



SCOTLAND-BOUND SENIOR For many seniors, traveling across the country for college is daunting enough. However, senior Linda Yang might choose to leave the United States and attend the University of Edinburgh this fall. Read her story in Features. Go to C10.

IS STRESS MAKING US DEPRESSED? Many of us walk the halls consumed by anxiety, stress and even diagnosed depression. What's the difference between them? Can one lead to the others? How big is the problem? Read student's perceptions of depression, a Q&A with a field expert and poll results inside. Go to C12.

HYPNOTIZED BY HYPPOLITE Freshman Ruben Hyppolite, a basketball and football player, moved up from the JV football team to join the ranks of the varsity team. Follow his progression as an athlete in the Sports section. (Photo/Joe Lieberman) Go to E20.

news

Students open up for Open-Mic Night Two clubs, The National English Honor Society and the Dead Poet's Society, are pairing up to host an Open Mic Night for all students Jan. 19. Student writers, musicians and performers will read their own poems, recite personal stories or play/sing songs in the Chorus room throughout the night. See A4.



(Photo/Vanessa Ryals)

opinion

The first female president: what it would have meant After a surprising presidential election, many students were left feeling shocked and disappointed. Regardless of who won, however, America did lose out on an opportunity to elect the first female president in 2016. Read one staffer's reaction in Opinion. See B8.

entertainment

Two one-acts performed in one memorable night Instead of one fall play, two separate one acts (written by the same playwright) were performed together Nov. 16-19. The shows, "Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You" and "The Actor's Nightmare" made for a highly entertaining night. See D17.

sports

Boys golf reigns victorious Early in November, the boys golf team earned another state championship title after losing it to a rival last year. Check out the Sports section for details. See E20.

Musicians march in Manhattan

Elysa Goldberg | Centerspread Editor
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On Thanksgiving morning, more than 20 million people across America tune in to watch the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade on television and many people dream of watching the parade in person. However, seven Heritage band members made their even-more-unbelievable dream come true: performing in the 90th Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

Sophomore Jacob Mass; juniors Dominique Cunningham, Drake Shaw and Makenna Turner; and seniors Jack Esquenazi, Sterling Miller and Carlos Rodriguez traveled to New York to perform with the Macy's Great American Marching Band.

In order to be accepted, each band member had to upload a four-to-seven-minute solo piece to YouTube, ranging from level three to five rigor. The applications opened in January and stay open until the parade coordinators have enough performers.

Students in band were not required to apply. The students



STAR SPANGLED BAND: Members of the Macy's Great American Marching Band pose before the parade with a balloon of Felix the Cat. The marching band had a total of 250 members and played "It's Not Unusual." Below, sophomore Jacob Mass, juniors Dominique Cunningham, Drake Shaw and Makenna Turner and seniors Jack Esquenazi, Sterling Miller and Carlos Rodriguez pose for a picture in Times Square where they practiced for the parade. (Photos/Rick Good)

who chose to apply do so because of their own interest for the experience.

"They all have their own personal drive and goals in the band world and their musician-

ship. [The parade] is something one of my former students did years ago and since then, more and more have been eager to

try to get in and participate," said band instructor Mrs. Kimberly Imerbsin.

Esquenazi performed in the parade last year and was eager to perform again.

"I decided to audition because I wanted to visit New York while doing the thing I love. I've already been, so I'm most excited for seeing returning members and going to New York once again," he said.

Another returning performer, Miller, decided to apply again "because it's an efficient and skilled band with great experiences all around. I'm most excited for the days that I get to chill with the drumline and explore

New York with close friends," he said.

Mass performed in the Macy's Parade for his first time. He decided to audition after seeing some of his fellow band members perform last year. "I'm super excited to be able to share this awesome experience with my friends and meet some other percussionists from across the country. I can't wait to hang out with them and bond during the trip," he said.

The seven band members arrived in New York several days before the parade to begin practice. The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade aired on NBC Thanksgiving morning at 9 a.m.



Student artists fuse up some fun with Potter's Guild

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Ten students gathered Nov. 16 in the ceramics room for an artistic experience most people never get the chance to enjoy - glass fusing.

Led by art teacher and Potters' Guild adviser Mrs. Shannon Wade, the workshop began with a brief safety lesson, followed by a discussion of the different types of glass being used, the methods and tools necessary to cut the glass and the process of transforming the cut glass shards into wearable pendants.

Then, from 3:15 to 5 p.m., the students cut, snipped, and glued together pieces of multicolored glass to form intricate patchwork designs on their pendants.

"Don't be mad at the glass; it's not the glass's fault," Mrs. Wade said to seventh grader

Sofia Santana as she was having trouble cutting a particularly thick piece of glass. Each student was encouraged to put together four or five pendants to make the most of the experience. The glass glue holding the pendants' pieces together dried overnight, and Mrs. Wade fired the pendants in the kiln the next day to melt and fuse the glass into the final product.

Potters' Guild hosts two of these glass-fusing workshops every year, usually around the holidays and before Mother's Day because the pendants make great gifts. Freshman Lidya Sezer, who attended the workshop, said: "I've done this [glass fusing] before, so [when I heard about the event] I was like 'oh, that's cool' and I thought of making a pendant for my mom."

Mrs. Wade loves the enthusiasm the workshop's participants

show toward visual art because it mirrors her own love for it. "Art's pretty much my life; it has been for a long time. I love art, all aspects of art, no matter what it is," Mrs. Wade, who teaches Ceramics, Sculpture, 3-D Art and

Visual Concepts, said. But when it comes to the workshop in particular, Wade said she "loves the ultimate end result. Students love the glass; it's beautiful, and they just seem excited about art."



SHARDS OF COLOR: Snow Kang, Yunyun Kuang, Aubrey Caprara and English teacher Mrs. Jennifer Caprara decide which colors of glass to use to make their pendants at the Potters' Guild glass-fusing workshop Nov. 16. (Photo/Andrew Kolondra Jr.)

CONTENTS

NEWS	A3
EDITORIAL & OPINIONS	B6
FEATURES	C10
ENTERTAINMENT	D16
SPORTS	E20

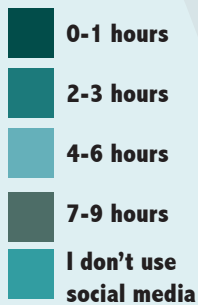
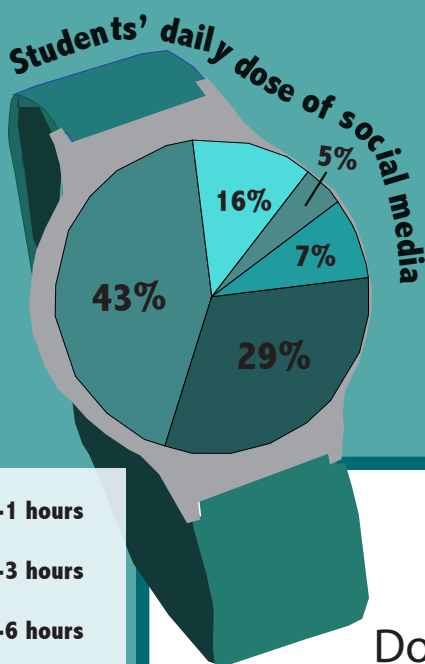


Social Media

Social Studies:

How students use social media

Compiled by Amber Bhutta, Katherine Quesada and Skylar Britton



Sumera Subzwari

Social Media Star:

Senior Sumera Subzwari joined the ranks of Instagram food bloggers in April 2016 and has garnered more than 2,000 followers since the creation of her Instagram account, @sssubzwari.

"I honestly didn't even intend on growing a following; it just gradually increased over time, and I'm still really surprised whenever I gain followers," Subzwari said.



(Photos/Sumera Subzwari)

Contradictory Comments

Does social media have a positive effect on our lives?



Elysa Goldberg | Centerspread Editor
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When I think of social media, I immediately think of multiple negatives: cyberbullying, online predators, the lack of interaction between real-life people—the list goes on.

However, social media has positive sides, too, and is not the scary monster that many people may think it is.

With social media, people can connect with others similar to them and instantly find information.

According to a report by Common Sense Media, 20 percent of teens say social media makes them feel more confident as opposed to the 4 percent who say it does not. Simple comments on somebody's selfie such as "You're beautiful," or even a heart emoji can boost self-esteem.

Nowhere else can you find information as quickly as on the internet and social media. According to CNN, social networking sites, such as Twitter, Facebook and BuzzFeed, are the top news source for Americans.

Without the power of the internet and social media, it would take much longer to find out about breaking news.

Not everybody sitting behind a screen on social media is a bully or a predator. Yes, social media might not be the safest way to communicate, but in today's world, it is the most valid way to connect with others and learn about breaking news.

"I use social media because it makes me feel connected to people, whether I go to school with them or whether they live halfway across the world."
- junior Amy Kwon

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Recently, I deleted the Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and Facebook apps off my phone. Although many of my friends couldn't understand my decision, my reasoning was simple: the pressure to maintain a presence on social media was causing me an intense level of stress that I didn't fully notice until going off the grid.

Prior to deleting my social media, I scrolled through Instagram and refreshed my Snapchat as I walked to my classes and waited in lunch lines. I developed a habit of opening the folder on my phone and not looking up from my fluorescent screen until I bumped into someone or was approached by a friend.

In the weeks that followed the deletion, I began to gain a new appreciation for participating actively in the world around me and maintaining relationships, in person, with friends. I listened to music without reading Facebook posts. I called my friends to see how they were doing instead of inferring based on their Twitter feed. I talked to my mom in the car instead of catching up on posts I hadn't had the chance to see during the day.

Social media has undoubtedly played an important role in connecting friends and family across the globe, but this interconnectivity can cost us meaningful interactions in the real world. Although I haven't deleted my accounts and may return to social media eventually, I recommend reducing social media usage to anyone feeling stressed or overwhelmed.

"The interactions aren't very real on social media, and I feel like life is easier without it."
- sophomore Eric Bazail

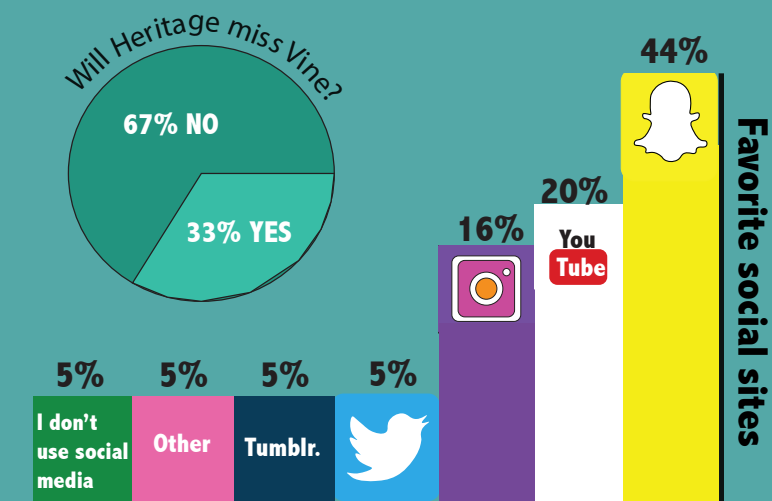
(Graphics/Katherine Quesada)

Unraveling the grape Vine

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The shutdown of the popular mobile app Vine was announced Oct. 27 by Twitter, which owns the social media platform. Many were surprised, especially Vine's core supporters and constituents. Experts in the social media industry cited a declining interest and stagnant user base as core concerns for Twitter and speculated that Twitter did not find much strategic or monetary value in Vine by the time of its closing.

For those concerned about losing their favorite videos, Vine will not close down its desktop site and previously published Vines will be able to be viewed there, as only the mobile app will become defunct. The format of Vine has not disappeared, though, as Vine had pushed Instagram to allow users to record and publish 60 second videos beginning in 2013, opening the way for other social media platforms to fill the gap. Vine has had a great cultural impact among younger people, creating many new internet stars such as Ruth B and Zach King who have since moved on to other media platforms, and it has opened up a whole new platform of social media. Vine will be remembered for opening the floodgates for a new species of content sharing.



All statistics based on a poll of 251 students, grades 7-12.



News

Progressive Generation discusses diversity

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High school principal Mrs. Elise Blum and 14 students gathered during lunch with one goal in mind: seeking solutions to race and cultural issues on campus.

Progressive Generation's event, led by club president and junior Kamryn Washington, adviser Mrs. Audrey Spicer and Mrs. Blum, shed light on pressing issues and allowed students to voice their concerns.

The idea for the discussion began with Mrs. Blum, who was inspired by Progressive Generation's progress in facilitating conversations about race and diversity the previous year. When she noticed these conversations had stopped, she reached out to the club and scheduled the Nov. 16 lunch event.

"One of the things I love most about this school is its diversity," Mrs. Blum said. She explained she wants the campus to be a more inclusive place for every student.

Students first discussed teacher sensitivity to race and culture. In response to students' claims that they have felt uncomfortable in the classroom at times, Mrs. Blum expressed her interest in incorporating more "diversity instruction" into teacher training and allowing students of a wide range of backgrounds to meet with teachers, history teachers in particular, to explain how they feel about sensitive issues that are part of the curriculum.

Additionally, according to Mrs. Blum, the English department will undergo a "curriculum redesign" to expand its reading lists.

The new required reading will maintain a focus on classical literature to prepare students for college, but it will include more African-American writers and authors from various cultures. The group proceeded to discuss how to deal with offensive and belittling comments, attempting to answer the



TOP: Mrs. Spicer and Mrs. Blum suggest ways for students to make their voices heard when insensitive comments make them uncomfortable. "You have to find the words," Mrs. Spicer said. "It's hard, but you have to find the words."
BOTTOM: Progressive Generation president Kamryn Washington (surrounded by junior Alyssa Hartley, left, and sophomore Ariann Barker, right) explains the purpose of the event to the students in attendance. Washington listed the topics the members would discuss, including teacher racial and cultural sensitivity. (Photos/Stella Ikpatt)

question, "How do we empower ourselves to speak directly to someone and say 'that's not acceptable?'"

"I know I speak for everyone in the Upper School office when I say that we would want you to come in," she said.

"Why are you so afraid to be your ethnicity? You're just another human being who happens to be this ethnicity. Embrace who you are," Mrs. Spicer said.

Progressive Generation hopes to host another discussion after school to continue the discussion on making the campus as welcoming as possible.

"Changes are slow, and change in culture takes time," Mrs. Blum said.

"That's why we all have to work together."

"Why are you so afraid to be your ethnicity? You're just another human being who happens to be this ethnicity." - Mrs. Audrey Spicer

Mrs. Blum expressed the importance of reporting problems (no matter how trivial they may seem) to her or to a guidance counselor.

Throughout the discussion, Mrs. Blum and Mrs. Spicer encouraged students to stand up for their beliefs and embrace their backgrounds.

PTO kicks off the season with ninth annual Holiday Bazaar

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To kick off the holiday shopping season, the PTO is hosting its ninth annual AHS Holiday Bazaar.

The event will host more than 44 vendors. Of those, 18 are returning vendors from previous years such as Charmz and ZEN. The bazaar is in the Gymnasium from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 13.

"We are careful about who we allow as we want to make sure we bring the hottest and most interesting things," Upper School PTO president Lee Gregory said.

With 26 new vendors, the event will have a myriad of gift options for students to choose from and give to friends or family.

Items range from \$1 to \$200 and include anything from jewelry for that special someone to Heritage swag for sporting events.

Additionally, grades PK3 through sixth grade, chorus and dance troupe will perform for shoppers.

The event not only includes merchandise and entertainment but also food.

The PTO will be manning its bakery, Sweet Street,

along the canal behind the 7000 building as well as have a Chick-fil-A vendor on campus.

"We host an event like this to bring our school community together," Gregory said. "The event involves the US PTO Board members, parent volunteers and [club members] who work for volunteer hours."

The event is open to all Heritage students, parents and faculty to help with holiday shopping.

"It's very popular throughout the entire American Heritage School. It brings

family members, friends and extended family members [and] gives families a chance to shop for the holidays while enjoying performances all day," Gregory said.

The event costs \$5,000 to host and is funded by the food vendor and Sweet Street sales. Clubs selling 50/50 raffle tickets receive a portion of the profits to donate to a charity of their choice.

The bazaar is a must-go-to event to complete holiday shopping while eating chicken nuggets and enjoying the beautiful singing voices of elementary students.



Asa's Analysis

BY ASA ZARETSKY
**How the Democrats
lost 2016**

The year 2016 has had some major electoral losses for the Democratic Party. The Republican Party now holds more power than it ever has since 2006. It will also likely be able to fill the vacancy left by the passing of Justice Antonin Scalia on the Supreme Court and may have the ability to fill the seats of two more justices.

The Democratic Party seemed to have the wind behind its sails, riding in with Hillary Clinton for president, retaking the Senate and thinning the Republican majority in the House of Representatives, but all those hopes were dashed as the results of Nov. 8 rolled in. Now, with Donald Trump as president and weak gains in both chambers of Congress, the situation is dire for the Democratic Party.

There are three main reasons for these losses. The Democrats first had trouble rallying millennials to turn out and vote. Clinton proved to be uninspiring for many of them, and Bernie Sanders' insurgent campaign alienated many more from Clinton.

The lack of a charismatic figure such as President Obama on the ticket also dampened enthusiasm for the Democrats up and down the ballot.

The Democratic Party also failed in its outreach toward many working class Midwesterners who either did not vote or voted for Trump. Clinton seemed to offer them little focused policy while Trump, with his bombast and populism, gave them some hope, if weak.

Finally, the Democrats were weakened by the high disapproval rates, justified or not, of Clinton with moderate independents and Republicans. The Senate and House Democrats in Wisconsin, Missouri, Indiana and Florida were also weakened by her performances in their states and lost opportunities to make gains.

To begin fixing these problems, the Democrats have to adopt a more populist economic platform and focus on turning out the base supporters in the midterms of 2017, 2018 and 2019 in order to limit as much as President-elect Trump's agenda as they can. Next, they need to launch a much more coordinated campaign in 2020 with a much fresher and newer candidate for the party who has not been in politics or the public eye as Clinton. The Democrats need new blood and a new face to start winning again.



News

Delegates debate in Model UN mock conference

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Classrooms became committee rooms and the teacher's lounge became a "crisis room" at Model UN's annual mock conference, where students filled the downstairs 9000 building for a day of discussing and debating.

Although the school conference followed Model UN's back-to-back Vanderbilt University and William and Mary trips and was postponed from Oct. 8 to Nov. 19 due to Hurricane Matthew, more than 80 delegates gathered to tackle issues ranging from nuclear technology to the Iranian Revolution.

According to Model UN president and senior Amanda Wasserman: "We do [the mock conference] because Model UN is a really competitive activity at our school. Given the logistics of traveling, we can only bring a finite number of students [on trips]."

The mock conference allowed members of the club's executive board, which consists of junior and senior outstanding delegates and leaders, to assess the performance of the newer delegates.

Students arrived on campus at noon and received placards with the name of the country

they represented. Following sign-in, students went to their committee room, debated for one session (for 2 1/2 hours), took a lunch break, and returned for the second and third sessions. By 7:15 p.m., delegates wrapped up their committee sessions and attended an award ceremony.

"This year, we had the [American Heritage] Boca-Delray delegates coming to join us, so we had 15 to 20 of them. We're really widening our conference and making it so other schools can start coming," Wasserman said.

Another difference in this year's mock conference is the way committee topics were

assigned. In previous years, the club president picked committees and assigned topics and chairs, but this year, the executive board strove to make the process "more engaging."

"We let people pair themselves up as chairs and then pick a committee that they've done before and a topic they're interested in," Wasserman said.

The crisis committee, the "most competitive" committee, according to Wasserman, focused on the events leading up to the Iranian Revolution. In order to partake in crisis committees, students must demonstrate excellence in the general

assembly, a large body in which students debate general topics, whereas a crisis committee requires intimate knowledge of the topic.

Model UN's next major conference will take place in January at the University of Florida's "GatorMUN." Fifty delegates will attend, more than the club has ever brought on a trip. The delegates will be split into two teams given the number of students who would like to attend and conference restrictions.

"This way, everyone can participate without worrying about awards — they can just go and have fun," Wasserman said.



BALL RULES ALL: Sophomore Paridhi Kapadia delivers a speech in the specialized committee of the AFL-NFL merger. Kapadia won the Best Delegate award representing Wellington Mara. (Photo/Alec Chao)



AN EXPLOSIVE COMMITTEE: Members of the Committee on Science and Technology for Development listen as a delegate speaks. Delegates discussed nuclear technology and drafted a resolution to regulate it. (Photo/Alec Chao)

Performers will 'slam poetry' at Open Mic Night

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To ring in the new year, Dead Poets Society (DPS) and National English Honor Society (NEHS) will be holding an Open Mic Night event on campus.

This is not the first Open Mic Night to be held by a Heritage-affiliated group or club. A similar event was organized by NEHS

and Lean In and held at Young At Art Children's Museum two years ago, and last year, DPS and NEHS collaborated to hold Open Mic Night toward the end of the school year. However, Dead Poets Society president and senior Ashley Stacy has new hopes for the event with the more recent collaboration between DPS and NEHS.

The goal of Open Mic Night is to provide a space for students to express their thoughts and feelings artistically, regardless of the type of medium.

"We want students to feel completely open and expressive in a welcoming space, so any type of performance is encouraged," Stacy said, remarking that past performances included

poetry and songs. Exhibited works do not need to be original; well-established poems, slam poems, songs, and other works are all eligible, as well.

The event emphasizes informality, so attendees and performers alike are encouraged to get comfortable.

"We get the chorus room as a performance space and [we]

all sit on blankets on the floor, so we do encourage people to bring blankets or sleeping bags to relax on," Stacy said. Attendees are not required to perform, either. "Students are welcome to come just to watch," Stacy said.

Open Mic Night is officially scheduled for the evening of Jan. 19 in the chorus room. There will be a \$2 fee to attend.

Global updates: What's happening in the world today

From presidential elections in the United States and Nicaragua to the refugee crisis and more, The Patriot Post has you covered with the latest news from around the globe.

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Europe

Nov. 13 marked a year after the Paris attacks where nearly 130 were killed by ISIS. French President Francois Hollande left plaques at attack sites and organized a memorial at the Bataclan Theatre for all those who perished. Following the memorial, singer-songwriter Sting performed at the site and donated the concert earnings to victim support charities.

United States

In an unanticipated turn of events, Donald Trump was elected president of the U.S. Nov. 8. Trump received 290 electoral votes, despite losing the popular vote to Hillary Clinton. Protests have sparked across the country from coast to coast with the first occurring in New York City outside of one of Trump's homes, Trump Towers. Trump met Obama at the White House Nov. 10, and they pledged to work together, beginning a transition between the president and president-elect. Trump will be sworn into office Jan. 20.

Africa

About 6,500 refugees from Libya crossed the Mediterranean and reached the coast of Italy Nov. 12. Doctors Without Borders moved 797 people to the doctors' ships for immediate medical care. Unfortunately, many of the refugees who set sail did not reach the coast of Italy. More than 3,165 people have been declared dead or missing. This year alone, about 270,000 migrants have traveled to Europe by sea.

Latin America

Nicaraguan president Daniel Ortega was elected for his fourth term in office by a landslide with his wife, Rosario Murillo, as his running mate. The election took place Nov. 6, with Ortega receiving 71 percent of the vote. However, opponents stated that 70 percent of eligible voters stayed at home. Ortega first served as president from 1985 to 1990. He was elected again in 2006 and later in 2011. He is a member of the Sandinista National Liberation Front party, which advocates democratic socialism.



News

Garage almost complete

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One of the moments the Class of 2017 has been waiting for is slowly approaching. The groundbreaking four-story parking garage is almost finished with the construction phase and should be available for seniors to use in February 2017. While administration is still working out the logistics and rules of the new lot, there are some regulations already in place.

Administration has already decided that there will be a second entrance to the parking lot to alleviate traffic and help run things more smoothly. Dr. Douglas Laurie has convinced the city of Plantation to allow the building of this second entrance in order to make sure that the parking garage does not back up traffic on West Broward Boulevard.

Construction workers are also working on installing a vehicle counter and numerous cameras for the safety of the students and faculty who will be parking in

the garage. Administration may mandate that, for accessibility, seniors primarily park on the first floor. This will make it easier for seniors to make it to class on time in the morning and coming back from lunch off-campus.

Unfortunately, due to the uncertainty of how many spots will be available after seniors and faculty have taken up space, juniors will continue to park at the remote lot. Nobody,

with the exception of parents picking up/dropping off students, will park at the church across the street, as the city of Plantation believes it is unsafe for students to continuously have to cross West Broward Boulevard to get on campus.

The lot across the street will be reserved for special events where parents will need to park there as the

parking garage will not be able to accommodate such a large number of vehicles.

Administration is still working out the kinks of the parking garage and will soon meet to finalize rules for the upcoming change to parking.



(Photo/Lauren Quintela)

New Fine Arts Department classes techs it up a notch

The new year/new semester will bring with it a new schedule of Technical Theater courses being offered in the Fine Arts Department. Here's what you need to know about it.

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Technical Theater 1: Take a hands-on approach to the fundamentals of Theater Tech. This class is project-based and teaches the basics of scene construction. Offered periods one and two. Prerequisites: none.

Playwriting: Master the process of writing plays, from formulating ideas to composing final scripts. Through workshops, peer review and journaling exercises, students will develop a unique voice for their dramatic works and compose a complete one-act play by the end of the semester. Offered period one. Prerequisites: none.

Junior High Technical Theater 1 and 2: As a junior high student, get introduced to the world of theater tech and develop basic theater skills. Students will have opportunities to work on school productions. Tech 1 offered periods three and nine. Tech 2 offered period two. Tech 1 prerequisites: none. Tech 2 prerequisites: Tech 1.

Sound Design for the Theater: Explore sound design and sound technology on an intermediate level. Students will learn to operate the Center for the Arts' sound system equipment, work in the Theater Tech Lab on design projects, and serve as sound board operators for school productions. Offered period four. Prerequisites: Technical Theater 1 or Junior High Tech 1 and 2.

Scenic Painting: Learn foundations of color and scenic art techniques. Students will paint props, sets and backdrops for Heritage productions. Offered period one. Prerequisites: Technical Theater 1 or Junior High Tech 1 and 2.

Stagecraft 1: Learn the skills necessary to create a theatrical production. Students' projects will be used in school productions. Offered period eight. Prerequisites: Technical Theater 1 or Junior High Tech 1 and 2.

Stagecraft 2: Extend your Stagecraft 1 knowledge by helping in the design process and technical direction of school productions. Offered period eight. Prerequisites: Stagecraft 1.

Stage Management: Develop the personal skills, computer savvy and business knowledge to run a successful theater production. Students will complete work in the Theater Tech Lab, including word processing, desktop publishing, spreadsheets and tracking sheets, and apply their skills to work on school productions. Offered period two. Prerequisites: Technical Theater 1 or Junior High Tech 1 and 2.

JH mathletes win half of all possible awards

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It's not often that junior high students get the opportunity to compete in math competitions. The school hosted its first junior high mathematics invitational math competition Nov. 12 from 8 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Ranging from fifth to eighth grade, 137 students from nine different schools and 48 competitors from American Heritage competed for a trophy.

Students took two tests, the one-hour multiple choice test at 9 a.m. and the one-hour free-response test at 10:45

a.m., consisting of Pre-Algebra, Geometry, and Algebra I. The tests were written by the school's alumni.

After the students finished, the tests were graded AMC (American Mathematics Competition) style - a full point for a correct answer, half a point for a

blank, and no points for a wrong answer - by a program developed by Dr. Radleigh Santos.

"The event ran smoothly for our first junior high competition. The test challenged the top students. I really enjoyed it," math competition director Mr. Richard Rovere said.

The competition concluded with an awards ceremony at 2 p.m. which offered 10 top scorers in each grade a trophy. Overall, Heritage won 15 out of 30 trophies.

The school's junior high students are working their way up to becoming future high school mathletes as shown in their successes this competition.

News Brief

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Winter Concerts

Throughout the beginning of December, students will showcase their musical and theatrical talents for students, teachers and family members. The Dance concert is Dec. 1, the Orchestra concert is Dec. 13, the Chorus concert is Dec. 12 and the Band concert is Dec. 13. All of the concerts have free admission.

Angel Tree

Students from National Honor Society are going to first period classes to collect money to purchase holiday gifts for /homeless and disadvantaged children. NHS volunteered to purchase gifts for 50 "angels." A child's name, age and desired gift are placed on an angel, and after the proceeds are collected, students go to Toys "R" Us to pick up the toys for delivery.

The profits received from Trunk-or-Treat along with student donations will make 50 underprivileged children happy this holiday season.

History Bowl

The History Bowl Team traveled to The National History Bee and Bowl at Archimedeian Upper Conservatory in Kendale Lakes, FL Saturday, Nov. 19. The team placed 13th out of 38 schools. There will be two more competitions in January and February.

Heritage For Humanity

Heritage For Humanity is hosting a furniture drive Dec. 10. The event will take place in the 9000 building from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Parents and families of students can bring a variety of household items for the collection. Some parents will volunteer their trucks and time to transport the furniture from the campus to The Habitat Restore in Fort Lauderdale.

Glenbrooks Debate

The Speech and Debate Team traveled to Chicago Nov. 18-20. The team brought 25 students to compete against the best students from all over the country. The following students placed:

• Congress:

Freshman Luca Zislin:
Semifinalist
Junior Christopher Matei:
Semifinalist
Junior Nicolas Fonseca:
9th Place

• Lincoln Douglas:

Junior David Min:
Double Octofinalist

• Original Oratory:

Sophomore Jordyn Allen:
Quarterfinalist

JH Math Winners	Seventh Grade	Eighth Grade
Sixth Grade 1st - Tyler Lindh 2nd - Juan Otero 3rd - Alejandra Abramson 7th - Niles Alexis 10th - Amari Porter	1st - Rohan Kumar 2nd - Philip Nenov 3rd - Stephen Levine 4th - Nicolas Fernandez-Baigun 6th - Adam Beck 8th - Megan Yang	2nd - Iris Lang 6th - Anisa Haffizulla 8th - Gauri Kasarla 9th - Adbul-Jalil Dania



EDITORIALS & OPINIONS

Political correctness goes overboard

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It's quite difficult to have much respect for modern journalism in today's increasingly politically correct world.

When writers can be harshly shunned for describing groups of people as "black" instead of African-American or using the word "both" instead of "all" to describe genders, something has gone awry.

The problem is plain and simple: political correctness has long been censoring the media.

Proponents of political correctness claim that its goal is the prevention of discomfort among people on the basis of sex or gender, race or religion. However, experience has shown that its true goal lies

in censoring the opinions of those who do not agree with politically correct principles.

For example, today one can receive backlash for not addressing a person with his/her/nir/vis/eir/hir/zir/xyr (from the Gender Neutral Pronoun Blog) "preferred pronouns," even if that person does not support the transgender/nonbinary movement. What happened to the time when people had freedom of speech? What happened to the time when people did not need "safe spaces" to hide from opinions not aligned with their own?

Political correctness is weakening the hearts and minds of not only its supporters, many of whom are so sensitive they break down upon hearing words they dislike, but also its opponents, who feel like the

uphill battle is not worth the toil. A brave few have stood up to the preferred pronoun pressure, attempting to satirize the issue. A student at the University of Michigan describes a new policy instituted by the school through which students may submit their preferred pronouns to avoid confusion.

This student decided to request "His Majesty" as his preferred pronoun, and, like all other requests, His Majesty's could not be ignored, as that would certainly offend His Majesty.

In City Journal's "When P.C. Tigers Attack," John Leo explains that "one of the feminists who used to write angry letters to the editor in the 1960s about sexist words such as 'fireman,' 'chairman' and 'mankind'" has become an administrator in the Human

Resources Department at Princeton University and banned language of that sort from all campus documents. He goes on to comically note the lack of clarity regarding words such as "humanity," "handyman" and "henchman," and says that to be safe he has already switched to "handyperson," "henchindividual" and "persons of hench."

Leo discusses another problem that could arise, in which someone falls overboard on a Princeton Cruise. Simply shouting "man overboard" would be misogynistic, but the gender-neutral "person overboard" could be interpreted as a rejection of the person's personal gender choice. "Possible male or female overboard" could be seen as non-inclusive when we consider that somewhere

between two and 32 genders exist and we would be committing a micro-aggression by neglecting to say them all.

Political correctness leaves us with no other option than to "let the individual drown and get the gender right later at the autopsy," Leo said.

These kinds of gender-neutral words and tedious thought processes are exactly the problem. They exemplify everything wrong with the phenomenon of political correctness as a whole, even though they are just one incarnation.

We should not be prevented from using English language for fear of offending the weak hearts of the perpetually politically correct. If that isn't censorship, then I don't know what is.

(Graphic/Skylar Britton)

Don't submit to rampant media sensationalism

The media tends to overexaggerate headlines in order to draw people into their articles. Because of this 'media sensationalism,' people tend to believe untrue statements made about current issues. Next time you find a controversial article, do your research.

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In the age of BuzzFeed and Twitter, clickbait has become common place in the mass market of international news and media.

From items as mundane as "17 Reasons Why Your Cat May Actually Be a Dog" to politically biased rhetoric, the desire for attention and a need for site traffic has largely soiled the sanctity of Internet news through the alteration of headlines for increased appeal.

However, that is to say nothing of sensationalism and yellow journalism, arguably two of the most dangerous plagues to modern news gathering since the late 19th century.

Just because it is rampant doesn't mean we should become desensitized to it. The threat of media sensationalism

derives its roots from the conflict between newspaper magnates Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst, owners of the "New York World" and "New York Journal," respectively. In an attempt to increase circulation in a competitive market, Hearst and Pulitzer ran scandalous front-cover stories—often discussing taboo subjects such as adultery—and hyperbolic headlines sometimes up to eight sentences long; a headline describing a high-rise building fire published in the "New York Examiner" is an example you may see that highlights sensationalism.

Publications such as "The Globe" purposely publish scandalous material simply to move copies and garner attention for events that are more often than not patently false. Even reputable publications fall prey to sensationalism. You may

remember a fairly recent story about Australia's Great Barrier Reef published by Outside Magazine, which eulogized the reef following its supposed death after 25 million years of existence.

Though coral bleaching

has made the reef's future somewhat uncertain, it is certainly not dead. Nevertheless, the story spread

like wildfire, provoking the ire of staunch environmentalists and the sorrow of those who have long admired the reef for its vibrancy and biodiversity. Scientists and more informed members of the public alike attempted to correct the misunderstanding, but the damage

had been done. After the dust had settled, the magazine received acerbic criticism for its article's prematurity and its hindrance to current Great Barrier Reef restoration efforts. Of course, "Outside" was held responsible, but this is perhaps an

anomaly. Even reputable outlets such as CNN rely on melodramatic headlines, leads and designs to garner attention and ratings.

Take, for example, the gaudy graphics created for broadcast news following a tragedy such as the 2015 Paris attacks or the absurd proposals of reasons for Malaysian Airlines Flight 370's disappearance.

We are ultimately misinformed, and yet we click and watch and continue the vicious cycle that we simultaneously decry. If we are to truly end sensationalism, we must not submit to our exploitation by the media.

Check sources, check multiple outlets, do your own fact checking and certainly don't take any headline at face value. Refer to Betteridge's law of headlines: If a headline asks a question of you, chances are the answer is 'no.'

Comical teachers create a better learning environment

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We've all had those teachers — the ones who intentionally freak us out with unrelated, complicated, terrifying calculus equations just to make us laugh when their irrelevance to the class is revealed.

The ones who play inescapable, obnoxious music videos before class starts on Fridays. The ones who enjoy talking about the NFL just as much as they enjoy discussing civil liberties.

These teachers, who engage with students on a human level through the use of humor, are far more effective educators than those who come in with the sole purpose of powering through the curriculum and neglect to make meaningful connections with their students.

In order to meet graduation requirements, most students end up taking several

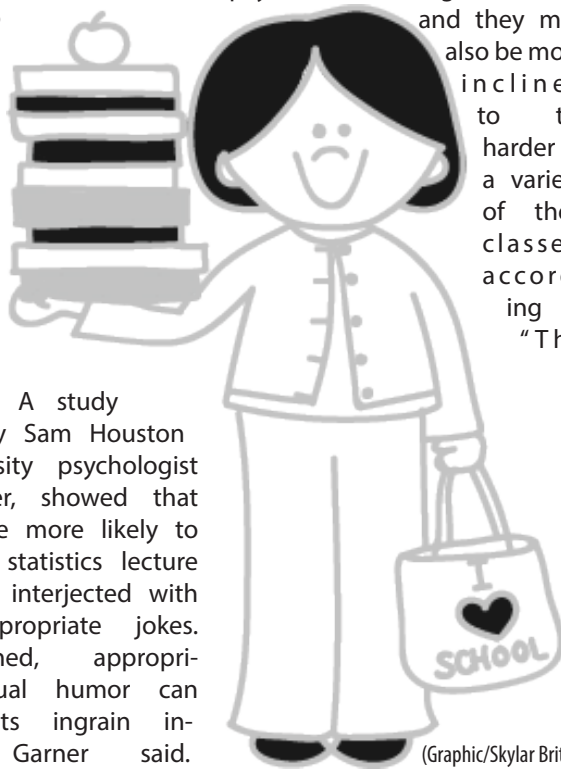
classes that do not align with their interests in any given year.

Without teachers who work to make the classroom a welcoming, engaging environment, these courses can be burdensome and downright boring. A study conducted by Sam Houston State University psychologist Randy Garner, showed that students were more likely to remember a statistics lecture when it was interjected with relevant, appropriate jokes.

"Well-planned, appropriate, contextual humor can help students ingrain information," Garner said.

When teachers use humor, students are far more likely to pay attention and get involved,

and they may also be more inclined to try harder in a variety of their classes, according to "The



(Graphic/Skylar Britton)

Teaching Profession's" report entitled "Humor in the Classroom: 40 Years of Research."

The report further notes that humor can create a sense of cohesion in the classroom, which helps reduce stress and anxiety by humanizing instructors.

Just as we've all had humorous instructors, we've also had ones who remained distant and cold throughout the year.

This hurts the learning process, as students will be less likely to communicate issues with a professor they fear or don't feel comfortable around. Often, students will drop a class they are struggling in without contacting their instructor.

This can be partially attributed to a level of discomfort between teachers and students that wouldn't exist if instructors taught on a more human level.

Additionally, in "Teaching of Psychology," Ohio University

psychology professors Mark Shatz and Frank LoSchiavo discovered that when professors used self-deprecating jokes, top 10 lists and psychology-related cartoons in an online introductory psychology course, their students logged onto the class website more often and were more likely to report enjoying the class.

"Professors' jobs are to educate, not to entertain," said Shatz. "But if humor can make the learning process more enjoyable, then I think everybody benefits as a result."

Teachers, using humor won't make us think you don't take educating us seriously.

It won't make us think your class is a joke. It won't make us lose respect for you.

Instead, it proves that you're human, too, and motivates us to actively enjoy your class and commit to truly learning.



Editorials & Opinions

SparkNotes doesn't spark much

Reviewing on SparkNotes can be helpful after you've already read a book for English class, but relying solely on online summaries of assigned reading has negative consequences.

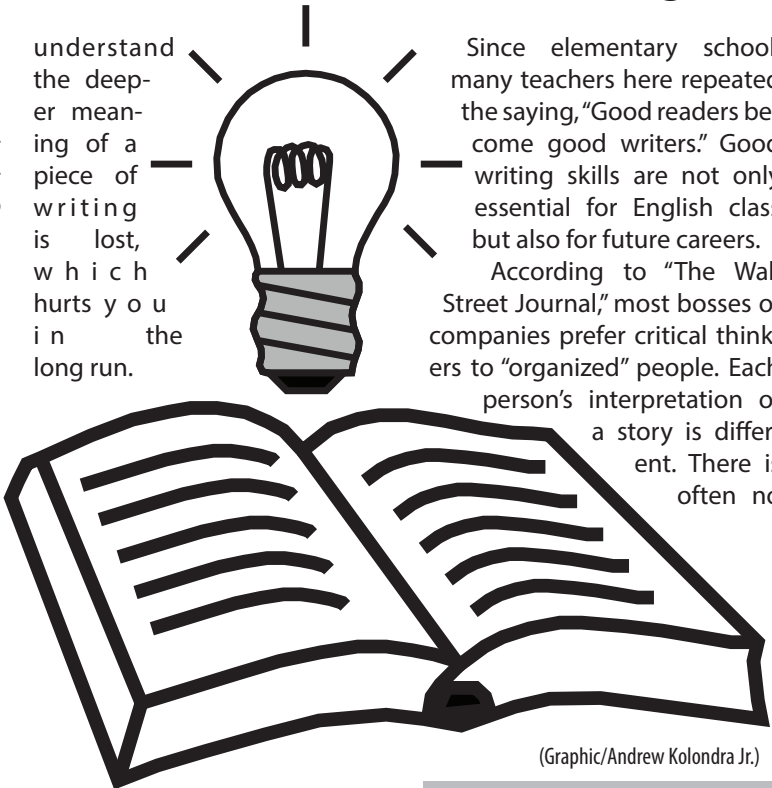
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Countless students turn to Sparknotes before a literature test, so why does using this website "spark" so much controversy?

Sparknotes, Shmoop and other online summaries should not serve as a substitute for actually reading the books assigned in English courses. It is one thing to use Sparknotes to refresh your memory, but quite another try and utilize it as a replacement for reading.

Reading is much more than completing the task of guiding your eyes across words on a page. The more important skill gained from reading is the ability to analyze. If you just read Sparknotes, the skill to

understand the deeper meaning of a piece of writing is lost, which hurts you in the long run.



(Graphic/Andrew Kolondra Jr.)

Since elementary school, many teachers here repeated the saying, "Good readers become good writers." Good writing skills are not only essential for English class but also for future careers.

According to "The Wall Street Journal," most bosses of companies prefer critical thinkers to "organized" people. Each person's interpretation of a story is different. There is often no

black-and-white, right or wrong answer. However, it is important to be able to analyze for yourself to practice the skill of critical thinking.

It is nearly impossible to acquire critical reading and analytic skills if all you read is a summary of the book.

Additionally, Sparknotes does not convey the author's writing style and subtle nuances, as both are lost when the book is summarized. For example, symbols in stories are only vaguely touched upon in many online summaries.

Often, the symbols discussed in online summaries are simplistic and obvious. The author may spend a great deal of time on certain parts of the story, crafting vivid descriptions and using

purposeful diction, yet this will not be conveyed properly in a one-page summary.

Another reason we read books is to make connections to real-life scenarios. Oftentimes, in TV shows, movies and conversations, references to books appear. Without actually reading, these references could be missed entirely.

Part of why we read books is to become more cultured and engage in other people's lives. Relating to situations comes more easily, due to our ability to pick up on subtle allusions.

Using Sparknotes is not necessarily a bad thing if it is done correctly, after reading the book. However, relying on it alone will only result in no actual benefits.

Don't fake hours

Students should not exaggerate their submitted community service hours. Serve because you want to, not for awards.

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Many students may see community service hours as a burden. How are students supposed to do schoolwork, have a social life and obtain the 120 service hours that are needed for graduation? For some students it may seem impossible and unimportant, therefore they cram all their hours in senior year.

Despite whether students cram or spread the hours throughout four years, they should not fake their hours or do activities solely because service hours are being rewarded. Students should instead serve the community in an honest way and want to help those around them even if service hours are not being awarded.

Some students may have friends or family members who work for a nonprofit organization who agreed to give them hours without actual service. This is not only unethical, but also unfair.

Other students have worked to complete their service obligation, so it is unfair that one gets the same reward (a

diploma) as the students who have truly worked much harder to meet the requirement.

The same goes for lying about how many hours a student served at a given time. Students should not say they served 10 hours at an event when they really did five.

These scenarios are equivalent, if not worse, to cheating on a test, for they show a lack of integrity.

With that being said, students should do community service not solely because they have to, but because they want to. Instead of completing community service to earn a special cord at graduation or a prestigious award such as a Silver Knight, students should understand that the school does not require them to do community service as "busy work."

Rather, the service hour requirement teaches us that by serving the community, we become a valuable asset in society.

Students should not fake their service hours and should be enthusiastic to help their community. Do not

think of service hours as an unnecessary requirement for graduation that just so happens to help the community. Instead think of it as the opposite — service hours are a way to help your community while fulfilling a minor requirement for graduation.



(Graphic/Andrew Kolondra Jr.)

Curtail the college competition

It can be difficult to deal with college rejections, especially if your friends get accepted to schools that rejected you. Either way, it's important to be mindful of how others may be feeling and show proper etiquette.

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Rejection is painful, and it might influence a student to eat an entire carton of ice cream in one sitting and throw a pity party. However, as crushing

remember the highly competitive nature of college admissions and realize that an admissions decision is not a judgment of

denied friends to completely forget their negative emotions, but do expect them to support you back rather than "guilt" you for being admitted.

Denied students: It is OK (in fact, it is healthy) to cry. While you're still coping with your admissions decision, snag a "consolation fortune cookie" from the guidance office to make the coping process a little bit sweeter. Bear in mind, however, that with thousands of incredibly diverse colleges all over the globe, chances are that more than one of these schools will be right for you.

Even the most successful individuals have faced rejection — both Warren Buffet and Steven

as rejection feels, it is inevitable in life. When colleges release admissions decisions, seniors must bear in mind the rules of "college acceptance etiquette" and cease the cutthroat college competition.

According to Kristin O'Rourke, a former social worker quoted in "USA Today," "Students need to understand that their lives don't depend on getting into one particular school and that there are alternatives." Unfortunately, feelings of unworthiness may blind students to this truth.

Watching a friend rejoice over an acceptance to a school which you were denied admission can lead to an onslaught of conflicting feelings — happiness for your friend, bitterness at the situation and confusion as to how a school deemed you "unworthy."

In spite of the barrage of emotions associated with rejection, seniors must

character. Countless factors influence the decision-making process, and with thousands of students seeking admission to the same school, most colleges simply cannot admit every prospective freshman.

It's OK to be rejected; in fact, it is normal. Rejection might even lead to future success, as it builds strength and character although it might not feel this way initially.

Admitted students: Support friends who are coping with rejection. Celebrate your accomplishment, and by all means, be proud — but be cautious of excessive boasting, which might exacerbate the feelings of insufficiency your classmates might be experiencing. Don't expect your waitlisted or

Spielberg were rejected from their dream schools. The truth is that everyone will experience failure in some capacity; what matters is how he or she copes with and learns from rejection. For instance, students should avoid distancing themselves from friends due to jealousy.

In order to foster a more comfortable environment for all seniors, students must exhibit admissions etiquette and put an end to the cutthroat competition so characteristic of the admissions process and trust that, come April, the pieces will fall in place, and everyone will end up in the right place.



(Graphic/Andrew Kolondra Jr.)



Editorials & Opinions

Glass ceiling remains intact

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When Hillary Clinton made the first crack in that highest glass ceiling by becoming the first woman ever to win the Democratic Party's nomination for presidency, there was no doubt in my mind she would make it to the White House. Not only has she been a staunch advocate for women, children and minority groups her entire career, but she has also made history as a senator, secretary of state and first lady. Few U.S. Presidential candidates have ever been as qualified as she is. However, during the early hours of Wednesday, Nov. 9, it was Donald J. Trump who was announced the 45th president of the United States – beating Clinton with 276 electoral votes to her 218 – a result that came as a shock to more than half the nation.

While many are quick to point out unfair coverage of Trump in the media or FBI Director James Comey's last-minute decision to re-scrutinize Clinton's emails as the sole cause of her unprecedented loss, in the end, Clinton's unprecedented loss was largely due to the DNC's failure to target states necessary to secure her victory – Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania. I say this lightly, because blame must also be placed on the 53 percent of white female voters and 63 percent of white male voters who backed a uniquely unqualified candidate.

My issue does not reside with the Republican Party. It resides in the fact that Republicans, many of whom good people, backed an openly sexist, xenophobic and homophobic candidate, for the sake of supporting their party. My issue resides in that fact that so many voters are comfortable viewing someone's inherent racism as a minor character flaw, rather than a deal-breaker to run a country. I was foolish enough to believe that America



MAKING HISTORY: Secretary Hillary Clinton takes the podium inside the Coral Springs Gymnasium at her Florida rally. That day, Clinton shared words of comfort about the passing of Miami Marlins pitcher Jose Fernandez and the disappearance of Robert "Bob" Levinson, a South Florida native and American private investigator. More than 2,000 people were in attendance. (Photo/Vanessa Ryals)

would not once again side with privileged white male superiority, despite it being what history has proven time and time again.

The glass ceiling may be cracked, but it is far from being broken. We are a female-majority country that failed to elect our first female president, despite it being absolutely necessary for the continuation of the social and economic progress our nation has made in the past eight years.

Though Clinton was a flawed candidate, her wrongdoings paled in comparison to the abounding list of good she has done. Her foundation, despite drawing speculation due to its lack of transparency, has raised over \$313 million for medical research, provided better maternal and child care to more than 110 million Americans,

treated 36 million people affected with tropical diseases in developing countries and collaborated with the American Heart Association (AHA) to provide more than 31,000 American schools with nutritious, reduced-price lunches.

But, of course, Trump's posing as a charity donor outshines all of this.

While the results of the presidential election and Trump's recent appointment of equally sexist and racist cabinet members raises questions for the future of this nation, there are still a few things to look forward to: Kamala Harris, the newly-elected Democratic senator of California, will be the first black woman to hold this office in nearly 20 years. Democrat Tammy Duckworth of Illinois, a military veteran who lost both her

legs in combat, defeated incumbent Republican senator Mark Kirk, and Ilhan Omar, a 34-year-old former refugee and Muslim, became America's first Somali-American female lawmaker.

Though I have come to terms with the fact that Clinton will not be America's first woman president, I am confident that due to her campaign and political engagement over the past thirty years, Clinton has set a historical precedent for girls interested in entering the political arena.

I believe one of the most important initiatives Clinton supporters can engage in moving forward is building upon the momentum she set and progressive platform she adopted. The election is over, but political engagement among women and youth is not; rather, a new era of inclusivity has begun.

In her concession speech, Clinton spoke candidly and addressed young girls, inspiring them to pursue their dreams and continue chipping away at the glass ceiling.

Many Democrats and Clinton supporters, displeased with the election, have deemed the political system "dead" and have resolved to decrease their engagement during Trump's term. We must not, however, allow our unhappiness to supersede our desire to create a meaningful dialogue and enact change.

Clinton said it best: "I want you to remember this. Our campaign was never about one person or even one election, it was about the country we love and about building an America that's hopeful, inclusive and big-hearted."

Keep trade free

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Free trade is one of the most important issues facing the United States, and yet some people do not know exactly what it means.

Many Americans choose one side or the other without sufficient knowledge on the matter, and therefore it is important to clarify what it means and what it does. Simply put, free trade involves buyers and sellers trading without restrictions and prohibitions put in place by governments. What is often referred to as free trade are agreements between countries to

freely trade certain things without restrictions.

A tariff, or a tax on a specific product or products from a certain entity, is the most common form of restriction a government places.

In the modern political scene, free trade has become a very polarizing issue, with the insurgent campaigns of Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders deriding it for supposedly throwing American jobs out of the country into other countries we have free trade agreements with, Mexico and China being frequently cited.

The 1990s era agreement between the United States, Canada and Mexico, that is the

most criticized of all trade agreements, NAFTA, is often blamed for the loss of many factory jobs in the Midwest. The Trans-Pacific Partnership, another trade agreement, was also derided by all major nominees in the 2016 election. In reality, free trade is not nearly the bogeyman its opponents make it out to be.

The decline in manufacturing jobs in the United States started in the early 1970s, and following passage of NAFTA, factory jobs remained somewhat steady for years until being damaged mainly by the 2008 Great Recession.

Free trade helps create jobs and increases affluence in the less developed parts of the world from factories and related businesses moving in. Opponents of free trade have some

legitimate concerns over labor protections and worker safety in these agreements with less developed countries.

One of the most cited concerns about the Trans-Pacific Partnership are the sections surrounding copyright law, which have been decried as draconian by opponents due to their strict restrictions.

As free trade is much more nuanced than a simple "good" or "bad" verdict, each agreement should be judged on its own merits.

For example, NAFTA has done a great deal to increase prosperity in Mexico and helped consumers throughout America, while the

TPP also functions on a geopolitical level, countering China's influence in East Asia as well as trade related portions. Free trade certainly requires examining, but it is an issue people should understand.



(Graphic/Vanessa Ryals)



Editorials & Opinions

Faceoff: pro-life or pro-choice?

Pro-life

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What is abortion, exactly? According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, abortion is “a medical procedure used to end a pregnancy and cause death to a fetus.” Abortion takes the life of a genetically independent individual and should not be legal, as it is morally and ethically wrong.

Life starts at conception. Yes, it really does. Open any biology book and notice the fact that at the moment of conception, a unique organism comes into existence in the form of an embryo that contains an exact number of chromosomes and genetic material, which distinguish it from its mother; therefore, an independent individual is present within its mother at the time of conception. However, abortion is legal up to 24 weeks, allowing this genetically unique individual to be terminated.

As early as five weeks, the baby has already begun developing its skin, nervous system, circulatory system, bone matter, muscles, kidneys and reproductive system. One week later, the baby pumps his own blood with his formed heart.

Fast forward to 10–12 weeks, and the baby has a recognizable human face, arms, hands, fingers, legs, feet and toes and can smile, suck on his thumb and respond to sounds. At 20 weeks, four weeks before the abortion age limit, a baby can feel pain, according to the Charlotte Lozier Institute, a medical information center. This means a baby from 20–24 weeks of age can feel the pain of being forcefully removed from his mother’s uterus. The baby forming in the womb is not just a sack of cells but a perfectly designed miniature human with functioning organs that allow him to move and live within his mother.

Moreover, the baby can survive outside of his mother. At 23 weeks, one week before the cut-off age for abortion, a baby has a 35 percent chance of survival outside of the womb, according to the March of Dimes organization.

This baby has a greater chance at surviving than someone suffering from brain or pancreatic cancer, yet we do everything we can to save the latter while we willingly terminate the former. A baby born at 24 weeks, the last week to legally terminate the baby, has a 70 percent chance of

survival outside of the womb. This number shoots up to 90 percent at 26 weeks, just 14 days after the allowed termination age.

Many abortion supporters argue for female rights, unless that female is in the womb. When a mother aborts her baby, she is aborting an individual who has the right to life, not a part of her body such as a fingernail or hair. The baby has its own set of DNA and chromosomes, and therefore is completely independent from the mother, only using her womb as a “safe” place for formation.

The baby is not the only person harmed in the process as abortion harms the mother as well. According to the American Pregnancy Association, abortion can cause damage to the cervix, scar the uterine lining, perforate the uterus or even lead to death. Although these risks are more common in late term abortions, if the abortion age limit is extended, more women will be at risk of permanently damaging their reproduction system.

Unfortunately, more than 57 million babies in the United States alone have been murdered at the hands of medical professionals since abortion’s legalization in 1973. This number approximates to neatly 1.3 million babies aborted each year. Some call pro-life supporters, who commonly agree with the death penalty, hypocrites for condoning the death of one person but not the other. However, those who are tried before a jury of their peers are sentenced to death as a result of committing a heinous crime. These 58 million babies did no wrong and committed no crime to deserve death.

The practice of abortion has become all too popular and no longer focuses on the health of the mother but has turned into a “convenience killing.” With 50 percent of unintentional pregnancies and 20 percent of total pregnancies ending in abortion, we must be a voice for the voiceless. There are other options apart from termination, such as the more than 2 million people waiting to adopt children of all races and genders, even those with disabilities.

We must think logically and realize that the child within a mother is alive and important. With the possibility of abortion age extension to full term—as suggested by some political figures—the time to act is now before this convenience killing continues to add names and lives to its hit list.

Pro-choice

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Since the 1973 Roe vs. Wade ruling, more than 58 million legal abortions have been performed in the U.S. While many pro-life extremists shudder at this statistic, the truth remains that a woman’s choice to terminate an unwanted or potentially dangerous pregnancy is a necessary and fundamental right.

To deny a woman an abortion, to leave her with no option but to carry and nourish a child she does not want, undergo the excruciating pain and permanent physical effects that accompany childbirth, somehow find the time, money and resources to devote to raising a child or else leave it up for adoption, is not only medical negligence, it is dehumanizing and immoral. Women are not baby-making machines, so as long as we are the ones who become pregnant it should be left up to us to decide when or if to become mothers.

Being pro-choice does not mean you are pro-abortion. It simply means you have enough decency and respect for others to recognize that no religion or government should interfere with such personal decisions.

Anyone with a uterus knows that entire lives depend on having complete control over what goes on in there, and the only guarantee of this control is to have safe and convenient access to birth control and abortive procedures. The decision to have a child is life altering and should not be taken lightly.

For some strange, unfounded reason, pro-life activists like to believe there are hordes of well-educated, wealthy, loving couples just waiting to adopt a child. However, this is not, and has never been, the case. Recent federal data from the Children’s Action Network reports that there are currently more than 400,000 children in foster care in the U.S.

While nearly 75 percent of these children are expected to be adopted out or else reunited with their birth families, approximately 20,000 young adults are expected to age out of the foster care system this year alone, without having ever known a family’s love. In addition to any psychological trauma these adolescents may face, they are also less likely than the general population to graduate from high school and secure a career. However, this is only one facet of the harsh reality of the lives of unwanted children.

Adoption alone is not a solution for abortion. It is also important to note the misinformation promulgated by the anti-abortion lobby – that abortion is murder, poses major health risks and leads to permanent psychological damage. A fetus is not a sentient being. It has no concept of life or a world outside of the womb. Even the vague scripture anti-choicers use to push their ideals fail to define when exactly life begins.

As far as the mother’s health goes, a woman’s risk of dying from an abortion is 0.6 in 100,000, while her risk of dying while giving birth is 8.8 in 100,000, and research conducted by the Guttmacher Institute shows that women who follow through with an abortion feel less regret and more relief than women who are denied abortions.

Now, the only valid argument against allowing unrestricted abortion is founded on the emotional opinion that life begins at conception. However, no amount of logic will sway the opinions of those who value the life of a fertilized egg more than that of its mother because those views can never be founded by logic or science, and one cannot argue emotions.

In the end, the same people who scream “abortion is murder” are usually the same people lashing out against gun control and promoting the death penalty. Abortion is murder, the death penalty is murder and unrestricted gun laws lead to the murder of thousands of actual sentient beings each year. Until certain Americans recognize the hypocrisy in this, women’s fundamental rights will always be at stake.

Passing laws to restrict or outlaw it will only make the process more difficult and dangerous for both mother and child, leading to the argument against late-term abortion, which is often caused by certain states’ harsh abortion laws and long, harrowing processes (usually including deception and scare tactics) to be approved for the procedure.

In states that criminalize abortion, many women opt to lay low and save enough money to travel somewhere where they can receive the procedure in a safe, efficient manner. Even if it is in the later stages of pregnancy.

No matter what the legal decision is for abortion, they will always happen. Women deserve to know the truth and have access to every option.

(Graphic/Isabel Chamberlain)

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|| Vanessa Ryals, 11th
|| Amanda Wasserman, 12th

This publication informs students about events, influences readers through editorials, and entertains through features and reviews, all achieved through responsible reporting. Opinion articles reflect the views of the staff and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the administration, faculty, or student body. We strongly encourage letters to the editor from students, parents, or faculty in response to these articles.

International student admitted abroad

Lauren Quintela | Co-Editor-in-Chief
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Senior Hongli (Linda) Yang traveled more than 8,235 miles from her birthplace of Suzhou, China, to South Florida more than three years ago — and, come August, she might travel overseas once more. Yang, who hopes to explore other parts of the world, is applying to colleges abroad and has already received her first acceptance from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland.

Currently in her fourth year living in America (she decided to receive her high school education in America, and her agent recommended Heritage), Yang believes she is accustomed to

living away from home, which will make the transition easier if she decides to move abroad again for college.

"I am already away from home, so I don't mind going from America to the United Kingdom," she said.

Yang learned of her acceptance to the University of Edinburgh, the sixth oldest university in the English-speaking world, late October. An aspiring environmental engineer hoping to positively impact the global warming crisis, Yang was drawn to the university's engineering program.

In addition to applying to the University of Edinburgh, Yang applied to the University of Cambridge in England. Because

she plans on entering the field of engineering, she was required to take a "pre-interview" physics and math test at the University of Florida (UF).

"The test was only two hours long, but I had to take a bus to UF, so the whole process took me two days. Each bus ride was six hours long," she said.

However, according to Yang, most of her applications were not as time-intensive.

"The application process for UK schools is actually a bit easier than that of U.S. schools. They have a similar system like the Common App called UCAS [Universities and Colleges Admissions Service], and I can fill out my entire application on that website," she said. "Most

schools I applied to did not require any extra materials except for Cambridge."

Yang has yet to decide where she will attend college — either in the United States or in Europe — but she is certain that she wants to experience other parts of the globe and continue her education away from home, even though she considers Suzhou a "beautiful city."

"I am quite confident that I can adapt to any new environment and enjoy it," Yang said.



ENTHUSIASTIC ENGINEER: Yang participated in the Yale Young Global Scholars program, where she discovered the interest in environmental engineering she hopes to pursue in either America or Europe. She received the certificate (above) after presenting her project on sustainable development. (Photo/Sydney Song)

Seniors cast their first vote in presidential election

Alex Becker | Staff Writer
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No matter what skeptics may say, every single vote counts. Maybe it's true that one vote won't sway the entire election, but voting is undoubtedly important, especially in a race where the candidates are so different.

This election, some of our very own students cast their vote for the first time.

Seniors Bailey Braeseke, Ashley Stacy and Edward Quaye were only a few of the students able to vote in this year's election. Braeseke, Stacy and Quaye all voted for the first time ever as early voters.

"There were a lot more people there than I expected because I didn't think anyone cared enough to vote early," she said. Braeseke also said that many individuals were there to persuade voters in a certain direction.

"I enjoyed seeing how much people actually care about the issues and the candidates and people campaigning for candidates were really friendly and passionate without trying to force their views on you or force you to vote for them," she said.

However, Stacy and Quaye had shorter waiting experiences.

"My experience wasn't too bad; I'm definitely glad I did early voting because I didn't have to wait too long. The people

working at that location were all really nice to me, and it all went fairly smoothly," Stacy said.

Quaye agreed that early voting helped a lot. "Voting was faster than I expected," he said.

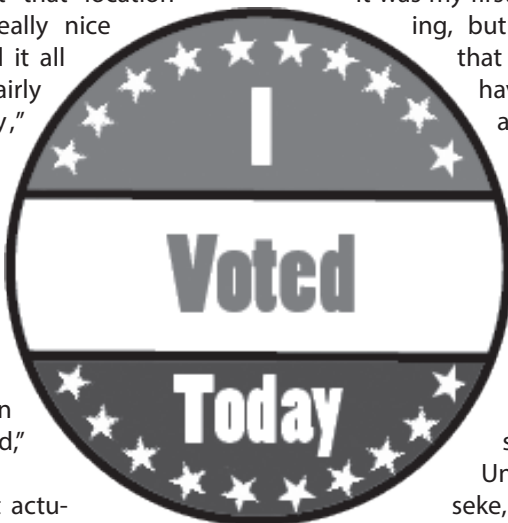
When it actually came down to voting, Braeseke was anxious to partake in the voting process. "I was excited because

it was my first time voting, but I wished that it could have been in an election where I really liked the candidate I was voting for," Braeseke said. Unlike Braeseke, Quaye was not excited to vote as he also did not like the candidates. "I was not really excited to vote,

but mostly because of the candidates," Quaye said. However, Stacy had a different attitude altogether. "I was definitely excited to vote. My mom and I went together, and it was both our first times. I didn't mention it to any of the poll workers, but my mom mentioned it and the person rang a bell and all the workers cheered," she said.

Overall, all three said they were glad they had voted because it was their civil duty, and they wanted their voice to be heard.

Braeseke said she was glad she voted "because while [her] vote isn't extremely significant, not voting would mean that [her] voice didn't count at all."



Homework for teachers: Grading students' assignments takes time

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Math

"Grading obviously varies depending on how many students you have and what kind of assessment you're giving," pre-calculus and calculus teacher Mrs. Leigh Chin said. For her pre-calculus class, she has about 100 students.

"Usually, it takes me about three hours to grade all of my tests for that class," she said. "For other classes, it often takes longer. For example, a statistics teacher grading FRQs will probably spend more time than I spend on my tests."

Despite students incessantly asking when grades will be posted, Chin said, "I understand that they're eager to see their results, and I also want to get tests graded as fast as possible."

Science

"For me, handwriting plays a large role in the amount of time I spend grading AP Bio essays," Mrs. Leya Joykutty, an Honors and AP Biology teacher said. "If a student has poor handwriting, I try to make a good attempt to decipher it, and it takes longer than other essays." With about 40 AP Biology students, Joykutty spends an average of five hours grading essays every time she administers them.

"Students don't like writing essays for my class, but grading them takes a long time for me as well," Joykutty said.

English

For the English Department, grading research papers is inevitable for most teachers.

"Obviously, research papers take longer than other assignments to grade," Mrs. Linda Gallagher, an English II Honors teacher, said. "I spend a minimum of 15 minutes on each student's paper, but sometimes I spend up to half an hour on one paper." Mrs. Gallagher teaches just about 100 students, and the 15 minutes spent on each student's paper truly adds up.

"In total, it takes me around three weeks to grade all of my research papers. I like to spend adequate time so each student knows both what they did well and how they can improve," Mrs. Gallagher said.

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Features

WTWU: Dr. Alfredo Pastor

Have you ever wondered what your teachers were like in high school? In our monthly teacher profile, we take a trip back to the past and explore what teachers were like ‘When They Were Us’ (WTWU).

Amanda Wasserman | Co-Assistant Editor
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For Dr. Pastor, Spanish teacher, author and soccer aficionado, teaching and interacting with students is more than a job, it is a passion.

Dr. Pastor grew up in Nerva, Spain, a city in the Andalucia region near Sevilla. Although he attended high-school in Nerva, Dr. Pastor moved to Sevilla for college, leaving a quaint, small town for the big city. While in Spain, he met his Bahamian wife and decided to move to Miami for a change of pace.

After arriving in South Florida, Dr. Pastor began taking courses at Florida International University (FIU) and earned both a Master’s and Doctoral degree. As a student, Dr. Pastor developed a love for teaching and began working as a professor at FIU, where he taught for seven years.

This year, Dr. Pastor began teaching Spanish I and Spanish III Honors — his first time teaching at the high school level. Although Dr. Pastor

understands the intricacies of the college system, he likes that high school classes focus more on actual instruction as opposed to research and publication in journals.

“I wanted to change my teaching in terms of trying high school. I already knew how the college system worked, so it was really about doing the same job in a different place,” he said.

Dr. Pastor, whose life has been largely defined by the immigrant experience, published a short story titled “El Cuadro, la Trompeta, y el Piano” in Spain for a fundraiser dedicated to providing treatment for a girl with a rare medical condition.

“[The story] is about my experience in the States as well as my hometown. It really encompasses everything — the good and the bad years,” he said.

Although this is the only piece of fiction that Dr. Pastor has written, he cites “100 Years of Solitude,” a novel by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, as the book that played the most formative

role in shaping his character. The story, which chronicles the trials and tribulations of a Colombian family over a century, contains elements of magical realism that intrigue Dr. Pastor.

“You read passages in the book that seem to be magical, but they are real. For example, there is someone who sees a boat on top of a tree. When you read that, you think, ‘Impossible!’ In the Amazon, however, the water level rises dramatically when it rains, so it actually is possible,” he said. In addition to reading and writing, Dr. Pastor enjoys spend time with his two children, ages 13 and 10, and following soccer. Although he no longer plays recreationally due to a back injury in college, he follows the sport professionally and loves watching the game.

Although Dr. Pastor has taught at Heritage for just a few months, his unique perspective and continued desire to expand his intellectual pursuits shine through and define him as an educator and author.



COLLEGE TO HIGH SCHOOL: Dr. Alfredo Pastor stands next to students during Homecoming week. He teaches Spanish III Honors to high school students. (Photo/Dr. Alfredo Pastor)

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C12 Stress and depression: You are not alone C13

Stress and depression are common mental conditions that many teens may experience. Many people, especially young adults who are still in school, confuse the two and say that they are 'depressed' when in reality, they are stressed. Below is some information about the differences between stress and depression. Always consult a physician if you suspect you may have symptoms of stress and/or depression.

Q&A with a guidance counselor: Mrs. Villalobos

Elysa Goldberg | Centerspread Editor
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Mrs. Nelsy Villalobos is a guidance counselor for freshmen and sophomores and has a Masters of Science degree in psychology from Carlos Albizu University and a Masters of social work degree from Florida International University.

What is depression?

"Depression can be described as a depressed mood or a loss of interest in daily activities for more than a two-week period. The mood has to be different from the person's 'baseline.' Also, the person's functions are impaired (social, occupational, educational), and the individual must have five of the nine specific symptoms: depressed mood or irritability, decreased interest or pleasure, significant weight change, changes in sleep [patterns],

fatigue, guilt, concentration [issues], suicidality." **What is stress?**

"Stress is a reaction to a stimulus that disturbs our physical or mental equilibrium. In other words, it's an omnipresent part of life. A stressful event can trigger the 'fight-or-flight' response, causing hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol to surge through the body. A little bit of stress, known as 'acute stress,' can be exciting - it keeps us active and alert. But long-term or 'chronic' stress, can have detrimental effects on health."

Is it easy to think you are depressed when in reality you are just overly stressed? Why?

"We should remember that overwhelming feelings of stress can lead to anxiety and/or depression. If a person feels that they can no longer function as they used to or are no

longer enjoying the things that they used to, they should seek help."

How can a student overcome stress?

"There are many ways to overcome stress. Some ways to attack stress include taking time for yourself, having someone to talk to, minding your diet, incorporating exercise and participating in activities that encourage a sense of peace. Individuals are encouraged to try different ones until they find what works for them."

How can a student overcome depression?

"Overcoming clinical depression or the symptoms noted above will likely require the assistance of a mental health professional. If experiencing the above symptoms in excess for an extended period of time, the first step is to let your family know or to notify your guidance team."

Do a lot of students come into guidance to complain that they are overly stressed in school?

"We have had a number of students with feelings of stress and anxiety. Our Guidance Department is available to assist those students and an Anxiety Prevention Group has been created to address such concerns. The group meets once per week after school and runs every semester. The group is facilitated by me. Students can speak to their guidance counselor or for more information if they wish to attend the Anxiety Prevention Group."

Would you encourage a student to talk to guidance if he or she feels depressed or stressed?

"We absolutely welcome students with feelings of stress, anxiety or depression to visit guidance for help."

An interview with a psychiatrist: Dr. Quesada

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After a stressful day of studying and doing poorly on a test, perhaps coupled with a fight with a friend, it seems easy to say, "I'm so depressed." As similar outbursts become commonplace, the question arises: What is the difference between stress and depression? An interview with psychiatrist Dr. Thania Quesada sheds light on the issue.

Medically, what is stress?

"Stress is caused by a physical mental, or emotional event that can show physiologically as a heightened emotional and bodily response. The important thing is that there is good stress, the kind that pushes us to do better, and bad stress, the kind that manifests as anxiety and a resulting lack of productivity."

What is depression?

"Though they're often used interchangeably, depression is not the same

thing as sadness. While sadness is a normal emotion that usually lasts a few days and passes, depression is a medical condition comprised of at least two weeks of identifiable symptoms, such as lack of energy or an inability to feel joy.

"While lots of bad stress may lead to depression, depression is not a medically normal response the way stress is. Like many diseases, depression is multifactorial, meaning that things like genetics and the environment also play a role. With depression, every task seems like a mountain."

How can either of them negatively affect one's health?

"Too much stress and more so depression usually cause higher risk of other medical problems, such as cardiovascular or neurological conditions. Depression especially is a medical condition, something that many

people don't recognize. And not only does your body feel its effects, your lifestyle also does. However, depression should be considered on more of a spectrum, and some people may have more mild episodes while others "all or nothing" people may experience more extreme effects."

How do you treat stress/depression?

"Again, stress is more of an event that we all may experience, but to combat too much stress, the main treatment, however obvious it sounds, is to identify and reduce stressors in your life.

Treatment for depression, however, places great emphasis on psycho- and group therapy and, if necessary, medication. I know I keep saying this, but depression, and other mental illnesses, are very real the same way cancer is, and sometimes medication, like antidepressants, are the way to go."

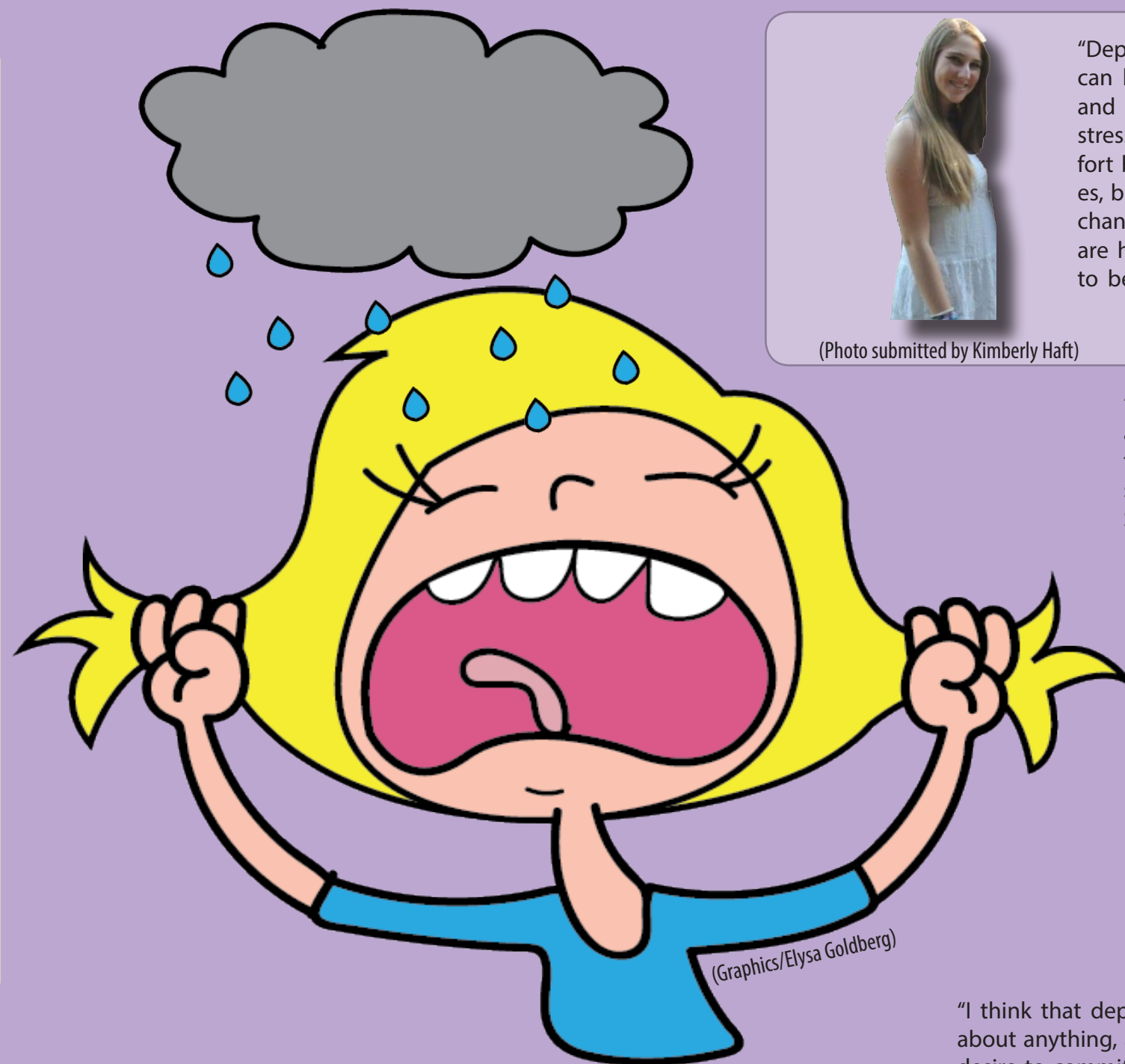
How do you know when stress is too much to handle?

"When you find the symptoms of stress getting to the point where it mentally blocks you from getting things done is when depression can manifest, and at that point, it is definitely too much."

What advice do you have for students/teachers/counselors dealing with this issue?

"My main advice is definitely to seek out help. The good thing about this generation is that there's less stigma surrounding things like anxiety and depression, which makes it easier for people to talk about it.

"I've found that for many patients therapy and just talking to other people is extremely beneficial. Also, be sure to seek professional help, because as I've said, depression is a medical problem that often needs a medical solution."



(Graphics/Elysa Goldberg)



(Photo submitted by Kimberly Haft)

"Depression is a clinical mental disorder which can be treated medically or therapeutically and is considered much more serious than stress. Stress is typically a short term discomfort brought on by unpleasant circumstances, but it fades away as those circumstances change. Although both stress and depression are harmful, depression is typically thought to be a much more severe effect of stress." - senior Kimberly Haft

"Depression is an unmistakable loss of hope and just a total state of unhappiness. By contrast, one can be hopeful and happy while stressed, like when you're on a Model UN trip. Stress can be a part of depression but it is not mutually exclusive." - sophomore Eric Bazail



(Photo submitted by Eric Bazail)



(Photo submitted by Maya Naim)

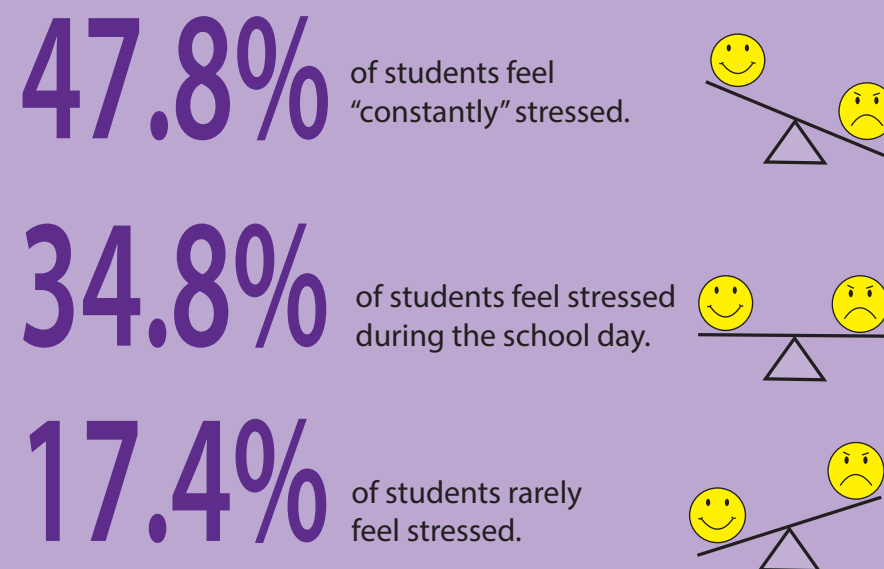
"Depression refers to a mental illness which must be diagnosed by professional medical advice. Stress relates to an uncontrollable psychological pressure surrounded by worry. Stress may lead to depression, but depression may lead to the opposite of stress." - junior Maya Naim

"I think that depression refers more to the inability to care about anything, almost to the point of apathy, or the lack of desire to commit any actions. However, stress is more about intense worrying, rather than a crippling inability to do anything that comes with clinical depression." - junior Zachary Spicer

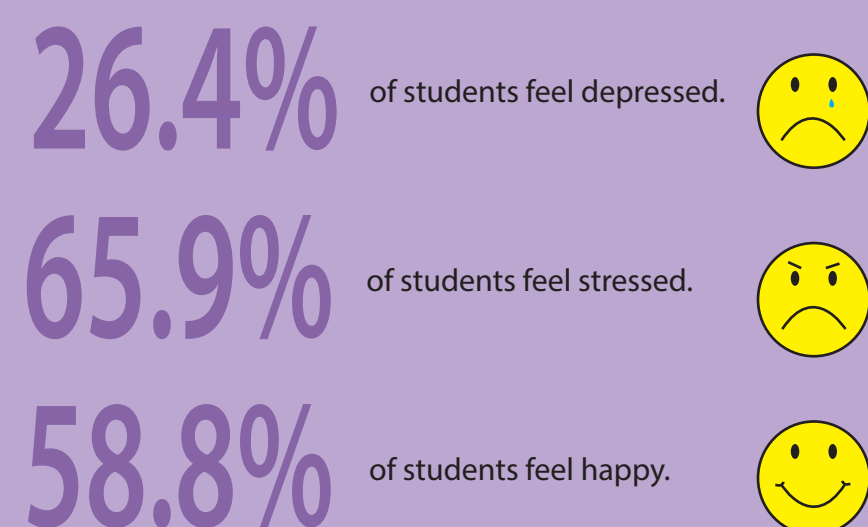


(Photo/Alec Chao)

We asked 184 students grades 7-12 how often they feel overwhelmed. Below are the results.



We asked 182 students grades 7-12 how they generally feel. Below are the results.



Mental health 'holidays' boost spirits

Lauren Hutton | Co-Editor-in-Chief
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Several weeks ago, I began to feel apathetic to failure and school assignments in general. After 3 1/2 years of staying awake for 21 hours a day, working through weekends and caring an unbelievable amount about every single test and assignment, I knew this newfound despondency wasn't right.

The solution? Taking a mental health day to unwind, catch up on sleep and generally recharge.

However, in a competitive academic environment, these "sick" days aren't condoned by our equally stressed out peers or teachers who worry about make-up work and missed tests. Because of this, I used these days only as a last resort,

typically when I was far past my breaking point, and I still felt guilty after every single one of them. But the benefits are abundant, and as soon as we start to admit that many of us suffer from unendurable stress, anxiety and depression, we can begin to justify and endorse mental health days as a valid sick day.

When to take one:

Use these days when you feel unable to handle your emotions, cannot think or concentrate clearly or are severely exhausted to the point of not being able to function. Additionally, if you begin to feel despondent, this can also be a sign that you need time away. "Feelings of extreme apathy —like you just don't care— or extreme anxiety

about nothing in particular are cues that could indicate you would be better off taking a day to reset," said leadership and workplace communication expert Brandon Smith.

Why it's important:

When we're emotionally and physically exhausted, it can be difficult to see things clearly and keep a rational perspective. This leads to poor performance on schoolwork and can leave us feeling hopeless and overwhelmed.

"If you don't attend to your stress, anxiety or depression, it can affect your work performance... and even cause physical ailments," Smith said.

Try to spend your day sleeping (if you need it), relaxing and partaking in anxiety-reducing

activities. While this day away won't make your stress and upcoming tests instantaneously disappear, it can drastically improve your mindset.

"It would be unfair and unrealistic to expect all symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress or anger to go away in just 24 hours, but after a well-used mental health day, you should feel 30 to 50 percent better," Smith said.

As long as you plan these days in advance and don't abuse them, they can be extremely helpful.

Not only will you be able to take a mental breather, but you can also do an abundance of schoolwork over the course of a day and come back well-rested, in better spirits and still caught up on all of your work.



Features

Everyone Has a Story: Sydney Stewart

Mandy's Musings

BY AMANDA WASSERMAN

Forgetting the fun

It's no secret that competitive culture reigns supreme at Heritage, both inside and outside of the classroom. After spending the day in seven classes surrounded by their stellar classmates, students head to club meetings, practicing for competitions and planning activities such as bake sales and trips.

While the result of this hard work, awards and national recognition can be seen on our marquee, there is a hidden downside to consistent extracurricular excellence: excessive competition.

In theory, students join clubs and academic teams as a way to explore their interests outside the classroom and meet new people. At orientation and during the first few weeks of school, freshmen are encouraged to join a multitude of clubs and pursue opportunities that may be outside of their typical areas of interest.

As students progress through high school, they tend to deepen their participation in a few extracurricular activities, often developing an interest in winning awards, whether it be in debate, math or journalism. Students, however, often forget precisely why they joined a club and focus obsessively on winning awards.

In a world where the college admissions process has grown increasingly competitive, it is natural for students to look to awards as a way to differentiate themselves in the applicant pool. Colleges, however, are unlikely to reject or accept a student solely on the basis of winning one more award in Model United Nations or earning a "Premio de Oro" on the National Spanish Exam. Although such awards are prestigious and play a valuable role in recognizing students' extracurricular excellence, they are by no means the "golden ticket" for admission to a prestigious university.

Within clubs, many talented students develop a desire to beat their teammates. While such competition can inspire students, an overly cutthroat environment leads students to forget the true reasons why they joined a particular organization in the first place, for the sake of a genuine desire to explore new activities.

There is nothing wrong with working hard to achieve recognition in an activity, but the desire for awards should never jade students from remembering that extracurricular activities exist, fundamentally, for the purpose of fun.



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We are on a mission: to prove to you, our reader, that everyone, and we do mean everyone, has a story within them, both unique and interesting. Cue our monthly feature EHAS: Everyone Has A Story, where two Patriot Post staffers set off on a quest to find and extensively interview a Heritage student at random to prove that everyone does, in fact, have a story.

In the wake of a polarizing and unpredictable presidential election, we posted a sign outside the 9000 building in the hopes of finding a student eager to express his or her opinions and answer our question, "How do you feel about the election results?"

Within moments, sophomore Sydney Stewart approached the sign and wrote "crying Jordan face," a reference to the Internet meme depicting a teary-eyed Michael Jordan. Stewart eagerly expressed her beliefs, so we elected her this month's "Everyone Has a Story" (EHAS) subject.

While Stewart was born in Palm Beach, Fla., she lived in Jamaica from the time she was 2 months old until she was 2 years old.

"My family immigrated from [Jamaica], had me and decided I had to go back to my 'roots.' I didn't even know what a 'root' was," Stewart said.

While attending Parkway Middle School of the Arts, Stewart discovered her love for in-depth analysis, which remains central to her identity. According to Stewart, Parkway "fostered [her] love of looking a bit too far into things."

Presently, Stewart is a member of the club MCTV (Movies, Comics, Television, Video Games) and has been a Girl Scout for nine years. She hopes to receive her Gold Award, the top-tier award for Girl Scouts and is building a garden for a park near her home as her service project. Several of

her other other pastimes, including Speech and Debate and Pre-Law, reflect the appreciation she developed in middle school for analyzing the world and expressing her opinions.

"I just really love talking and putting my ideas into word form because what's in my head needs to escape," she said.

A politically-inclined individual, Stewart felt her views were not reflected in this year's presidential election and is finding it difficult to maintain friendships with peers whose beliefs sharply contrast with her own. She claims president elect Donald Trump is a "documented anti-Semite and a racist" and his supporters "show a lack of human empathy," which has left her feeling frustrated.

Ultimately, however, this frustration has further inspired her to pursue a career as a Florida senator or federal judge.

"I'm for more progressive ideals... We need legitimate status reform to bring more funding to public education," Stewart said. She also believes in a more equal taxation policy between the upper and lower classes.

Stewart's anger with the results of the election has only



HAPPY FO(U)R WINNING: Sophomore Sydney Stewart holds her trophy after winning fourth place at the Flying L debate tournament. (Photo/Ryan Hubbard)

fueled her to continue pursuing her passions in order to one day bring about the changes she feels are important for Americans, including voting for Michelle Obama if the first lady were to run for president. Stewart earned her spot as this month's EHAS subject for eagerness to share her opinions and her love of speech, both which are central to her identity.

Students achieve AP(erfect) scores on math exams

Juniors Max Ranis and Min-Kyu Kim received perfect scores on the AP Calculus AB and AP Statistics exams. Kim was one of only three students in the world to receive a perfect score, and Ranis one of only 18.

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Most AP-level students study extensively to achieve an exam score of four or five, but for juniors Max Ranis and Min-Kyu Kim, fives were not good enough.

At the end of their sophomore years, Ranis and Kim achieved perfect scores on their AP Calculus AB and AP Statistics exams, respectively. Kim was one of only three students to receive this score worldwide, and Ranis one of 18.

Both students took rigorous courses last year, their schedules filled with AP and honors classes, and participated in many extracurricular activities. Ranis participates in multiple honor societies, is a member of Tikun Olam and volunteers for a teen leadership program at his temple. Kim performs with the Florida Youth Orchestra and competes with Model UN and FBLA.

When it came to statistics class, Kim "just tried to pay attention in class and take his homework seriously."

They also both compete regularly in the Heritage chapter of Mu Alpha Theta (MAΘ), and Ranis is an officer for the club. Participation in MAΘ translates to hundreds of hours of extra math practice, both in mandatory after-school and weekend classes and in individual preparation. Ranis noted that this extra practice contributed to his perfect score.

"During these extra calculus classes, I learned from MIT graduate Dr. Radleigh Santos, who exposed me to new theorems and techniques and in general made me more comfortable with calculus," Ranis said.

For both Ranis and Kim, math is more than just a school subject. "Math is an endless road that I continue to walk on. There are always new concepts to learn and new problems to solve," said Kim.



PERFECT AS PI: Juniors Max Ranis and Min-Kyu Kim's diligent studying paid off as both achieved perfect scores on their AP math exams. (Photo/Melanie Hoffman)

"Since I was young, math was my favorite subject in school. It came naturally to me, and my parents incorporated math into my daily life. It was common at my dinner table for my dad to rattle off a series of math problems or operations that my sister and I were expected to solve in our heads as quickly as we could. That may not sound like fun to everyone, but to us it definitely was," Ranis said.

Ranis now tutors other students (though not just in math) almost every day after school in either the school library or public libraries. He also serves as a MAΘ teaching assistant and teaches Saturday math competition classes for freshmen in the

program. "I think it is important for people to see how math affects and is used in their everyday life. When I teach and tutor, I keep this in mind. How can I make math more accessible for people who don't feel math is for them?" he said.

Both juniors plan to take Multivariable Calculus next year – the last step in Heritage's extensive math curriculum – and will no doubt continue to use math in their everyday lives.

"By integrating math concepts I've been learning for years to make conclusions about the real world, statistics made it possible for me to connect math to other fields such as international relations and business," Kim said.

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Features

Female engineers break down stereotypes

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Female engineers may be building the technology of the future, but they're also breaking down stereotypes by entering a historically male-dominated field. According to engineering teacher Mrs. Mohanalatha Pamajala, a stigma continues to surround women in this field. We asked three senior girls involved in engineering to share what the field means to them and what obstacles they have faced.

Kaitlyn Arlotta

Kaitlyn Arlotta, the co-vice president of the GEMS [Girls Excelling in Math and Science] club, first became interested in engineering after watching the movie "Robocop" in eighth grade. She was amazed by the prosthetics created by the engineer in the film and wanted to get involved. Today, Arlotta remains fascinated with the progress being made in artificial intelligence and machinery. According to Arlotta,



REPAIRING ROBOTS: Kaitlyn Arlotta (middle right) and other members of the Ninjineers perform checklist maintenance on the team's competition robot. (Photo/Lexie Chong)

the most challenging part of being a female in the engineering field "is fighting the conception that women cannot handle the same workload or do as good of a job as men. Some ideas I say are ignored, and it is frustrating to not be heard," she said. However, solving a problem even in the face of doubters fills Arlotta with a sense of pride. Arlotta hopes to continue innovating "to make the world even

more progressive" and to support other girls who hope to enter the field, sharing this advice with aspiring female engineers: "If you truly care about engineering, nothing can make you quit."

Vanessa Pipitone

For Vanessa Pipitone, an aspiring artist and architect with an interest in how things work, the Pre-Engineering track, in conjunction with architecture

and drafting classes, has provided her with "a better understanding of design, not only visually, but also practically."

Pipitone, the co-president of the Pre-Engineering Society, said she has been encouraged by her teachers and her family members to pursue engineering. "I feel that at Heritage, we're pretty lucky that we're given an equal opportunity, and even encouraged, to enter the field of engineering," she said.

Though glad to have these opportunities, Pipitone said she feels she has not been given equal leadership opportunities and has received more difficult on-the-spot tests than the boys in her class.

Despite this, Pipitone said she feels "very happy for and in support of the women and men who fight for their representation in any field."

Pipitone encourages girls with an interest in engineering to not be discouraged from following the track, but to "be aware of the work that pre-engineering entails."

Lucila Grinspan

Lucila Grinspan, the treasurer of the GEMS club, decided to try the engineering track when she was picking her classes before freshman year, because she remembered how much she enjoyed puzzles and putting together IKEA furniture for her dad when she was younger.

Grinspan recalls a time she was ridiculed in the lab.

"My friend Julia [Haack] and I had to use some tools, and we were trying to figure it out, but obviously we were doing it all wrong. Before helping us, the boys made fun of us for not knowing how to work the power tools," she said.

Besides this scenario, Grinspan said she has not faced much discrimination herself and encourages girls with an interest in engineering to not let "the fear of being the only girl in a male-dominated class or field" hinder them.

Grinspan hopes to pursue her interests in electrical and biomedical engineering or digital electronics in college.

Student publishes research in scientific journal

Zihan Kabir | News Editor
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Nearly everyone has used antibiotics to treat illnesses at some point, but what has been a staple of the medical community for so long may soon be obsolete in the face of evolving bacteria which are resilient to common medicine.

To combat this reality, senior Maxwell Gu began researching the development of new types of antibiotics. He eventually published a paper in "Scientific Reports," an academic journal published by the same group responsible for "Nature."

Gu's paper, published Oct. 31, details an innovative protocol he developed to aid professionals in creating new viable antibiotics quickly. "I saw

many scientific and news articles urging people to support food that are organic and not treated with antibiotics, because these antibiotics will create antibiotic-resistant bacteria, that could significantly endanger patients' lives," Gu said. "I hope that in the future big pharmaceutical companies can modify and adopt my method because the efficacy will save many more lives."

Gu's paper was the result of three months of lab research at Florida International University under the tutelage of Dr. Fenfei Leng at FIU's chemistry and biochemistry department.

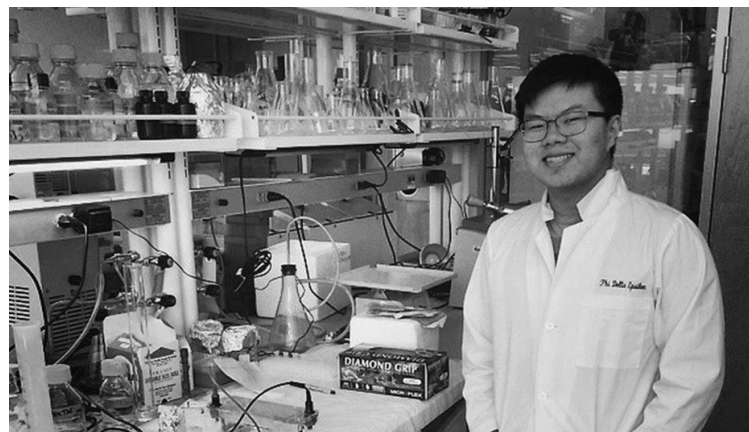
The final product was a fluorescently labeled DNA molecule, enabling Gu to determine whether various

compounds could be antibiotics. In other words, Gu developed a tool that could help scientists find new ways to treat illnesses.

"The usual time to screen large quantities of antibiotics is one week, yet under this new testing protocol, the screening time can be shortened to one day," Gu said.

Gu believes that the work he has done may advance medicine in more fields than just the development of antibiotics.

"This method, under a new twist, can be implemented to screen anticancer drugs rather than antibiotics drugs," Gu said. "Currently, few anticancer drugs are available in the market, which makes this project's future brighter than ever."



MAX MANIPULATES MOLECULES: Senior Maxwell Gu works at the lab bench at Florida International University, where he spent three months developing fluorescent-labeled DNA molecules to be used in developing antibiotics. (Photo/Fenfei Leng)



(Photo/Emma Gellman)

Kevin Pollack | Co-Sports Editor
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Two things were characteristic of every football game during the regular season: The Patriots came out with a victory, and senior twins Gabrielle and Garcelle Lawson were there to cheer them on.

On their senior jerseys, Garcelle sports "Football," and Gabrielle sports "Twinz." When spotted next to each other, it's easy to tell just how much the game of football means to them.

The twins' passion for football is relatively new. "In sophomore year, we went to the homecoming football game. We just kept going and going, so now we go to every single football game," Garcelle said.

Since that first game, their love for football has multiplied.

With the Patriots finishing 9-0 in the regular season, Garcelle and Gabrielle may have just been a lucky charm.



"Save a Life"

Woogie.org is a registered 501c3 nonprofit charity.

In memory and in order to honor former Heritage student Dylan Wohlgemuth, the funds collected through Woogie.org will go towards the Woogie Scholarship and to provide financial support for baseball programs in both schools and individual leagues K-12. Please donate to help end Hodgkin's lymphoma.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Becoming the medium of art

Amber Bhutta | Business Manager
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Junior Sabrina Lin has lived her life enveloped in art, even before she started school at Heritage and was presented with many opportunities.

"Ever since I was a toddler, I have loved art and drawing on anything I could get my hands on," Lin said. "I don't remember why I started; it has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember."

Lin currently studies art at American Heritage with Mrs. Susan Foltz.

"Mrs. Foltz was my first legitimate art teacher, and I've learned so much from her," Lin said. She has learned to use oil paint, pastels, watercolor, graphite, color pencils and a variety of other mediums.

"It's so fun to explore my own imagination," Lin said. "Art involves a lot of critical thinking and improving my pre-existing skill set during every step, from choosing the color scheme to executing the preplanned composition."

Harnessing her talents, Lin has won various awards for her artwork, including awards from

the Broward Art Guild and the Scholastic Art Competition.

Lin's inspirations come from her fellow artists and teachers, namely Mrs. Foltz, both of whom motivate her to improve every day.

"As much as I love drawing and painting, it's my peers that push me to do better and be the very best I can be," Lin said.

"These people are not only such positive influences on my path to becoming a better artist, but also inspire me to continue growing and bettering my abilities."



MULTIPLE MEDIUMS: Oil paints are one of many mediums junior Sabrina Lin frequently uses for her artwork. "There's no one medium for me really. I work with anything Mrs. Foltz teaches me," Lin said. (Photo/Wen Lin)

Juniors sing in global Jewish choir

Andrew Kolondra Jr. | Co-Assistant Editor
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Three juniors have been taking their singing careers to the next level with their participation in a Jewish choir outside of school known as HaZamir, a program of the Zamir Choral Foundation.

HaZamir consists of a series of interconnected choral chapters in the United States and Israel, and last year, a chapter was created in Miami.

Two juniors, Chloe Brown and Stephanie Berger, joined that year, and a third, Dylan Olster, joined this year after hearing about the program from Brown and Berger.

While Olster has not yet performed with the choir, Brown and Berger performed at a sold-out Carnegie Hall concert last year, at which Brown sang the opening solo.

"At one point, we sang T'filah L'Tzahal [Prayer for the Israeli Army] to the Israeli seniors who were graduating to join the IDF. As they began to cry, so did we because the connection was so strong," Brown said.

For a few hours each week, the three students meet with the rest of the chapter to practice music in many languages, with a focus on Hebrew.

Receiving new and difficult pieces to practice on a weekly basis helps the students improve many skills necessary to be a part of the AHS choirs as well.

"HaZamir has helped me improve my sight reading which allowed me to score high enough to be in A Capella this year as well as become the V. P. of Chorus," Berger said.

Although Brown and Olster will graduate from the program next year, their futures within it

are still bright. Brown recently submitted an audition tape to be admitted into the HaZamir Chamber Choir, an elite fast-paced choir of around 35 singers from around the world.

"As someone with synesthesia, singing, to me, is like painting a canvas but with sound. Notes have sounds and shapes and create a masterpiece," Brown said of her experiences singing with HaZamir.

HaZamir gives its participants a newfound appreciation for their Jewish heritage and allows them to connect with people worldwide.

"HaZamir means so much to me. Not only is it a choir, but it is also a family. I have HaZamir friends spanning the globe. Through HaZamir, I love my religion and cherish my culture much more than I used to," Brown said.



SING YOUR HEART OUT: Juniors Stephanie Berger and Chloe Brown meet with one of the national directors of HaZamir, Vivian Lazar, at the August Teen Leader Orientation in New York. Both students are teen leaders in the program, meaning they attend national and international meetings to plan HaZamir activities and events. (Photo/HaZamir)

All I want for Christmas is winter concert tickets

Santa Claus isn't the only one coming to town: this winter, jam out to some of your favorite artists when they visit South Florida. Check out these upcoming concerts this winter break.

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Y100 Jingle Ball



(Photo/Wikimedia)

This year, Jingle Ball's lineup includes artists such as Fifth Harmony, Meghan Trainor, Charlie Puth, Lukas Graham and Hailee Steinfeld. The concert takes place Dec. 18 at the BB&T Center and tickets can be purchased on Ticketmaster with prices ranging from \$46 to \$251.

Billy Joel



(Photo/Wikimedia)

On New Year's Eve, Billy Joel will be performing at the BB&T Center. Tickets can be purchased on Vivid Seats with prices ranging from \$56 to \$4,850.

Sabrina Carpenter



(Photo/Wikimedia)

Sabrina Carpenter from Disney Channel's "Girl Meets World" will be performing at the Parker Playhouse in Fort Lauderdale Dec. 9. Tickets can be purchased on Vivid Seats with prices ranging from \$34 to \$587.

Pitbull



(Photo/Wikimedia)

Pitbull will be playing at Hard Rock Live Dec. 9. Tickets can be purchased on Ticketmaster with prices ranging from \$70 to \$105.



Entertainment

Acting naturally in fall one-acts

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In the first Heritage play under the direction of new upper school acting teacher, Dr. David Klein, the flaws and values of Catholicism as well as the humorous dilemma of waking up in an actor's worst fear were performed in a night of one acts. Instead of performing one full play, two separate one acts, "Sister Mary Ignatius Explains it All For You" and "The Actor's Nightmare," were put on one after the other Nov. 16-19 in the Blackbox Theater.

The two plays, written by playwright Christopher Durang, explored vastly different topics but shared a similar type of absurdist humor to convey their messages.

"Sister Mary Ignatius Explains it All For You" tells the story of a nun who explains the covenants of Catholicism only to be confronted by four of her past students — a homosexual, unwed mother, suicidal wife-beater and a disenfranchised girl who has had multiple abortions — who attempt to take out their pent up anger for both her and the faith by embarrassing her.

Post intermission, "The Actor's Nightmare" follows a man who wakes up and finds himself going on stage for a famous actor — except he's an accountant who doesn't remember going to a single rehearsal and doesn't know what show he's in or any of his lines. Dedicated theater goer and junior Faith Ward attended

the opening night of the shows. "Dr. Klein's directing style is such a stark change... it's something to get used to," Ward said.

The cast started rehearsal Oct. 10 and rehearsed every day after school until 7 p.m. First-time stage manager and senior Sofia Ubilla, who had to attend every rehearsal, found the process rewarding despite the demanding time commitment.

"I gained a completely different perspective on the rehearsal process. For me, it was interesting to see the process the actors went through during the rehearsals, and it helped me gain insight into what it's like to be a director," Ubilla said.

This will be the last Heritage play for seniors Jacob Greene, Nicholas Disla, Jennifer Molson, Elliot Mahon, Dylan Erdelyi and Valen Marie-Santos, as second semester only entails a freshman/sophomore play and a musical. This made the experience somewhat bittersweet for Marie-Santos, who hopes to pursue straight acting (acting in plays, as opposed to musicals) in the future.

"I'm happy to say my last play was a pretty great experience. Everything about the experience was new and different: a new director, a fresh perspective and a piece that's different than anything I've ever done before," Marie-Santos said. "I'm happy I got to close my high school acting career with a such an interesting and unique show while being surrounded by amazing friends and fellow actors."



SISTER MARY TAKES CENTER STAGE: Junior Fiona Baquerizo poses as Sister Mary in "Sister Mary Ignatius Explains it All For You." Prior to the performance, actors took inquiries from the audience to make the show seem interactive. While the show drew from Catholic ideology, it displayed acts of religious extremism stereotypical of parochial schools. (Photo/Ryan Bible)

Obscura: 'Dive' into Tycho

Alec Chao | Staff Writer
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The desire to be somewhere you're not at any given moment is inherently human.

To have the errant escapist thought is a reflection on one's ability to dream and process ideas to the point that perhaps subconscious is preferable to reality.

It is only fitting I discuss an album that symbolizes escapist thought in its most basic form. Released five years after its debut album "Past is Prologue," Tycho's 2011 record "Dive" serves as a 50 minute love letter to daydreams and a textbook definition of a need for change in scenery.

Scott Hansen, Tycho's former sole member and now frontman, frequently regards "Dive" as his magnum opus; reference is made to the length of time required for its production and the experiences which drove Hansen to create the record.

Indeed, "Dive's" production was the driving force behind Hansen's decision to leave the graphic design industry and pursue a full-time career as a professional musician. Undoubtedly evident on account of its

title, "Dive" is highly evocative of large oceanic expanses and the feeling of flight.

Backed by hearty yet relaxed bass lines and an excellent percussive foundation by drummer Rory O'Connor, Hansen manipulates synthesizers to create swelling and ironically subdued ethereal sounds.

These instrumentals are often accompanied by the crash of waves and vocal echoes; the latter serves to not only provide an element of familiarity but also to emphasize the simply vast nature of the landscapes "Dive" symbolizes.

As with last month's featured project "The Disintegration Loops," "Dive" is entirely without discernible vocals.

Of course, that is not to imply any of the 10 tracks truly needs vocal accompaniment at all; Hansen has effortlessly created depth without it. As with "Loops," "Dive" is an album to be enjoyed in serenity.

An additional benefit of "Dive's" structure is its applicability to a surfeit of situations, regardless of whether one is driving along a seemingly endless road or watching waves crash at the beach. The listener may simply permit immersion

and enjoy his surroundings, correlating what he sees with what he hears.

"Dive" is perfect for concentration, as well; when focus is required, the album's subdued nature allows one to passively listen and stave off idle thought.

No matter your musical preferences, "Dive" comes highly recommended; it is an absolute treat to listen to, and beautiful in every sense of the word.



Above image appears on Tycho's 2011 album, "Dive." (Photo/Reddit)

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Entertainment

Book review: 'A Dog's Purpose'

Vanessa Ryals | Online Editor-in-Chief
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It all begins when a puppy (the soon-to-be narrator) is born in an illegally managed, run-down dog rescue. Just days later, animal control arrives, seizes the property and sends the dogs off to a pound where they are promptly euthanized due to overcrowding.

Just as the young dog's life begins to end, he reawakens – this time, as a golden retriever puppy named Bailey.

Bailey holds onto all of the memories from his past life as he navigates the new world he is born into, and soon becomes the best friend of 8-year-old Ethan.

However, as Bailey's life with Ethan draws to a close, he comes

to learn that his purpose for existing has yet to be fulfilled.

Cameron, through telling the story from a dog's perspective, manages to uniquely capture how dogs view the world around them, as well as illustrate the essence of a dog's love and devotion to its human companion.

While the book has many witty and humorous points, the ultimate message is clear to decipher and strikes the core of humanity's deepest question: Why are we here?

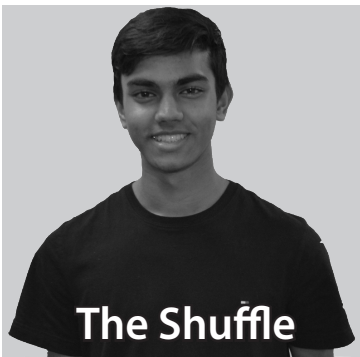
The greatest let-down in the novel arguably occurs in Cameron's too-drawn-out telling of Bailey's life with Ethan. Making up the majority of the novel, one

would expect the story to close during Bailey's life, and for all loose ends to be tied up.

However, the reader is instead left unsettled when Bailey, nearing the novel's end, is once again reborn into the life of another dog.

Ultimately, Cameron successfully accomplishes addressing some deep themes in the most unconventional and un-deep ways.

While an easy read, "A Dog's Purpose" has messages both cat and dog lovers can take, and if a more complex read is preferred, one may find common themes in "The Art of Racing in the Rain" by Garth Stein.



The Shuffle

BY ZIHAN KABIR
Black Mirror

Despite having just 13 episodes in five years, "Black Mirror" has managed to leave an imprint on both the television industry and the minds of its viewers. The British science-fiction anthology series was originally produced by Channel Four in the U.K., but Netflix took over its production in 2015 and released a third season Oct. 21, bringing the show to a much larger audience and contributing to its growing following.

The secret to "Black Mirror's" popularity is its ability to capture both the wonder and uncertainty that comes with technological progress in the modern world. It is impossible to describe what the show is about, because each episode is so unique, with a different story, cast and setting.

The one thing that ties the series together is the recurring theme: technology gone wrong. "Black Mirror" is especially disturbing because the dark realities depicted in the show are so close to our own.

"Nosedive," one of the lighter episodes, takes place in a dystopian society where popularity on social media defines an individual's standing in society. The main character, desperate to increase her individual rating, ends up discovering the disparity between genuine friendships and those on social media.

Despite the obvious future setting, many aspects of the episode's imaginary world reflect the dominance of social media in the lives of younger generations today. It is not uncommon to see children consumed by the social dynamics of apps such as Instagram or Twitter, dedicating hours for the purpose of gaining a perceived sense of popularity.

In the near future, it is possible that social media will take a larger role in all our lives, making "Nosedive" seem less like a work of fiction and more like a prediction of our future.

"Black Mirror" is so difficult to watch for this reason: each of the horrific, gut-wrenching stories it portrays are just a step or two away from our own reality. The role of technology in our lives is expanding every day, and the show effectively captures some of the fear that accompanies this progress.

"Black Mirror" is not simply entertainment, but a cautionary tale for those who recognize the boundless potential of technology, a warning against the real "black mirrors" — computer, tablet and smartphone screens — present in all of our lives.

Food trucks invade

Andrew Kolondra Jr. | Co-Assitant Editor
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It's another Tuesday night and you're ready for the weekend after only two days of school. Even though you don't have too much homework and want to go out, you have no plans and are stuck at home all night.

Why not take a quick drive over to Plantation Heritage Park for the weekly Food Truck Invasion night? Every Tuesday from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., Food Truck Invasion, a coalition of food trucks, stops by the park for a night of food and fun.

Featuring such trucks as the Mobstah Lobstah seafood truck, the Buenos Nachos Mexican cuisine truck and the Top Fries specialty French fries truck, the weekly food truck fest has something for everyone. You can even go just for dessert and treat yourself to a handcrafted gelato bar

from the HipPOPs truck or a milkshake from ColdStone Creamery's truck if you desire.

"I thought it was really convenient because there were so many options to choose from," junior Kathryn Martorella, who has attended the event, said.

Simply taking a trip to the park just to walk around and enjoy the outdoors is a fun way to recharge for the rest of the week after a full Monday and Tuesday at school. Food Truck Invasion offers a great opportunity to spend an evening there with friends and family. "The park is so big and it's nice to just get lost in it," Martorella said.

If Plantation Heritage Park is a bit far from where you live, Food Truck Invasion also has monthly and/or weekly evening events at other parks around South Florida. Go to foodtruckinvasion.com for a full list of locations.

'Tis the season tunes

Katherine Quesada | One-Pager Editor
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Hip Hanukkah

- "Dreidel, Dreidel, Dreidel," Jerry Parker and Matt Stone
- "Sevion Sov, Sov, Sov," Kenny Ellis
- "Chanukah Blessings," Julie Silver



Classic Christmas

- "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree," Brenda Lee
- "A Holly Jolly Christmas," Burl Ives
- "Santa Claus is Coming to Town," Bruce Springsteen



Seasonal favorites

- "Baby, It's Cold Outside," Idina Menzel and Michael Bublé
- "Winter Wonderland," Frank Sinatra
- "Let it Snow! Let it Snow! Let it Snow!" Dean Martin



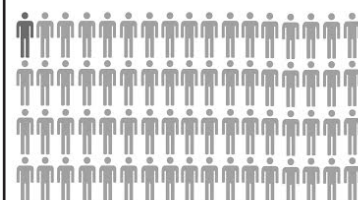
(Graphics/Katherine Quesada)

Support Autism Speaks!

Get a Quill and Scroll button when you buy \$5 worth of baked goods from our December bake sale. Help us support Autism Speaks's research in finding a cure for Autism!



AUTISM: the facts 



About 1 in every 68 children in the United States have been identified with an Autism Spectrum Disorder.



Autism Spectrum Disorder is about 5 times more common among boys (1 in 42) than in girls (1 in 189).

(Infographic/Elysa Goldberg)



40% of children with Autism do not speak.



It is the fastest growing developmental disorder.



There is no known cure.

Sources: Autism Speaks National Autism Association Autism Society

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Entertainment

Student author ‘flares’ up career

Isabel Chamberlain | Staff Writer
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Not many people have written and published a novel by the age of 11, but eighth grader Casey Weidenfeld has.

Inspired by the Mortal Instruments series by Cassandra Clare and The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins, Weidenfeld wrote her first novel, “The Golden Flares,” in fifth grade.

“When I was in fifth grade I went through a hard time in my life,” she said. “I was an outcast in my grade, but I read a lot, and I was inspired to write a book.”

“The Golden Flares” is about a girl named Fallon, the “most wanted rebel,” who strives to protect the ones she loves from the government in a dystopian world where the countries are at war with each other.

The book received glowing reviews from Amazon

customers describing it as suspenseful, intriguing, and well written. One reviewer wrote, “very promising young author! I constantly had to remind myself that this book was written by a 12-year-old girl!”

It also received 5 stars on Amazon, where the novel is sold for \$9.34. Weidenfeld has recently completed the sequel to “The Golden Flares” titled “The Mark of the Chosen,” which will be released March 2017.

She plans to write a third novel for the series before bringing the dystopian world to a close.

Weidenfeld plans to donate a portion of her earnings to Project Hope, an international healthcare organization. Currently, Weidenfeld is working on a separate novel which she explains will be more science fiction, fantasy based than what she’s previously written.



BOOKS AND BOOKS: Casey Weidenfeld presents the print copies of her first novel, “The Golden Flares.” Her inspirations are Suzanne Collins and Veronica Roth. “I shift between many of the characters and I don’t stick to one character’s point of view,” she said. (Photo/Patricia Deben)

Four ports too far: Apple disappoints

Alec Chao | Staff Writer
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Apple’s proclivity for innovation is somewhat of a social trope, a joke about what some people consider to be excessive changes to its product line.

With the latest variant of the iPhone, Apple forewent the inclusion of the 3.5mm headphone jack, a technological staple that is, by Apple’s accounts, outdated. Despite pre-release controversy, market analysis shows the iPhone 7 sold better than initially expected; Apple refuses to release exact sales numbers, making any sort of analysis really just educated speculation.

However, one would assume backlash over the removal of

the headphone jack would have perhaps taught Apple a lesson: Don’t make drastic changes to your product line. One would actually be wrong.

On Oct. 27, Apple held a second event on its Cupertino campus to announce the latest iteration of the MacBook Pro.

Though the MacBook and its constituent models are typically refreshed every year, Apple was rather slow to the punch on this particular occasion.

With the new MacBook came changes to its function row, which was replaced with a new adaptive touchscreen bar meant to take the place of the on-screen dock and physical function keys. The new Touch Bar

also allows for the use of Touch ID, which when integrated with the iPhone, is meant to assist with application handoff.

But perhaps the most intriguing and disputable change was the removal of the machine’s USB ports and SD card port in favor of a full four USB-C port lineup.

The addition of new USB-C ports proves advantageous due to their data write speed, but their greatest disadvantage comes from the fact that USB-C simply isn’t popular enough for peripherals to be produced on a massive scale.

Additionally, the lack of serviceable ports proves disadvantageous for professional use.

For those who photograph or videograph through SD cards, a dongle is now required. For those who have peripherals dependent on the standard USB bus, a dongle is now required.

No matter what you need to do, chances are, a dongle is required. Considering the removal of USB buses for thinner, more compact USB-C buses, which allow for a reduction in the machine’s thickness, it appears Apple has chosen aesthetics over functionality.

However, the 2015 MacBook does indeed use Thunderbolt 3 USB-C ports for power supply purposes, and yet still retains conventional USB ports. If that is the case, why can’t we have the

best of both worlds on what is objectively a larger machine? Apple seems to take several steps ahead, and all at once fall an equal number behind.

Consumers simply refuse to tolerate the need to pay for more equipment to actually use their computer, and it is plain to see there may be sales ramifications if Apple continues this record of anti-consumerist actions.

This may not be unexpected, and it certainly won’t be the last instance of inconvenient changes to their product line; if Apple wants to remedy their ailing sales numbers, they need to start asking why such drastic changes are necessary before they act.

‘Twas the night before Christmas: last-minute gift guide

Lauren Hutton | Co-Editor-in-Chief
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The Straight A Student

For the accomplished student who can’t let their accolades go unnoticed, help them shout their achievements to the world this holiday season. This T-shirt let’s them know exactly how unbothered you are by their successes. Perfect for anyone who finds a low A+ a daunting symbol of mediocrity, this gift is a true sign that you’re a supportive, underachieving friend.



\$26.25, Zazzle.com



\$4.95, 4gCustomGraphics on Etsy.com

The Theater Geek

If you have a friend who is a ticking time bomb, just waiting to break out into song and dance with a rendition of “Hamilton” or an obscure reference to “Into the Woods,” this personalized sticker could be the perfect gift. They’ll appreciate being given the opportunity to warn helpless victims who happen to be caught up in the middle of a spontaneous rendition of Eponine’s “On My Own,” during a once peaceful lunch or evening stroll.

The President of Everything

We’re all friends with someone who is incapable of not being the group leader, runs at least three organizations and is constantly complaining about their self-induced stress. Let them know that you recognize how life-alteringly important they are with a thoughtful “I’m Kind of a Big Deal” desk sign.



\$28, Uncommongoods.com

The Athlete

If you’ve ever been walking to class with an athletic friend, you’ve probably grown accustomed to their constant complaints of hunger. With this compartmentalized water bottle that holds snacks in the bottom and water or shakes (the wire ball breaks up the protein in them) on top, you’ll provide a great gift. As an added benefit, you’ll never have to suffer through their endless reminders that while they’ve been working out since 5 a.m., you’re still struggling to ascend the 2000 building’s stairs.



\$13.99, Blenderbottle.com



SPORTS

Up-and-coming athlete: Ruben Hyppolite

Conner McLeod | Co-Sports Editor
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Freshman Ruben Hyppolite is a dual sport student athlete determined to accomplish his goals in athletics by working to improve his game any chance he gets.

Hyppolite just finished his JV football season where he helped lead the team to an impressive 5-1-1 record, only losing one close game.

Hyppolite's standout play at both running back and linebacker earned him a spot on the varsity team for the the final game of the season and its remaining playoff games. Here, he will focus on the defensive side of the ball as a safety and a linebacker and hopes to help the team win a state championship.

While Hyppolite now loves the game of football, this was not always the case. "I started when I was about 7 or 8, but at first, I didn't like football at all," he said. Hyppolite decided to focus on basketball

but eventually changed his mind when a local football team headed by former Patriots head coach Mike Rumph asked Hyppolite to play running back for them. Since then, Hyppolite has grown to adore football. He even signed himself up for the sixth grade team at Heritage because of his confidence in his talents.

"I felt that I could go somewhere with [football]... It is now like the back of my hand to me," Hyppolite said. He has lived up to his own expectations, winning multiple MVPs for the sixth grade and junior high football teams. Hyppolite is also very passionate about basketball. He originally started playing for fun at age 6 but started to take it more seriously in eighth grade. Outside of the school team, he played for a travel team called Blue Storm where he had to quickly adapt to the competition. "The other kids were getting bigger, stronger and faster, and I still had the mentality of just playing for fun," Hyppolite said. In order to take

basketball more seriously, he took the initiative to attend numerous training camps to improve his dribbling and shooting skills. Hyppolite eventually

proved his skills enough to win an all-tournament MVP for Blue Storm.

The self motivation Hyppolite possesses has always helped him take his game one step fur-

ther. "I'm very hard on myself, so when I see that I'm not playing well or doing something right, I strive to get better and make sure I don't make the same mistakes again. When I'm practicing, I take it very seriously." Hyppolite has made a habit of continuing to put work in even after the rest of his team has finished practice.

Hyppolite's coaches have also noticed his strong work ethic. "Whether in practice or in the game, [Hyppolite] never stops grinding. He's always a guy I can count on to be the one who's working the hardest on the court," middle school basketball coach

Doug Scott said. Despite his maturity, Hyppolite values having fun while playing sports.

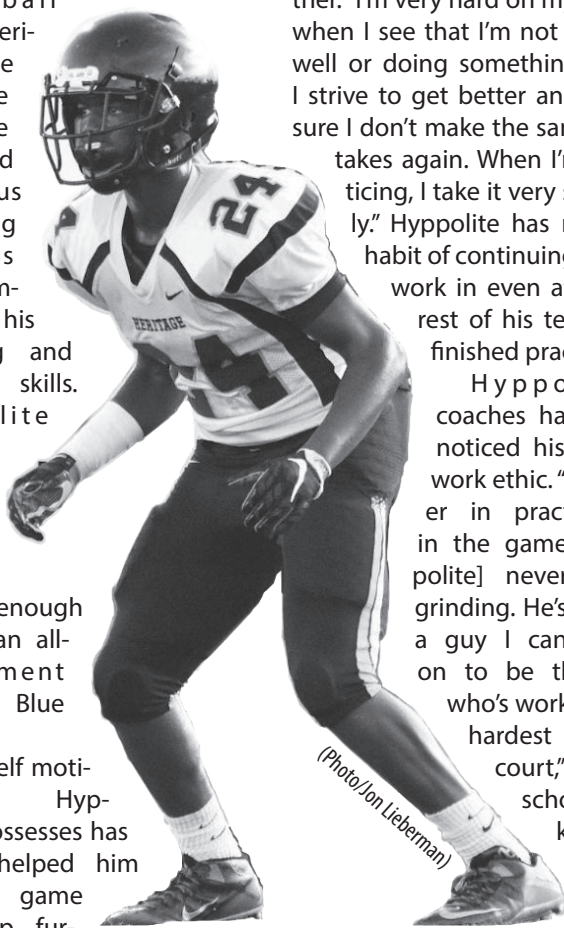
"If you're not having fun, you're not going to perform well," he said.

His many accomplishments have made it clear that he loves what he does.

In the future, Hyppolite hopes to win a football state championship every year for Heritage and hopefully earn the chance to play football or basketball collegiately and professionally.

His goals motivate him to play the best he can.

"I think about all of my dreams, and it only makes me go harder in practice and on the football field or basketball court so I can achieve my goals. When I look back on my life, I want to say that I accomplished something whether it's in sports or academics so I can be proud of myself for doing something amazing in my life," Hyppolite said.



(Photo/Jon Lieberman)

Sophomore swims in Santiago

Amber Bhutta | Business Manager
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Sophomore Thea McKenna has worked her way up from being an impatient 5-year-old waiting on the pool deck for her brother to finish swim practice to a member of Team USA in the Pan American Maccabi Games in Chile.

"My older brother had been swimming for about a year already, and I'd have to sit on the hot pool deck waiting for him every day. After seeing how much fun it looked, I decided to try swimming and never really stopped," McKenna said. Eleven years later, she now competes for both school and club teams and has collected many accolades on the way.

From first place in the Junior Olympics in the 50-meter, 100-meter, and 200-meter breaststroke to a national ranking as 32nd and 55th in the 200-meter and 100-meter breaststroke respectively in 2013, McKenna's swim career has been filled with accomplishments. Despite these many achievements, the highlight of McKenna's career had yet to come.

"My biggest achievement is definitely getting chosen to compete for Team USA in the Pan American Maccabi Games in Santiago, Chile in December 2015," McKenna said.

Misfortune struck when, upon landing in Santiago, she developed a raging fever and stomach sickness.

"It was awful," McKenna said, "but somehow, I won bronze in the 200-meter individual medley with a 102 degree fever." In order to win these awards and keep improving, McKenna practices six days a week over the school year and during the summer.

"I have to get up super early on weekends and during the summer, but in the end the early mornings are worth it as I see myself improve," McKenna said. McKenna's older brother, a student at Brown University, continues to inspire her.

"I remember he was originally a distance swimmer, and he changed to a sprinter because he wanted to, not because someone told him he'd be good at it," she said.



SEALING STATES: The boys golf team is presented with the state championship trophy after defeating Ponte Vedra by 16 strokes. Senior Jonathon Cachon, pictured holding the trophy, closed with a par 72 in the first round of the tournament. (Photo/Jorge Cachon)

Boys golf team swings its way to the state title

Kevin Pollack | Co-Sports Editor
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The boys varsity golf team dominated its competition and earned the state championship title in Howey-in-the-Hills, Nov. 2, with a 16-stroke victory over Ponte Vedra.

Leading the boys was senior Jonathon Cachon, who finished three-over-par 147.

Freshmen Jude Kim and Leo Herrera also both finished in the top seven with scores of 149 and 152, respectively.

Kim played in his first season for the varsity team after not playing at all last year. The win, in his words, was great.

"It was actually my first time winning something as a team, so I really enjoyed the whole experience," he said.

Because Ponte Vedra won the title last year, the win exacted revenge for the boys. Although he played his first season with the team this year, junior Alberto Martinez noticed the competitive

atmosphere, especially against Ponte Vedra.

"Coach [Moser] and the team filled me in on what happened last year, and it motivated the whole team to go win [the state championship]."

"It felt good to play great throughout the whole year as a team and get the win against Ponte Vedra," he said.

The win is promising for the future of the golf team with only one senior, Cachon, participating out of five players.

Jonathan Mourin, the fifth player for the Patriots who participated in the tournament, is only in eighth grade.

The state championship trophy is evidence that the future is bright for the boys. With only one senior departing this year, there are plenty of players to fill Cachon's shoes.

If the team continues to drive, chip and putt as it did in Howey-in-the-Hills, then more hardware is in store for the boys.

Comeback of competitive cheering

Alec Chao | Staff Writer
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The beginning of this school year saw the re-creation of Heritage's competitive cheer team, making it the one of the latest additions to the 18 sports offered on campus.

While many may believe the competitive cheer team's rise to be recent, it was indeed reformed for the 2016-17 school year; the last time a competitive cheer team existed at Heritage was in 2010.

According to athletic director Mrs. Karen Stearns, interest in competitive cheer returned with the hire of new coaches to the athletic department.

"New varsity coaches were hired this past summer, and they held a great deal of interest in re-creating our competitive cheerleading team," Stearns said.

Though planning began over the summer, the team

was not officially created until a few weeks before the school year began, much like the bowling team. The addition of competitive cheerleading to the list of Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA)-sanctioned sports also contributed to the rebirth of the competitive cheer team.

"Now that competitive cheer is sanctioned [by FHSAA] and concrete rules are in place, we're able to arrange meets and create a solid framework for our team," Stearns said. Though the team is small, it is a dedicated bunch whose interest Mrs. Stearns credits with helping the team get off the ground.

Among the team members is senior Kimberly Haft, who made clear the differences between sideline and competitive cheerleading. "Competitive cheer is definitely more intense than sideline cheering. Like any activity, it becomes easier with

practice. [One] would probably feel sore for the first few days, but afterwards the activity doesn't feel as strenuous," Haft said.

Competitive cheer routines are scored on a points system with guidelines set by Varsity Spirit, a national organization responsible for staging large-scale competitive cheerleading events.

Teams are scored based on their stunts, cheers, dances and crowd participation.

Routines require music accompaniment and as a result must be well-choreographed to receive the maximum number of points.

The competitive cheer team has already participated in two competitions Nov. 15 - Nov. 22.

The team will continue to compete throughout November and December leading up to the regional meet Jan. 6, 2017 at Coral Springs High School.



Sports

A look inside an official visit

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Before student athletes are ready to commit to college, there are many steps they must take to decide where to go. Arguably the biggest step is the visit. However, many student athletes take two visits, a regular visit and an official visit. If you're not a student athlete, then you probably don't know the difference between the the visits, but it is major difference.

Senior softball player Sydney Grobman has committed to Yale University. Before her decision she took both a regular visit of the school and an official visit sponsored by the softball team. "I had visited the school before, but I had my official in September. They were incredibly different."

"My official visit was definitely a better experience. Instead of just getting a tour with your parents, you get to stay two nights in a dorm room. I was on the official with four other softball



PRACTICING FOR PRACTICE: Grobman and friends attended an official Yale softball practice to get a feel of what playing for the Bulldogs would be like. (Photo/ Sydney Grobman)

players in my class and we got to do so many fun things," she said. Grobman said that the official

visit really helped her get a feel for college life. She got to experience her future life as a college

student eating in the dining hall, tailgating at a football game and best of all got to sleep in an actual dorm.

"The idea of spending the night is a huge difference. You basically get to feel what it's like to be a student there for the weekend. Which you don't get on an unofficial," said Grobman.

Apart from acting like a college student for the weekend, Grobman attended softball practice to see what the team was like. Grobman went to only one practice, but it was enough to see what playing for Yale would be like.

The trip to Yale may have been short, but told Grobman all she needed to know to make her decision. "Although I only took one official visit, it did help me know that I wanted to go to Yale. It was reassuring and helped me decide. I am extremely glad I took the visit. It was a great experience. It showed me exactly how I will spend the next four years of my life," she said.



Half Court

BY CONNER MCLEOD
Stop Athletic Stigma

Senior Blake Wooden, starting safety on the football team, wakes up at 6 a.m. every morning to attend school until 3 p.m. He then goes to football practice until 7 p.m., some nights even later. He spends the rest of his night studying for tests and doing homework for his academic classes only to grab a few hours of sleep before beginning this process all over again. Too many students believe a false stigma about athletes. Because some talented student-athletes receive college offers during high school, some students think these athletes need not worry about school anymore and an athlete can simply neglect any academic responsibility.

Students who wrongly believe that athletes do not have to care about grades do not understand the complexity of even earning an athletic scholarship. For many athletes lucky enough to receive an offer, it takes years of practicing to obtain the skills necessary to be noticed by college scouts. Even after a college offer, an athlete may spend a couple hours after practice, training to elevate his or her game to match a college team's athleticism. This includes weekends, holidays, summer break and for most of the football team, a daily class period of intense strength and conditioning with coach Mike Smith.

On top of constant practice, athletes also have to earn good grades in the classroom, contrary to popular belief. In order to be eligible to play in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), athletes must maintain a 2.0 GPA throughout high school. Even then, some schools, including Ivy League universities, still require athletes to apply and receive admission to the university as the offer is only an offer to the actual football team. To top it all off, only about 3.3 percent of all high school athletes even receive an offer, according to the NCAA website. Athletes feel pressured to get good grades just in case their athletic plans don't pan out. All of this means that athletes do not have much time to hang out with friends or family.

These student-athlete responsibilities prove much more time-consuming than most people think, which adds extra stress to athletes who may worry about even receiving a college offer in the first place. We need to get rid of the stigma that athletes have it easy, as it disregards the dedication athletes have regarding their passion, and for some, their whole livelihoods.

Student athletes commit to college early

Conner McLeod | Co-Sports Editor
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The Heritage sports world felt a great amount of pride Nov. 9, when five athletes signed their National Letter of Intent, officially committing to play for their respective colleges.

The official day to sign for all athletes is Feb. 3, but seniors Drew LaMont, Jonathon

Cachon, Mark Vientos, Christian Santana and Justin Connell could not wait until then. These athletes received their offers at different times in their athletic careers, but all of them utilized the first possible day to put their commitments in writing.

LaMont has played on the varsity basketball team since

his sophomore year and has impressed ever since, scoring 700 points over the span of his three years. LaMont received college offers during the summer before his senior year, but eventually verbally committed to American University.

Cachon played well for the varsity boys golf team, leading the team to win multiple

tournaments and state titles, including one this year. Cachon has decided to play at the University of South Florida.

Santana transferred from Mater Lakes Academy this year and will play on the Heritage varsity baseball team. Santana has been chosen to pitch for multiple showcases including an All-American baseball tournament last year. He started to receive offers once colleges got a chance to see his standout play. Of all his offers, Santana decided on Florida International University (FIU).

Connell transferred to Heritage this year and will play for the varsity boys baseball team, but his excellent play at his original high school, Flanagan High School, earned him an offer from Florida International University. He has committed to play there along with teammate Santana for his four years at college.

Vientos, another Flanagan transfer, has committed to play at the University of Miami. Vientos has an impressive resume, being chosen to play on the high school All-American team and the 15U national team. According to usatodayhss.com, Vientos is one of the best prospects in his class. Vientos says he could not wait to officially commit.

"I decided on Miami because I grew up watching the Hurricanes play and dreaming about playing there one day. On my visit I fell in love with the campus and the traditions the coaches put in place," Vientos said.

These athletes have great confidence in their college choices and thus decided not to prolong the commitment process. "I knew that the University of Miami was the place for me," Vientos said.

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Sports

Swim team strokes to first place

Skylar Britton | Opinion Editor
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For the past three years, the varsity swim team has raced its way to a state championship and it seems this season, the team is staying in lane and sprinting to another gold.

Junior Nicholas Pacitti has been a part of the swim team since seventh grade and each year has made a major contribution to the team's success. But, success does not come without hard work.

"I swim nine, sometimes 10 practices a week. The practices are Monday, Wednesday, Friday morning before school and Monday through Friday every day after school and Saturday morning practice with an occasional Sunday morning practice," Pacitti said.

With the countless hours of practice, the swimmers must showcase their talents at weekly meets. At these meets, the boys and girls swim teams rack up awards and recognition. "We had swim meets almost every

Wednesday from the second week of September until the second week of October. Most of them were dual meets or tri meets against one or two other schools. We also went to two invitational swim meets, Sun Invitational at University School and Woodson Invitational at Pine Crest.

Most recently, the girls team placed second at districts and third at regionals, while the boys team got fourth at districts and third at regionals," Pacitti said.

Swim meets are not only a way to engage in the sport Pacitti and his teammates love, but they are also another way to socialize with friends and have fun experiences.

"A typical swim meet with our team is very energetic and fun. Everyone is talking and having fun before their races, but everyone still remains concentrated when it comes to racing. Usually we celebrate the meet by going out to eat afterwards," Pacitti said before the meet. "All that is left



MAKING A SPLASH: Juniors CJ Kopecki, Nicholas Pacitti, Cathy Cooper and Kevin Porto celebrate with Coach Tan after their regionals win Nov. 5. Both the girls and boys varsity swim teams placed third and will advance to the state championship. (Photo/Lynn Kopecki)

this season for the varsity team is states Nov. 12. This meet is the toughest of the season because

it has 24 of the fastest people in each event from our state class. After states, most of the

swimmers swim for their club teams, competing and practicing with them," Pacitti said.

Seniors serve up scholar awards

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The varsity girls volleyball team may be known for spiking and serving, but that's not all the Lady Patriots are good for.

The girls are court-smart and book-smart: seniors Lucila Grinspan and Laura Perez, were honored with the All-Academic Award by the Florida Athletic Coaches Association. Grinspan is in four AP classes and the pre-engineering track. She is also a member of Rho Kappa and the Chinese Honor Society. Perez is taking three AP classes and in the Pre-Law Club. Perez is also a vice president of Model United Nations and Future Business Leaders of America.

Coach Lori Rembe nominated Grinspan and Perez for the award, which honors seniors who excel both academically and athletically.

Grinspan, a four-year starter and captain of the volleyball team, led the team throughout the season this year,

which ended with a 13-6 record. Grinspan enjoyed the recognition after working tirelessly throughout high school. "I was honored to receive the award after working hard throughout

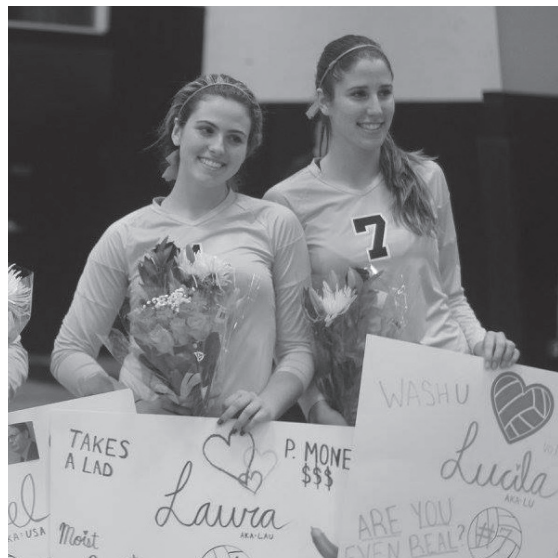
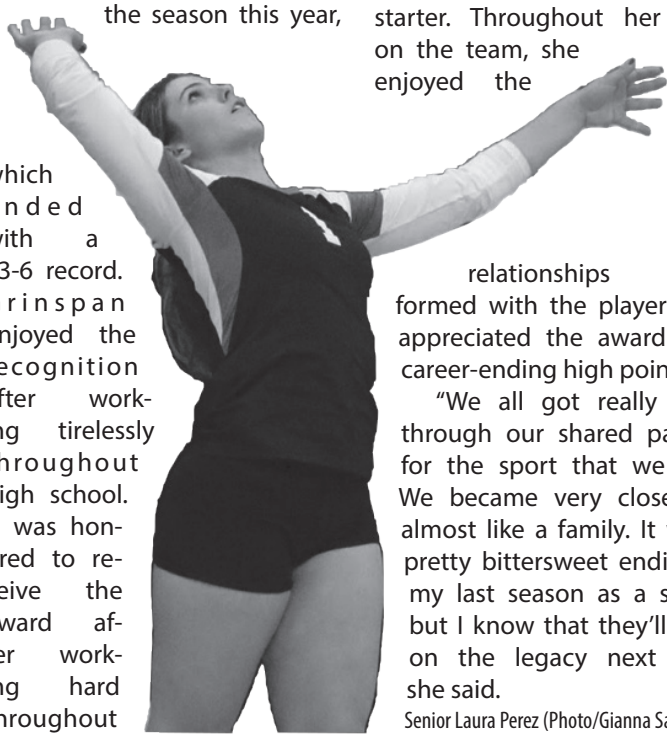
all of high school and recently senior year," she said.

Perez was also a four-year starter. Throughout her time on the team, she enjoyed the

relationships she formed with the players and appreciated the award as a career-ending high point.

"We all got really close through our shared passion for the sport that we love. We became very close-knit, almost like a family. It was a pretty bittersweet ending to my last season as a senior, but I know that they'll carry on the legacy next year," she said.

Senior Laura Perez (Photo/Gianna Sanchez)



DOUBLE TROUBLE: Seniors Lucila Grinspan and Laura Perez, above left, receive praise from their fans senior night before beating Somerset Academy in their last home game of their high school careers. Perez and Grinspan have started for the Lady Patriots since freshman year and have dominated on the court ever since. At right, Perez and Grinspan prepare to return a serve in a home game against Archbishop McCarthy High School. The talents of Grinspan and Perez cause other teams to change their gameplans and aim their spikes away from the two players. Grinspan and Perez combined for 320 kills this season. (Photos/Gianna Sanchez)

5Ks running to Florida

Alex Becker | Staff Writer
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5K Zombie Run by MOR

Staged as a zombie apocalypse, this 5K lets participants choose to be runners or zombies. Runners wear three flags on a belt to represent lives. Zombies are staged throughout the course ready to chase you and steal your flags and knock you out of the competition. Lose all three of your flags, and you are "killed" although you can still finish the course for no prize. Safe Zones are set up at mile markers one and two with water, and extra life flags. Prepare for walkers, runners, crawlers and some surprises.

If you're not a big runner, you can sign up to be a zombie and have just as much fun. Choose to be a zombie instead and hunt humans while dressed in realistic flesh-eating fashion, compliments of the event's expert make-up team. Although zombies cannot win a prize, they still have a blast chasing runners.

Zombie Runs are in various places around Florida at many times, so check out the5kzombierun.com for dates and locations.

The Great Amazing Race

This race was inspired by "The Amazing Race" television show to help support Pediatric Cancer. You work in teams of two and race around a 1.5-mile cross country course completing a string of eight, fun-filled outdoor challenges. Your team will receive clue cards provided at each station describing a

challenge that each team must complete before proceeding to the next challenge station. This race is all about teamwork; how well you work together with your partner (communicating and collaborating) is essential to winning the race.

Each race offers two course levels, recreation and competitive, based on age and fitness level of racers. The race takes about an hour to complete and spectators are welcome to watch and cheer. Runners will get wet and dirty, so be prepared.

For more information, plus dates and locations, visit greatamazingrace.com.

Spartan Races by Reebok

Reebok hosts various races and runs across the country called Spartan Races. The runners must turn to warriors in order to complete the race. Spartan races come in three forms: Spartan Sprint, Spartan Super and Spartan Beast. The Spartan Sprint is the shortest of three races, stretching from three to five miles long with about 20 obstacles.

The Spartan Super, or the middle child, is more than eight miles long with about 25 obstacles. The harshest of the three races is the Spartan Beast, a 12 mile run encountering more than 30 obstacles. Obstacles include barbed-wire crawls in the mud, fire jumps, rope climbs and much more. The races are extremely difficult and help build physical, tactical and mental strength. These runs are brutal, yet fun and rewarding. For more information and dates, visit spartan.com.



Sports

Hockey team skates to ‘cool’ start

Kevin Pollack | Co-Sports Editor
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The ice hockey team has skated its way to a cool 2-3 start to the season. Junior Cameron Wolk, a center and forward on the team, praised senior defenseman Alan Jacob on his great work this season and is enthusiastic about the team’s potential. “We have a lot of potential, and with practice, we can be a great team,” he said. Wolk said that though the team began the season well, there is always room for improvement. “I am looking forward to seeing my

teammates improve and winning more games,” he said. Junior Sophia Donskoi is the team manager for the ice hockey team for the second year in a row. As manager, she contacts parents, helps prepare the players for games and assists coaches J.L. Haber and Michael Usan. Donskoi recognized the team’s improvement over the last seasons. “The team has improved a lot. We used to be really low in the division, but this year, we’re already third even though it’s early in the season. I’m really optimistic about the rest of the year,”

she said. The team has since dropped to sixth in the standings. Donskoi also identified some of the team’s shortcomings. “As far as organizing their plays, it would help them a lot [to improve on organization],” she said. The team still has 15 left to play before the season ends in February, but so far, the team’s performance has been top shelf.



FACEOFF: Junior Jacob Usan waits for the puck to be dropped in the opening faceoff against Boca Raton Nov. 7. The game ended in an 8-1 loss for the Patriots, but Usan scored from an assist from sophomore Anthony Van Steenkiste. (Photo/Sophia Donskoi)

Basketball team rebounding with new leadership

Conner McLeod | Co-Sports Editor
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The basketball team is going to look very different this year. With key players going off to college, new players will have to step up and take on new leadership positions. One player that the Patriots will lean on is senior Drew LaMont. “I know these guys look up to me so I also have to lead by example,” LaMont said. With a height of 6-foot-8 and

an ability to score from anywhere on the court, LaMont’s play will be a huge factor in how the team will fare this year. LaMont has committed to American University and hopes to finish his last season at Heritage with a strong outing, chasing 1,000 high school career points. LaMont scored 350 points last year, which pushed him to about 700 points in total. If he has as good as a season as he did last year, he will definitely

accomplish his goal and propel the team to a great record. Also stepping up for the Patriots this year will be junior Nick Backer, a quick combo-guard who is able to control the game with his speed. Last year, Backer played as a sixth man, but this year, he will start at shooting guard; a new leadership role for Backer. Sophomore Brandon Spencer, new to the squad, will add depth to the team as a shooter

and a great defender. The Patriots have definitely lost valuable height and cannot rely on their post game, how big players play, as much as they did last year. With their only height coming from LaMont and senior T.J. Slaton, they will have to look for more outside shooting opportunities for LaMont and other shooters on the team, including senior Ammar Asad. The lack of height is not a bad thing as the Patriots will be

a lot faster than other teams, opening opportunities to press teams and force turnovers. One thing the Patriots will have to work on is their chemistry. With so many new starters on the court, the players have not yet found their rhythm. The boys finished last season 14-8 under the leadership of Coach Brent Maffett. With new players filling the roles of graduates, the team is poised to compete with the best once again.

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Cheer

THE HOLIDAYS: TRADITIONS & TREATS

Compiled by Skylar Britton and Carrie Kuecks (Graphics/Amanda Wasserman)



49%

OF STUDENTS WILL
STAY AT HOME
INSTEAD OF
TRAVELING DURING
WINTER BREAK

53%

REPORT THAT
SPENDING TIME WITH
LOVED ONES IS THE
BEST PART OF THE
HOLIDAY SEASON

82%

OF STUDENTS
CELEBRATE
CHRISTMAS WITH
THEIR FAMILIES

(Poll of 51 students grades 9 -12 /Asa Zaretsky)

HOLIDAY HABITS

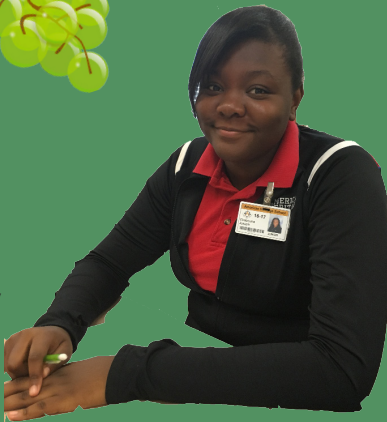
FOR THREE STUDENTS, HOLIDAY TRADITIONS EXTEND
FAR BEYOND SIMPLY OPENING PRESENTS UNDER THE TREE.



"On New Year's Eve at midnight, we run around the neighborhood with suitcases so that we can have good travels for the following year. We all also wear yellow underwear and eat 10 grapes for good luck." -junior Sarah Mitchell



"My family and I go to church every year on Christmas Eve. We have a party and there is a lot of food. Then on Christmas morning, my family and I bring all of our gifts to church and the whole community opens gifts together." -junior Ekabouna Joseph



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"Every year my family gets together at my grandparents house and we light the candles on the menorah. My grandma also makes home-made latkes and jelly-filled donuts." -junior Max Kingsley

