III, which was released in 2015. "When Love Hurts" accompanied by two other singles, "Say Love" and "Save My Soul," was the first formal release that JoJo accomplished since the break from her previous record label. The singer did perform both of the other singles later on in her set. Fans who have followed her set throughout the tour may have expected to hear "Say Love," but JoJo decided to perform all three singles for Long Island because she says that "Save My Soul" is one of the closest songs to her personally and helped her in rough times.

Fans were also pleasantly surprised to hear an all around familiar JoJo hit

so early on in the set. The singer let the crowd help her sing the song that she says "changed her life": "Leave (Get Out)." Another fan favorite, 2006's "Too Little Too Late," brought nostalgia to the venue later on in the set. JoJo also spiced up her performance by incorporating songs by other artists of which she regularly covers. A highlight was her own version of rapper Drake's "Marvin's Room," which highlighted JoJo's capability to conquer pretty much any genre of music. Speaking of music, in the more acoustic part of her set, JoJo performed a song with that exact title from her newest album. "Music" is a fan favorite because it is said to be the most emotional song on *Mad Love*. Written to honor her late father, the entire room was at an emotional peak as JoJo sang "but I lost him and so I sing to the crowd," of her father.

Even with all of these highlights that made fans in the crowd say it was the best concert they had ever been to, JoJo was not yet through. She shared with the crowd another tear-jerker, "I Am," a song that she wrote about self-assurance and her own battle with mental illness. She then used title track "Mad Love" to close the show and also to introduce and thank her team with whom she shares the stage each night. Fans then reluctantly watched the singer leave the stage, but to everyone's delight, the intense cheering urged JoJo to come back for a one song encore. For this, she chose the optimistic "Good Thing," which brought a more fun vibe to the stage. With that, everyone left the venue feeling satisfied and uplifted by JoJo's mad love for her Long Island fans.

THUNDERBIRD

HSE SCHOOL SPORTS

Boys Varsity Baseball Leaves Their Mark

Sami Moody

Staff Writer

As the spring sports season came to a close, the Boys Varsity Baseball team finished yet another memorable season for HSE athletics this year. The boys made history, leaving their mark on Hills East. They hit a record of 18-6 and were pronounced League 3 Champions in Suffolk County, which has not been accomplished since 2007. Captain Matt Hogan said, "This year our baseball team has played the best it has in years. We just got off of winning our first league championship in 10 years. Everyone has taken a role on our team, and the atmosphere resembles that of tight family. It's been truly a great year, and we are hoping to extend our season as far as we can go."

On senior day, May 9th, the team played Comsewogue and won 3-0. Patch Dooley and Joe Litchhult both threw no hitters during their time on the mound, while Zach DeCicco threw a complete game shutout. Joe Tantillo got his first big hit of the season. The boys not only celebrated the dedicated seniors, but they left it all on the field and played extremely well.

On May 16th, the Thunderbirds sadly lost to Pat-Med in the championship of their playoff bracket by a score of 4-3. "Being eliminated in that last game was really emotional for me and the rest of the seniors, but we really had a great ride. Thanks to Coaches Belz and Pedrick, we had the time of our lives this season. I hope that all of the young guys from this team continue to build off this season

and continue to succeed on and off the field," expressed graduating senior Zach Decicco. Despite this loss, the Thunderbirds stayed strong and fought it out until the end of the season proving that they are not only very talented, but also very determined and dedicated.

Although the season has come to an end, the team continues to celebrate their teammates who were recognized for their great accomplishments. Patch Dooley, Joe Litchhult, and Mikey Palazzolo won the All County award. Elliott Goldstein, Kevin Cavataio, and Kevin Glasser won All League title. Mikey Palazzolo won League 3 Silver Slugger, and Matt Hogan won Academic All League. The league MVP was Patch Dooley, and the captains were Matt Hogan, Aaron O'Donnell, and Cam Skudin, who led the team to great success. Patch Dooley is also a finalist for the Gibson award for best pitcher in Suffolk County. The team's accomplishments outweigh any outcome of the season. Their skill, talent, and determination on and off the field is outstanding and worthy of praise.

Sadly, the team had to say goodbye to twelve seniors this year, including: Zach DeCicco, Matt Pam, Elliot Goldstein, Patch Dooley, Kevin Glasser, Kevin Cavataio, Joe Tantillo, Mikey Palazzolo, Aaron O'Donnell, and Cam Skudin. High School East congratulates the Thunderbirds Boys Varsity Baseball Team on an amazing season and can't wait to see what will come next!



Photo Courtesy: LifeTouch

Boys Varsity Tennis is County Champs

Rachel Rosenstein

Executive Editor

As spring sports come to a close, the boys Varsity tennis team is playing in their last few matches of what was a nearly undefeated season. During the regular (league) season, the boy compiled a record of fourteen wins and one loss. The team suffered a loss to Commack high school early in the season. "We were short handed. We were missing four of our top players during that match. I knew we would win the second time we played," said Senior captain, Adam Stein. The boys skillfully accomplished this the second time around, certainly making up for the loss with an efficient 6-1 victory over Commack, which granted them the one seed for the team tournament.

The playoffs started for the team on May 9th. In the first round, the boys fiercely played and defeated Sachem East. This win placed the team in the quarterfinals of the team county tournament. After an outstanding season of 17 wins and 1 loss, the boys ultimately came through with a Suffolk County championship win that solidified a perfect playoff season for them.

I recently spoke with team member Tyler London to discuss the team's current circumstances and gain some better insight on specific match details. Tyler plays at the 1st doubles spot with partner Sandy Greenberg. The two went undefeated individually in the regular season and recently clinched

the one seed in the division-wide tournament for Suffolk County.

Rachel Rosenstein: What are the team's chances of winning it all this year?

Tyler London: If all goes well, and the boys keep up the level of play that they have over this past year, our Hills East Varsity team is expected to meet the Hills West Varsity team in the finals on May 26th. I don't want to jinx our team; however, I am very confident that the boys and I will be able to pull it out in the end. We have worked all year to get the chance to rectify our loss to west in the 2016 final.

RR: What is your perception of the upcoming matches? In other words, what do you believe the difficulty level will be?

TL: Well, as we get deeper into the playoffs, competition certainly grows. Our first match (Round-of-16) should be a pretty easy win. The finals and semifinals will definitely require us to play well and make as few mistakes as possible if we want to win it all.

The future looks bright for the Hills Boys Varsity Tennis team. Luckily Tyler's predictions came true and the team defeated Hills West in the County Championship. The Boys Varsity Tennis team was able to bring back a county championship to complete a nearly impeccable season.



Photo Courtesy: LifeTouch

Girls Varsity Lacrosse Team has a Successful Season

Jordyn Schioppo & Skylar Gronich

Staff Writers

The 2017 Girls Varsity Lacrosse team has had a successful season, thanks to the hard work and dedication of all the teammates. Aside from challenges, such as unfortunate weather and fierce competition, the girls have a remarkable season with 8 wins and 5 losses. Throughout the season all of the team members have shown so much devotion which played a major role in this hard fought season. Coach Lori Horbach guided the team with helpful tips and showed the team the significance of

sportsmanship on and off the field. The team's overall record demonstrates their motivation and tremendous effort. A huge thanks goes out to the team's extraordinary captains, Julia Pascarella, Megan Lulley, Sam Leva, and Kelly Sullivan, who have been role models to all of the other girls on the team. Their achievements in leading the team with passion and spirit have made a triumphant season possible.

After speaking with varsity player, Marni Kahn, she has told us that "It's all about teamwork. When everyone is communicating on the field and trusting one

another, we can do great things!" All of the players got the opportunity to experience what it's like working with others and being involved in a team sport. Some notable stats from this season include Julia Pascarella with 35 goals and 22 assists, as well as Ashley Gonzalez with 37 goals and 19 assists. Their hard work and motivation is very appreciated.

The team made it to the second round of playoffs last year, and they participated in the playoffs again this year with even greater success. Now that the season has come to a close, many seniors will be

graduating after dedicating so much of their time to this team. We wish them the best of luck in all their future endeavors, both on and off the field. The Girls Varsity Lacrosse team has shown this school what commitment, perseverance, and loyalty truly mean.

Check out our online site
www.thunderbirdhse.com
 for Boys Lacrosse update