

THUNDERBIRD

HALF HOLLOW HILLS HIGH SCHOOL EAST

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Hills East Boys Varsity Basketball Makes History

Sami Moody

Staff Writer

After a great season, the boys varsity basketball team finished with an overall record of 16-4 and 12-2 in League 2. They were crowned Co-League Champions alongside Bay Shore, who also finished 12-2 in league play. The T-Birds last won the League title back in 2014 when they advanced to the Final Four.

On Saturday, February 18th at 2pm, the basketball team played against Ward Melville High School. The T-Birds were ahead throughout the first two quarters and then took a big lead in the 3rd. Their opponents came back late in the fourth quarter, however, they did not score enough points to triumph. The game ended 75-59 with a High School East victory. Savion Lewis led the team with 33 points and nine assists in an HSE (no. 3) Class AA quarterfinal win over Ward Melville (no. 6). Shane Dean scored 12 points, and Kendall Nero-Clark had 10 points and 13 rebounds.

The team advanced to the Suffolk County AA semifinals on Saturday, February 25th where they played

against Brentwood. At the start of the fourth quarter, the teams were tied at 51. Junior guard Savion Lewis scored 10 points during an 8-0 run that put the T-Birds in the lead (61-51) with 4:18 left on the clock. In addition to Savion's numerous baskets, Kenny Mathurin drilled the first three pointer of his varsity career. In the end, Mathurin scored a total of 14 points, Kendall Nero-Clark scored 16, Julien Crittendon scored 11, Kioni Nedd scored 6, and Savion Lewis scored an amazing 28 points. The game ended 75-59, allowing Half Hollow Hills East to advance to the Suffolk AA Final for the first time in school history. Savion Lewis stated, "That was our expectation - to make history."

Throughout the game, no one on either team compared to the level of skill exhibited by Savion. Maneuvering his way through the other team's defense, Savion successfully made many layups. He also made 11 of his 15 free throws. He scored seven points and had a steal and assist during a 12-0 run. In a recent interview with a news report-

er, Savion stated, "My teammates trust me, and they know I'll come through in the clutch. I'm a winner."

The finals took place on Thursday, March 2nd at 8 pm at Stony Brook University. The Thunderbirds played in the county championship against

March 12th at the Long Island Basketball Championship against Nassau County Champions, Westbury. With 15 seconds on the clock, the score was 59-60 with the Thunderbirds in the lead. Less than 10 seconds were left in the game when Westbury player Jalyn



The Thunderbirds beat Bayshore 62-61



Captains Kioni Nedd and Savion Lewis along with Coach Basel

No. 1 seeded Bay Shore. Both teams gave their all throughout the game as they came neck and neck in scores before the final buzzer. With 25.1 seconds left on the clock, the score was 62-61 in East's favor. The clock read 14.6 seconds when Kioni Nedd stepped up to the foul line and nailed both of his free throws raising the score to 64-61. Now with 2.1 seconds left, Bay Shore's player went to the line to shoot two free throws. He made one and let the other hit off the backboard in hopes that his teammates would get the rebound and shoot thus tying up the score. However, HSE's Zach Schwartz grabbed the ball and secured East's victory. Savion Lewis had 19 points, 7 assists, and 3 steals. Julien Crittendon had 18 points and 4 steals, Kendall Nero-Clark had 14 points and 8 rebounds, Kenny Mathurin had 9 points, and Kioni Nedd had 4 points.

For the first time in our school's history, HSE represented Suffolk County AA in the Long Island Championship. Making it there was an accomplishment and fighting to the very last second solidified this team's position as the best there ever was donning that Thunderbird basketball uniform. The T-Birds put up a strenuous fight on

Dunlap grabbed a rebound and made a basket, advancing Westbury into the state semifinals with a score of 61-60. Savion Lewis scored 12 points, Julien Crittendon scored 29 points, Kenny Mathurin scored 6 points, Kendall Nero-Clark scored 4 points, Shane Dean scored 3 points, Sean Lulley scored 2 points, Kioni Nedd scored 2 points, and Zach Schwartz scored 2 points. It truly was a team effort.

"That was our expectation - to make history."

**SAVION LEWIS
VARSITY CAPTAIN**

Although Hills East did not advance beyond this point, it is safe to say that the entire HHH community is incredibly proud of this monumental accomplishment. These boys came together as more than just a team; they played like a family. Throughout the entire season, they had each other's backs and consistently gave 110%. Congratulations on making history; this season is one that will not soon be forgotten.

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Students Combat Poverty by Lending a Hand

Austin Krach

Staff Writer

February 17th: the Friday that started the winter recess. Before students took some time to relax, go on vacation, hang out with friends, and just take a break from schoolwork for a week, everyone took time out of their day to give back to those in need. Friday, February 17th marked the annual Students Rebuild Challenge. The organization is run by the Bezos Family Foundation. This foundation was started by Jackie and Mike Bezos in order for all kids to be able to make their own significant mark on society. Their son, Jeff Bezos, is the CEO of Amazon. Each year, Half Hollow Hills eagerly accepts the Students Rebuild Challenge. In 2015, the district collectively made 7,958 bookmarks to help promote literacy in countries such as Peru, Mali, and Nepal. All of the bookmarks that Half Hollow Hills made lead to the Bezos foundation donating \$15,916 to the Save the Children's Literacy Boost Foundation. Last year, Half Hollow Hills came together as a district to create pinwheels to support Syrian refugee children. Each year, HSE students face a difficult challenge, but Half Hollow Hills takes on the obstacle with great passion and determination to excel and assist those who are in need all around the world.

The Students Rebuild Challenge for 2017 was no different! This year, the challenge we faced was poverty. While children all around the world have dreams of what they would like to do with their life and who they will

become, many people have to face the harsh reality that their dreams are impractical due to the daunting conditions of living in poverty. Since their basic needs for life are not being met in many cases, their education becomes less of a priority. The Bezos foundation wants to take steps, even a leap, towards ensuring that no child has to face these harsh circumstances and to help pave a better life for children all around the world. This year, instead of pinwheels or bookmarks, we created hands. By accepting this challenge, these hands symbolized the HSE student body lending a hand to those who are facing poverty. For every hand made, the Bezos Family Foundation donated \$1.90 and ended up with \$500,000 to donate to the Save the Children's Programs, which helps youth in Nicaragua and Indonesia win the fight against poverty and obtain a better life that they envisioned for themselves.

Mrs. Cullen's Amnesty Club and Girls Learn International Club, Ms. Utendorfer's National Art Honor Society, and Mrs. Nolan's Future Educators Club all worked in tandem to make sure this year's challenge reached new heights. Future Educators Club prepared a lesson on poverty to teach at all of the elementary schools in the district so they can contribute to the challenge as well. All of the students in the participating clubs were able to attend these field trips to help the elementary school students lend their helping hands. Speaking from experience regarding my involvement

in the Future Educators Club, I always have a wonderful time going to the elementary schools to teach these lessons to the students. It is such an enjoyable and rewarding experience to teach the elementary school students the importance of giving back. During each social studies class on Friday, February 17th, every class went to the East Gym for half of the period to lend their hand to the challenge. As every student entered the gym, music blared as each class found the respective table to get down to business. At each table, two representatives from one of the clubs running the challenge were in charge of the table and helped make hands as well. Everyone was ecstatic to create their hands and contribute to the cause. The enthusiasm that ran through the gym made the experience of contributing to the community even better. Mrs. Cullen made sure to go to every table in order to ensure that everyone was staying on task. In fact, she even came over to my table at the beginning of the period and said "each of you can at least make six hands!" Some ambitious students even made eleven hands, proving their serious dedication. Throughout the whole day, there was a gigantic bake sale with a plethora of breathtaking baked goods.



The money from the bake sale would also go towards HSE's grand total raised for the challenge. By the end of the day, everyone was eagerly anticipating the total amount of money that High School East made. In the end, our school made 19,165 hands which is equivalent to \$36,411 for Save the Children! The 2017 Students Rebuild challenge was a complete success!

Participating in this challenge was truly an unbelievable way to give back and help those in need. Personally, the challenge was a very self-reflective experience. The 2017 Students Rebuild Challenge inspired me to always lend a helping hand to those in need all around the world, by participating in the challenge, or even volunteer at organizations in our very own community to help lend a helping hand to those in need right here on Long Island.

Congratulations to the Top 20

Alyssa Schmidt

Junior Managing Editor



Not pictured are Jesse Blatt, Jessica DeVilla, and Vaidehi Patel

Valedictorian: Matthew Chen **Salutatorian:** Jesse Blatt
Rachel Bank, Jessica DeVilla, Ryan Hsiao, Lindsay Korman, Gina LaRusso, Julia Pascarella, Vaidehi Patel, Shiv Patil, Paul Rhee, Alia Rizvon, Danielle Roedel, Rachel Rosenstein, Viren Sabhnani, Hyun-su Shin, Leah Shindler, Adam Stein, Adam Wilck, and Anton Wu

On February 14th, 2017, the Top 20 of the class of 2017 was announced. Out of the 475 seniors this year in HSE, the students with the 20 highest GPAs are given special recognition for academic excellence and hard work demonstrated throughout their high school careers. Being in the Top 20 is a huge accomplishment for which every student should strive. Rachel Rosenstein and Lindsay Korman, editors of the newspaper and members of this year's elite Top 20, gave insight into their feelings about their accomplishment. Rachel said, "I was honored to be recognized as one of the Top 20 of my graduating class. It was a great validation of my hard work and commitment over the last 4 years." Similarly to Rachel, Lindsay stated, "It feels great to receive such an honorable distinction for the hard work I have put in during the past four years." A huge congratulations to all 20 unbelievably bright and hardworking students. All of your hard work and dedication paid off. You did it! Keep up the great work for whatever else you wish to accomplish from here on out!

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR OWN EDITORS: Rachel Rosenstein (Executive Editor) and Lindsay Korman (World News/Op Ed Editor) for their achievement in High School East's Top 20, class of 2017!

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HSE Symphonic Band and Cross Campus Choir Make it to the Big Stage

Abhinav Srivastava

Staff Writer

Carnegie Hall. A place where musicians dream of playing. An elegant hall where world-class music is magnificently played from various instruments. From Beethoven to Bach, the most famous composers and musicians have gotten the chance to perform on this very stage in front of a tremendous crowd. Music is not just an art that is performed here; it is a “lifestyle” by which many choose to in order to perform at this incredible place. A high school band could only dream of performing here though, right? WRONG! That all changed on Wednesday, March 22nd, when the HSE Symphonic band, accompanied by the Cross Campus Choir, took the storied stage for a performance all their own.

Mr. Belanich, the band director of the 11th and 12th grade High School East symphonic band, has been teaching music for well over thirty years and is well educated in the music field. In all his years of teaching, he has only gotten the chance to take his band to Carnegie Hall two times. Now, this year, that all changes as he had a third opportunity to showcase his composing talents on the biggest music stage in the world. With some help from Mr. Belanich, the students of the 11th and 12th grade band had the unbelievable chance to play their three best pieces in front of an audience that has a strong appreciation

for music. However, this opportunity was not just handed over; the band had to work extremely hard to get to this point.

Everyday, the High School East symphonic band members practice their hearts out 2nd period for forty minutes. The band does not just look at the music as a simple piece of paper with a bunch of random notes on it, but instead, as a story behind the tune of each song. The only way the band members improve is with the constant and unconditional encouragement from Mr. B that he provides at every single practice. With a perfect pitch, Mr. B tells the band each and every detail of the music and how it should be played. He makes sure that all of his students practice diligently and perform to the best of their abilities. He even holds after school practices and extra lessons throughout the school day to ensure the betterment of his students’ musical talents. With such passion and determination, Mr. Belanich has taught his students everything they need to know and has thoroughly prepared them for one of the biggest nights of their lives.

One of the three pieces that the East symphonic band performed at Carnegie Hall was called “Peterloo Overture.” It was performed together with the Cross Campus Chamber Choir, a group of select students from High School East and High School

West under the direction of Dr. McRoy. This choir also worked extremely hard for their Carnegie Hall debut. This is a special piece for the band because we had to receive permission from the estate of composer Malcom Arnold to perform this work with band and choir. Sir Tim Rice wrote special lyrics for this Overture. In fact, HSE premiered the piece as a combined effort of a band and choir for the first time in the United States. Needless to say, this is a really huge deal and was quite a task for these young musicians. The second piece was “Symphonic Dance #3 “Fiesta,” and it is best described as a three-page “explanation of a journey.” The third

and final piece is called “Bandology,” and it is a very upbeat march that the audience clearly enjoyed.

The students, along with Mr. B, did everything they could to ensure a stellar performance on the epic Carnegie Hall stage, and they surely did not disappoint. Six months of hard work clearly paid off as these young musicians truly brought the house down at Carnegie Hall. They are now among the elite class of musicians and other talented people who have graced the historic stage. They will each have an exciting story to share with friends and family for the rest of their lives. On behalf of the Thunderbird staff, congratulations on a job well done!



HSE Symphonic Band and the Cross Campus Chamber Choir perform *The Peterloo Overture* at Carnegie Hall

We The People Team Demonstrates Constitutional Knowledge at States

Lauren Peller

Editor-In-Chief

We The People Constitution Team (WTP) is a unique course that involves both the AP U.S. Government and Politics curriculum in conjunction with the WTP program. The WTP program divides the class into six “units” in which each group prepares a four-minute opening statement in response to two congressional hearing questions. In order to prepare for the February 11th state competition in Albany, the WTP class practiced, prepared, and researched in and out of the classroom. The team participated in a regional competition this past December and also in a mock competition judged by Suffolk Assistant District Attorney Michelle Pitman and Attorney Lois Rowan. At the regional mock competition, each unit presented speeches and responded to follow-up questions from the judges. WTP Student Anne-Marie Tehn-Addy said, “The regional and mock competition both were helpful ways to prepare for the state competition, and each one of us received constructive criticism that helped us improve for the next time we presented.” As the WTP students headed into their state competition in Albany, they were confident that their extensive preparation would support them in Albany. WTP student Marlie Androsiglio said, “My unit and I were not nervous for the competition. We were excited to speak with the judges about our topic of balancing branches of government and share our knowledge. Mr. Pitman prepared us extremely well and steered us in the right direction with regard to crafting our speech and follow ups.”

Historically speaking, HSE’s WTP

team has typically performed at a high level under the guidance of Mr. David Pitman – our AP Government and WTP teacher. Mr. Pitman works closely with each unit to prepare us for any curve ball or obstacle that we might face. He has each unit immerse themselves into research, including learning specific court cases and understanding sections of the Constitution. In February, we earned a “Third Place” award at the state competition. This year’s competition was tough, but our class performed and carried themselves professionally throughout the duration of the competition. When asked about the results at the state competition, Mr. Pitman said “the *We The People* competition in New York State is very competitive. Schools across the state are committed to the curriculum and spend a tremendous amount of time preparing for the state competition. This year’s *We The People* team should be proud of what they accomplished. They finished third in the state. Although this was not their goal, they succeeded in pushing themselves beyond their comfort levels through acquiring an in-depth knowledge of the Constitution and citizenship and learning how to engage in civil discourse. It is this last piece that I am most proud of: high school students modeling civil discourse is an encouraging sign for the future of our democracy.” Congratulations to the entire team on a job well done at both Regionals and States!

The keynote speaker for this year’s competition was Christopher R. Riano, a Constitutional Law and Government professor at Columbia University and

practicing Lawyer. He gave a speech that emphasized the importance of engaging in civil discourse and the ability to have an in-depth understanding of the U.S. Constitution at such a young age. He remarked on how truly lucky we are to have such a strong comprehension of constitutional law during such a tumultuous time period.

As a dedicated member of the team, I can most definitely appreciate the benefits of gaining a depth of understanding of our Constitution. Although finding scholarly resources takes both time and dedication, I had the opportunity to delve into history and evaluate the current impact of voting rights and the voting process. Our individual unit became passionate about our topic, and we incorporated a tremendous amount of enthusiasm into our speeches. In ad-

dition to the specific knowledge that the members of the WTP team have gained, we now have a greater appreciation for current events and politics. This class taught us how to speak eloquently and back up our assertions with specific facts. Our daily discussions kept us on our toes and kept us excited to attend class. This experience has been extremely rewarding for my peers and me. Most members of our team are truly passionate about government and politics. The knowledge we have gained and the insight with which we have been provided from WTP will likely never leave us. I am confident that they would join me in encouraging any junior interested in government and politics to consider participating in the “*We the People*” class.



We The People Team at the State Competition in Albany

New Science Journal Club at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

Anish Pisipati

Staff Writer

Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory was founded in 1890 and is a private, non-profit organization focused on different fields of biology, including cancer, neuroscience, plant biology, and genomics (concerning the structure of genomes). The laboratory is also famous for the discovery of the double helix structure of DNA. While serving as the origin location of the double helix DNA structure, the laboratory also offers various opportunities and programs for the students at Half Hollow Hills.

This school year, a new program has been created that collaborates curriculum from both the Western Suffolk BOCES school library system and the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Library. Known as the Science Journal Club, this program allows students to pick apart and analyze scientific journals of notable researchers in order to better their understanding on various scientific subjects.

Scientific journals allow researchers to communicate their findings to fellow researchers. According to APA, these journals may consist of original research done experimentally or observationally, as well as analysis of another scientist's research. In addition,

these journals may even include proposals of new, untested theories. Usually, these journal articles are notorious for causing frustration among inexperienced readers and can be especially overwhelming when read under a limited time frame. Many readers have agreed that the only way to understand scientific journal articles quickly is to have experience with reading them.

"This program allows students to pick apart and analyze scientific journals of notable researchers."

ANISH PISIPATI
STAFF WRITER

At the Science Journal Club at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, high school students have the opportunity to get a head start on reading and understanding these type of articles. Ludmila Pollock, the executive director of the CHSL library, worked with Sara Kardasz, the coordinator of the Western Suffolk BOCES School Library System, along with several high

school librarians, to set up this incredible club. The club meets every Tuesday at CSHL to interpret these articles. Matthew Covey is another researcher at the lab who works one on one with the students at the program as well. According to Mrs. Miceli, a librarian at High School East, Covey does this job in order to help students actually find journal articles and of course analyze them. The students sometimes even get first-hand accounts from the researchers themselves who are associated with the different topics. Towards the end of the program, students present their article that they have been analyzing and educate the rest of the club on what they've learned throughout the course of the club.

Mrs. Miceli, along with Emily Gershowitz and Anna Constantinides, attended this program for the 2016-2017 school year and have already been planning for the next journal club start-up this upcoming year. One beneficial change to the club that might occur is that the club members may begin to analyze research papers directly from the researchers at CSHL who are assisting them. By doing this, the scientific article topics will be narrowed down and

the students will be able to receive direct feedback from the researchers whose work they are evaluating. Anyone interested in attending the Science Journal Club for the 2017-2018 school year should contact Mrs. Miceli at the school library for more information.



Ludmila Pollock, Emily Gershowitz and Sara Kardasz pose after Emily's presentation

Around the World in Three Hours

Hallie Schuster

Lifestyles Editor

On February 3rd, the senior class took a trip around the world in one night! Thanks to the planning and hard work of National Art Honor Society and Student Government, the class of 2017 was able to enjoy a fun-filled evening at their beautifully decorated senior banquet in the gym. Students danced the night away, took pictures,



Senior Girls having a blast at banquet

and reminisced with classmates. Cirellas, an Italian restaurant that is a favorite among locals, catered the event with pastas, chicken parmesan, salads, mozzarella sticks, and more.

After dancing until our legs gave out and eating until our stomachs were full, the class found their seats as the highly anticipated senior superlatives were announced. The superlatives are one of the most notable senior traditions; the awards range from class clown to best eyes to most musical and everything in between. The winner of each superlative was given a certificate and gift provided by the Senior Class Student Government officers. Paul Ibutor,

our school chairperson and winner of the *Class Couple* and *Most Likely to be President* superlatives, along with Ann-Marie Tehn-Addy, says "when I ended up buying the gifts I really wasn't expecting to get them back at all! But I was certainly pleased that Anne-Marie and I won together." I could confidently say that no one would be surprised if those two lead our country in a few years. Natalie Selmer took home two superlatives as well. Here is what she has to say about having the *Best Eyes* and *Being Best to Bring Home to Mom*: "I was so excited to have won the superlatives for best to bring home to mom and nicest eyes!! I was hoping to win maybe one of them, but winning both was even better! I am so grateful that such an immense majority of the grade supported me." The time for announcing the superlative winners quickly came to a close, and it was time for the montage video, which was created by the Student Government Senior Officers and was filled with pictures of the amazing memories that the graduating class of 2017 has had so far. The night was a huge success and left the senior class with feelings of joy and nostalgia as they looked back on the past four years and forward to everything in store.

Learn Chinese Through Independent Study

Andrea Park

Staff Writer

The students of High School East have the opportunity to explore themselves throughout the countless programs offered here. One of the programs provided by our school district is the Independent Study Program. Independent Study gives students the chance to learn all about a different language in addition to the one they learn about during the regular school day. The independent study program helps students construct new experiences, learn new subjects, and attain a plethora of opportunities. While other subjects offer independent study courses, the language portion of the program is very important because it provides students with a special opportunity to learn another language in an interactive and fun way. Language plays a significant role in educating students about different cultures throughout the world, and the ability to communicate with others is a fundamental skill needed in many fields.

The amount of people using and speaking the Chinese language in America is rapidly increasing as the years progress. The ability to eloquently speak the language is definitely beneficial for students in the long run. The Chinese Independent Study Program allows students to further enhance their knowledge of Chinese vocabulary, culture, and customs. There are four different levels for the Chinese Independent Study Program. The class tends to meet once a week at High School West or East, depending on the schedule and the classrooms available. However, for the

past two years, the program has been taking place in High School West.

The class educates students on Chinese cultural aspects, grammar, and vocabulary. The current teacher for the class is Mrs. Schwartz, and she makes sure students fully comprehend all the material they learn. The first two levels of Chinese Independent Study revolve around learning more about the Chinese culture and the vocabulary. As the levels progress, the focus shifts to grammar and learning sentence structure. This class is no ordinary language class that students normally experience during the school day. Instead, the program exposes students to the language in a more approachable way without the stress of tests and quizzes. I appreciate the class, despite the tests, quizzes, and homework that is occasionally given, because the amount of stress the class calls for is significantly lower than classes taken during the school day. This is due to the fact that students' GPAS are not affected by the average received in the independent study class. I also personally enjoy this class because it has given me an opportunity to educate myself about the Chinese language and culture without having to worry about making mistakes. According to one of the students currently in the class, "The class itself is an easily accessible way to further diversify yourself." This clearly suggests the benefits of taking the class.

If you are interested in learning more about language, culture, or communications, Chinese Independent Study is highly recommended. It will be a thrilling and educational experience!



Mrs. Schwartz, Chinese Independent Study teacher

A Hidden Art Gem in Heckscher Park

Lauren Peller

Editor-In-Chief

Art has always been a passion of mine. Whether I am studying art history or sketching for fun, I appreciate what an art museum can offer for a community. Right in our backyard, in Huntington, the Heckscher Museum of Art provides local Long Islanders and visitors with interesting, varied exhibitions and educational art programming. Nestled in the Heckscher Park, known for its greenery, ponds, and playgrounds, Heckscher Museum showcases a permanent collection, including over 2,000 works of art, as well as noted traveling exhibits. With its vision on education in the arts, the Museum strives to provide a learning experience that will engage and motivate students in the community.

With a recommendation from Mrs. Uttendorfer, I had the rewarding and enriching opportunity to work as an intern in the education department at the Heckscher Museum this summer. As part of my responsibilities, I worked with the Museum educators to lead workshops and to incorporate fun ways for children to become familiar with the Museum and its artwork. For example, I led entertaining scavenger hunts at the Museum so that the children could readily grasp facts about

many art forms and the backgrounds of the artists who created the pieces. The Heckscher education department partnered with Park Shore Day Camp in a new program called STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Math), which allowed campers to participate in classes that combined art projects with various topics in science. Along with the Museum's education department, I was able to develop projects and prepare art materials that targeted age appropriate science concepts. It was gratifying to be able to see a project come to fruition and to see the campers have a great time while enhancing their knowledge. Surprisingly, my favorite project was one called "Art Bot", which included a battery operated toothbrush and acted as a robot to create abstract drawings. I tested and developed the implementation plan after seeing a similar project on Pinterest, and it proved to be one of the most popular projects of the summer with children of all ages.

My experience this summer at the Heckscher Art Museum was extremely fulfilling, and it enabled me to strengthen my collaborative, creative, and organizational skills. While the Museum and its staff were welcoming and supportive, they also challenged

me to brainstorm and design projects that would be feasible and educational. I learned that the art museums, especially the Heckscher which places a strong emphasis on art and education, have so much to offer people of all ages and backgrounds. From programming that focuses on children to those afflicted with Alzheimer's, the Museum offers something for everyone and should be regarded as a treasured resource in our community for lifelong learning. According to Joy Weiner, Education Director, "the hands-on internship opportunity allows students

to engage with programs at the museum and broadens their awareness as they make career choices." If you are a rising junior or senior interested in interning at the museum this summer, e-mail a resume and cover letter to Joy Weiner, Director of Education, at joyw@heckscher.org.

Come and explore the many things the Museum can offer. Check out the Heckscher Art Museum, and you may be surprised when you discover that seeing art in person will deliver an inspiring experience.



Assisting the New Orleans Community, One "Mardi Gras" Bead at a Time

Lauren Hochheiser & Brooke Blumberg

Staff Writers

Hurricane Katrina had severe detrimental effects on New Orleans, and the city still needs help to continue rebuilding. In an effort to help New Orleans rebuild, we embarked on a short journey to NOLA (New Orleans, LA) to give back to the community. It was intriguing how just one weekend could be such a rewarding experience.



Students painting

We went on a community service trip through Temple Beth Torah to New Orleans, Louisiana. While there, we engaged in various community service activities, including those affiliated with the non-profit organizations the Green Project, the ARC, and CRISP farms. The Green Project is an organization that dedicates their time and efforts to promote the use of recycled materials for household use, especially paint. At Green project, we painted the upstairs of the soon-to-be offices by using recycled paint. Even though painting was messy, it was an artistic and environmentally friendly

way to give back to the community. The ARC is a non-profit organization that is committed to assisting the intellectually disabled with jobs and a stable salary for which these individuals sort and package recycled Mardi Gras beads. We tediously sorted the Mardi Gras beads which are then sold at a discounted price. With the profit made from selling the beads, the organization will be able to continue to pay its employees and donate to the mentally disabled community. CRISP farms is a small farm whose agriculture provides fresh food for its surrounding community. Community research into sustainable permaculture is the main mission at CRISP with which they try to teach alternative growing concepts and provide organic produce. The farm was in poor condition, and we helped to clear the area to grow new, fresh agriculture.

In addition to helping out the community, we walked around the french quarter and were able to see historical buildings and the culture of New Orleans. We went to Cafe Du Monde, where we had the infamous beignets. We also did a ghost tour, swamp tour, and rode on the street car. On the final day of our trip, we took a tour of Tulane University. Not only did we get a glimpse of what New Orleans has to offer, we were simultaneously able to provide a "helping hand." This trip was extremely rewarding and allowed us to give back to a community that truly needs our help.



Sorting Mardi Gras beads

The Unity Fair Celebrates Diversity Through Harmony

Sophie Kreit & Rachel Penzer

Staff Writers

Every spring, the Half Hollow Hills PTA Council Diversity Committee organizes the Unity Fair, an event celebrating all things that make our school district diverse and unique. This year's Unity Fair took place on March 5th at Half Hollow Hills High School West and included an internationally-themed food court, various arts and crafts activities, student club displays, student performances, and many other unique activities that celebrate cultural diversity.

Scents of all different origins could be sensed when walking into the school's cafeteria. The PTA of each school in the district was assigned the task of serving cuisine from either a foreign nation or food category. While High School East provided delicious breads and other sweets and pastries, the cuisine of choice of other schools in the district included American, Italian, French, Indian, Greek, and even gluten free and other allergy-free treats. This wide array of cultures and types of food completely accomplished the goal of setting the scene for the true themes of the event: diversity and unity.

Next stop...the main gym. Held here were various arts and crafts activities for younger students, as well as club displays from High School East and West. In the front of the gym, attendees had the opportunity to get creative with velvet art, scratch art, sand art, coloring, and more. Further into the room, activities, such as the Students Rebuild challenge, offered participation opportunities. Student clubs worked together to organize this project by printing out outlines of hands and encouraging district members to decorate and cut out as many hands as they wished. For every hand made and sent into the Bezos Family Foundation, a donation of \$1.90 will be made to help the world's impoverished youth.

Other student clubs provided fun and

educational activities as well. The XX Coders opened up their own student-made computerized games for use on laptops to inspire young girls to get involved in computer programming and STEM-related activities. The district's various culture clubs hosted fun activities at their stations such as Jewparty, coloring in traditional Indian designs, and learning how to use chopsticks as well as drawing Chinese characters.

Those who arrived to the Unity Fair early enough had the chance to watch spectacular numbers of song and dance by the district's many performing arts groups. The step teams of both high schools performed a highly coordinated routine that was equally as mesmerizing as their pep rally performances. Additionally, the Stony Brook University Bhangra dance group's contemporary Indian steps were extremely enjoyable for every audience member who was fortunate enough to watch these talented young people in action.

The Unity Fair is a small, but brilliant example of the diversity that our community offers and encourages. It portrays every reality of equality that students, parents, and faculty try to maintain daily.



HSE Junior, Guadalupe Pedraza, at the Students Rebuild Booth

Create a Link to Future Networking

Lauren Peller

Editor-In-Chief

You may have heard of parents or college students who use LinkedIn to network and look for internships or jobs. LinkedIn is a professional networking site that allows its members to create professional connections, search for jobs, and find business opportunities. Most recently, LinkedIn has expanded its user base to include those aged 13 and up so high school students with a goal of a “longer vision to help students and parents get a head start on career mapping” can do so with ease. In addition, they have added university pages to connect in-

stitutions with alumni, parents, and prospective/current students. It seems as though there is a tremendous potential for high schools student to use LinkedIn to explore future careers that they are considering and to educate themselves on what others in the industry have accomplished.

Considering the goals of high school students, the strategy for creating their profiles needs to be adjusted as compared to full time professionals. LinkedIn has a profile checklist they have developed specifically for high school students. It provides examples for each category, such as using the summary

area to describe your potential major in college and personal interests. In the experience section, the examples point to activities and positions held in and outside of school. If you have any work or internship experience, this could be added here as well. There is also

a section that you can use to detail your awards or honors. When doing so, make sure to keep a professional outlook in mind. A word of caution: this is not the forum for personal posts, such as those on Instagram or Facebook.

A LinkedIn profile will set you apart from other students your age and present you as a person who takes school and work seriously and understands the importance of displaying a positive professional image on the internet. If you’re searching for a job or internship, this type of profile will impress potential employers. LinkedIn provides a free framework to create your digital presence that you will eventually need once in college. According to current numbers, most high school students do not use LinkedIn, and if they do, they have only created an account. Students are well aware that it may be useful, but have not sought out LinkedIn’s potential. Some high schools have taken the leap and introduced classes to teach their students how to use LinkedIn and connect with school alumni.

Despite these obvious benefits, there are some concerns about the privacy issues as is the norm with an

online presence. Furthermore, there is the question about adding pressure to the already intense high school experience students face. According to Common Sense Media, a nonprofit children’s group, their main concern is, “is it healthy for kids to be so future-focused?”

Recently, I decided to build a LinkedIn profile to see how applicable and easy it was to navigate. First, I added my role as editor of Spoon University High School, and it led me to connect with a wide network of students from other high schools and colleges around the country who are part of Spoon. From there, I can see what other activities they are involved in. It is interesting to see what people with similar passions do throughout college and after. I was able to connect with the Editorial Director at GW, which was quite fascinating because I am attending GW next fall in the same program she is in, SMPA. The connections made on LinkedIn are one of the most important aspects of this site. Personally speaking, I found this exciting and can see the potential in connecting with other students. I also appreciate the knowledge I can gain to further my future career aspirations.



Photo courtesy of Forbes

Connected Online, but not with Each Other

Kayla Menkes

Staff Writer

Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter, Facebook, Groupme, Youtube. In today’s society, these names have become more than just apps. They have become parts of our lives. It is no news that electronic devices have become imperative in the daily routines of children, teenagers, and adults. While electronics bring many advancements to our world today, they are taking away from relationships we build with each other. Many high schoolers are familiar with the following scenario: a group of friends goes out to dinner to eat. These friends are having fun, smiling, and laughing, but not with each other. Their enjoyment is coming from the 6×3 inch tablet they have not let go of since they sat down. Unfortunately, this is an extremely common scenario that occurs way too often. Although sending a quick text appears to be a good fix for many communication problems, it can also have the opposite effect.

According to *The Lance*, “Studies have shown that it makes it difficult for students who rely so heavily on technology to actually communicate to adults in person because they don’t

quite develop all of the necessary skills to hold or even start a face-to-face conversation.” The increased texting and online chatting is giving phone-users the opportunity to bypass the face-to-face interactions that are crucial to forming bonds with other people. Another situation many students can relate to is when a concern about a grade becomes present. A popular approach to fixing this issue would be resorting to an email written to the teacher stating the student’s concern. However, if the matter cannot be fixed in an email, it may be necessary to speak to the teacher face-to-face.

This is when the lack of social experience comes in as a major negative. Teenagers may not know how to handle themselves when having a conversation such as this one, and they may feel nervous and uncomfortable. The growing problem in society is that people are become exceedingly dependent on technological devices to communicate. This is causing individuals to lose, or not ever develop, social skills needed for successful relationships with other people.

Dogs Detecting Cancer

Kasim Waqar

Staff Writer



Photo courtesy of CNN

Claire Guest, CEO of Medical Detection Dogs, thought her fox red Labrador Daisy was crazy when Daisy began barking furiously at her chest one day six years ago. Daisy was not crazy. Spooked by the possibly ominous sign, the then 45-year-old Guest was compelled to seek medical attention. She realized her “crazy” dog saved her life by nudging her to early testing and detection of cancer. Thankfully, the dog helped her detect the tumor in her chest early enough to save her life.

British researchers from the organization Medical Detection Dogs are working in conjunction with the National Health Service to develop the new prospect of using dogs to detect cancer. Dogs have an incredibly keen sense of smell; in fact, they can sense one part per trillion of select odors. They have 300 million sensors; in comparison, humans only have five million. This difference, and the fact that dogs have a second smelling mechanism, known as the “Jacobson’s organ” which humans lack, attributes to dogs’ unique capability for acute smell. Other instances have occurred in which dogs barked at, thus suggesting the existence of, cancerous tumors before their owner or

any screening would realize the affliction. This ground-breaking experiment being conducted by the NHS is running clinical trials to test dogs’ ability to differentiate between cancerous and normal biological cases using 3,000 samples of urine.

In the future, dogs or mechanical systems, referred to as E noses, may be used in the process of early detection, and therefore early treatment, of cancer. They could have success rates as high as 95%. However, recent endeavors have had trouble receiving funding due to the lack of feasibility for expedition and commercialization. This is why further testing is being conducted to prove the effectiveness and legitimacy of this practice. It would be difficult to produce and implement this treatment cheaply and on a large scale. The hope is that this innovation can be used to detect urological and breast cancers and later on, other cancers, such as lung and bowel cancers. Tens of thousands of Americans suffer from these fatal diseases every year, but early detection of these cancers can give doctors more flexibility and exponentially increase survival rates.



Photo courtesy of CNN

A Guide to Sanctuary Cities: What Are They? Should the U.S. Allow Them?

Bradley Shanker

Junior Managing Editor

What is a sanctuary city?

Up to this point there is no legal definition of a sanctuary city, with the most common explanation being that a sanctuary city offers safe refuge for undocumented immigrants who might have otherwise been deported. In the United States, there are currently over 200 sanctuary cities. These cities ignore the federal law on prosecuting illegal immigrants and do not comply with the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, otherwise known as ICE. For example, if an illegal immigrant with no documentation is pulled over by a law enforcement officer for a driving violation, the officer working in the sanctuary city will neither take the immigrant into custody nor contact ICE for deportation services. A few of the more prominent sanctuary cities are New York, San Francisco, Chicago, and Boston, among others.

How can a city become a sanctuary city? There is no specific route or qualification needed to become a sanctuary city. Likewise, the commitment to becoming a sanctuary city is not official through the U.S. government's eyes. However, according to the Congressional Research Service, a city becomes a sanctuary city when it enforces "a state or local act, ordinance, policy, fiscal constraint" and "places limits on their assistance to federal immigration authorities seeking to apprehend and remove unauthorized aliens." What this basically means is that a city takes the title of "sanctuary city" by limiting cooperation with ICE and the FBI, by working to improve conditions for illegal, undocumented immigrants, by reducing illegal immigrants' correspondence with the

criminal justice system, and, lastly, by ensuring access to legal assistance for all people living within the city — no matter their legal resident or citizenship status.

President Trump's stance: On Wednesday, January 25th, President Trump signed an executive order in which he promised to withhold federal money from cities that claim the titles of sanctuary cities. This executive order would leave the decision of designating sanctuary cities to John F. Kelly, the secretary of Homeland Security. A law from 1996 prohibits cities from withholding information about citizens' legal statuses, which has led to President Trump stating that sanctuary cities are in violation of the law. However, according to NYU law scholar, Barry Friedman, "The federal government can't demand that state officials or local officials do their work," Friedman says because of the Tenth Amendment and a court precedent called *Printz v. United States*. Therefore, the federal government can't make it mandatory for local police officers to collect immigration information from their suspects. Friedman says that "as long as sanctuary cities don't cut off communication with immigration officials about the information they don't have, they're likely to stay on the right side of the law." All things considered, federalism gives local police departments a freedom and separation that police departments in other countries don't have. So, this leaves President Trump with one huge advantage: funding (money). This is why he has threatened to cut federal funding for the sanctuary cities. Some states have taken the threat to heart, while others

have scoffed at it. For example, Chicago, Seattle, and New York have all kept to their claim as being sanctuary cities and will continue to do so. While others, such as Miami, decided to instruct prisons and jails to notify ICE if they are housing an undocumented, illegal immigrant.

"As long as sanctuary cities don't cut off communication with immigration officials about the information they don't have, they're likely to stay on the right side of the law."

BARRY FRIEDMAN
NYU LAW SCHOLAR

Should the US allow Sanctuary cities? Sanctuary cities are complicated with regard to their function and interaction with the government. Sanctuary cities must cooperate with the federal government and law enforcement agencies. According to Temple University's law professor, Jan Ting, "Sanctuary cities became controversial after a series of high-profile crimes were committed against innocent victims by illegal immigrants who had been released from detention by local authorities — without notification to the Immigration and Customs Enforcement bureau of the Department of Homeland Security." While some may argue that Sanctuary cities have a legal right to defy the federal government, it is important that these cities cooperate with the federal government. According to Cesar Vargas, a former national Latino strategist

for Bernie Sanders, "It is not only legally defensible but crucial to our national security for cities and states to be allowed to pass and uphold sanctuary laws to assure taxpaying residents — regardless of immigration status — that their local government will protect them from federal overreach." He goes on to explain that many cities across the nation have not complied to work with the ICE because "they think that cooperating with ICE causes them problems with respect to the immigrant community and public safety, but in fact it does exactly the opposite." While both sides of the spectrum on this issue are valid, cooperation with the federal government is very important and funding these programs should not be a requirement of our government.

The future of Sanctuary cities?

The issue of sanctuary cities definitely became a bigger concern during the most recent, somewhat tumultuous presidential campaign, as well as in local elections. However, the complexity of these cities and cases ultimately make it extremely difficult to reach any national consensus on the issue.



Will New York City remain a sanctuary city under Trump's executive order?

Trump Gets Going on Campaign Promises

Andrew Yanover

Political Correspondent

Donald J. Trump was unexpectedly catapulted to the highest office in the land back in November because he railed against Obamacare and promised to beef up the military; he's now begun to turn that campaign rhetoric into reality, for better or for worse. With the introduction of the American Health Care Act and Trump's budget for 2018, the new administration has finally started to implement the long promised change to Washington upon which his run to the White House was based.

"It would be better for Trump to take his time and work through a health care plan and a budget that will yield positive change for the American people."

ANDREW YANOVER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Despite the advancement of Trump's agenda, it would be foolish to call the American Health Care Act and the

budget seamless, easy fixes. Veteran Republican Senator Lindsey Graham has called Trump's budget "dead on arrival" in Congress; the new budget aims to counterbalance a 54 billion dollar increase in military spending by completely eliminating nearly 50 federal agencies and programs, including the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the NASA Office of Education, and the Minority Business Development Agency, just to name a few. Furthermore, Trump's plan proposes to cut both the Environmental Protection Agency and the State Department by 30%. Onto healthcare, a poll conducted by Public Policy Polling found that only 24 percent of voters support the new healthcare plan. The only block that hates the plan more than the voters is actually the Republican Party as Republicans find themselves split over the new proposal. While the far right labels the bill "Obamacare lite," more moderate Republicans are worried about the cuts to Medicaid, projected drop in the overall insured rate, and the proposal to defund Planned Parenthood. Republicans have good

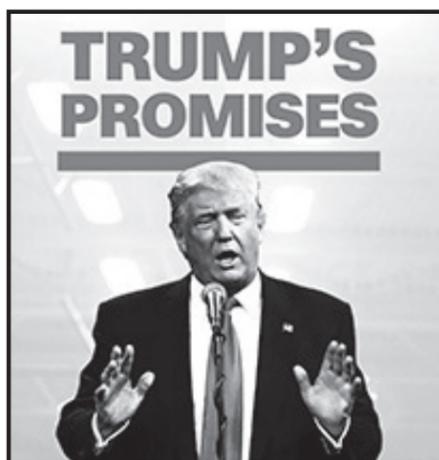


Photo courtesy of CNN

reason to be worried as the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that the proposal, if voted into action, would result in 24 million fewer Americans having insurance in the next decade.

Both the budget and the American Health Care Act are flawed proposals which are a direct product of the pressure on the Trump Team to bring about immediate change. It would be better for Trump to take his time and work through a health care plan and a budget that will yield positive change for the American people. Though, truly, it

would be best to continue to fund educational services, protect the environment, and ensure our ability to engage diplomatically, while also ensuring that Americans with preexisting conditions maintain their legal access to healthcare and prioritize that as many Americans as possible have healthcare, and not vice versa, these are uncertain times regarding the continuance of all of the above. I would urge President Trump and the Republican Congress to proceed with caution, as the "mandate" that was given to them by the voters in November can just as easily be stripped away.

To read more Op/Ed articles, check out pages 10 and 11 and thunderbirdhse.com

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.

Skip the Forks and Join the Spoon Revolution

Lauren Peller

Editor-In-Chief

Spoon University is an online publication whose purpose is to relate to and celebrate millennials who are trying to navigate the food scene. From simple recipe hacks to the best restaurants around a city, town, state, or college campus, you can scroll through different food related articles for hours.

Joining Spoon opens a digital media world for the next generation of journalists, marketers, event-planners, photographers, and videographers. Contributors receive training and information that will help them build new skills. Spoon U allows

school students all across the country. This is a great way to get ahead before stepping foot on a college campus. In addition, you can build up an online portfolio of writing that the whole world can appreciate and share. In addition to publishing articles, you learn about online analytics, such as your article statistics, page views, and Facebook shares. According to Spoon High School Social Media Director, Lindsay Paulen from New Jersey, "I wrote an article called The 5 Must-Try Doughnut Shops in New Jersey which got so many page views. I was able to reach out to each shop and

ing Spoon High School was the best decision I have ever made throughout high school. Not only has my writing improved, but I have been able to showcase my family recipes and ways food has impacted my life." Working with Spoon HQ's Editors and Secret Sauce will allow you to develop tangible skills that will carry over to college and even a future job. You will learn how to write in a casual style which is different from essay writing or newspaper style writing. In addition, you will learn how to tailor headlines to a specific audience and understand how SEO (Search Engine Optimization) works.

Many students at Hills East have been involved with Spoon University at the high school level. Lifestyles Editor for the Thunderbird and original member of Spoon High School, Hallie Schuster said, "I love food and strive to live a healthy lifestyle. Since my goal is to become a dietician, Spoon is the perfect way to get involved in something food-related before college that I can continue at college. One of my favorite articles I covered was What to eat on Long Island this summer if you're trying to be healthy. Being able to share my passion for healthy eating with other people was incredible, and I was able to share my favorite places too. Spoon University has manifested my appreciation for food even more so now that there is Spoon Healthier that covers wellness and health related topics."

The goal of the high school chapter is to teach high school students about the world of online media, especially

if they are budding journalists. Current Community Editor at Spoon University said,

"I am extremely proud of all they (Spoon HS Contributors) have accomplished, being the biggest Spoon chapter across the board."

SAM DILLING
SPOON COMMUNITY EDITOR

If you would like to join Spoon U, go on spoonuniversity.com, click on "become a contributor" at the bottom of the main page, and fill out the request form. Then, you'll be connected with the chapter you'd like to join. Once you connect with the High School leaders of the chapter, you will have to fill out a Google Form application. Ideal candidates for this program are those students who have tangible experience with writing, photography, and/or video.

Currently, Spoon High School has over 60 members across the country from Alabama to California to Chicago and beyond. The High School Chapter launched in August 2016, and there have been over 220 articles published to date. Do you want to see what the High School Chapter is all about? You can find out on *Instagram* @[spoonhighschool](https://www.instagram.com/spoonhighschool) and follow <http://spoonuniversity.com/chapter/highschool>



students to use an online publishing platform called "Secret Sauce" that is filled with skill guides, stock photo library, marketing materials, brand kits, and video demonstrations. Any time new students join Spoon U, they go through training in which they learn about SEO (Search Engine Optimization), headline writing, food photography, and social media strategy, a large portion of what you need to know when working with digital media. With thousands of contributors from hundreds of colleges, and a new High School Chapter, Spoon U helps contributors feel empowered by teaching them how to improve their writing, videos, and photos. While it may appear that Spoon U is only for college students...that is not the case.

Calling all high school students who have a passion for food, writing, video, photo, and journalism... this is a unique opportunity. There is a chapter designated just for high

share my article with them. Montclair Bread Company actually posted my article up in their shop and shared it on all of their social media platforms. It was amazing to see how one article could be shared with so many other people across New Jersey. Spoon U has helped me expand my audience and allowed me write about things I am passionate about."

As the current Spoon High School Manager and Editorial Director, I have found that student contributors find it tremendously rewarding to connect with other students who have a common interest in food, writing, and photography. Brooke Daly, a high school writer from Florida said, "I learned how to utilize social media to grow an online program from the ground up. Through my experience publishing articles, I've practiced incorporating a casual writing style and tailoring articles to target a specific audience. Applying to and join-



FOLLOW US:

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<http://spoonuniversity.com/chapter/highschool>

Long Island Super Bowls: Better than a Brady Come Back

Rachel Rosenstein

Executive Editor

Super Bowl 51 may have just passed, but now it's time to enjoy an entirely different type of "Super Bowl." Long Island Super Bowls, an acai bowl shop with storefronts in Sayville and Patchogue, just opened its newest location at 204 Jericho Turnpike in Syosset.

The *acai bowl* has been a trending health craze that has been around for some time now, and I don't see it going away anytime soon. I'm more than confident that they will have a loyal following in our area. The bowl is definitely an amazing product for someone who's into healthy living, but most people love the taste regardless. At **Long Island Super Bowls**, the *acai bowl* is a work of art. No joke - it is truly beautiful from the inside out. I bet you didn't know that acai is an antioxidant packed super fruit indigenous to the Amazon Rainforest. At *Super Bowls*, they blend frozen acai berries, strawberries, bananas, and a splash of soy milk to make a thick fruit smoothie. Then, the smoothie is layered between delicious homemade granola. The bowl is topped with a heaping mound of fresh blueberries, strawberries, sliced bananas, a

sprinkle of coconut, and topped off with a drizzle of honey. YUM! For a modest additional charge, and well worth it, this chilled treat can also be topped off with add-ons like homemade organic peanut butter, Nutella, almond butter, pineapple, and kiwi. They even offer cookie butter (a rare topping at most acai bowl stores) as an extra sweet treat! Not only are these bowls super pretty, but they are super nutritious, filling, and energizing. In an effort to be inclusive of people with a range of dietary restrictions or allergies, the classic bowls are gluten-free, dairy free, and can be made

vegan-friendly with a honey substitute. Craig Giorgio opened the new Syosset location out of genuine admiration for the company. He always wanted to open his own business, and after driving many times from his home in Bellmore to Sayville to enjoy the perfect acai bowl, he finally found the right product to get excited about. Since December 7th, the date of the store's opening, the business has been booming. Curious customers have been eager to see what the acai bowl trend is all about. There are a lot of niche fitness places in the area, and Super Bowls will be reaching out to them to do some cross promotions. Knowing that I could have an acai bowl

after exercising would certainly make it far more appealing to workout! Everyday the friendly staffers serve fresh acai bowls along with homemade soups, salads, wraps, burritos and more, all for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. If you're a health nut, this place makes healthy eating easy. Finally, someone figured it out! For foodies near and far, Long Island Super Bowls in Syosset is a destination that has so far been receiving much praise. The acai bowl is tasty and affordable (for \$7.00, you will be full, I promise) and something well worth checking out. I can honestly say it's the best acai bowl I have ever had, and I have consumed many! Super Bowls is open seven days a week from 7:00am to 8:00pm. The shop is immaculately clean and has a very comfortable and inviting atmosphere. For more information visit www.superbowlsli.com or call 516-654-4600. There are a few tables and benches if you choose to eat there, but you can certainly take your order to go. This new gem makes healthy eating easy, accessible, and guilt free! I encourage you to jump on the acai bowl bandwagon; I know you'll be hooked.



Photo by Maddy Propis

Taste the Chocolatey Goodness Without the Guilt

Hallie Schuster

Lifestyles Editor

What is the perfect snack to satisfy your sweet tooth that tastes delicious, but will keep your healthy eating on track? That's right! It's dark chocolate! The difference between dark chocolate and lighter chocolates, such as milk and white, is the percentage of cocoa. Dark chocolate is much less processed and has a smaller amount of milk solids added into it. The process of making dark chocolate all begins in the fruit of the Theobroma Tree, or cocoa tree. The fruit is pod-shaped and grows directly on the trunk of the tree. The pods are cut open, and the white flesh containing the cocoa beans is extracted. The beans are processed, and in order to make dark chocolate, small amounts of milk and sugar are added. After the production is over, the chocolate is wrapped up and sent out to dark chocolate fanatics. One may ask why even their healthiest friends will enjoy chocolate everyday. The answer is found in the health benefits, which include lowering the risk of heart disease, causing the release of dopamine, and detoxifying the body. A 100 gram bar of dark chocolate with 70%-85% cocoa contains 11 grams of fiber, 67% of the RDA for iron, 58% of the RDA for magnesium, 89% of the RDA for copper, 98% of the RDA for manganese, and lots of potassium, phosphorus, zinc, and selenium. It also contains healthy fats and small amounts of caffeine for a little wake up call! Dark chocolate is an amazing source of antioxidants. Antioxidants are naturally produced by the body to counteract the dangers of free radicals, but there are usually not enough, so make sure to eat your dark chocolate during flu season. Although 100 grams is a large amount of chocolate to consume regularly, it is

a perfect treat, but don't overdo it because there is a small amount of sugar in the chocolate. Dark chocolate can be eaten plain, on top of ice cream, or in any one of a variety of ways, but my favorite way to eat dark chocolate is when I make **dark chocolate covered pomegranate seeds**. Keep on reading for the recipe!

Ingredients:



Photo by Hallie Schuster

Melting dark chocolate (Hack #1 - I suggest using Whole Foods 365 dark chocolate chips)
Coconut oil
Pomegranate seeds
Ice cube tray

Directions:

- Pour all of the chocolate into a pot on the stove over medium heat and stir around to prevent burning
- When the chocolate is almost completely melted mix in a heaping tablespoon of coconut oil (don't worry if you don't like coconut you won't taste it)
- Continue to stir until all of the chocolate is completely melted. It should be very smooth and thin.
- This part might get a little messy! Using a spoon pour the chocolate about a quarter of the way in each ice cube section
- Place 5-6 pomegranate seeds on top of the chocolate or until there is a layer of seeds covering the top of the chocolate
- Pour more chocolate into the tray until the seeds are just covered
- Store the tray in the freezer for about 45 minutes to an hour or until the chocolate hardens. Make sure not to over freeze it because you don't want the seeds to freeze.
- Remove from the tray and enjoy! If you have left over I recommend storing them in a closed container in the refrigerator.

Revolutionary Farm to Table Restaurant: Rustic Root

Rachel Rosenstein

Executive Editor

A new *Farm to Table* restaurant from Chef Tom Closter has hit the Long Island food scene, and it is phenomenal! I can confidently say that this restaurant is revolutionary in the best of ways. I loved the mission of this restaurant as soon as I heard it: a small menu restaurant that uses local and organic ingredients to create fresh, innovative meals. When I walked into **Rustic Root** a few weeks ago, I was smitten with the whole feel of it. It's an earth tone venue with reclaimed wood tables, built by the Amish in Pennsylvania, and the exposed brick walls create a comfortably natural ambience. The restaurant features whimsical touches such as room dividers made from rolling pins. Overall it is homey and inviting...a real chic, rustic restaurant.

In 2014, Thomas Closter, the present chef at **Rustic Root**, was named champion of the Food Network's hit show "Chopped," which if you have never watched is very entertaining. He has a reputation of being one of the most creative and passionate chefs around. Every meal he creates is given so much attention, which is not easy considering the menu changes seasonally, and the chalkboard-written specials are changed frequently. Closter's attention to detail and the restaurant's commitment to using local food is written all over the menu. We started with the mushroom flatbread which was topped with the most delicious ricotta cheese I have ever tasted. The pecorino cheese on top gave it the perfect salty finish, and the right amount of truffle oil was used so the mushrooms could really shine through. My sister was at first reluctant to try the deviled eggs, something she would normally never consider, but was finally convinced to try them and ultimately said they were outstanding! I believe the eggs are from Kerber's farm which has been providing eggs to the north shore for years.

Next, we tried the cornbread which comes in a skillet. It was by far the tastiest cornbread I have ever had. After examining the list of entrees, I decided to go with the burger which was cooked

perfectly and served with a side of salt and vinegar fries. YUM! My mom had the antibiotic-free lemon thyme chicken breast which she said was far better than any other normal chicken dish. It was paired perfectly with swiss chard and a side of chickpea fries, which I had never seen before. The menu also features plenty of vegan and gluten free options if you have dietary restrictions. There was no room for dessert, but my dad proceeded to order it anyway. Our server recommended the carrot cake which was huge and served in a mason jar; it was moist and full of flavor.

The restaurant partners with nine local farms and businesses which is where they get their fresh maple syrup, grass fed beef, non-homogenized milk, and even sea salt from a local salt maker on the South Shore of Long Island. The owners and chef at **Rustic Root** want to educate the community about where their food is produced. They feel strongly that people should understand that although you may buy your food at a grocery store, that's not its origin. They take pride in knowing the farms and farmers that produce their ingredients.

If the restaurant doesn't sound appealing enough yet, let me tell you about the staff: they are incredible! Everyone was friendly, knowledgeable, helpful, and passionate about the restaurant's mission. It is very clear that the wait staff is trained to know everything about the restaurant, from the food to the history, so when they get to your table, they are able to make your time there the best experience possible.

Rustic Root is open seven days a week for dinner. They are also open Monday through Friday for lunch and Saturday and Sunday afternoons for their delicious brunch menu. They are located at 7927 Jericho Turnpike in Woodbury, where **Laguna Grill** used to be. Their number is 516-364-5041. If you are looking for a local place with a comfortable rustic charm, an amazing staff, and fresh, innovative, high quality food, this place is definitely worth checking out.

Where Does the Trump Administration Stand Now?

Andrew Yanover

Political Correspondent

The state of the Trump Administration is a relative one. By Trump's standard, his presidency has thus far operated like a "fine tuned machine." Though, also according to Trump, as he wrote in his best-selling book *The Art of the Deal*, "I play to people's fantasies... a little hyperbole never hurts. People want to believe that something is the biggest and the greatest and the most spectacular."

To Trump's credit, the stock market has enjoyed a record stretch while investment in American industry seems to be on the rise. He is delivering on his campaign promises to bring back manufacturing and put coal miners back to work. He has also announced an undeniably qualified candidate for the Supreme Court, Neil Gorsuch. Though, despite a number of other accomplishments, Trump's most notable moment in his first six weeks was the tribute he held for fallen Navy SEAL Ryan Owens during his address to a joint session of Congress on February 28th. Ryan Owens is undoubtedly an American hero, and Trump, as the Commander-in-Chief who ordered the mission which ended Ryan's life, understood the magnitude of the moment as he reflected that "Ryan's legacy is etched into eternity."

Despite some positive steps forward in achieving major policy objectives

and announcing a nominee to fill the vacant Supreme Court seat, Donald Trump has manipulated the awesome power of the Oval Office. To quote Uncle Ben from *Spiderman* (who is also, coincidentally, the source of a record number of leaks), "with great power comes great responsibility." A casual scroll through the President's twitter will reveal a man who appears mentally disheveled. The President and his team, ranging from new Attorney General Jeff Sessions to recently fired National Security Advisor Michael Flynn, appear to have a serious corruption scandal on their hands. Don't expect the Republican House of Representatives or Senate to do anything about it; they're still fixated on bringing a special prosecutor to charge Hillary Clinton, despite the fact that she has been cleared of all wrong doing by the FBI, twice. Did I forget to mention that the election was 5 months ago?

"Donald Trump has manipulated the awesome power of the Oval Office."

ANDREW YANOVER
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Moreover, one of Trump's principle policy proposals, the so-called "Muslim Ban," was first shot down by "so-called" Judge Robart of the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington, then for a second time by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals because the ban

barred those with visas and legal status from maintaining their constitutionally protected due process rights. During the legal proceedings, Trump undermined the independence of the judiciary branch by addressing Judge Robart, the presiding judge in the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington, as a "so-called" judge. There are no "so-called" judges in the United States of America. There are people who are judges, and there are those who are not judges. There is no in-between. Any attempt at dismantling the reverence an independent judge's decision deserves is dangerous for democracy. Furthermore, the administration, specifically Press Secretary Sean Spicer,



Photo courtesy of www.kctv5.com

strongly opposed the media calling Trump's immigration ban a "Muslim Ban." However, when considering the legislative history of the issue, it is important to quote a statement issued by Donald Trump on December 7, 2015, which read "Donald J. Trump is calling for a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country's representatives can figure out what the hell is going on."

Donald Trump has spent his first six weeks as the leader of the free world blocking freedom of the press and ignoring freedom of religion. With 6 weeks in the books and 202 more to go, the transition of our democracy into an autocracy is already in full swing.

President Trump's Involvement in LGBTQ Rights Spurs Controversy

Lindsay Korman

World News & Op/Ed Editor

Ever since President Donald Trump entered the political world, legislation pertaining to rights for the LGBTQ community has been controversially debated. Some of his initial comments and actions seemed to imply that he supports this population, which consistently faces adversity and discrimination. During the Republican National Convention, President Trump mentioned the protection of LGBTQ citizens from radical terrorists. Through this seemingly minor comment, President Trump became the first Republican presidential nominee to bring up this group of people. President Trump also publicly stated that Caitlyn Jenner was encouraged to utilize whichever bathroom she wanted in Trump Towers, and he exclaimed that the subject of same sex marriage is settled.

On the other hand, members of Trump's party, specifically Vice President Michael Pence and Attorney General Jeff Sessions, have both vocally opposed progress for LGBTQ citizens. Up until a few weeks ago, the manner in which the Trump administration would handle this population's rights was not entirely clear. However, on February 22nd, President Trump repealed an order, implemented under the Obama administration, that permitted transgender students to use bathrooms based on their gender iden-

tity, rather than their genders assigned at birth. A Texas district court refused to implement this position, and the Department of Justice took back its request for the court to act opposingly. Civil rights officials from the Justice and Education departments declined the concept that nondiscrimination laws ensure that students can choose any bathroom they choose.

During the Obama administration, most lawsuits that defended the rights of LGBTQ citizens were supported by the DOJ. By withdrawing the request to the Texas court, the DOJ under President Trump seems to be removing its support for the LGBTQ community. Although this action seems relatively miniscule, it could be a sign that the federal government will not prioritize the defense of LGBTQ people and that this targeted population will need to fight independently for basic rights.



Subway Passengers Erase Anti-Semitic Messages

Lindsay Korman

World News & Op/Ed Editor

Prejudice against Jews has continuously plagued society for centuries. In the recent months, signs of anti-Semitism have been prevalent throughout New York City, and this type of vandalism has been increasingly reported to the New York Police Department. In January, the words "Jews are a virus" were written on a recycling bin in black ink. Early in February, swastikas were seen on a northbound F train. On a B train, a swastika that was drawn on an American flag was altered into a symbol containing the word "love." All of these instances were formally reported to the NYPD, but one recent event that was not reported ended up going viral.

In early February, a number one subway train was covered with anti-Semitic phrases and symbols. Some of the phrases written on the subway maps included "Jews belong in the oven" and "destroy Israel, Heil Hitler." Additionally, swastikas were drawn all over the doors and windows of the subway in marker. All of the passengers on the subway were obviously appalled, and many of them decided to take action against this horrific act.

One passenger, Jared Nied, recalled that permanent marker could be erased with alcohol. According to the New



Photo courtesy of NY Times

York Times, Mr. Nied and numerous other riders collected bottles of hand sanitizer from their fellow passengers and scrubbed off the hateful words and symbols. Another subway rider, Gregory Locke, took photographs of the messages being cleaned and detailed his experience in a Facebook post. Just over one day later, the post had been reacted to about 518,000 times and shared nearly 354,000 times.

According to Mr. Nied, every mark was gone in less than five minutes due to the teamwork of the passengers. In a phone interview he stated, "It was a very New York moment in that we all came together, we all teamed up, and then we settled back down." This event is an admirable example of how American citizens, and New Yorkers, join together in times of trouble to yield positive outcomes.

PINK IS THE NEW POWER COLOR: The Women's March Across America

Carina Boyce

Staff Writer

On a sunny Saturday morning, January 21st, 2017 to be exact, something of a revolution began to sweep the country. By the end of the day, millions of people would march in their respective colleges, villages, towns, and cities, in what was billed as "The Women's March." Having never been to a political march before, my sibling and I set out with our mother to venture into the New York City March. As we rode the Long Island Railroad, more and more women of all ages began to board the train leaving a trail of pink hats and provocative signs from Hicksville to New York City. Penn Station was bustling as always, but by the time we got to Grand Central Station, the subways and the streets were filled with people; the largest number of people I had ever witnessed in one place took to the streets. In total, more than a reported 400,000 people would march in New York City alone that day. Other large marches included over 470,000 in Washington, D.C. during their peak, and hundreds of thousands in both Los Angeles and Boston - the other major anchor cities for marches. However, millions and millions more were also marching in every state in the nation, and in most continents worldwide, some marched hours before we did because their time zones differed. As a result, this was a full 24 hours of women around the world marching for their rights and demanding their voices be heard.

So Why March? Marches had initially begun as a way for women (initially) to vent their frustrations about the results of the November 2016 Presidential elections, and to voice early concerns for what they feared could become an insensitivity to women's issues under our newest and 45th President of the United States - Donald J. Trump. Organizers believed that their

fears rationally arose largely out of several of President Trump's campaign comments that they believed posed a risk to some of the gains in women's rights over the years. Many of these issues revolved around things like equal pay for women and reproductive rights, but extended to what they felt were human rights issues on subjects like immigration and trans-gender policies.

What is the mission behind the Women's March in NYC and elsewhere?

The Women's March states its purpose as one "To provide a safe and accepting platform for supporters of equality to rally and march in promotion of civil rights for every human regardless of gender, race, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, religion or creed". They stated that they also "hope to send a positive message to the local, domestic, and international community that the administration's job is to report to the people who elected them."

And so it was, on that sunny day in January, two months after election day and within 24 hours of the newly elected 45th President of the United States taking office, my family and I joined an estimated 400,000 people marching through the streets of New York City. Not much of a political rebel before this, I really wasn't sure what I might feel once I got there. The crowds made me nervous but the sea of people in pink hats seemed like a unified chorus and it fascinated me. I began reading the range of posters as I munched on a free pink cupcake made specially for the occasion by organizers. The posters ranged from political, to funny, to unprintable. I watched as a two-year old skipped happily as she held her "Future Woman Voter" sign, and as grandmothers held "Nasty Woman" signs that channeled the presidential debate in which the current President call the leading Democratic candidate - Hillary Rodham Clinton - a "nasty

woman". I stared uncomfortably at a man in a wheelchair with a portable oxygen tank and a huge sign that said Obamacare had kept him alive, and I wondered what my own sign would've said if I had made one.

Why They Marched

Somewhere in the crowded organized chaos that was the Women's March in NYC, the orderly intentions and fears of the people in the march began to become clearer to me. It felt like some people were genuinely scared of what the 45th presidency might bring. There were those who seemed to believe that they had everything to lose and was unsure that the newest administration would care about their needs going forward. Some marched against something - like the new President, his past rhetoric or what they suspect would be his future policies. Some marched for something - women being heard, girls being empowered to shatter glass ceilings and receive equal pay, healthcare services being available, or young undocumented immigrants being given a pathway to residency or citizenship. They all felt impassioned to make their voices heard... and it was, as hundreds of thousands of both women and men loudly chanted phrases like "This is what Democracy looks like!" If true, democracy that day included every race, every age, every gender, every nationality, every religion and a range of political beliefs.

It was clear that the elimination of the Affordable Care Act, also known as "Obamacare", was a huge threat to many of the marchers - both the sick and the healthy. However, I began wondering as well about other signs pointing to a huge list of women's, civil and human rights that seemed to be at risk. I could not help also wondering about those who did not agree with this March and had retained full faith and confidence in this new Presi-

dent. Then I wondered how many of the marchers had actually voted, having squeezed into the booth with my own parents months earlier as they casted their votes. I wondered, did you get more upset if you voted and lost or if you didn't vote expecting a certain outcome that didn't happen? Whatever their motivation, the crowd was passionate and civic engagement was everywhere.

Marching is as Old as Our Nation

It was an amazing experience to be part of history being made as it was clear from the inside that it was being made. Later the evening, I stared at marches across the nation and world and the movement felt overwhelmingly bigger than I was. The confusion I entered the March with was replaced by clarity as I left. People marched for many reasons... none of them bad. Their right to protest, right to engage elected officials, right to fight for gender equality, civil rights or human rights, was as old as the nation. Had some not marched, women would still not be able to vote. Had some not marched, African Americans might still be enslaved or be drinking from "colored" fountains. Had some not march, blacks would still not be allowed to vote. I can honestly say that each of us is allowed to march for what we value, and by the time the twilight hours forced an end to the march one block from Trump Tower on Fifth Avenue in NYC, I, too, felt a heightened awareness of the issues that bothered me most. Protesters had come together for so many different reasons but none any less important than the next. I myself found it rather powerful how such a huge and diverse portion of our nation was able to come together as a unified voice in this March after being so heavily divided during this election. Yes, this is what Democracy looks like!

Protests at Berkeley Challenge Free Speech

Aditi Patil

Stem Editor

On February 1st, protests broke out at the University of California Berkeley campus in response to conservative commentator, Milo Yiannopoulos, who was scheduled to give a speech at the university as a part of his right-wing college speaking tour. Milo Yiannopoulos, who has outwardly spoken against progressive social justice, feminists, and Black Lives Matter movements, was not a speaker whom the overwhelmingly liberal UC Berkeley community was hoping for. In fact, UC Berkeley, the pioneer of anti-war non-violent protests of the 1960s and 1970s, did not want Yiannopoulos to even be on the campus. However, the protests that erupted at UC Berkeley, targeted against the appearance by right-wing commentator Milo Yiannopoulos, unraveled rapidly and caused \$100,000 worth of damage to the campus. The university blamed "150 masked agitators" for the unrest, saying they had come to campus to disturb an otherwise peaceful protest.

The violence that took place once these protests began increased to startling levels, making it one of the most violent protests to take place at the university. More than 1,500 protesters had

gathered at Sproul Plaza, chanting and holding signs that read: "No safe space for racists" and "This is war." However, a group of these protesters were resorting to violent methods. The protesters attacked two Berkeley College Republicans and pepper sprayed one woman wearing a red Trump hat. Black-clad protesters wearing masks threw commercial-grade fireworks and rocks at police. They also smashed windows of the student union center on the Berkeley campus where the Yiannopoulos event was to be held. At least six people were injured. As police dispersed the crowd from campus, a remaining group of protesters moved into downtown Berkeley and smashed windows at several local banks. Despite all these occurrences, no arrests were made throughout the night. Finally, administrators decided to cancel the Wednesday event about two hours before the Breitbart editor's speech. UC Berkeley said it removed him from campus "amid the violence and destruction of property and out of concern for public safety."

This shocking reaction from the community came mostly due to the offensive nature of Yiannopoulos' prose. Many protesters said the Yiannopoulos

event was not a matter of free speech because he espouses rhetoric of hate. Thus, some may have felt entitled to strike back with violence because that was the same manner with which Yiannopoulos speaks. Despite Yiannopoulos' controversial speech, it is clear that the route these protesters took was not correct. Most UC Berkeley students who were interviewed about the protests said they were relieved that Yiannopoulos was not able to speak, but this was not how they wanted to accomplish that goal. "It's a sad irony

in the fact that the Free Speech Movement was founded here and tonight, someone's free speech got shut down. It might have been hateful speech, but it's still his right to speak," said Shivam Patel, a freshmen who stood outside of Sproul Plaza. The Free Speech Movement started at UC Berkeley in 1964 after students protested en masse when administrators tried to restrict their political activities on campus. Patel said he supported peaceful protests, but disagreed with the way things turned out on Wednesday.



Photo courtesy of USA Today

Dance and Sing Your Way to See *La La Land*

Jolie Freedman

School News Editor

Many moviegoers have been wondering what all of the buzz has been regarding the new sensational movie *La La Land*. After seeing this movie for myself, I now understand what all the hype is about! *La La Land* is a drama and a romance that depicts the life of a man and woman who are both trying to make it big in Los Angeles. The director of *La La Land*, Damien Chazelle, truly pulled out all the stops by incorporating complex songs and impeccable dance routines, while telling an intriguing love story that kept audiences on the edge of their seats. Emma Stone, known for her roles in *Easy A* and *The Help*, starred in this movie as Mia, a wannabe actress who struggles to find success, and her true identity, in the big city. During her journey, she meets Sebastian, played by Ryan Gosling, known for his work in *The Notebook* and *Crazy Stupid Love*. Sebastian hopes to pursue his lifelong dream of creating a jazz club in order to keep the remarkable genre of music from disappearing from the culture of the city. Mia and Sebastian's similar sense of passion for their dreams leads to an epic romance. However, Sebastian eventually finds extreme success in a jazz band and starts touring around the world. His success interferes with his relationship with Mia. The heightened conflict mixed with the exceptional music numbers and a unique ending make for a one of a kind movie.

Critics and fans clearly shared the



same sentiment as *La La Land* has become a winning success. The movie soundtrack recently climbed its way up to number two on the Billboard 200 chart. *La La Land* won a Golden Globes award this year for Best Film, Comedy or Musical. The film was nominated for fourteen different Academy Awards, and took home several. *La La Land* won for Best Cinematography, Best Production Design, and Best Original Score. In addition, Emma Stone won Best Actress, and Damien Chazelle won Best Director.

This musical delivers superb cinematography and captures the characters in a unique perspective. Moreover, this film depicts the accurate reality that success isn't easy, but you should always stay true to your passions and dreams. This movie shows the audience that Mia's difficult journey in L.A. and her endeavors to become an actress all led her to a successful destination. If you enjoy seeing Broadway-style musical numbers and classic romantic stories, then *La La Land* is definitely the next movie ticket you should be purchasing!

New Kind of Thriller: *Split*

Ava Maneri

Staff Writer

James McAvoy delivers a brilliant performance as a man (Kevin Wendell Crumb) with twenty three personalities in M. Night Shyamalan's shockingly disturbing movie, *Split*. The movie is about three girls who are kidnapped by a man named "Dennis," one of Crumb's twenty-three different personalities. He holds them hostage in a small, isolated room in his home, and when he returns to the room to check on the girls or give them something to do, he has a different identity. The girls soon realize that they should try to use his identities to escape, however when this fails they must try other options. Claire and Marcia, two of the girls he keeps captive, try to hurt him and kill him, but their plans don't work, and he separates the two girls into different rooms where they remain unseen until the end of the movie. Casey, the other girl he has kidnapped, plays along with him and does not try to hurt him. She takes advantage of "Hedwig," another one of his personalities who is apparently a nine-year-old boy. He confides in Casey about the "beast" that is coming to get him, which is later revealed as his twenty-fourth personality. His psychiatrist, Dr. Fletcher, gets alarmed with an overwhelming amount of emails from "Barry" when he calls for an urgent meeting, but then claims it is nothing which adds suspense to the movie. Weird behavior from Kevin leads Dr. Fletcher to realize that he must have the missing girls



who have been all over the news. By then it is too late. The movie continues with unexpected scenes of violence and a mysterious ending that will leave you confused and questioning what you thought you had already figured out.

The role of Kevin is played by actor James McAvoy. Throughout the movie, he becomes violent and disturbing. Casey, played by Anya Taylor-Joy, along with Claire, played by Haley Lu Richardson, and Marcia, played by Jessica Sula, are the three girls who Kevin kidnaps and keeps hostage. They add suspense to the movie and get to experience all of his identities. His psychiatrist, Doctor Fletcher, played by Betty Buckley, helps Kevin try to figure out who he really is. In my opinion, it is a great cast because we are able to relate to the teenage girls and what they must be feeling; you also get to experience the horror of James McAvoy popping into scenes at the most unexpected times.

I highly recommend *Split* because it is very creepy, different, and disturbing, a combination I love in film. It definitely went above and beyond my prior expectations. It was not just a horror movie, but a new kind of thriller. It was unlike other movies because you would expect horror movies to be dark and scary; however this movie was creepy and suspenseful. If you are looking to go see a movie in theatres now, I would recommend seeing *Split*.

Dear Evan Hansen: A Representation of Today

Emily Disman

Entertainment Editor

Broadway theaters are a place to tell stories and send messages to audiences. Millions of singers, dancers, actors, and actresses have performed and left their mark on stages all over New York City. While many Broadway shows retell classic stories, such as *The Lion King*, *Mary Poppins*, and *Matilda*, few introduce viewers to new narratives that are relevant to current times. *Dear Evan Hansen* is a new Broadway musical that addresses many issues relevant in today's society including suicide, anxiety, and the impact of social media. The show helps to convey many important messages and is successful in showing how many people can be affected by one person's actions.

Dear Evan Hansen is directed by Michael Greif and stars some of Broadway's finest. Ben Platt, Laura Dreyfuss, Rachel Bay Jones, Jennifer Laura Thompson, Mike Faist, Michael Park, Will Roland, and Kristolyn Lloyd all star in the production. While the cast may be small, only eight people to be exact, they are still able to tell a moving and emotional story. Ben Platt plays the main character Evan Hansen. Platt has appeared in various roles on Broadway but is best known for his role as Benji in *Pitch Perfect* and *Pitch Perfect 2*. Platt did an incredible job in portraying this eclectic character, and his vocals throughout the entire production were superb. The rest of the cast also did a great job in expressing the emotion and personality of their specific character. Not only was the show filled with a

memorable story and entertaining cast, but there were empowering songs and dance moves that helped to tie together the whole story. The songs ranged from emotional ballads to upbeat tunes.

Dear Evan Hansen is a heart-warming, yet melancholy production about a high school senior named Evan who struggles with anxiety. This anxiety disorder prevented Evan from making friends, and as a result, he did not fit in well at school. In order to build his self-esteem, Evan wrote notes to himself about what he was feeling: "Dear Evan Hansen, today is going to be a great day because... Sincerely, Me." Unfortunately, one of Evan's notes gets into the wrong hands causing Evan to get tangled up in the life of a grieving family and in a lie that should have never been told.

The show helps to illustrate problems that many teenagers face today. It portrays the thoughts that go through people's minds when they feel alone and not cared about. It demonstrates how prominent social media is in our lives today by showing how quickly one tweet or one post can be seen by millions of people. Finally, it leaves people wondering about how they can make a difference in society. I would recommend this show to people who want to see a production where they feel connected to the lives of the characters and want to see how Evan Hansen handles his own reality. This is a story that should be told to people of all ages, and this cast and crew did an excellent job of telling it.

Ed Sheeran Plays To His Strengths

Mackenzie Gosset

School News Editor

Fans have anxiously been checking their calendars waiting for Ed Sheeran's return to the music world. It feels like decades since he released his last album *X*. After Sheeran's one-year hiatus, fans were enthusiastic to hear that he was finally going to release another album and were eager to listen to what would soon be the hottest songs on the radio. To continue with the math motif for his album names, Sheeran decided to title this new album *Divide*. As soon as he announced the official release date of March 3rd, 2017, an overwhelming amount of fans pre-ordered it. Even though fans must wait until the release date to hear the complete album, they were extremely happy to hear that he would be releasing a few songs early, such as "Castle On a Hill" and "Shape of You." These two new hit songs demonstrate Sheeran's versatility as a singer, and his unique quality to produce all different musical genres. "Shape of You" is an upbeat/dancehall song that combines Caribbean percussion with guitar acoustics about an aspiring romance. "Shape of You" nearly became an overnight sensation as it climbs its way to the number one spot on the UK Singles Chart, selling 227,000 copies in just the first week alone. Following in the steps of "Shape of You," Sheeran's other recent hit, "Castle on a Hill," reached similar success. "Castle on a Hill" is about Sheeran's hometown, Framlingham, and the memories he created there as a child. Rolling Stone Magazine states that the song incorporates "a dramatic, galloping rhythmic vibe"

along with an outstanding chorus that shows off his incredible vocal range. This single debuted at number two on the UK Singles Chart with about 193,000 copies sold within the first week. Ed Sheeran ultimately became the first artist to sweep the top two spots in the same week, and his fans could not be prouder.

After reflecting on his recent resurrection into the music industry, Sheeran stated, "First off, what a week! The reaction to my new singles has been absolutely mind-blowing and I can't thank you enough. My new album ÷ holds a very special place in my heart and I really believe this is my best work to date. I've been eager to get back and I couldn't be more excited for March 3rd." The domino effect resulted as millions of fans continuously "fell head over heels" for his new singles and were anxious to hear what was in store for the rest of his work. To continue getting his fans pumped to hear the rest of his new music, he posted a teaser revealing the official track listing for the new album *Divide*. This list reads as follows: "Eraser," "Castle On The Hill," "Dive," "Shape Of You," "Perfect," "Galway Girl," "Happier," "Hearts Don't Break Around Here," "New Man," "What Do I Know?," "How Would You Feel (paean)," "Supermarket Flowers." As anticipated, Sheeran's fans could not be more excited. Upon release, the anticipation was well worth it, as Sheeran's newest album is amazing!

The Oscars' Debacle Did Not Overshadow an Inspirational Night

Emily Disman

Entertainment Editor

For the past 89 years, talented actors, actresses, producers, directors, and other members of the filmmaking industry have been recognized for their hardwork and excellence in their jobs. The Oscars is a night where the best of the best are commended for the roles they played or the ways they helped to create some of the greatest productions of the year. Walt Disney, Katharine Hepburn, Meryl Streep, and Leonardo DiCaprio are all prime examples of Oscar award winners. This year, the show was filled with live performances, comic relief, breathtaking attire, and numerous awards.

Late night talk show host, Jimmy Kimmel, was the host of this year's Academy Awards. Kimmel did an outstanding job in keeping the audience entertained throughout the entire show by allowing for his own comedic personality to shine through. He told countless jokes and made witty comments whenever he took the stage. Kimmel was funny and avoided being "too political" given the current news environment.

The red carpet is a highlight for many viewers of the show. Designers hope that the stars will choose to wear their gowns and tuxedos for the evening. This year, many celebrities added a blue ribbon to their ensembles to show support and bring recognition

to the American Civil Liberties Union. The ACLU reached out to many of the nominees and their families asking them to help raise awareness about the importance of protecting people's civil rights and liberties. Emma Stone, Karlie Kloss, and Ruth Negga were only a few of the stars who were "wearing their hearts on their sleeves."

The show was filled with live performances of Oscar-nominated songs including "Can't Stop the Feeling," by Justin Timberlake, and "How Far I'll Go," by Auli'i Cravalho. Timberlake opened the show with a phenomenal performance of his hit song from the movie *Trolls*. Like many of his other performances, Timberlake paired his vocals with intricate dance moves, and he had the entire crowd singing along with him. Auli'i Cravalho, who voiced Moana in the hit Disney movie *Moana*, also performed on the Oscars stage. Cravalho did a fantastic job especially considering she is only sixteen years old. She received a standing ovation at the end of her performance.

Everyone's favorite part of the show is the actual awards and the anticipation that builds as each category is announced. At the Oscars, the Academy chooses who wins each award. For every category there are between three and nine nominations. This year, while there were many winners, a few stood out because of their incredible speeches or unexpected victories. *How to Get*

Away With Murder's Viola Davis won the Oscar for Best Supporting Actress for her role of Rose in the film *Fences*. Being a huge Viola Davis fan, I was extremely happy when her name got called, but what made me even happier was the acceptance speech that she gave. In her speech, Davis explains that she gains her inspiration from those who have passed and how she wants to exhume their stories and bring them back to life. Besides her touching tribute, Davis made history. This award allowed her to be the first African American to achieve what is known as the Triple Crown: winning an Emmy, a Tony, and an Academy Award.

The biggest award of the night is always for Best Picture. *Arrival*, *Fences*, *Hacksaw Ridge*, *Hell or High Water*, *Hidden Figures*, *La La Land*, *Lion*, *Manchester by the Sea*, and *Moonlight* were all nominated for this prestigious award. Being the most coveted award, it was shocking to watch what happened when the winner for Best Picture was announced. It was initially announced that *La La Land* had won the



Moonlight wins Best Picture after confusion during the Oscar ceremony

award. The whole cast and crew made their way to the stage only to find out that there had been a mistake, and they did not really win. It turns out that the presenters were given the wrong envelope, and *Moonlight* actually won the award for Best Picture. This year's Oscars mess up will go down in history for being one of the biggest mistakes ever made on the iconic stage.

Besides the debacle with the last award of the night, the show ran very smoothly. Kimmel did a great job at hosting the Oscars; so good that they should ask him to host again next year. Congratulations to all of the winners and nominees for being the supreme example of Hollywood greatness.

This Is Us Season Finale Gets Mixed Reviews

Alexa Grill

Entertainment Editor

The television series *This Is Us* captivated America's hearts ever since it premiered on NBC on September 20th, 2016. In just one season, producer Dan Fogelman managed to tug at a full range of emotions of everyone who watches the show. Although the family of five that the show is about is so easy to fall in love with, the real secret behind this ground-breaking show's success is that it does not sugarcoat the ups and downs of life.

Throughout the season, we have been immersed in both the past and present of the Pearson family. We have grown to know and love Jack Pearson, played by Milo Ventimiglia, who is the father of the "Big Three." Early on in the season, we found out that Jack was no longer in the picture in present day. At first, it was unclear if this was because of a divorce or death, but sooner rather than later we find out that Jack died as his daughter, Kate, brings attention to the urn of his ashes that she sits beside to watch football every Sunday. Fogelman did not reveal the cause of Jack's death during the season, but he did reveal that Kate believes she is to blame.

The highly anticipated season finale that aired March 14th, 2017, and anxious viewers, including myself, hoped to learn the unknown cause of Jack's death. The previous episode ended with a scene showing Jack drinking while driving after his daughter Kate persuaded him to go surprise his wife Rebecca at her concert taking place two hours away. This caused many to speculate that drunk driving is what ended his life. The finale opened up with this same, previously unfinished scene, but showed Jack arriving safe-

ly at his destination. I was shocked and a little disappointed. Don't get me wrong, I love Jack, but since I know he died, I am so antsy to find out how. The rest of the episode alternated between how Jack and Rebecca met and how their seemingly perfect relationship went cold. I think that both of these stories are crucial to the show's storyline, but the season finale was not the right place for them. The three siblings, Kate, Randall, and Kevin, did not get much on-screen time, although we did find out that Kate wants to pursue singing and Randall wants to adopt a baby. These two revelations were heartwarming and surely brought the season full circle because much of it was about Randall's struggles as an adopted child, and Rebecca's passion, and never pursued talent, for singing. All in all, the *This Is Us* finale did not live up to my expectations. I was expecting Jack's cause of death to be revealed, but that did not happen. I will say, though, that this episode was very consistent with the rest of the season in that it was extremely emotional and definitely a tear-jerker. *This Is Us* returns to NBC this fall, which is seven months too long to wait for another emotional bout with the beloved Pearson clan. I wonder what Dan Fogelman will have in store for us with season two of a show that touched the hearts of everyone who watches it. We will just have to wait and see. If you haven't watched season one yet, you have seven months to get caught up, and I suggest you do so. Don't miss out on the drama that has taken the world by storm, and get to know "the Big Three" for yourself.

Andy Grammer Reminds Long Island to "Keep Your Head Up"

Austin Krach & Rachel Penzer

Staff Writer

Best known for his hit singles "Keep Your Head Up," "Honey, I'm Good," and recent single "Fresh Eyes," thirty three year old singer-songwriter Andy Grammer was presented by local radio stations WALK 97.5 and K 98.3 for a show at the Paramount in Huntington. The singer-songwriter chose two acts, Oak & Ash and Sir Cadian Rhythm, to open the show. Both musical groups warmed up the crowd and got them excited for what was to come.

Once it was Grammer's turn to hit the stage, fans were surprised that he chose to open the show with what could be his most well known song. The crowd cheered as they recognized the familiar opening notes of Andy's 2011 single "Keep Your Head Up." Grammer also surprised the crowd by playing many songs from his first self-titled album. Fans reminisced over throwback songs such as "Fine By Me," "The Pocket," and "Miss Me." Between songs, Andy stopped to talk to the riled up crowd about his love for Long Island and all of the time he has spent in the area. He made sure to mention his love for New York pizza and the fact that he stopped at the pizzeria across the street from the venue, Little Vincent's, before the show. Andy also made his performance more interesting by covering some currently well known radio hits. He incorporated Drake's "One Dance" into a song, "Blame It On the Stars," from his second studio album, *Magazines or Novels*. Of course, Andy found a way to put his own twist on the song by playing the trumpet. Later on in the evening, he covered current radio hit "Don't Let Me Down," by the Chainsmokers and Daya.

Towards the middle of his performance, Grammer took a risk by playing a song

that is yet to be released. The song, titled "Good Parts," is said to be part of the singer's upcoming third studio album. It was written after his mother died; he explained to the crowd that this song, his favorite song from the new record so far, is about getting to know someone on a personal level rather than just having a bland conversation. Fans quickly caught on and sang along to the meaningful lyrics. Grammer then went on to play a song more familiar to fans. His most recent single, "Fresh Eyes," excited the crowd as it was the first time that most of them heard the new song live.

The rest of the concert was a victory lap for Andy as he sang hit after hit. The whole room was ecstatic when Grammer busted out his 3x Platinum hit that made it to #9 on the Billboard Hot 100 chart: "Honey, I'm Good." The roof was blown off of The Paramount as everyone screamed at the top of their lungs to the song that has dominated on the radio. That was a great ending to a very high energy concert... or so we thought. Soon after he went off the stage, Grammer and his band returned for an encore. After that amazing concert, the encore song, *Good To Be Alive* (Hallelujah), was very fitting. This song is about the great year Grammer had in 2016. It is inspiring to hear Andy discuss his roots as a street performer in Los Angeles, considering how far he has come. He even sings a song about it, called *Biggest Man* in Los Angeles, which he used to end a very successful night. Grammer truly deserves all the success that he has had and will surely continue to have. Given that his new unreleased song that he performed *Good Parts* was phenomenal, 2017 will definitely be another year to remember for Andy Grammer!

What Made This Year's Super Bowl So Super?

Alexa Foodim

Staff Writer



Photo courtesy of CNN

Super Bowl 51 was monumental in terms of entertainment. Over 100 million people gather in various places across the country to watch the Super Bowl every year, so it is the perfect time to advertise a brand or promote a career. This year's Super Bowl kicked off with country artist Luke Bryan singing the National Anthem. He managed to sing under the required time of two minutes and thirty seconds, and his performance was excellent. The Schuyler Sisters, from the hit Broadway musical *Hamilton*, sang "America the Beautiful" to really get the game started.

The game continued while Lady Gaga prepared for her halftime performance. She started her performance with a bang as she "fell" from the roof. Her thirteen minute medley included some of her most popular songs, including "Born This Way," "Poker Face," "The Edge of Glory," and "Million Things." Her sparkly costumes, superior choreography, and of course her amazing voice made the performance outstanding. People were surprised

that she did not bring her left wing political views in the performance since political views have been addressed by artists in past halftime shows. Many people believe that the Super Bowl is not the proper time to address this since families are all together, and the event is not geared towards politics, so viewers were happy to see that she focused on entertaining her audience and showcasing her talent.

Aside from the game, everyone loves to watch the commercials. This year commercials ranged from \$5-5.5 million for a 30 second spot, or \$166,666 per second! Even though politics were not mentioned in the halftime show, some commercials hinted at the political views of their respective companies. Budweiser's commercial "Born The Hard Way" is an example of this type of subliminal messaging in advertising. The commercial shows a German immigrant being unwelcome in America. Parallels can be drawn from this commercial and the current immigration debate. Another brand that tried to make a political statement in their commercial is Audi. Their commercial "Daughter" discussed gender equality and feminism. The end of the commercial stated: "Audi of America is committed to equal pay for work. Progress is for everyone." Some other commercials that drew the audience's attention were Justin Bieber's T-Mobile Commercial, Honda's Yearbook Commercial, and Melissa McCarthy's KIA Commercial.

The game was extremely close and resulted in the first overtime in Super Bowl history. The great game and awesome entertainment definitely made *Super Bowl 51* one to remember!

Escapades at *The Ellen Show*

Emily Metaxas

Public Relations & Social Media Editor

Visiting a taping of the Ellen DeGeneres show has been on my bucket list for years, and I finally got to check it off! Ellen has always been an inspiration to me; she knows how important it is to "be kind to one another." I've always wanted her positivity, humor, and generosity to rub off on me somehow, and it definitely has. By visiting her show, I got to see first hand how she puts a smile on everyone's face.

My mom and I have been wanting to go see a taping of Ellen for a while now, and when she first told me that she got tickets to go see her in person, I was overjoyed. It's pretty hard to score a pair of tickets, so I was never expecting to actually be able to go. However, my dreams became a reality on Monday, January 30th... the day I would go see Ellen.

After a six hour flight to Burbank, California, we got to the soundstage and checked in. We were given instructions to sit and wait for about an hour. Then, we finally were allowed to get our official tickets with a number on it. My mom and I got numbers 100 and 101. These numbers determined when you were to be escorted into the audience seats. While we waited, they played Ellen's show on TVs around us, which got me even more excited to finally see her in person. After what seemed like hours, we were called to our seats just when

we were finished shopping in the "Riff-Raff room." Twitch, her DJ and an amazing dancer, came and danced with us for a little. Then, out of nowhere, came Ellen herself! She talked to us, made us laugh, and played a couple of games. The New Orleans Saints quarterback, Drew Brees, was a guest along with the actor from the new romantic thriller "50 Shades Darker." Big Sean performed his new



Emily and her Mom at the Ellen Show

single "Moves," while Ellen and the audience danced along. Finally, Ellen said her goodbyes, and we were on our way to the airport before we knew it.

This trip to the Ellen show was definitely worth the wait, and I would do it again in a heartbeat. Hopefully, Ellen's kindness will rub off on everyone who watches her show as she continues to be in inspiration and source of hope to all of her viewers.

The Vampire Diaries: 8 Years Later (A Spoiler-Free Synopsis)

Emily Disman

Entertainment Editor

In 2009, Julie Plec and Kevin Williamson brought a new take on the supernatural to The CW. The Vampire Diaries is a television drama that is filled with vampires, witches, werewolves, and doppelgangers. While some people think that shows about the supernatural are not enjoyable due to their cliché storylines and unrealistic special effects, then they definitely have not seen *The Vampire Diaries*. This show goes beyond the classic vampire stories and brings viewers to a place where they can connect with the characters and feel as if they are a part of their world in Mystic Falls, Virginia. Shortly after its pilot episode, viewers fostered a connection with the characters, the setting, and the unique romances in *The Vampire Diaries* that has kept them attached for the past eight years.

One reason that the show has such a big fan base is because of the actors and actresses that embody the characters. Every member of the cast does an impeccable job in portraying their eclectic roles. Ian Somerhalder plays Damon Salvatore, a blood-sucking vampire who is not afraid to break the rules. Somerhalder did a fantastic job in playing this character in that he was able to change as his character changed, showing his true dynamics as an actor; one day, Damon will be

killing every person sitting in a restaurant, but the next day finds him be fighting to be with the girl he loves. Paul Wesley plays the role of Stefan Salvatore, Damon's younger, more humane brother. Stefan is an "angel" in comparison to his older brother. He does his best to maintain his humanity even though he has been living his life as a vampire. Wesley captures the attention of the audience with his soft-spoken voice and his over-the-top emotions. One of the female leads, Nina Dobrev, was lucky enough to play four different roles on the show. However, she will be most remembered for Elena Gilbert and Katherine Pierce. Elena and Katherine were doppelgangers, born over a century apart, yet they were completely opposite in personality. Katherine is basically the female version of Damon. She is evil and conniving and will do whatever is necessary to get what she wants. Elena, on the other hand, is just a normal teenager who's life got turned upside down when her parents were tragically killed in a car accident; she was the sole survivor. It wasn't too long before the heroic Stefan Salvatore waltzed into her life, and she was turned into a vampire. Dobrev stole audience's hearts with her talent and beauty. The love that her fans have for her became apparent after the sixth

season of the show when she decided it was time to say goodbye. Dobrev, along with her characters, were not in the last two seasons of the show, with the exception of a much anticipated return in the finale. Many superfans thought that Dobrev's exit meant the end for their beloved show, but, as is the norm in show business, the show went on. Candice Accola, who plays Caroline Forbes, and Kat Graham, who plays Bonnie Bennett, stepped up and filled the shoes of Dobrev. Zach Roerig, Matthew Davis, Michael Trevino, and many others also helped to make the show unforgettable.

The Vampire Diaries also had an amazing plot. Initially based on the popular book series by L.J. Smith, the television show went above and beyond initial expectations. At the end of every episode there seemed to be a cliffhanger and now that the show is over, viewers are still left wanting more. The drama takes place in a town called Mystic Falls, a classic small town where everybody knows everybody and Americana prevails in debutante balls and homecoming parties. Two brothers, Damon and Stefan Salvatore, return back to their hometown after being gone for more than one hundred years. The Salvatore brothers are vampires, and eventually, mostly because of them, their

close friends become vampires, too. Besides having the storyline of vampirism, there is also tons of romance and drama between the main characters with love triangles, on and off again relationships, and the return of old (sometimes very old) flames and friends who often put a wrench in the plans. These intense relationships are what keep audiences engaged because throughout the whole show they root for their favorite couples and hope that in the end they will be together. While sticking to the main storylines throughout the series, Plec and Williamson did a great job in incorporating substories to ensure that the plot was never boring.

The Vampire Diaries will forever be one of my favorite shows, and I could not be more sad that the series has come to an end. After eight seasons of love triangles, curses, and heart-breaking goodbyes, I can honestly say that the last episode of the series was perfect in wrapping up everybody's stories and leaving viewers content with what happens in the lives of the characters. If you are looking for a new show to binge watch on Netflix or you just have a little extra time on your hands, I suggest you watch *The Vampire Diaries*. I promise that you will not regret it.

Rumors about Islanders Returning to Long Island

Sami Moody

Staff Writer

Over the last few months, rumors have spread across New York that the NHL Hockey Team the Islanders will return to their original home at Nassau Coliseum, now newly refurbished. The Islanders played at the Coliseum for over 47 years. After many failed attempts to update the Coliseum, the Islanders made the decision to move to the Barclays Center in Brooklyn.

For the last two seasons, the Islanders had successfully played at the Barclays Center; however, they now face the threat of being evicted. The Islanders have an average of about 12,828 fans per game this season, whereas last season they had 13,626 and the season before saw a much higher attendance with 15,334 per game. Due to a decrease in attendance of fans, the arena no longer sees hosting the NHL games to be financially possible.

Although it is not clear if the Islanders will definitely make a return to the Coliseum, many business organizations are asking for help to lure the Islanders back to the arena. In a letter to Howard Zemsky, head of Empire State Development, Kevin Law, president of the Long Island Association, asked the state to help make the Coliseum more attractive to the owners of the Islanders. He recommended funding a transit system that connects the Coliseum to LIRR stations or that the state provide grants and tax credits in attempt to expand the size of the arena.

The Islanders lease with the Barclays center ends in 2019. There have been

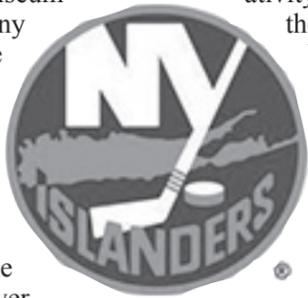
reports about the possibility of Islanders owners Jonathan Ledecky and Scott Malkin building a new arena in either Belmont Park or Flushing (next to Citi Field). Islander fans have voiced a negativity in response. They believe the NHL team belongs at the Nassau Coliseum and will continue to make every effort to see it through.

Although it is not clear, officials have hinted at possible actions that would be taken regarding the Coliseum.

County Executive Ed Mangano states, "We decline to comment on ongoing discussions, however, we are supportive of the Islanders return to the [Coliseum]." Mikhail Prohorov, owner of the Barclays Center who is responsible for the renovation of the Coliseum, also supports the Islanders return to Nassau County.

It would be wise of the Islanders to move back to the Coliseum. Over the last few years, the total number of fans have decreased drastically in part due to new challenges fans face in getting to The Barclay's Center. Nassau Coliseum is much closer than the Barclay's center, which will most certainly lead to an increase in the amount of people who attend the games. In addition, 260 million dollars were recently spent on the renovation of the arena. It would be a shame to see that money go to waste.

Very little information has been released and officials refuse to announce the ongoing discussions. Although the suspense is great, Islander fans will have to wait with bated breath until a final decision is made.



The New England Patriots Come Out on Top in an Overtime Victory

Evan Gottlieb

Staff Writer

Superbowl 51 was surely one to remember for numerous reasons. Tom Brady led the greatest comeback of all time in the most important game of the year to solidify himself as the greatest quarterback to ever live. The night concluded with the highly anticipated awkward handshake between the commissioner and Brady.

In order to really analyze this historic comeback, we must analyze the deficit. The Falcons offense began the game right where they left off, with a high flying offense. Specifically, the explosive Devonta Freeman racked up big runs and capped off the drive with a TD. Then, the Falcons responded with another touchdown to the tight end establishing a stunning two touchdown lead. Julio Jones continued to make the most of his limited opportunities and impressed with elite grabs. The Falcons piled up enough offense to take a commanding 28-3 lead going into half, trending towards a blowout. The Patriots came out in the second half without panicking and sticking to their gameplan. Brady stuck to driving methodically rather than resorting to desperate downfield passes. A James White touchdown and a Gostkowski field goal put the Pats defense back on the field. With 8:27 left in the 4th, the outside linebacker, Hightower, forced a fumble to set up Amendola to receive a touchdown on a short field. The Falcons then got into field goal possession to potentially put the game away as a result of a big receiving gain from Freeman and a spectacular sideline catch by Jones. And this is where the Falcons choked. Penalty after incompleting, the Falcons gave the greatest QB of all time a chance to send the game into OT. Brady drove methodically down field, including a ridiculous catch by Julian Edelman to set up a James White receiving touchdown, along with a

2 point conversion. When the Pats won the coin toss to receive, the comeback looked more and more realistic. Unfazed by the stage with which he is so familiar, Brady led the game winning drive capped off by a James White rushing touchdown to win Super Bowl 51.

One of the most alarming statistics is the lopsided snap count in favor of the Pats: 99 plays for Patriots, 46 for the Falcons. The Falcons were unable to get rolling in the second half offensively, which resulted in little offensive output. Another major question yet again pertains to the running game. Why didn't the Falcons run the ball to make it a 2 score game? Freeman had been averaging 13 yards per touch and has proven to be extremely efficient. Why did Julio Jones only receive 4 targets? Jones was making the most of these 4, racking up 82 yards on spectacular grabs. Jones should've been relied on down the stretch, along with Freeman. Now, we look to the other side of the ball. Tom Brady provided every viewer across the country with the greatest, most improbable comeback of all time. Brady answered what appeared to be the path to a Falcon blowout with 31 unanswered points. Tom had zero room for error on his game tying and game winning drives. Brady, laser focused, proved why he is truly the greatest QB of all time, as he now dons his fifth Super Bowl ring. Despite Brady's greatness, this game was in no way the greatest game of all time. The game was extremely lopsided through three quarters without any back and forth action. Fans were provided a catch that portrayed great concentration and luck. However, the aspect of the game that stayed with us was the remarkable comeback as the Pats stole the game right out of the Falcons' hands.

An Eventful NFL Season Comes to a Close

Jimmy Rouse & Ishan Suri

Staff Writers

This year's NFL season was one of excitement and surprise. There were teams that were expected to do very well, but fell short, such as the Carolina Panthers. The Panthers were coming off of a Super Bowl appearance and a very successful 2015-16 season, during which they went 15-1 led by Cam Newton and Luke Kuechly. They faced disappointment this year, going 6-10 and landing in fourth place in the NFC South. The Super Bowl winners from 2015-16, the Denver Broncos, even fell short of making the playoffs, ending up with a 9-7 record. This was mainly due to the fact that they lacked a skillful quarterback and put too much pressure on Trevor Siemian, an inexperienced quarterback, to run the explosive Denver Broncos offense.

Although there were some disappointments, there were many teams who really impressed during this 2016-17 NFL season. The main surprise this season was the emergence of the Dallas Cowboys. The Cowboys went an abysmal 4-12 in 2015, but really turned things around this season. Their two rookies, quarterback Dak Prescott and running back Ezekiel Elliott, led the Cowboys offense, but they did so with a lot of help from their offensive line. The Cowboys ranked top 5 in yards and points with their powerhouse offense. A common theme during this season was that offensive

duos, like Zeke and Dak, emerged as key assets to playoff teams. For example, Le'Veon Bell and Antonio Brown put up ridiculous numbers while helping the Steelers make the playoffs. Bell put up 157 all purpose yards per game, and Brown caught for 1,284 yards. The duo helped the Steelers make it to the AFC championship, where they lost to the Patriots. Two more duos that emerged as vital to their respective offensive were Odell Beckham Jr. and Eli Manning, and Matt Ryan and Julio Jones. Odell and Julio were second and third in receiving yards this past season and couldn't have experienced so much success without their quarterbacks. Jones and Ryan, however, proved to be the most dangerous quarterback and wide receiver combination, as they made a push all the way to Super Bowl LI.

Super Bowl LI was arguably the best Super Bowl in NFL history and truly reflected just how exciting this season really was. The big game featured two of the best quarterbacks in the league, Matt Ryan and Tom Brady, who were both ready to face very strong defenses. The game looked like a blowout by halftime with a score of 21-3, as the Patriots couldn't handle Devonta Freeman and Matt Ryan in the first half. However, coach Bill Belichick worked his magic at halftime, and the Patriots methodically cut into the 18 point defi-

cit. They cut the lead to eight with just minutes to go in the fourth. Brady slowly drove the offense across the field with his arm. Julian Edelman helped Brady by making a spectacular catch that put them into Falcon's territory. They were able to drive all the way to the endzone with a touchdown from James White. Amendola then scored the two-point conversion, which sent the Super Bowl into overtime for the first time in history. Again, Brady drove his offense down the field, and James White scored the game winning touchdown in the greatest comeback in Super Bowl history.

There were also new and surprising stat leaders for this season. Rookie sensation Ezekiel Elliott of the Dallas Cowboys led the league in rushing with an outstanding 1631 yards rushed behind his unstoppable offensive line. T.Y. Hilton of the Indianapolis Colts led the league in receiving yards with 1448 yards, which came as a shock to many because he surpassed the best receivers the game had to offer in Odell Beckham, Jr. and Julio Jones. However, it doesn't come to a surprise that Quarterback of the New Orleans Saints Drew Brees led the NFL in passing yards with 5208 yards, as Drew has been playing at a such a high level



throughout the entirety of his Hall of Fame career.

The statistics, however, don't fully tell the story of the 2016-2017 NFL season as it was truly one to remember. The success rates of converting on extra points dropped to a whopping 94.2%, the lowest in NFL history. Aaron Rodgers played one of the best seasons that any quarterback in the history of the NFL has ever had. MVP Matt Ryan of the Atlanta Falcons led one of the best offenses, statistically, ever in the history of the NFL to a super bowl. The Dallas Cowboys, America's Team, kept the entire NFL on their heels and became highlight reels every week with their rookie stars Dak Prescott and Ezekiel Elliott. But, to cap the season off, Tom Brady captured his 5th Super Bowl title and solidified himself as the greatest QB of all time.

THUNDERBIRD

HSE SCHOOL SPORTS

All-American and Scholastic Athlete Alex Park Makes Swimming History

Lauren Peller

Editor-In-Chief

On Saturday, March 4th, Alex Park had some unfinished business to accomplish in the pool. Since freshman year, he has worked tirelessly to achieve his goals in swimming. Park's Coach, Nina Cunningham, said, "Park is an effortless swimmer, but he is also a very versatile swimmer. His accomplishments are something he should be proud of." During sophomore year, Alex won the 200-yard individual medley. He continued to win the 200 IM again during his junior year and achieved his goal of winning the 200 IM yet again in his senior year. Park won his third straight swim title in the 200 IM at the state level competition.

"I am incredibly blessed, and it's not just me who accomplished this. My team, my friends, my family and the one above have helped me. I am very grateful for this opportunity."

Alex Park
All-American Senior Athlete

Park had expectations for this high stakes state level meet over the first weekend in March at NYSPHSAA boys swimming and diving championships at the Nassau Aquatic Center in East Meadow and added, "I knew this would be a tough race. I have a lot of friends in this competition knowing that they would give me a run for my money. But, in the end, I prevailed

and I am very thankful." Park won his third 200 IM state title in 1 minute, 50.28 seconds.



Hills East Senior Alex Park has made swimming history as the anchor in the 200 yard freestyle relay team. In addition, in the medley relay Park was the breaststroke leg and swam second. Park along with teammates Daniel Lee, Ethan Tack and Dylan Chan not only broke 6 school records, but won in an All-American consideration time of 1:25.27 in the freestyle relay. Park and his teammates broke the NYS Public Relay Record as well as the school record in this, taking first place at the meet. Park set a public school state record in the 200 medley relay with his three relay teammates in an All-American automatic time of 1:33.42. Hills beat its own record set in the preliminaries the day before of 1:33.82. Park said, "I am in-



credibly blessed, and it's not just me who accomplished this. My team, my friends, my family and the one above have helped me. I am very grateful for this opportunity."

Park has made his mark and is one of New York's finest swimmers. Park said, "This means the world to me, it means a lot. Being in the event, which is what I wanted as a sophomore...I am just speechless." Alex Park, an All American and Scholastic All American athlete, will be attending and

swimming for Brown University in the fall where he will continue to pursue academic and aquatic excellence. Park added, "I chose Brown because Brown University offers undeniable excellence in both academics and athletics. I am looking forward to achieving my goals in and out of the pool. Go Bruno!" On behalf of Hills East and the Thunderbird, we wish Alex the best of luck next year and can't wait to see what he accomplishes.

Fencing: The Three Weaponed Sport

Brooke Blumberg & Olivia Levy

Staff Writers

Fencing is a competitive sport that is played all around the world. In recent years, High School East has been met with great success within the fencing program. Unfortunately, there are no state championships for fencing in New York because currently there are only six counties that offer high school fencing. In order to hold a state competition, there must be at least seven. Long Island is actually one of the most concentrated fencing regions in the entire state.

During the fencing season, the team practices for 2.5 hours a day and for 6 days a week. Throughout the season, the team fences in tournaments, such as the Brentwood Holiday tournament, the Huntington Relays and the Counties. We recently spoke with Alina Chen, one of the fencing team captains here at High School East, to find out

more about this extremely interesting and difficult sport. Along with having the honor of being named team captain, Chen also has achieved many other accomplishments through fencing, such as participating in the Junior Olympics over the weekend of February 17th. If you are interested in fencing, Chen advises to "...never stop training hard and look at competitions and tournaments as opportunities to learn both about your own fencing style and how to enjoy the sport," despite obvious difficulties in achieving success in such an intricate sport. If you have never fenced before, don't worry... you might find a hidden talent.

Alina also told us that, "fencing is such a fast paced sport, yet progress is usually slow despite daily training. For sabre, it takes about 8 months to perfect; for foil, it takes about 2 years; and

for epee, it takes up to 3 years." Sabre, foil, and epee are the three weapons used in the sport. Most fencers focus on only one weapon. With interest consistently growing in the Long Island fencing world, multiple schools host annual tournaments allowing fencers to show off their skills while competing for recognition as the best in their specific event. The Brentwood Holiday tournament is an individual tournament, the Huntington Relays is a competition in which fencers will compete in teams of three, and in Counties entire teams fence against teams from other schools.

If you are interested in trying out for fencing, tryouts typically last for about a week, and they consist of a lot of running. The coaches and captains look for the athletes with great sportsmanship and a drive to learn, so don't be

worried about your ability to play the sport. The coaches and captains also teach the basics during the first few practices. Fencing is a precise and purposeful sport that requires hard work and motivation. If you are interested in participating on the school's team, come on down to tryouts next season and see what fencing is all about!



Alina Park challenges her opponent