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(Photo/Jennifer Estevez)

All stars at All-State: Eighteen high schoolers and four junior high students traveled to Tampa Jan. 11-13 for the All-State choir contest. Turn to the News section to find out more about these talented musicians' performances. Go to A3.

Tech: terrific or terrifying? In an era of constantly developing technology, sometimes the future can be scary. Open up the centerspread to read a review of "Black Mirror" season 4 and more about new technology. Go to C8-C9.

Project Alive makes progress: Project Alive recently reached more than $1 million toward the $2.5 million necessary to fund a cure for Hunter Syndrome. Flip to features to read more about the project's recent events. Go to C11.

Fundraising in the 14th century

English Honor Society and Dead Poets Society join forces to host the first Renaissance Festival.

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A NOBLE KNIGHT: Junior Ariann Barker "knights" fellow junior Gavin Grnja with a pool noodle as a reward for winning first place in the boys' costume contest. Senior Kamryn Washington won for the girls, and they each received a free ticket to the next EHS/DPS open mic night as a prize. (Photo/Andrew Kolondra Jr.)

The Environmental Education Center was turned into a land of princesses, jousters and knights Jan. 20 when Dead Poets Society (DPS) partnered with the National English Honor Society (EHS) to host the first annual Renaissance Fair from 1-4 p.m. In addition to introducing students to life and culture during the historical era, the event doubled as a fundraiser for Project Alive.

"The event came about on the request of students in my clubs Dead Poets Society and National English Honor Society. They have an interest in Shakespeare and the Renaissance and they wanted a Renaissance fest. We decided to do it, and then we decided why not make it a fundraiser. It just developed over time," Mrs. Dina Amata, adviser for both societies, said.

The festival was decked out in Renaissance decor with everything from flags with coats of arms to tree fairies. "It was beautiful. The space was gorgeous and the set up was nice. I love how committed everything was, from the lances to the costumes," Alejandro Ortiz, one of three judges for the monologue contest, said.

The approximately 50 festival-goers could participate in a Shakespearean Monologue contest, take part in Shakespearean scene re-enactments, request a Dead Poets Society member to write a personalized poem, experience a jousting competition, get their face painted, bid on photos in a silent auction or compete in a costume contest.

The monologue competition was the clubs' second annual contest. Contestants included juniors Samuel Marx, Isabel Chamberlain, Gabriela Coutinho and Thomas Windisch, and senior Faith Ward, with Coutinho winning first place. She will move on to the district level for her performance of Tamora's monologue in Act 1, Scene 1 of "Titus Andronicus."

The reenactment contest ended with seniors Lauren Waldman and Katherine Quesada placing first and second, respectively, and juniors Ariann Barker and Daniela Rivera placing third and fourth, respectively.

Open to the public, the festival attracted many spectators, allowing the clubs to raise more funds for Project Alive. "It was very interesting. I didn't expect anything poor – it's American Heritage – but this is definitely very, very cool. I am currently in a Shakespeare production, so I am very into the Renaissance. The central theme around the literature is great," Rayna Kanas, a senior at Nova High School, said.

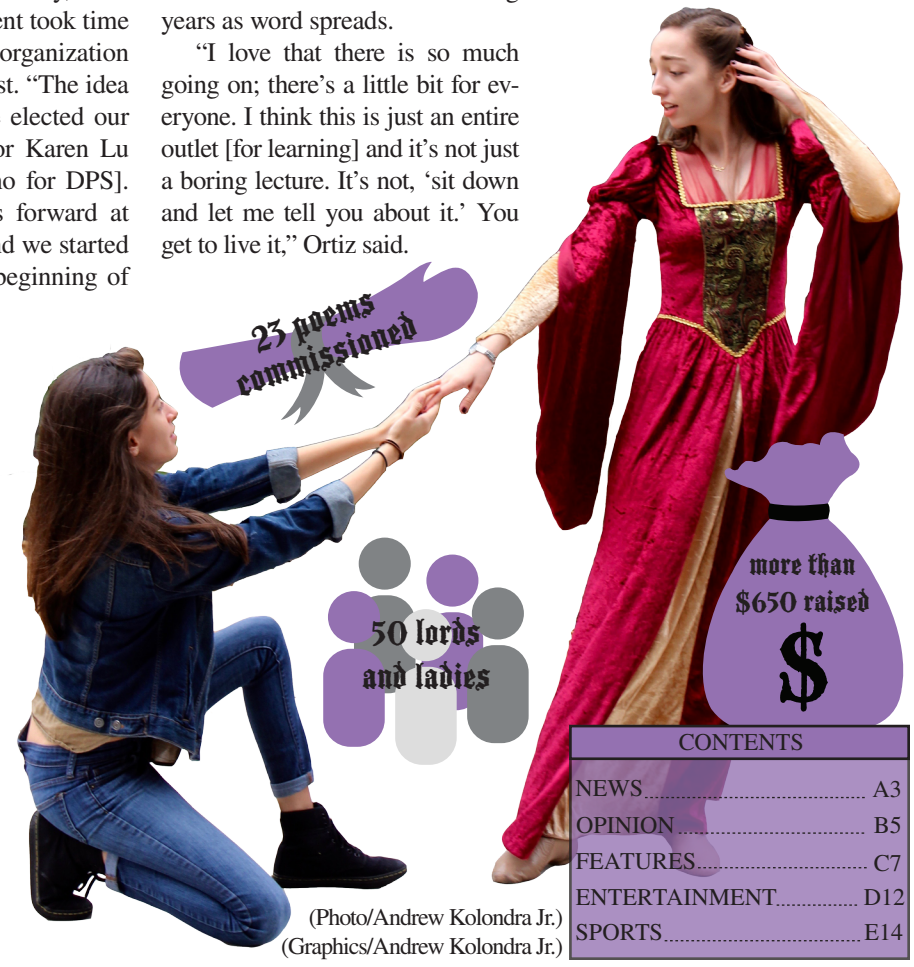
Club members arrived at 11 a.m. to set up for the festival and received service hours for their work. "I'm happy that I attended and helped set up. It was really fun seeing everyone dress up. They had a cool poetry table with calligraphy pens and some really good photography at the silent auction," senior Kamryn Washington, member of both Dead Poets Society and National English Honor Society, said.

The three-hour event took time to plan, however, with organization starting back in August. "The idea came about when we elected our new presidents [senior Karen Lu for EHS and Coutinho for DPS]. They put those ideas forward at the end of last year and we started making plans at the beginning of this school year," Mrs. Amata said. "We got a donation from Publix so we could offer lunch, and we made all the signs and booked the monologue judges. It took quite a bit of time to plan."

In addition to admission and lunch funds, the festival had a silent auction of student-donated photography. The event raised approximately $650, with all of the proceeds going to Project Alive. The club hopes that festival attendance will increase in the coming years as word spreads.

"I love that there is so much going on; there's a little bit for everyone. I think this is just an entire outlet [for learning] and it's not just a boring lecture. It's not, 'sit down and let me tell you about it.' You get to live it," Ortiz said.

RENAISSANCE (FACE) PAINTING: Freshman Bella Ramirez gets her face painted with butterflies and flowers to match her flower crown at the festival. (Photo/Angela Lin)



(Graphics/Andrew Kolondra Jr.)

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Disney VS UNIVERSAL

Disney Trivia

Walt Disney World was the second Disney theme park ever built, following the original Disneyland in Anaheim, Calif.

There are six Disney theme parks around the globe: Disneyland (Anaheim, Calif.), Disney World (Orlando, Fla.), Disneyland France (Marne-la-Vallée, France), Tokyo Disney (Tokyo, Japan), Disneyland Hong Kong (Hong Kong, China) and Disneyland Shanghai (Shanghai, China). Walt Disney World in Orlando encapsulates around 30,500 acres, making it about the same size as San Francisco.

The estimated yearly attendance at Disney World's Magic Kingdom park in Orlando is 17.6 million, followed by Epcot with 11.1 million, Disney's Hollywood Studios with 9.9 million and Disney's Animal Kingdom with 9.9 million.

Selfie sticks are no longer allowed at Disney World.

Universal Trivia

The Rip Ride Rock-It track features three different world's-first maneuvers; the Double Take, which is the world's largest non-inverted loop, the Jump Cut, the ride's spiraling negative gravity maneuver, and the Treble Clef, which is the portion of the track that was built into the shape of a treble clef.

The Jurassic Park ride cost $110 million to build, which is double the amount it cost to make the film that inspired the attraction. Here's a bonus Jurassic Park fact: the 85-foot plunge at the end of the ride is the longest water descent ever built.

The E.T. Adventure is the only ride from Universal's opening day in 1990 that is still operating today.

In Diagon Alley, the former home of Universal's Jaws attraction, there are several nods to the now-closed ride. In the record shop, there is a record by The Quint Trio on display, "Here's to Swimmin' With Bowlegged Women." There are also telescopes in Wiseacres Joke Shop that are being made from old boats from Jaws, and there's a set of shark jaws in the window of the Apothecary Shop.

Events in the parks

- World Disney World Marathon Weekend- Jan. 3-7
- Epcot International Festival of the Arts - Jan. 12- Feb. 19
- Disney Princess Half Marathon Weekend - Feb. 22- 25
- Epcot International Flower & Garden Festival- Feb. 28- May 28
- Star Wars: Galactic Nights- April TBD
- Star Wars Half Marathon Weekend - The Dark Side- April 19-22
- Disney Wine & Dine Half Marathon Weekend- Nov. 1-4
- Mickey's Very Merry Christmas Party- December
- Epcot International Festival of the Holidays- TBD
- A Celebration of Harry Potter - Jan. 26-28
- Mardi Gras- Feb. 3- Apr. 7
- Rock the Universe- TBD
- Halloween Horror Nights- TBD
- Holidays at Universal Orlando Resort- TBD
- Christmas time at the Wizarding World of Harry Potter- TBD
- Mannheim Steamroller- TBD
- Grinchmas- TBD

Mickey versus the Minions: which park is better?

29% prefer Disney World.

71% prefer Universal.

Based on a poll of 425 Upper School students.

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Both the Disney and Universal season passes include many perks such as free parking, discounts on food and merchandise and the time-saving advantage of skipping ticket lines at the parks.

Sophomore Marissa Pendas has been a Walt Disney World season pass holder for the past two years, and visits the parks at least six times a year. Pendas can visit the parks anytime she wants because her pass has no blackout dates. With the platinum pass, she is able to go to a single park for the day or park hop. This allows her to enjoy Epcot during the day and then take the monorail to Magic Kingdom to enjoy the fireworks display at Cinderella's castle at night. Disney season pass holders get notifications on the upcoming special events that are happening in the parks. Pendas loves the parks so much that she plans on being an annual pass holder for life.

Sophomore Cindy de Oliveira recently became a season pass holder at Universal Studios and Islands of Adventure. She visits Universal often with the four other members of her family. De Oliveira saves a lot of money because she visits Universal Studios often. With the pass, she is able to take the Hogwarts Express and hop between parks as many times as she wants throughout the day. The pass enables her to enjoy special events and get discounts on merchandise and food. De Oliveira enjoys all the perks of the Universal season pass. She goes so often that she calls Universal her second home. Because of this, she will continue to get a pass for the parks every year.

Upcoming projects in the parks

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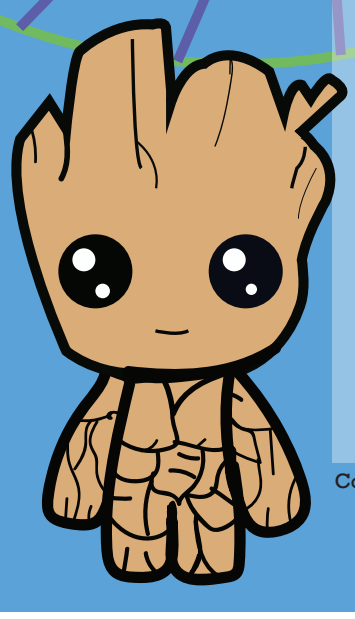
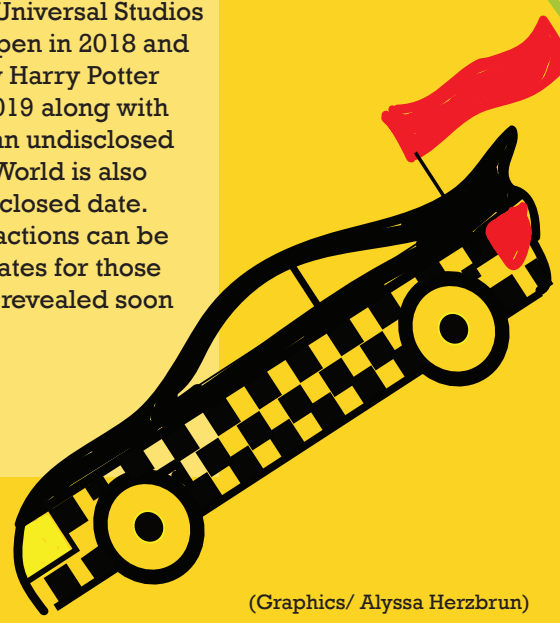
The world of theme parks is one of constant expansion. New construction, attractions, rides, whole new areas of a park - these are regular sights at any one of Disney's or Universal's parks. So it's no surprise that they both have quite a bit coming up soon in the next couple of years. Disney will have several new attractions being built at most of its parks, among them a Tron-themed attraction at Magic Kingdom in 2021, Ratatouille and Guardians of the Galaxy attractions at Epcot in 2021, and at Hollywood Studios two new Star Wars attractions in 2019, a Mickey and Minnie Mouse attraction at an undisclosed date, and a new section of the park dedicated to Toy Story in 2018.

Meanwhile, Universal hasn't been slacking off, with plans for new attractions announced at their two parks as well. At Universal Studios a Fast and Furious ride will open in 2018 and at Islands of Adventure a new Harry Potter roller coaster will arrive in 2019 along with another Harry Potter ride at an undisclosed date. A new Super Nintendo World is also coming to Islands at an undisclosed date. Stay tuned, because new attractions can be announced at any time and dates for those already announced could be revealed soon as well.





Compiled by Angela Lin, Joanne Haner, Alyssa Herzbrun, Asa Zaretsky and Carrie Kuecks.

(Graphics/ Alyssa Herzbrun)

NEWS

Chorus all stars take on All-State

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Traveling to Tampa for the annual All-State showcase, 18 high schoolers and four junior high students joined other choir students around the state from Jan. 11-13. These students took part in the Concert Chorus, Women's Chorus, Men's Chorus or the Sight-Reading Choir depending on their musical ability.

In order to place into a choir, the students take multiple tests regarding music theory, vocal ability, and sight-reading, the ability to distinguish notes, intervals and rhythm without the help of a piano. A very limited number of students participate in each choir as even passing all the tests does not secure a spot in one of the All-State Choirs. While more than 15,000 students apply, the All-State choirs take about 1,000 students in total.

Among the students to go, junior Nathan Mahon, seniors Emily Gutierrez, Carly Medwin and Kamryn Washington took part in the Sight-Reading Choir, recognized as particularly prestigious due to the challenging criteria. Seniors Dylan Olster, Diego Vazquez-Gomez and Gutierrez also performed solos. "I am very proud of the incredible job our school did this year at All-State," Gutierrez said.

"All-State is not for the faint of heart," Gutierrez said. Students have two full days of rehearsing new music culminating in a final performance. All the conductors who worked with the choirs hold advanced degrees in music and are distinguished in the choral world.

While only Florida students participate in the All-State choir, college representatives and clinicians hold seminars, presentations and other events aimed to inform both students and their directors.

Recalling her four visits to All-State, Gutierrez said, "My best advice to someone whose goal is to make it in is to practice and trust your teachers. Miss Vanderhoof and Mr. Moccia have been invaluable in helping me not only make it into All-State but have also helped me grow all around as a musician. I'm sure I speak for many of my fellow singers when I say I would not be half of the musician I am today if it wasn't for their guidance and expertise," Gutierrez said.

SUCH A SIGHT: From left to right, junior Nathan Mahon, seniors Emily Gutierrez, Carly Medwin and Kamryn Washington at All-State. These four students performed in the Sight-Reading Choir. (Photo/submitted by Emily Gutierrez)

'The beautiful campaign' shows at YAA

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When senior Sabrina Lin began working on "The Beautiful Campaign," she knew there was no better way to show what she found beautiful than to paint portraits of the very special needs students for which she was campaigning.

The collection of 16 pieces, both an awareness campaign for the special needs population and a fundraiser for Friends & Stars, a nonprofit offering personalized art classes to special needs individuals, went on display at Young at Art (YAA) Dec. 17 and will remain on exhibition until Feb. 10.

Lin has worked for many years teaching art to special needs individuals at Friends & Stars, where she uses her artistic talent to promote self-confidence and self-expression in her students. Her time there inspired her to create the series of paintings now on exhibition at YAA.

"YAA has quite an encompassing, multigenerational audience," Lin said. "I had had a few pieces shown there before, so it was definitely one of my top choices [for my campaign]."

Lin loves the rewarding experience of watching her students grow with each finished piece of artwork. Her favorite student, a man named Marcos, amazed her with how proud he was of his art pieces.

"I can't emphasize enough how much he loves art. Every time he finishes a certain section, he'll get up and show everyone around him what a good job he did. He has the biggest ear-to-ear grin," Lin said. "It's been a while since I volunteered because the center relocated, but I will never forget his contagious smile and how much he loved what he did."

Through "The Beautiful Campaign," Lin hopes to help people see special needs individuals like Marcos from a new perspective, so that they may be more open minded and accepting.

The main goal of the campaign is to start conversations, change perspectives and show the students – the stars – just how beautiful they are.

WHAT IS BEAUTIFUL: Senior Sabrina Lin stands in front of a wall of portraits of her special needs arts students as a part of her "The Beautiful Campaign" exhibition. Aside from the portraits, Lin's exhibition featured a mural of a sunset and a wall of sticky notes on which museumgoers could answer the question "What is Beautiful?" (Photo/submitted by Sabrina Lin)

"By highlighting differences in a positive way, I am hopeful that my campaign will encourage our community to break down social barriers, increase awareness for those experiencing injustice and help people become mindful of their own thoughts and actions," Lin said.

Most of all, Lin loves how her artwork has allowed people to connect and empathize with the subject matter. "I've had complete strangers hug me at previous exhibitions because they've had family members with special needs," she said. "There's so much critical thinking that goes into art behind just the coloring. Who knew?"

Visit Lin's website at the beautifulcampaign.com to read more about her work and past exhibitions.

Expanding Speech and Debate to the elementary level

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The "Speech and Debate" are seemingly making their way into the already known three pillars of American Heritage: "knowledge, integrity and compassion."

Speech and Debate Team directors are taking into account the increasing importance of public speaking in the status quo, especially in the futures of today's youth. This is evident in the new elementary school speech and debate program that our Lower School students have recently enlisted in.

The program is small but mighty; 10 elementary school students in the forth and fiffth grades are allowed to join the team. These students will receive instruction directly from varsity team members who have at least two years of experience in their designated speech or debate events.The new additions to the team will compete in a variety of events, including Original Oratory, Dramatic or Humorous Interpretation and Congressional Debate.

Varsity member and junior Chase Freeman is hopeful for the bright futures of the new youth. "I think it will really help develop confidence in public speaking and general knowledge of our country," said Freeman. "I hope it interests the kids enough to progress into upper school debate."

Varsity students will coach every other Monday for approximately two hours. Student mentors and team coaches plan on making all efforts possible in order to prepare their newest young members for their future careers in speech and debate.

News Brief

Linguistics Olympiad

The North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad took place Jan. 25 in the 4500 building and in schools around North America. High school students competed to solve linguistic puzzles.

The AHS team was led by senior Fernando Rivera, who has held practice sessions all year for the Heritage participants. Meetings take place every other Monday immediately after school in Mrs. Lovegren's room.

BGG Art Contest

The Black, Gold & Green Club is holding its third annual art contest in February. While previous submissions only consisted of recycled art pieces, last year, the club decided to open up the contest to include nature-themed art such as paintings of animals, photos of nature or poetry and prose about nature.

Last year, the club received more than 50 entries and raised $300 for Project Alive, and they hope to exceed that amount this year.

Participants may submit their art to room 8203 any day or the Black Box Theater after school from Feb. 5-7. Entries cost $3, and any student who enters will earn three community service hours.

Butterfly Project

The Butterfly Project, started by junior Mikhal Ben-Joseph, will be holding its first Genocide Awareness Writing and Artwork Contest. All students K-12 in both American Heritage and Academy are eligible to submit either written or visual entries.

This project is required in all ninth grade English classes. Teachers must submit their students' best works by March 9 by dropping them off in Mrs. Behar's room or box.

After-school information and coaching sessions will be available for participants, and all entries will be submitted to the school competition.

Gluten-Free Drive

Key Club is holding a gluten-free food drive to help others in need who suffer from gluten sensitivity or intolerance.

From Jan. 22-26, students may drop off certified gluten free or kosher food items at the Upper School office. Key Club meetings are held every other Friday in room 4101.

News

Patriots take GatorMUN

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Thirty-degree weather, political worries and bustling thinkers – one might think, perhaps, of Washington, D.C. This description, however, is equally suited to the University of Florida's annual high school Model United Nations conference: GatorMUN.

The conference of approximtely 1,200 attendees is one of the largest in the nation, and the quality of competition proved it.

Junior Rayyan Merchant attested to the advanced competitive level. "The most difficult part was competing against the other really strong delegates in my committee," Merchant said. As a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), he was responsible for handling issues regarding the IOC in the status quo, such as doping and environmental policy.

American Heritage alumnus and current sophomore at the University of Florida Zachariah Chou served as Assistant director of the Press Corps at the MUN event. While as a staff member of the tournament he was unable to work with the team, he enjoyed witnessing its progress. "Seeing my old friends and advisors makes me happy beyond belief; I can only hope some of the students end up at UF," Chou said.

Heritage members did not short their previously set standard; the team received recognition as an "Outstanding Large Delegation" and several members won individual awards. Merchant said, "Overall, the team had great successes at GatorMUN, and we're looking forward to the rest of a great spring season with NAIMUN in DC, NHSMUN in NYC and MICSUN at UM heading up the rest of the season."

COMPREHENSIVE: The delegation of Poland listens with rapt attention to a "multifaceted" speech about combining draft resolutions. Seven consecutive speakers had previously brought up the same idea. (Photo/Amber Bhutta)

Asa's Analysis

BY ASA ZARETSKY

Florida Elections in 2018: Who is Running?

As one of the premier battleground states of America, Florida is always tense during election year, even during a midterm election. This year we have elections for the Senate, governor, Congress, and state legislature. Each race is predicted to be close and hotly contested, so every vote will count.

For the Senate, we will have two candidates. Republican Gov. Rick Scott is expected to run against the current Senator, Democrat Bill Nelson. Both men have millions of dollars in the bank already, and early polls have them neck and neck.

Nelson, through the Democrat friendly national climate, has an edge, but he shouldn't underestimate Scott's ability to raise and spend large sums of money on campaigning.

Looking toward Tallahassee, there's multiple candidates running for governor. On the Republican side, Agricultural Commissioner Adam Putnam, a relative moderate, Congressman Ron DeSantis, who has Trump backing, and Speaker Richard Corcoran, a Tea Party style conservative will face off in a divided primary.

DeSantis currently has the advantage due to Trump's pull among the base. On the Democratic end, former Congresswoman Gwen Graham, daughter of former Gov. Bob Graham, has the lead in the polls, while Mayors Andrew Gillum and Philip Levine trail behind her.

This race is liable to be even closer than the Senate race because of the more localized nature of the governor's race.

For Congress and state legislature, Republicans hold a majority in the federal delegation and in both state chambers.

However, Democrats are exploiting a favorable national climate, partly due to Trump's unpopularity, to net them a few more congressional seats and possibly control of one of the chambers.

While most races are likely to be decided by thin margins, Democrats currently hold a lead in polling and predictions.

Success at science fair

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Science fair can be described as an opportunity for students to prepare a project based on topics unknown to them. This year's topics include "The Molecular Effects of Pichia Kudriavzevii Yeast on Cell Viability, Apoptosis, Cytokine Levels (IL-6), and Mucus Secretion of A549 Alveolar Epithelial Cells" or "Combatting Familial Alzheimer's Disease By Comparing Calcium Retention of Mutated Presenilin Genes and Assessing the Restorative Potential of Parathyroid Hormone in a Caenorhabditis Elegans Model." It is an understatement to say projects such as these require an abundance of work, research and time.

However, after students complete several science fair projects throughout junior high and high school, the concept of science fair doesn't seem as difficult to tackle. "As students stay in research, their knowledge base and skill level rises and their projects reflect that," Science Fair Coordinator Mrs. Joykutty said. "This year's projects demonstrate a degree of professionalism that is impressive."

A high sense of professionalism is exactly what the science fair judges search for in the perfect project. "Judges look at the boards to identify originality of thought, the degree to which the student did the project themselves, the scientific process, the command the student has on the research," Mrs. Joykutty said. "They want to know that the student can defend their rationale for their hypothesis. Appropriate controls and defensible statistical analysis also plays an important role in being able to convince the judge of the validity of their data, discussion and conclusions."

Although extensive work has been completed before the judges' initial examination, the final project is not done yet. The steps that remain start with the Broward County Fair in February, then States in March, and an International competition that takes place in Pittsburgh in May.

Science fair provides students a venue to practice essential researching skills that can prove to be useful as students advance into college and real world jobs. It "introduces students to the scientific research process. It teaches students how to ask questions based on observations in real life and find original ways to find answers. It expands horizons by revealing to students the scientific method in action, teaching them how to interact with the professional scientific community and helps them learn life skills like persistence and perseverance," Mrs. Joykutty said. "It allows students to develop cutting edge research skills that many others learn in grad school and sets the groundwork for paper and poster publications, speaker presentations and some of the most lucrative prizes at the high school level."

Science Fair first-place results

High school	Junior High
Stefan Abi-Karam	Alejandra Abramson
Anam Ahmed	Christian Custodio
Satya Alagarsamy	Ella Gohari
Amber Bhutta	Seraphina Hsiao
Dawson Cohen	Rohan Kumar
Nicholas DiStefano	Isabella Melians
Diya Jayram	Maya Neeranjun
Angelin Mathew	Yulene Oyarbide
David Mendez	Charlie Sanford
Valentina Ortega	Anjali Sood
Ephraim Oyetunji	Megan Yang
Emily Pallack	
Hemangi Rajpal	
Rajat Ramesh	
Lauren Waldman	

Students making history

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National History Day (NHD, a school year-long event requires students to perform an extensive amount of researching for a specific subject based on the overall topic of the given year. In the 2017-2018 school year, students were given the theme of "conflict and compromise."

In some years, topics are "straightforward and easy to understand [such as] the 'individual in history' or 'taking a stand,'" Mrs. Porges, head of NHD for AHS, said. "'Conflict and compromise' is harder because there are multiple meanings for each word."

As a result of such a general topic, students had the option to interpret it in a variety of ways. Ideas ranged "from the well-known such as Ping Pong diplomacy to unique topics including Eleanor and Gil Kraus, who rescued 50 Jewish children from Austria, or the Harvest of Shame, [which is] about migrant farm workers," Mrs. Porges explained.

Students work from the beginning of the school year to the start of second semester in January.

At this point, judges choose the projects in each category that best fit the criteria. "Judges look for in-depth research, [if] the project tells the complete story [and embodies] the theme," Mrs. Porges said. As far as the winners go, [they look to see if] it has the possibility to become something really special."

As soon as the special few are chosen to move on to the next stage of NHD, their project has to be perfected. "The winners do as much work after they've won as they do before. Basically every project needs to be refined. They need to double and sometimes triple their sources.

Then the projects are redone. The school project is basically a rough draft [for their] final, revised and expanded project," Mrs. Porges said.

NHD provides a different type of educational experience unique to that of school.

"Much of what we teach in school is information, facts, [and] basic knowledge that you need in order to accomplish things later. NHD teaches how to find information, how to analyze that information and how to use and then present that information.

These are skills that you need in college and beyond," Mrs. Porges said. "History is simply the vehicle that is used to teach the skills the students need."

NHD winners

High school	Junior High
Olivia Lender & Zane Moser - group exhibit	**Hana Starkman and Nicole Gorbatov** - group exhibit
Nathan Mahon, Wesley Mahon & Frederick Bredemeyer - group performance	**Wes Holston** - individual exhibit
Daniela Hilel - Individual performance	**Wynona Brinkmann** - individual performance
Ana Curi and Tomas Arroyo - group documentary	**Alejandra Abramson & Diya Goel** - group performance
Abby Lichterman - individual documentary	**Alex Hoffman** - individual documentary
Makenna Boose and Emma Quarequio - group website	**Sarah Franzblau** - documentary
Celia (Jiayong) Lu - individual website	**Cayden Conn** - paper
Steven Keppinger - paper	**Philip Nenov** - individual website
	Amari Porter & Sofia Aronsky - group website

OPINION

Wrecking resolutions

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In light of the resolutions that come with the new year, many people find themselves trying to implement lifestyle changes. Upon reflection of the previous year, living a more positive life usually come to mind.

Carrying out these changes varies from person to person as everyone has his or her own ideas about what constitutes a positive lifestyle. Some people find the answer in going on a diet or to the gym, but for others, a healthier life lies more in committing to a job, or in this case, school.

As a student, the new year brings a new semester, a fresh start allowing for the implementation of resolutions. Students looking to make better decisions concerning their academics may be trying to pay more attention in class or put more thought into their work. Some students may just be looking to keep a positive energy instead of complaining and worrying.

Walking back into school at the beginning of the year can be the chance for a student to carry out his or her resolutions, or remove a barrier that forces students to struggle to make the changes they want to see in their lives. Despite returning to a "new" semester, students find themselves back in the same schedule with the same students every day.

Slipping back into their old routines, students can easily fall prey to the familiar setting around them. According to Meg Salig from "Psychology Today," this sense of comfort that comes with a prolonged routine allows for the completion of tasks in a complacent state known as autopilot.

When people complete tasks on autopilot, they tend to pay less attention to what they are doing because it has become so normalized. While performing daily tasks such as getting dressed in the morning, autopilot helps to minimize the number of little decisions such as what you are going to wear.

However, performing on autopilot at school limits the amount of thought put into the tasks at hand.

Block scheduling or a division of classes between the first and second semesters are two schooling methods that have been implemented around the country that would minimize this issue by adding variety to the schedules of students.

Although not as often as in block scheduling, changing schedules every semester instead of every year could break students of the mid-school-year sluggishness that comes with setting into autopilot.

While it may not be necessary to take different classes in the second semester, rearranging the order of classes would go a long way to keeping students on their toes and fresh for a new year.

(Graphic/Kristen Quesada)

Despite the benefits to these types of scheduling, shuffling classes or dividing them between semesters would force guidance to go through the time consuming processes of arranging schedules an extra time a year.

Implementing a system that would change schedules every semester as opposed to every year would not solve the issue of students who find their classes boring, but this small change could keep students on their toes and engaged as they have to navigate through a new daily routine.

Capitalizing the internet

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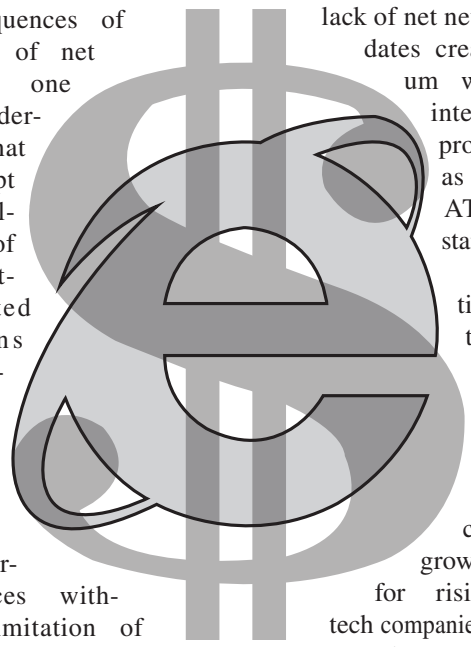
"Good God, they did it," said every news-aware member of the American Heritage student body on the day the FCC authorized the repeal of net neutrality. Buzz and bewilderment coursed through the hallways as students frantically saved the last three years' worth of Instagram posts and resurrected whatever snap streaks they could before the end dawned upon their beloved cellular devices.

While some did understand what exactly this legislative adjustment entailed, many missed the point entirely; unless you're an online business owner or small telecommunication company executive, the impact you feel will be soft, if not completely nonexistent.

In order to understand the consequences of the repeal of net neutrality, one must understand that the concept is essentially a set of government-implemented regulations that protects a consumer's (your) rights to access to internet services without the limitation of big corporations.


(Graphic/Kristen Quesada)

The vote comes to the dismay of small tech corporations; a lack of net neutrality mandates creates a vacuum which major internet service providers, such as Comcast and AT&T, can instantly occupy.

This position enables these tech giants to hypothetically create a monopoly that eradicates any growth potential for rising, smaller tech companies.

"The New York Times" says the repeal "may win pride of place as the single most greedy, corrupt and damaging such action," and adds that "giving monopolies more power will make it harder for new companies to enter the marketplace and limit the pace of innovation."

Many companies have spoken against the FCC move upon hearing the news: sites like Twitter, Reddit and Vimeo are just a few entities to have done so.

The quintessence of our free market lies in the opportunities it creates for growth of companies, and therefore the growth of our economy. The FCC's decision does nothing to aid this ideology and will only stunt any potential for economic evolution.

Don't jump on the bandwagon

Carrie Kuecks | Features Editor
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Many celebrities like the Kardashians don't really have a talent or skill other than a strange ability to remain relevant in the media. The unfortunate reality is that many talented musicians, actors and singers are underappreciated regardless of their immense talent. It is perhaps time to promote these more talented artists instead of "keeping up" with the Kardashians.

It is especially important to stop supporting celebrities without significant talent who also make negative impacts on the world. Youtuber Logan Paul (who currently has more than 15.7 million subscribers to his channel) created a graphic video showing a man who committed suicide.

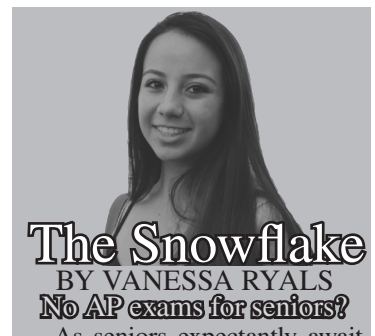
Paul claimed that video was to promote mental health awareness; however, he laughed in the video and was disrespectful to the body. The fact that Paul still has so many subscribers following this horrendous video posting (and a lack of impressive talent) is truly saddening, especially while many smaller Youtubers making quality content are underappreciated.

Although the Kardashians lack significant talent, one could argue that their "talent" of remaining relevant and popular for so many years in the media is perhaps a skill. Science actually explains why stars who no longer have talent (or never initially did possess talent) are still popular.

"We realized that there's a ton of stats and performance data available for baseball, so if we can show that famous or well-known baseball players become more prominent than unknown baseball players who perform just as well or better, we're able to make a convincing case," Nathaniel Fast, a researcher at Stanford University, said.

The reason why many talk about and promote celebrities who are not talented is simply to discuss a popular topic. Instead, shifting the conversation to talk about other important issues or discussing artists who possess true talent is perhaps a better alternative.

(Graphics/Kristen Quesada)



The Snowflake

BY VANESSA RYALS

No AP exams for seniors?

As seniors expectantly await their decision notifications and juniors prepare to take SATs and SAT Subject Tests, I thought it fitting to reflect on the drastic price tag that comes with applying to college.

The College Board currently charges $46 for students to take the SAT without essay, $60 to take the SAT with essay, $21 per SAT Subject Test (in addition to a $26 registration fee) and $94 per AP exam (from which schools receive a $9 rebate per exam).

A non-profit solely on paper, College Board has been criticized for partaking in fraudulent business practices since 1999 when the company recruited CEO Gaston Caperton. In the following years, prices of standardized tests skyrocketed, and students, being required to take the SAT for admission at most four-year colleges, were left to foot the bill. In 2014, College Board paid its CEO $1.3 million – a salary larger than what Harvard University's president made in that same year – and 19 executives more than $300,000 each.

Despite offering students from low-income families fee waivers, the price for students to take SAT exams (many taking upwards of five), SAT Subject Tests (with selective colleges requiring at least two) and AP exams (a requirement for students taking AP classes at Heritage) can quickly amount to hundreds of dollars. Combined with the price of sending score reports - $12 per send – and CSS profiles – $17 per send – some seniors spend well into the thousands on college applications. This practice is unnecessary and puts students from low-income households in especially compromising positions, with many having to sacrifice school activities for part-time jobs in order to pay the fees.

To level the playing field for seniors on financial aid or scholarships, Heritage should allow students to decide for themselves whether or not to take AP exams. Leaving the option open will not only ease the financial burden on students, but also ensure higher average exam scores among seniors, as those who opt to take them are likely doing so to earn additional college credit and thus will be more motivated to study.

As for covering the expense of sending SAT Score Reports to colleges, many institutions will honor scores submitted by guidance counselors. Students just need to email their admissions representative at the schools they are applying to explaining how sending scores presents a financial hardship.

Applying to college is stressful enough for low-income students, being able to afford the process should never be an issue.

Opinion

Hurricane Andrew

BY ANDREW (AJ) KOLONDRA

Too much trash talk

From nuclear threats from North Korea and massacre in Las Vegas to Hurricane Irma and fires in California, 2017 was dominated primarily by negative news. The media over-sensationalizes stories they know will strike a chord with the public, even if that means shifting the focus toward minor stories.

"Truck blocks cameras from filming Trump on golf course" in turn taking attention away from positive news. So here's your monthly dose of positivity: five good things that happened in 2017 that were generally underreported.

1. The world economy grew. Despite the overwhelmingly negative press surrounding both the Trump administration and international diplomacy as a whole, the U.S. economy actually grew by about 2.3 percent, and the world economy by 3 percent in 2017 – its highest rate since 2011, according to the U.N.

2. ISIS was defeated. Well, almost. Horrific stories of bombings and beheadings carried out by the Islamic State filled the news media throughout 2016 and 2017. U.S. troops destroyed the territorial base, putting an end to some of the worst abuses of human rights taking place in the world.

3. Australia achieved marriage equality. The 25th country to do so, Australia's decision just goes to show how far we've come toward equality on the basis of sexuality – though there are still many steps yet to be taken.

4. Scientists made strong developments in gene therapy. According to the "Washington Post," the FDA approved a gene therapy treatment that could cure a form of hereditary blindness previously thought incurable. As research continues, more cures will follow.

5. The bee population rose. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the number of bee colonies in the U.S. grew by 3 percent as of April 2017, and the number of hives lost due to the mysterious phenomenon of colony collapse disorder decreased by a healthy 27 percent.

Face-off: is water wet?

Alyssa Herzbrun | One-Pager Editor
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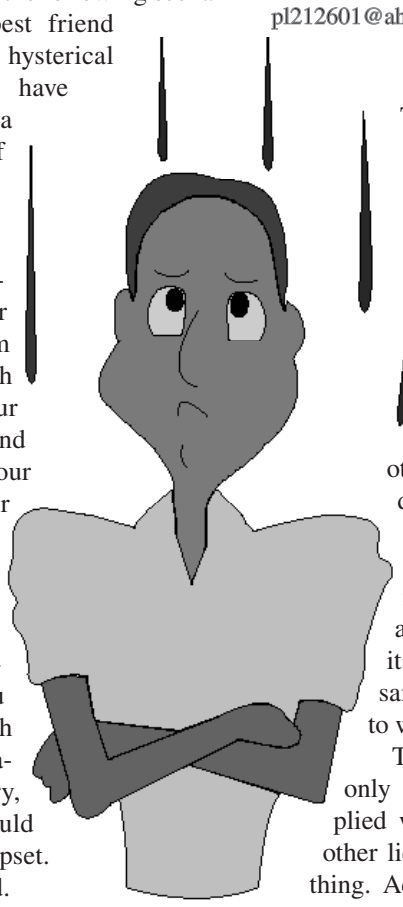
Water is most definitely wet. I will begin with a scientific explanation. Wetness is defined as the state or condition of being covered or saturated in water. When our bodies come into contact with water, sensory receptors on our body send information to our brain. Our brain receives the information and processes it.

The temperature, pressure and the way water moves when our body touches it tells our brain that water is wet. Water is wet just like steel is hard and fire is hot. A more simple explanation: Water cannot be made dry. In order to make something dry, we must physically remove water from it.

Things that are wet can be made dry because water is being taken away from it, but the water itself can't be made dry. Things become wet because water is absorbed into the material.

Imagine the following scenario. Your best friend tells you a hysterical joke. You have just taken a big gulp of water when you begin to laugh uncontrollably. Water spews from your mouth onto your friend and you pee your pants. Your friend is enraged and you are embarrassed because you are both wet. If water was dry, no one would be upset. Case closed.



(Graphic/Maia Fernandez Baigun)

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Water is not wet. To say that something is wet means that the water on that surface can be removed, but water cannot be removed from water.

Take fire as a similar example. Fire can burn other objects, but it does not burn itself. When a candle is lit, the wick is burning. When you light a match, the match itself is burning. The same logic applies to water.

The word "wet" is only meant to be applied when water (or any other liquid) gets on something. According to Merriam Webster, the word wet is defined as "covered or saturated with water or another liquid," but water cannot be saturated or covered with water.

When water is poured on an object (like paper), the object becomes wet however when water is poured on itself, there is no physical or chemical reaction that the water has been saturated with more water.

People might give this term a science definition and say that it is due to molecular bonding, but given the English definition of water, there is no way that water can ever be wet.

Next time you find yourself doubting the true answer and want to find out for yourself, submerge your hand carefully into a pool of water and keep it still.

Not only will you not be able to feel the water around your hand, but your hand will not feel wet.

Live in the now, but prepare for the future

Kayla Rubenstein | Staff Writer
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A million and one quotes exist about living in the present, meaning that the moment currently occurring is the most important one, right here and right now.

While this idea of living every moment like it's the last is exciting and gives life a dash of adventure, it can be dangerous if taken too literally.

Living in the moment does hold many benefits. The first and arguably most important benefit is happiness. What good is storing money if it's never used? It's like having a sports car that never leaves the garage.

Yes, it's vital to save some for the future, but at what point does the present become the future? Happiness doesn't come from monotonous routine, but from experiences that can be made special by their spontaneity.

Another benefit is the feeling of the world as your oyster. When living in the moment, anything and everything can happen, adding to the excitement of life.

A full, happy life filled with random opportunities, impromptu experiences and unexpected twists and turns, all which fall under the category of living in the moment.

Living in the moment is enjoyable, but there are multiple things that need to be done in order to be able to live in the moment. Planning is one of these things.

Humans are animals. Homo sapiens, to be exact. However, what makes us different from any other organism is that we plan for the future. As soon as the snooze button is hit, the brain goes to a million and one places, preparing for the upcoming day. Even throughout the day thoughts of what to do the upcoming night, week and month pop up.

Am I in the mood to eat take out or try whatever Mom's new diet is instructing her to make? Should I finish my homework tonight or right before the bell tomorrow? Such small and inconsequential plans are unimportant in the grand scheme of life.

By outlining our day, we get lost in our thoughts and lose focus of what really is important: enjoying life. Yet, it is through this planning that when we get older, we can be able to enjoy life and all it has to offer. Planning is a part of living in each moment, making the ideas of preparing and living in the moment connected.

Living in the now is a key element to a fulfilling, complete life, but preparing for the future can help ensure the luxury of not having to worry about putting food on the table. Bucketlists should be completed, but in order to fund some of the items on that list, one has to have prepared and set money aside for this.

My ultimate point: living in the now is crucial, yet we need to prepare ourselves so that when the right opportunity comes, when that totally crazy and impulsive activity just begging to be done presents itself, we are able to take that experience, make it our own, and truly experience what it means to be alive.

(Graphic/Maia Fernandez Baigun)

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The Patriot Post is sold on a monthly basis for 25 cents. American Heritage consists of 1,950 students and 160 faculty members.

Do you have a response to a column or article that was published in the paper?

You can make your voice heard by submitting a "Letter to the editor." Physically hand the response in to room 9114 or email it to patriotpost@ahschool.com.

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FEATURES

Carrie Tries: Touring Colleges

With so many activities available at American Heritage and in South Florida, it can be overwhelming to decide what to do. Features Editor Carrie Kuecks will try various clubs and activities on campus and in South Florida.

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For this edition of Carrie Tries, I am sharing my experience of college-touring. I attended the Florida College Tour led by the guidance department from Jan. 18 - Jan. 20.

This tour allowed students to tour six universities in Florida, both public and private, and eat in most of the dining halls. The cost was $500 and included hotel stays, bus rides and admissions-information sessions as well.

On the tour, we visited University of Central Florida, University of North Florida, Florida State University, University of Florida, Rollins College and University of South Florida.

I ate lunch at the University of Central Florida and toured the first day of the trip. It was really interesting to see all of the universities in person after seeing many pictures online.

The universities all had different atmospheres and some were more integrated into local cities than others.

For example, USF and UCF both are located in cities (Tampa and Orlando) and give students easy access to internships. However, if you prefer a more "traditional" college atmosphere, University of Florida's location of the charming college town of Gainesville might be more for you.

I personally liked UF and FSU the most due to their abundant resources for students and large alumni networks.

The more traditional style or architecture featured at UF and FSU was also something I preferred.

The schools that featured the best dining halls (in my opinion) were USF and FSU.

All of the Florida schools I visited had numerous clubs and activities for students to join and if a club did not exist, students have the option to create their own club.

UCF and USF had extremely modern campuses which some students prefer. It is all about your individual experience and determining which style of campus you prefer.

After touring multiple schools, I've realized how crucial it is to ask questions to learn more about the university. It definitely helps to come up with a list beforehand to ask. However, sometimes additional questions can arise while on the tour and it is important to ask them when the chance comes.

Taking photos is great to (if the tour guide allows) to further reflect on your tour experience and the campus. College touring can be exciting and very relevant in making college decisions. Certain schools really can fit certain personalities more than others, and each have their own "vibe."

Touring as many schools as possible is a great way to ensure you are making the right choice of school.

CARRIE TRIES COLLEGE: Features Editor Carrie Kuecks tours many universities in Florida in this edition of Carrie Tries. This photo was taken on the University of Central Florida tour. (Photo/ Kathryn Treacy)

WTWU: Mr. Osmel Rodriguez

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).

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Science teacher Mr. Osmel Rodriguez would have been mortified if someone had told him as a high school student that he would one day return to high school – as a teacher. "I was not a big high school guy. I did my time, got along and just sort of coasted," he said. "I had a too-cool-for-school attitude a lot of the time."

Mr. Rodriguez's high school experience at Miami Senior High was a tale of two halves. His first two years, he was on the quieter, shyer side, but he gained confidence by his junior year. Despite this change, he described himself as "chill" all four years, saying that nothing bothered him much.

"I was popular in that everyone knew me, and I knew them. I was usually invited to the parties and hangouts, but I had so many interests outside of school that I never really went to any social gatherings except for maybe an extended lunch here and there," Mr. Rodriguez said.

His favorite of these outside interests – and something he continues to enjoy today – was making music. He worked as a DJ most of high school, describing it as a "a good way to make money, meet girls, and mostly stay out of trouble." He eventually dropped the turntables and picked up the guitar, and as any of his students knows, he now owns more than 10 of them, some of which he built by hand. He even took a hiatus from college at Nova Southeastern University to play in a punk rock band, then finished his degree at Miami Dade College.

"It was convenient. I was working, playing in a band, and going to school. Staying close to home and having multiple campuses to select classes from made it easy to manage my time," he said.

One of Mr. Rodriguez's favorite high school memories was graduation: "a student somehow snuck a beach ball onto the graduation stage, inflated it and let it fly through the crowd.

The vice principal was livid. Did I mention my school had behavorial issues?"

Prom, on the other hand, was not exactly a great memory.

"My date was from another school, and she felt left out of the loop. I ended up taking her home early to avoid any unnecessary drama," he said, noting with a laugh and a shrug that was not the only awkward boy-girl moment of his school experience.

Although Mr. Rodriguez initially saw himself as a chemist or meteorologist in the future, he loves working as a science teacher. "The information is topical and current, especially in the environmental science classes.

The learning is not abstract or ancient history; it is happening all around us all the time, which makes for great class conversation," he said.

He models part of his humorous and easygoing teaching style after his favorite high school teacher, who taught in a very straightforward and laid-back way that "made the process less painful."

He loves interaction with students and the back-and-forth discussions that develop during class. "When a student who has been struggling to grasp something or to make a concept tangible gets it, that look on their face and their sense of satisfaction is great, almost addictive," he said. "I also get to prank the students, and that's always a good time."

COLLEGE ROCK STAR: Mr. Osmel Rodriguez rocks out on the guitar with his college punk rock band at a house party in the '90s just after graduating from high school. (Photo/submitted by Mr. Osmel Rodriguez)

The Future *brought to you by the* Patriot Post

As we continue to explore the lengths of technology as a society, it is important to assess our plans and analyze our proposed "future." The Patriot Post *has compiled a model of what the world could look like, including past predictions come true and current predictions still possible. Read below for the plan of progress.*

Compiled by Kristen Quesada, Katherine Quesada, Andrew Kolondra Jr., Sammy Rosenthal and Joanne Haner.

'Black mirror' s4 pushes boundaries

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The long-anticipated fourth season of the British thriller anthology-turned Netflix phenom "Black Mirror" was finally released Dec. 29. The show, named for the so-called black mirror one may view in a phone or computer screen that is turned off, continues to push the boundaries of science fiction and television through its darkly satirical commentary on human dependence upon technology.

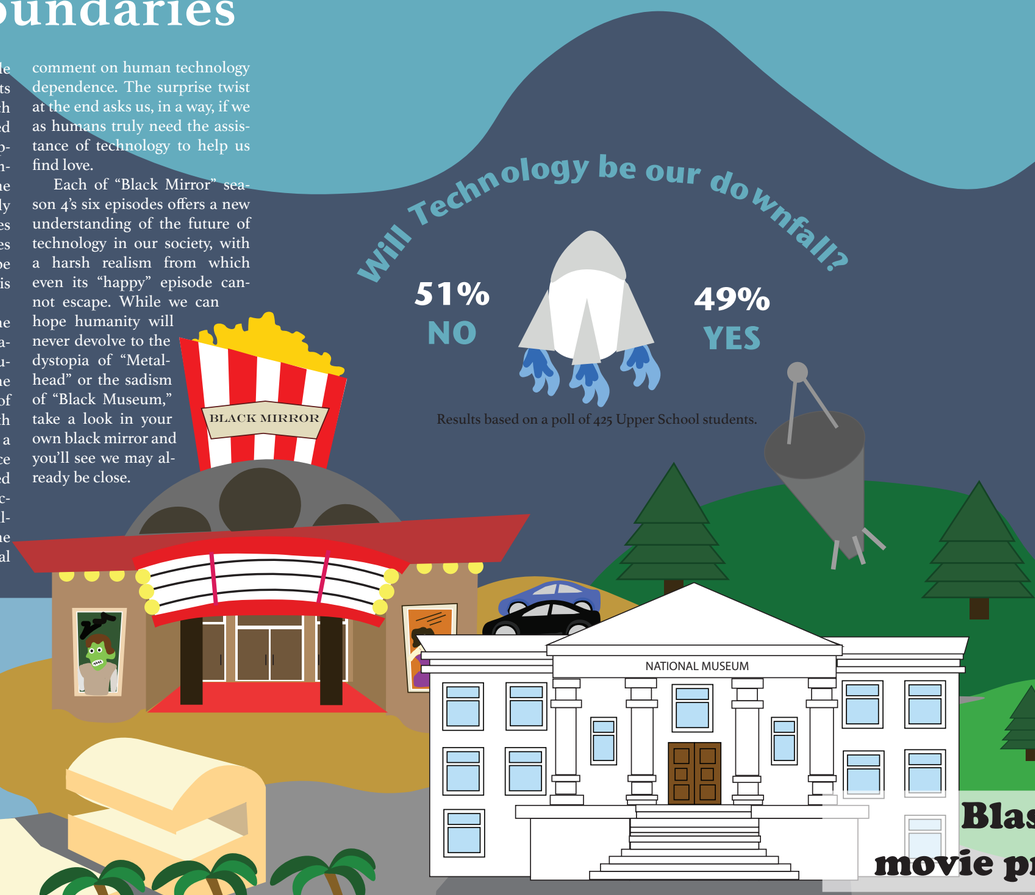
"Black Mirror," likened to the '50s cultural phenomenon "The Twilight Zone," is an anthology of science fiction stories ranging from 40- to 90-minutes long. Each story develops its own unique world in which the characters interact with a futuristic piece of technology in some way and face dark and unintended consequences of this technology. Contrary to popular expectation, the show offers downer endings or ambiguous conclusions that leave viewers wondering whether they should feel satisfied – even in its two episodes typically perceived as the "happy" episodes.

The fourth season starts off strong with "USS Callister," a parody of the cultural staple series "Star Trek" that ventures into the concept of virtual reality gaming, but with a dark twist. It presents a uniquely terrifying interpretation of the already existing technology of VR, making it scarily realistic and posing the idea that such situations could happen in the near future.

Episode 3, "Crocodile," pushes the bounds of what's considered "too much" on television as one of the show's darkest stories yet. The episode explores the lengths to which people will go to prevent their secrets from coming out as we watch a psychologically distressed woman dig herself into a deeper and deeper hole after committing a crime. At the same time enthralling and deeply distressing, "Crocodile" makes us question the known realities of human nature, as our hope for her eventual redemption is left unfulfilled.

But the series does have one bright point reminiscent of season 3's ever-popular "San Junipero" – episode 4, "Hang the DJ," which follows the story of a couple in love who battle with the idea that they live inside a simulation. While on the surface a wholesome and much-needed break from episodes like "Crocodile" and the almost equally dark "Arkangel," "Hang the DJ" is a remarkably unusual comment on human technology dependence. The surprise twist at the end asks us, in a way, if we as humans truly need the assistance of technology to help us find love.

Each of "Black Mirror" season 4's six episodes offers a new understanding of the future of technology in our society, with a harsh realism from which even its "happy" episode cannot escape. While we can hope humanity will never devolve to the dystopia of "Metalhead" or the sadism of "Black Museum," take a look in your own black mirror and you'll see we may already be close.



(Graphics/Katherine Quesada)

Creating the future with CRISPR

A look into the reality of genetic modification

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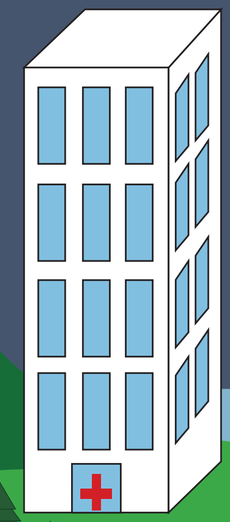
Genetic engineering is the manipulation of genes to "make the human body better" throughout the generations. The alteration of a genome in sperm or egg cell state is known as germline gene therapy, and it allows parents to choose specific traits for their child to inherit. This method, also known as the creation of "designer babies," is currently illegal in many countries – but not the United States, which has yet to pass any legislation on the procedures.



The first attempt at creating genetically modified human embryos took place in Portland, Oregon, by Shoukhrat Mitalipov of Oregon Health and Science University. The study involved the changing of DNA of a large number of one-cell embryos with the gene editing technique CRISPR. However, the embryos were not allowed to develop for more than a few days and there was never any intention of implanting them into a womb. But, if there was, would it be a positive or negative thing?

Genetic modification is one of the most debated scientific breakthroughs on the grounds of moral and ethical ambiguity. Germline engineering allows scientists to eradicate or correct genes that cause inherited diseases to pass on with each generation.

However, this same technology can be used to "personalize" offspring, allowing parents to choose eye color, skin color, hair color, height and so on. The U.S. intelligence community even went as far as to call CRISPR a potential weapon of mass destruction, according to the MIT Technology Review, due to its ability to genetically grow the "perfect human."

Another aspect debated about genetic modification is the act of cloning humans, which creates an identical embryo of a human to be planted in a womb and allowed to grow until full development.

"Genome editing to enhance traits or abilities beyond ordinary health raises concerns about whether the benefits can outweigh the risks, and about fairness if available only to some people," Alta Charo, co-chair of the National Academy of Science's study committee and professor of law and bioethics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison said.

Currently, in the United States, an edited in vitro fertilization embryo's maturation is blocked by Congress. However, does the possibility of eradicating life-threatening diseases outweigh the endless possibility of power in the hands of the human race once restrictions are removed? Science is knowledge and knowledge is power, and we have come to a point in our technological advancements where that knowledge can lead to our self-destruction, with only our ever-changing moral standards blocking our progression.

Flying car failure or driving in the right direction?

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Self-driving cars have become more and more of a reality as time goes on, even to the point where driver services such as Uber are adapting to the new technology. You don't need to be part of a large company to utilize these vehicles as semi-autonomous cars are already being released. The semi-autonomous cars have the ability to be put on autopilot while the driver still has the ability to control the wheel. However, the next step of completely self-driving cars is soon to come. Coming in 2019, General Motors' self-driving car that lacks a steering wheel and pedals will hit the road.

The U.S. government is preparing for this as well, having passed a bill in support of autonomous vehicles in September 2017. This support came after automobile deaths reached more than 37,000 in 2016. However, the driver death rates in self-driving cars are anticipated to reduce the fatality rate by up to 90 percent. The one death that arose out of self-driving vehicles came about when a Tesla car's sensor system failed to distinguish a white 18-wheeler truck crossing the highway with the background of a bright sky.

Google, BMW, Tesla and many other car manufacturers have already begun testing these vehicles, with some of these companies actually producing them and putting them on the road and 35 cities actively incorporating self-driving cars.

For the Google car, the only accidents occurred when it was the driver's fault or when the vehicle was rear-ended by other vehicles while following transportational law maybe too strictly, acting in jerky motions when it turns or stops while following traffic laws.

"The real problem is that the car is too safe. They have to learn to be aggressive in the right amount, and the right amount depends on the culture," Donald Norman, director of the autonomous vehicle design lab at the University of California, said.

Self-driving cars represent another ideal that's to come in the future: convenience.

"The reality of the world is that a lot of driving we do is not fun driving. It is driving to work in traffic. Even so, we want it to feel as it should feel if they were driving it themselves. Or like maybe a chauffeur is driving. A very comfortable do-not-disturb type of driving," Michael Aeberhard, BMW's leader of autonomous vehicle prototype efforts, said.

Autonomous vehicles are expected to begin to replace Uber-type services and share the road with other drivers in the near future. Although these cars might not conform to "Popular Mechanics" magazine's expectation of flying cars from 60 years ago, they will be revolutionary.

55%
of students would own a self-driving car

Results based on a poll of 425 Upper School students.

Blast from the past: movie predictions come true

"Star Trek" Communicator, 1979

As the "Star Trek" crew embarked on missions, crewmembers easily "communicated" through handheld devices in which the top flipped opened.

(Photo/AndroidAuthority.com)

Does it exist today?

Yes; Today's communicator is the cell phone, which is in almost everyone's pocket and can handle tasks much more complex than the communicator.

(Photo/Popsci.com)

"The Jetsons" robotic assistant, 1962

To make life easier, the Jetsons had a robot named Rosie to help them with various chores around the house.

(Photo/Engineering.com)

Does it exist today?

Yes; Life-size robotic assistants similar to Rosie do exist today, however, more affordable and smaller robotic vacuum cleaners, such as the Roomba, exist as well.

(Photo/Roomba)

"Back to the Future Part II" - Wearable technology, 1989

In the future, Marty's children would wear high-tech glasses that enabled them to make calls and watch TV.

(Photo/Singularityhub.com)

Does it exist today?

Yes; In 2013, Google created Google Glasses, which is a headset that allows the user to receive emails, take calls, and perform other functions.

(Photo/Cnet.com)

"Total Recall" Johnny Cab, 1990

"Total Recall" features a taxi in which a decorative robot named Johnny is at the wheel; however, the car is actually driving itself.

(Photo/Silicocangle.com)

Does it exist today?

Yes; self-driving cars are already a possibility that looks to take over the driving industry, although a robot named Johnny is not keeping passengers company.

(Photo/Documentarytube.com)

"Dick Tracy" two-way wrist radio, 1931

In the comic strip in 1931, Dick Tracy was able to catch criminals with a wrist radio that enabled him to communicate with others.

(Photo/Chicagology.com)

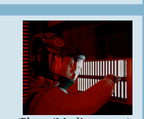
Does it exist today?

Yes; In 2015, Apple came out with its first Apple Watch, which was essentially a phone on your wrist. By 2017, it could do everything that Dick Tracy's wrist radio could do and then some.

(Photo/Adweek.com)

"2001: A Space Odyssey" HAL 9000, 1968

HAL 9000 was the on-board computer that was in charge of everything technological that occurred on the Discovery One spacecraft.



(Photo/Medium.com)

Does it exist today?

Yes; an Amazon product known as Alexa resembles HAL 9000 in that it has the ability to control many areas of your home, as HAL did a spaceship.

(Photo/Digitaltrends.com)

Features

Everyone Has a Story:

SOPHIA ORTIZ

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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.

Taking inspiration from the whimsical characters created in Lewis Carroll's famous novel "Alice in Wonderland," we decided to tread in the footsteps of the Caterpillar and use a cupcake coupled with an ominous "eat me" sign as bait for this month's EHAS.

We placed the cupcake, decorated with bright pink frosting and rainbow sprinkles, in a box on a bench behind the 9000 building accompanied by a sticky note with the words "eat me" scrawled on it. On the inside of the box, we left explicit instructions to head to room 9114 upon eating the cupcake to redeem a second prize.

After nearly an hour of waiting with waning hope, eighth grader Sophia Ortiz cautiously entered the room, and was greeted immediately by us as we enthusiastically informed her that she had rendered herself this issue's EHAS victim.

Born in Miami, Ortiz has resided in Florida with her parents and younger brother.

"I would like to move out of state, not because I don't like living here, but because of the opportunities I can find elsewhere," Ortiz said.

She hopes to one day move to Washington, primarily due to her aspirations to attend the University of Washington as one of her top college choices to pursue her passions.

One such passion revolves around Ortiz's love for computer design and 2D animation. She stumbled upon the world of animation after discovering a YouTube channel dedicated to the subject.

Inspired by the creativity and entertainment aspects of animation, she began taking online lessons in 2D animation from friends with vast experience in the field. Upon mastering 2D animation, Ortiz moved to learn 3D animation and participated at a summer program at Stanford University to further her knowledge.

"Once I saw that others had been drawing digitally and even animating their drawings, I was hooked," Ortiz said. "I wanted to make something that other people found cool, interesting, funny, or just plain awesome."

Ortiz's enthusiasm for using her imagination extends far beyond the scope of virtual design. In addition to animation, she also enjoys writing short stories ranging from science fiction to romance. Her science fiction stories usually stem from weird dreams that she remembers, and her romance and comedy stories from her friends' experiences.

Physical activities such as volleyball and tennis also consume much of Ortiz's time. She has been playing volleyball around 3 $^{1}/_{2}$ years and tennis for six years at school. Unlike tennis, she plays volleyball competitively at the YMCA.

"Volleyball and tennis have been my favorite sports since I was a child, and I never stopped playing and rather, got better at each sport," she said.

Ortiz hopes to combine her areas of interest to not only further her personal ambitions but also to leave behind a lasting impression on the world she lives in.

"I want to leave a mark in the world, a name that people will remember for a while to come," Ortiz said. "I want to be an inspiration to kids such as my brother, and many other people as well."

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(Photo/Joanne Haner)

Most people know senior Gabriel Hinojosa as the senior class president, but not many know him as "Blue Mamba." Hinojosa coined the name "Blue Mamba" after playing basketball.

Blue Mamba is a twist on the name Black Mamba, which is the self-declared nickname of Kobe Bryant. Hinojosa gave himself the name after realizing that when he shoots into the net, it goes "swish." Similarly, water goes "swish" and is blue. Therefore, the name "Blue Mamba" was deemed as the perfect name.

"I live with the mamba mentality which means I never give up," Hinojosa said.

Banking on Bitcoins

Kelly Taylor | News Editor
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Growing in value since the beginning of 2017, bitcoins have begun to interest investors as they contemplate the cryptocurrency's value and possible uses. Created around 2009 by an anonymous person or persons under the alias Satoshi Nakamoto, bitcoins remain one of the largest forms of electronic currency on the market that have since been released and the recent increases and decreases in value that occurred throughout November and December.

Created to replace physical currencies, bitcoins allow consumers to store their money in one place. Through bitcoins, people can store money as they would in a savings account, or use it to purchase goods like a debit card. The differences between bitcoins and physical currencies include the lack of a physical entity, as bitcoins are virtual.

While some people see the high value of bitcoins as a promising way to invest their money, Massachusetts Institute of Technology researcher on cryptocurrencies Christian Catalini advises caution, as its value is essentially dependent upon its use in the community. As more people buy bitcoins, their value increases, but if businesses reject bitcoins and they fall in popularity, their value will decrease subsequently. So far, not many businesses use bitcoins, but this form of currency benefits small businesses as they can profit directly through buyers instead of having to deal with banks.

The purchasing of bitcoins takes place on bitcoin applications called Bitcoin Exchanges. Transferring bitcoins in order to give or receive money is possible through bitcoin databases so they may be adopted by businesses. A blockchain, similar to a record book, is used to keep track of thousands of transactions across the globe, but, aside from a bitcoin ID, users are kept anonymous which makes it harder to track illicit transactions. Despite the complications, bitcoins allow the purchase of merchandise at lower fees and without the use of banks as users purchase goods directly from sellers.

Other risks that come with bitcoins include the need to store them electronically. Although the bitcoin database has a wallet function for storage within the application, the program must be saved on a computer or in an iCloud account in order to keep track of money. With circulating computer viruses and iCloud hackers, both of these methods of saving hold risks of stealing or accidental deletion.

"Individuals should not invest any capital that they cannot afford to lose tomorrow," Catalini said. As always with new technologies, not all of the problems concerning cryptocurrencies have been corrected so investors must be willing to accept the glitches.

As of the beginning of January, the value of bitcoin equated to about $14,060 which is a drastic difference from the $12,504 low that bitcoins reached on Dec. 21.

In light of the recent unpredictability, many short-term investors have withdrawn their investments, but a number of bitcoin holders remain. In the eyes of Jay Blakey, a BitIRA digital currency specialist, this product may be worth the risks. "It's not for the timid," Blaskey said in an article written by the "Washington Post". "But neither is anything. Great rewards sometimes involve risk."

Features

Project Alive makes headway

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Project Alive, a cause championed by the Heritage community in support of junior high teacher Mrs. Jennifer Estevez's son Sebastian, has made headway in funding a clinical trial for gene therapy that has the potential to save Sebastian's life.

Four-year-old Sebastian Estevez was diagnosed with Hunter's Syndrome in May 2016. An X-linked recessive disorder, Hunter's Syndrome involves the inability of the body to make a certain enzyme, leading to excess waste buildup in the cell. The disease leads to cognitive decline and eventual fatality in young boys before they reach adulthood.

"It was devastating," Mrs. Estevez said. "But it also led us to Project Alive."

Project Alive aims to assist young boys suffering from Hunter's Syndrome across the nation by raising money to fund a clinical trial for a potential cure. With the support of the local community as well as numerous other families across the country in search of a cure for their own children, Project Alive has raised $1.4 million, enough money to sign a contract to begin the process of creating the gene vectors necessary for the clinical trial.

"Signing the contract means that the pressure is on to raise the rest of the money," Mrs. Estevez said. "But it also means that the process of making the genes is underway, which is huge."

While signing the contract has allowed vector creation to begin, Project Alive now must raise another $1.5 million by July in order for the actual guidelines for the clinical trial to be put into place. Once guidelines are created, the clinical trial will take place.

With the July deadline looming overhead, Project Alive has put together numerous events to meet the funding requirement. Working alongside the Florida Panthers, Project Alive held a Project Alive Night at a Florida Panthers game Jan. 12 in which $10 of every ticket went to Project Alive. Here at school, the English Honor Society and Dead Poets Society hosted a Renaissance Fair rasing more than $600 for Project Alive. The National Honor Society and many other clubs have begun planning a Project Alive week at the end of February.

Students have also written a second wave of letters in their English classes to Ellen Degeneres in hopes of getting Project Alive featured on her show. While the school sent an initial set of letters in the Spring of 2017, the show had already finished filming for the season. Mrs. Estevez hopes that sending more letters will convince the producers of Project Alive's determination.

"We're hoping to send the message that we're not just sitting around and waiting. We're working hard and are determined to make this work," Mrs. Estevez said. "If every one of her viewers donated a dollar, we'd be more than good."

HAPPY FAMILY: Mrs. Estevez's youngest son, Sebastian, pictured in her arms, has a rare cognitive disease. Along with the community, the Estevez family and Project Alive are on their way to funding a clinical trial for boys impacted by Hunter's Syndrome. (Photo submitted by Jennifer Estevez)

How you can help:
- Donate at www.projectalive.org. Any amount of money helps.
- If you can't donate, spread awareness among friends and families.
- Share Sebastian's story on social media.
- Participate in Project Alive Week.

New year, new teacher

Kristen Quesada | Opinion Editor
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After Mrs. Lindsey Levy, an Algebra II Honors teacher, left to care for her newborn baby and toddler, a replacement teacher had to be found. That's where Dr. Maribel Curry comes in. Originally from Cuba, Dr. Curry moved to the United States when she was 4. She grew up in Miami and went to the University of Central Florida (UCF), where she earned her undergraduate degree in math education and her masters in educational leadership. She then earned her doctorate in educational leadership at Florida Atlantic University. "I always wanted to be a teacher, a math teacher specifically. I love teaching kids and I love math, so it combines two of my great passions," Dr. Curry said.

Dr. Curry has taught for eight years, but took a long time off to be a stay-at-home mom. "I was very nervous starting as a new teacher in the middle of the year and stepping into a great teacher's shoes. My two girls actually started here on Monday [Jan. 8] with me," Dr. Curry said. "I decided to keep everything the way she did it to make it an easier transition for the students, and I'm keeping everything consistent with her gradebook and plans. Next year it's my chance to do it the way that I want to do it, but I really like her system so I think I'm going to keep it."

Out of school, Dr. Curry regularly plays golf which she has played for 10 years. She plays in charity tournaments, but for the most part, golf is just a fun hobby for her. Prior to golf, she played volleyball for four years at UCF.

Dr. Curry was in the Heritage environment before starting as a teacher, though, since she began shadowing Mrs. Levy a couple of weeks before winter break so that she could learn about the processes of the class. "I'm really enjoying my time here at Heritage even in just the few weeks I've been here," Dr. Curry said.

GOLF LIKE A CHAMP: New Algebra II Honors teacher Dr. Maribel Curry fancies a game of golf in her free time. She enjoyed the day golfing with her husband Michael at the Champion Hills Golf Club in North Carolina. (Photo submitted by Dr. Maribel Curry)

The Q Concept

BY KATHERINE QUESADA

Malingering masses or actual illness?

A sickness has spread to all born in the years 1999-2000; however, has it really? Senioritis is stereotypically suffered by seniors, with some contracting the ailment as soon as late junior year or earlier. However, is senioritis merely a predisposition imposed on those of age? The answer is yes.

Work ethic is an innate characteristic ingrained into each individual: some have it, some don't. People do not lose a characteristic because time has changed or progressed, just as one's voice doesn't change with the weather. To say students, who have been molded to perform at their very best, turn the light switch off and evict their brains come senior year, does not make sense, especially at a school like ours.

Thus, this produces quite a few misdiagnoses.

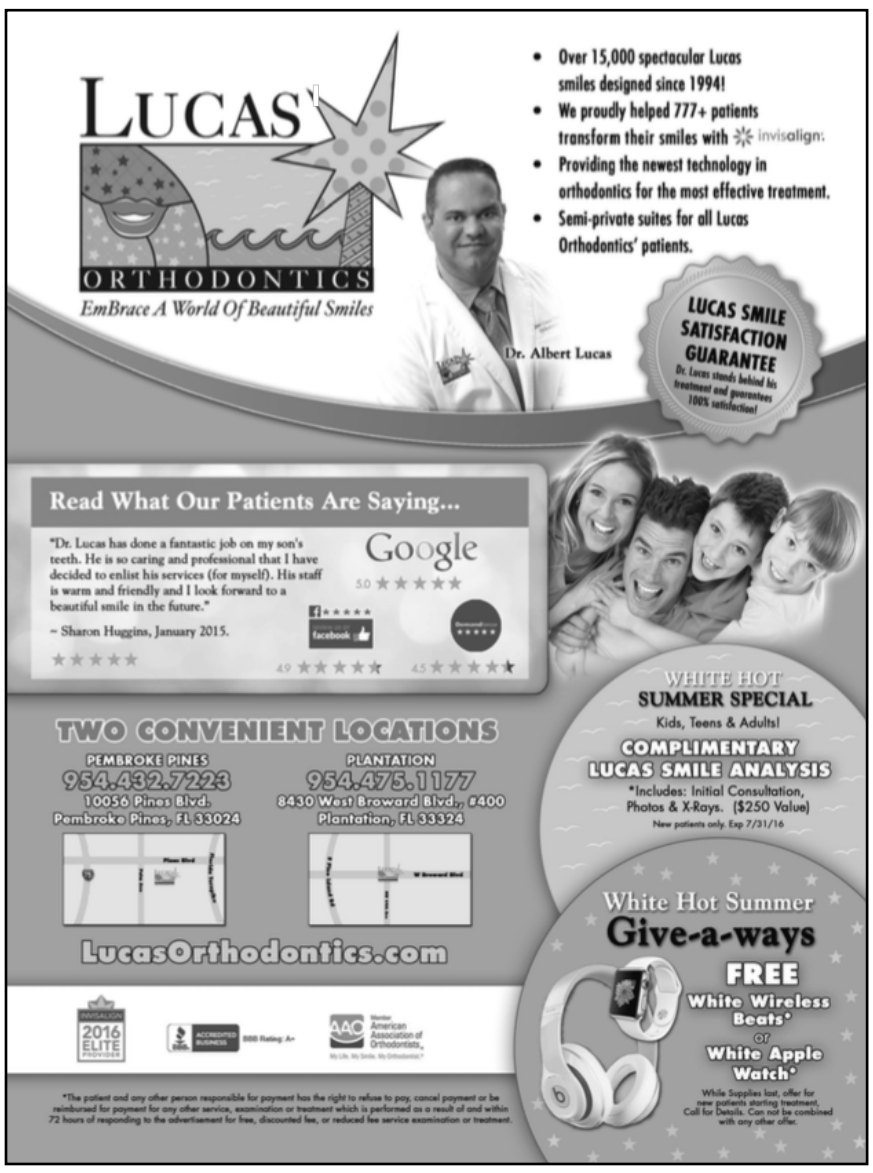
As a whole, students do not arrive at school each morning determined to fail classes, skip homework assignments and sleep through the day. Just one glance around my classes, and students are actively participating, raising hands and answering questions. But if you'd stop to ask the same students if they suffer from senioritis, the answer is usually yes.

This brings us to my main argument: senioritis is a social construct imposed on seniors. It is the permission slip to stop before the finish line, an instruction which headbutts our instincts. Humans are organisms of habit, and we have been following routines that have been fostered through years of schoolwork. In order to conform to senioritis, we must leave behind our "comfort zones" and venture into a new era of our lives. And frankly, we don't. When we get into a groove, we stick there and ride it until we are forced to change, and a teacher shouting an expiration date on our effort is just not enough.

However, I'm not saying dips in productivity fail to exist. It is a natural course of life to lose energy in areas of repetition; we get bored, we slack, our motivation falls, but it's not a reality that should be expected from senior year. We should cease to label seniors with an ailment that they do not necessarily suffer from.

Teachers, I reach out to you as well. Please don't expect a lack in performance from your senior students, nor equate a bad grade with an "innate" decline of motivation, because the truth is most students don't stop trying.

We are machines that keep moving as long as we have our fuel of habit. And yes, fuel can run low, but it usually doesn't run dry.



ENTERTAINMENT

Spotlight: Nik Serrano

Kelly Taylor | News Editor
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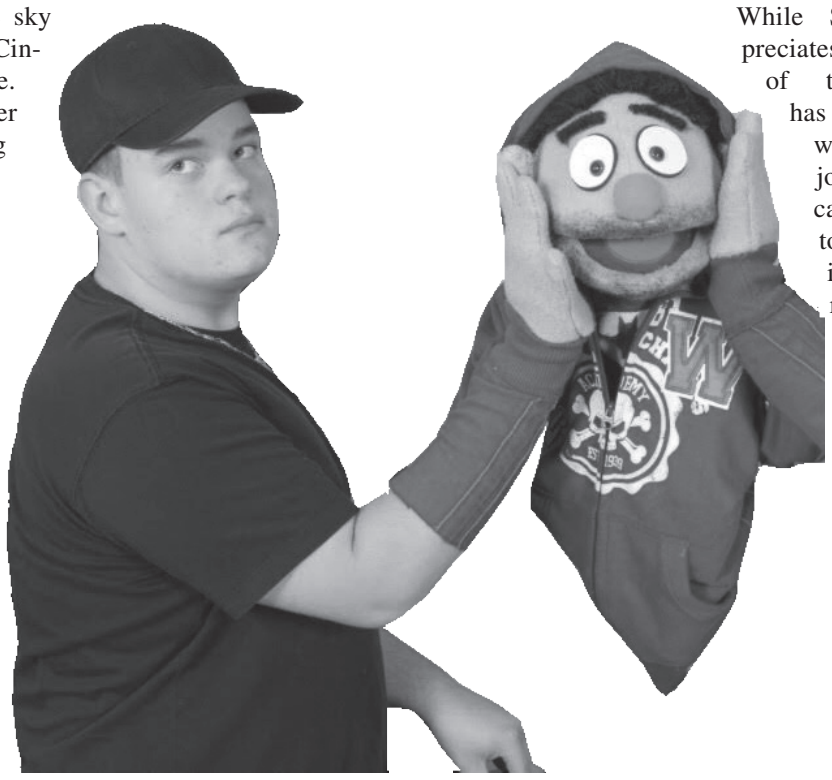
Most people enjoy theater, viewing a new world brought to life before their eyes. However, for sophomore Nikolas Serrano, making this world a reality is the true entertainment.

To this day, Serrano is enchanted by the special effects and scenery that transport viewers into the realm of imagination. Taken by the lights and designs that decorate a stage and appeal to the senses, Serrano seeks to tell stories through the sets he creates, drawing inspiration from both Disney and Broadway.

"I couldn't talk about my interest in technical theater without mentioning Disney. When I was younger, and still now, my favorite part of Disney World trips were the shows. I have seen 'Finding Nemo' the musical, 'Voyage of the Little Mermaid,' 'Beauty and the Beast Live on Stage" and the countless parades and shows in front of Cinderella's castle," Serrano said.

On a trip to Disney World, one show in particular stood out to Serrano as particularly inspiring: the "Happily Ever After" light show. Blending fireworks, projections and lasers, this show decorated the sky in front of Cinderella's castle.

"I had never seen anything like that. I will always remember that show because that was the moment I saw the endless effects that can be done with just a little bit of theater magic. I realized what I want to do for the rest of my life: theater," Serrano said.



PULLING THE STRINGS: At Slow Burn Theatre Company's production of "Avenue Q.", Nikolas Serrano demonstrates one of the props, a ventriloquist's doll. (Photo/Ian Ibbetson Photography)

Even before his deep passion for technical theater, Serrano remembers his introduction to the performing arts when he saw his first Broadway shown at age five, "The Lion King," with his "theater-loving" sister.

"I was mesmerized by the puppetry, beautiful staging and set of the show. I would say since then, I've always had an interest in the technical aspects of theater," Serrano said.

Over his five years of experience, Serrano has worked many shows with Slow Burn Theatre Company and The Performance Project. Some of his favorites include "Heather the Musical," "Spring Awakening," and "Rapunzel."

While Serrano' appreciates all aspects of theater, and has experience with nearly all jobs technical theater has to offer, his interest currently lies in scenic design.

"I really love what I do. I wouldn't want it any other way," Serrano said.

Looking toward the future, Serrano hopes to incorporate his inspirations into his dream job.

"I plan to go to college and get my degree in technical theater. From there, I would like to get a job in a theater. My dream is to one day be an artist for Disney or move to New York and work on Broadway," Serrano said.

Making school history as the first student to receive a technical theater scholarship, Serrano is "so proud to be a part of the technical theater department at American Heritage."

Throughout Serranos first two years of high school he has taken Intro to Tech, Stage Management, Scenic Design, Stagecraft 1 and 2 and Scenic Painting.

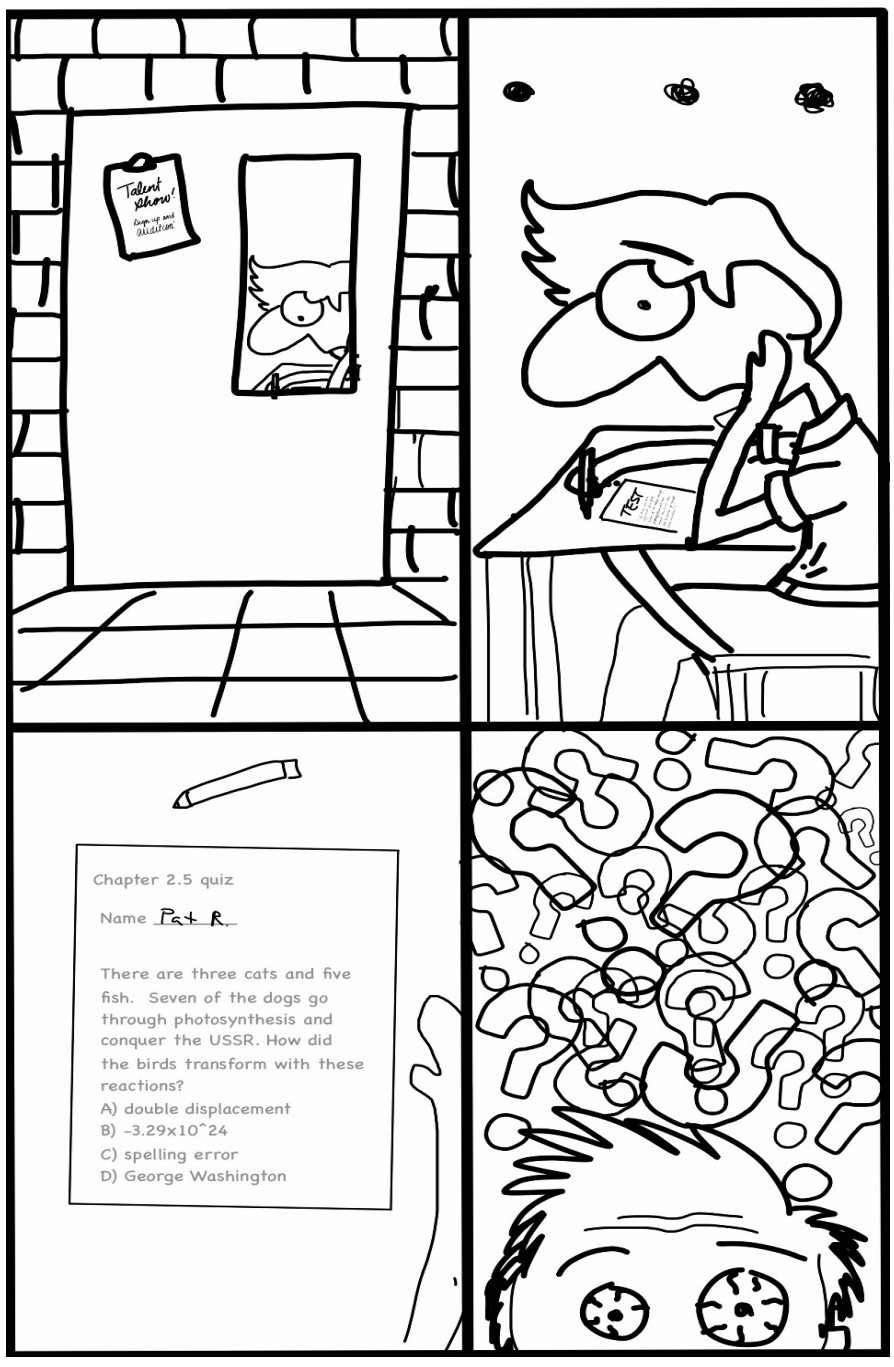
After school, Serrano has worked on almost every school production in the last year and a half including the summer camp production of Beauty and the Beast.

Some recognizable roles Serrano has taken over include the Prop Master and Crew Chief for "The Importance of Being Earnest," Sound Board Operator for "35MM," Fly Rail Operator for "Guys and Dolls," Prop Master and Light Board Operator for "Almost Maine" and Fly Rail Operator and Prop Master for "James and the Giant Peach."

"I become more and more impressed at Heritage with what can be done with hard work, talent and some theatre magic. I invite everyone to please support our department by taking a technical theater class or to see some of our productions at school. You might be surprised in what you discover in yourself," Serrano said.

The comic corner

Quizzes and question marks by Maia Fernandez-Baigun



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Entertainment

Losing the pop in our music

While many students listen to a plethora of popular songs, they sometimes miss the reality of the fact that modern music has reached a point of stagnation.

Yasmeen Altaji | Staff Writer
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First bell ringing? Get out your headphones. Time for lunch? Time for headphones. What's everyone listening to? According to one study (and a lot of our ears), it seems to be the same three-minute soundbite on repeat.

From the first historical records of music to the phenomenon that is Taylor Swift's "Reputation," the evolution of music throughout the centuries is an intriguing concept because as time has gone by, innovation and new technique have come with it; time has witnessed the transition from the 17th century cutting, mathematical baroque period to the operatic show-off's romantic "bel canto" style, to the Afro-European rhythms from which jazz was born. Today, however, that clock seems to have stopped.

Researchers at the Spanish National Research Council studied the "Evolution of Contemporary Western Popular Music," using musical elements such as "pitch, timbre (tonal quality) and loudness" as points of analysis.

Essentially, they concluded that popular music has grown flatter, if you will, meaning these pop pieces carry a notable new element of "homogeneity."

Over time, this homogeneity becomes a trait associated with "new" and "hip" music, and it becomes a foundation off which we base a piece's appeal. The researchers add, "an old tune could perfectly sound novel and fashionable, provided that it consisted of common harmonic progressions, changed the instrumentation, and increased the average loudness."

If music is the "break" from your every day routine, I highly recommend changing it up. Broaden the scope of the music you listen to; you never know what you might find.

The Shuffle
BY AMBER BHUTTA

TimesUp

In the wake of the highly politicized Golden Globes in which the issue of sexual harassment took center stage, controversy surrounding the legitimacy of many celebrities' solidarity with victims has flooded social media and dominated the conversation about sexual assault. Actors who have been implicated in sexual assault scandals, such as James Franco, also received awards, calling into question whether or not the Hollywood establishment actually cares to confront the issue. What many critics fail to realize, however, is that TimesUp extends far beyond the scope of wearing black and delivering fiery award acceptance speeches.

In late 2017, the Alianza Nacional de Campesinas wrote a letter expressing solidarity with Hollywood women involved in exposing the sexual abuse allegations against Harvey Weinstein. The letter, published in "Time," described experiences of assault and harassment among female farmworkers and stated that it was written on behalf of the approximately 700,000 female farmworkers in the United States. Inspired by the letter and the sheer number of women who identified with the struggle, a group of 300 Hollywood figures started TimesUp, a campaign to combat systemic sexual harassment in the United States.

Though the movement originated in Hollywood, its work extends far beyond the all-black dress code at the Golden Globes. According to its mission statement, TimesUp "addresses the systemic inequality and injustice in the workplace that have kept underrepresented groups from reaching their full potential." The TimesUp initiative includes a legal defense fund, backed by more than $13 million in donations, to help women who have experienced sexual assault and lack the platform to take action. By providing the legal resources and safe platform to disenfranchised, everyday victims of sexual assault who fear the cost of speaking out, TimesUp hopes to end the occurence and trivialization of sexual assault.

As such, dismissing TimesUp as just another Hollywood fad unjustly robs the millions of women across the globe who comprise the true beneficiaries of the initiative. The likes of Salma Hayek and Oprah Winfrey may spearhead the movement, but women from all walks of life receive its desperately needed aid.

Don't let the popularization of TimesUp keep you from showing solidarity with victims. By all means, start the conversation about fighting against sexual harassment. Follow the comprehensive list of action you can take conveniently compiled on the TimesUp website. Donate at www.gofundme.com/timesup to the women who don't have the means of defending themselves from their abusers.

Restaurant Review: Delicious Raw

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If your new year's resolution was to start eating healthier, but with food that still tastes great, Delicious Raw will not disappoint. Located on South University Drive in Davie, this hot spot and its infectiously positive atmosphere gives the motivation and flavor to stay true to this resolution. Even if eating healthier is not on your 2018 to-do list, a good refreshing meal is never a bad thing.

As one of South Florida's mini chains, Delicious Raw first opened in 2013 in Naples, where its primary selling points were raw and immune-boosting juices. However, with the increasing popularity and growth that it received, co-founder Flemming Madsen and his team decided to open another location in Davie. "So many in this community embrace a healthy lifestyle, making it a perfect fit for our brand," Madsen said in an interview with Southflorida.com.

Upon entering, there is a fresh and fruity aroma that perfumes the whole restaurant. The very earthy color scheme and urban furniture integrates a trendy lifestyle with industrial ceilings, couches, abstract mirrors and fresh fruit on display. Apart from the picturesque setting, the values of this bar align perfectly with the earthiness. "At Delicious Raw, we really just want a clean, pretty much plant-based menu (not everything will be vegan, but mostly everything will be plant based) and we wanted our guests to find nutrition through plants and super clean ingredients," Kevin Fantis, general manager of this location, said.

Everything is made entirely from scratch to preserve freshness and ensure quality. In fact, even though not everything is organic, a lot of Delicious Raw's ingredients come from local vendors and local farmers. "We are not so huge on the "organic" label because we don't want to go overseas for the food unless it is something that is not naturally growing in this country," Fantis said.

Even though there are not many options for a full meal, it is balanced by the many juices and immune shots available. I ordered the Super Bowl (an acai bowl topped with strawberry, kiwi, hemp seeds and granola, $9.95), an avocado smash (a twist to traditional avocado toast with pumpkin seed dukkah, $6.25), the C-booster smoothie (with carrot, pineapple, grapefruit, lime and camu camu, $7.95) and the Buddha bowl (with potato pasta, corn salad, mushrooms, kale and chickpeas, $12.75).

My favorite dish was the Buddha bowl. With unique flavors and original spices, the potato pasta went perfectly with the spiced chickpeas and portobello mushrooms. The C-booster juice was also unique, but more refreshing and energy-boosting than the other options.

Overall, Delicious Raw lived up to its name: raw and delicious food. Even though the prices might not be for an everyday meal, it just shows what was spent on the actual ingredients that are being used and are not the cheapest.

Whether you are staying true to your new year's resolutions or looking for a quick and healthy pick-me-up snack, Delicious Raw brings the purest form of food available; raw and nutritious.

GOOD GRUB: (Top) The Super Bowl, (bottom) the Buddha Bowl. (Photos/Maia Fernandez-Baigun)

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Obscura: CUCO

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While many of us tend to associate popular music with mainstream artists, I've had someone else in mind. Rooting from Hawthorne, California, (near Los Angeles) Omar Banos, or most notably known as "CUCO," brings a reformed style of the early 2000s electronic genre. While still far from mainstream music, his beats and colorful LA style showcase his edginess. Although different from your average R&B or pop song, CUCO's voice and use of "Spanglish" touches your soul and brings a new feel to the underground style of music. The artist aims for hyperrealism, a combination of nostalgia and euphoric tunes. Once you hear the first verse of any of his creations, anyone can decode his pure heart and message.

Released in January of last year, CUCO's Songs4U set a new stage for his platform. The Los Angeles Times described it as a "touching album full of deep passion." After releasing a new single "Lo Que Siento," CUCO's presence has been steadily rising in the media and taking over California's market. With multiple rising stars from California, it's not peculiar to see a young 19-year-old find influence in the heart of Los Angeles.

A sense of etherealism is constantly present in CUCO's music. With lo-fi beats and a '90s mic arranged with echo, Omar Banos has a real talent in electronic music. You need to hear it to believe it.

(Photo/SoundCloud)

SPORTS

Boys basketball shoots for success

Alex Becker| Sports Editor
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One point stood in the of way the boys varsity basketball team and a date in last season's district championship. After a heartbreaking 73-72 loss to rival Archbishop McCarthy, the Patriots' dream of playing in the state tournament was crushed.

This season, the team changed the script. With a 67-65 win over the Mavericks this season, the Patriots got their revenge on a go-ahead layup from senior point guard Samir Stewart with 1.3 seconds left. The game not only provided a moral victory for the team, but also put the team atop the division with a 14-3 record, at the time. Nevertheless, the victory holds great importance for the team.

"The Archbishop game to me stands out the most because of the rivalry and the atmosphere that we were playing in. The Archbishop team and school were talking so much on how they were going to beat us, but we came out with the victory," senior power forward Nathan Johnson said.

On top of the victory over Archbishop McCarthy, the team also enjoyed success at the Kreul Classic and the Don Stewart Shootout tournaments. The team was the runner-up at the Kreul Classic, after a nail-biting 62-59 loss to Coral Springs High School. The Patriots were crowned champions of the Don Stewart Shootout, after a 73-66 win over First Baptist Academy, where junior shooting guard Damari Monsanto was named Most Valuable Player with 28 points. The team has all-around talent from every player on the court, but Monsanto has certainly taken the reigns. Monsanto has averaged 19.9 points per game this season and accumulated four Divison I offers as a junior. The 6-foot-5 guard who transferred to Heritage from Mater Academy last April is also ranked 10th in the state according to 247.

The team also finds talent from Stewart, who averages 15.9 points per game, senior shooting guard Nick Backer, who averages 16 points per game and senior point guard Michael McBean, who averages 13.9 points per game. Although the team is filled with talent, its success is found from teamwork. "I think one of the reasons we have been so successful this season is our talented team and the fact that we enjoy playing basketball with each other. We're a family on and off the court," Johnson said. The Patriots will play their last regular season game Feb. 3 at home before hopefully moving on to the district tournament.

CHAMPION CALIBER: The boys basketball team is named champion of the Don Stewart Shootout Basketball Tournament. The Patriots currently hold a record of 17-3 and are first in the district. (Photo/New Era Prep)

Former Patriot sets sights on lifetime dream

Sammy Rosenthal | Staff Writer
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To most people, football is just another sport to pass the time, a way to hang out with friends or a way to stay active. However, to former Patriot and Georgia Bulldog Sony Michel, football has been his pathway to success.

Michel was born and raised in Hollywood, Fla. Throughout his childhood, Michel enjoyed participating in a variety of sports such as football, track and baseball. Just one year after arriving at Heritage in seventh grade, Michel focused on football as he was offered to play running back on the varsity football team.

Due to his success, Michel began receiving national recognition, collecting offers from University of Miami and Florida State University in eighth grade.

Instead of losing sight of his end goal due to all of the attention, Michel stayed grounded and maintained his leadership skills. Former head coach at Heritage during Michel's time,Mike Rumph, noticed these leadership qualities in the athlete.

"He was never late to meetings [or] practice," Coach Rumph said. "He supported and pushed his teammates to do better [and] put his utmost effort on the field and in the classroom."

In just his junior year of high school, Michel decided on his college destination, choosing "the best place for success and the right environment" in the Georgia Bulldogs. Transitioning into his college time at Georgia, Michel described his overall experience similar to that of your "average college kid." From the perspective of the stat sheet, however, it was exactly the opposite.

Over the spread of his first three college years, Michel was able to rush for 2,411 yards and accounted for 22 touchdowns overall.

Just before senior year, Michel opted to stay for his final year of college instead of declaring for the NFL, as staying would "be beneficial for [his] family." It would be an understatement to say he made the right choice.

In his last year, Michel eclipsed 1,000 yards on the ground and helped carry his team to make a final four appearance as the three seed. During the semifinal game at the Rose Bowl, Michel was awarded game MVP, leading his team to victory with 222 yards and a game-winning score. In the final game of his college career, the Sugar Bowl championship, Michel led all rushers with 98 yards, however, his team came up short in an overtime loss.

To Michel, it isn't about the end result as he described his championship game experience as having "many ups and downs" but overall he enjoyed himself and "had fun."

Michel left a mark on Georgia, finishing with the third most rushing yards in school history, once again making his college experience anything but ordinary.

Michel is currently preparing for the NFL. According to walterfootball.com, Michel is ranked seventh among all running backs entering the draft. If these rankings hold true, USA Today predicts that he will be drafted in the early portion of the second round as do most mock drafts. However, Michel has "no ideal team" to draft him. Coach Rumph, being a former top NFL draft pick himself, advised his former running back to "take it all in and enjoy himself at the next level."

Although Michel is becoming a major star, he hasn't forgotten to credit those who helped him on his journey, including Coach Rumph, Mike Smith (Michel's trainer), and all of the AHS staff. Michel's personal motto of "being patient" and "working hard" has gotten him far. With the various records, achievements, and accomplishments under his belt, it would be safe to say to expect the same at the professional level. However, with Michel's hardworking drive and humility, it wouldn't be wrong to assume much more.

Woogie
"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.
Visit woogie.org to donate.
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Email: info@woogie.org
Mail: PO Box 1442, Boca Raton, Fl 333439

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Sports

Swimming for USA

Kayla Rubenstein | Staff Writer
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Swimming is a popular sport, especially in the water-surrounded state of Florida. Most Floridians know how to swim, but only a select few take swimming to a high, competitive level. Freshman Isabella Taylor is one of these athletes.

Having travelled both nationally and internationally to compete with the USA Swim Team, Taylor is an experienced swimmer with a background of more than five years of competition. Taylor has been competing in local and state meets since she was 9 years old, the minimum age to compete. She competed nationally a year later.

Since then, she has been all around the United States, including places such as Daytona Beach, Los Angeles, Virginia Beach and Cape May. Because of her exemplary performance at these meets, she was invited to be an official member of the Open Water Team, a branch of the USA Swim Team. Members of the team swim in a body of water other than a pool, such as a lake or bay.

Taylor was introduced to the Open Water Team through her dad. "My dad was actually a part of the Open Water Team and is still involved in volunteering, officiating and coaching teams. He was heavily involved since I was younger, and I really enjoyed the competition and the whole idea of the team. I started at the local and made my way up to the rest of the state, national and currently international levels," Taylor said.

(Photo submitted by Isabella Taylor)

The Open Water Team competes year-round. Local and state competitions are held through the winter and spring. The primary national and international competitions occur during the summer and roll into the early fall. Competitions are weekly all around Fort Lauderdale, Miami, West Palm and Hollywood beaches. The national competition will happen in the beginning of August in Virginia Beach. Based on her performance at this event, Taylor may be asked to compete in the international competition, DHS Swim Challenge, in Australia in September.

This past year, Taylor competed in the 2017 DHS Swim Challenge. This competition has four categories: swimming, running, paddleboarding or a combination of all three.

"I compete mostly in the swim events, which consist of a distance swim [around 1,000 meters], a run-swim-run [running 1,000 meters, swimming 1,000 meters and running 1,000 meters] and an event known as the 'iron guard' which consists of swimming, running and paddleboarding all together, which requires lots of endurance," Taylor said. However, because of this competition, Taylor had to take six days off from school. "After a big competition when I have to miss school, sometimes it makes it hard to balance school and athletics together, and occasionally I can see myself falling behind. I have to work a little harder to study and make up work from missing school, but overall I can catch up," Taylor said.

Both the Heritage varsity team and swim club are part of Taylor's after-school activities. "Right now, I practice basically every day after school," Taylor said. She went to a state competition with the varsity team this past year.

Only a freshman, Taylor has college on her mind, but it is not a major concern for her. "I have some colleges I'm looking into, but not any specific swim schools as of right now. I am looking for a school that meets both of my academic and athletic needs," Taylor said. Taylor will certainly have her pick of schools, with exemplary academics and athletics to add on her college application.

Kayla in sports: Hoops! I did(n't) do it again

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Basketball always seemed to be a complicated and imposing sport for those vertically challenged, like myself. This month, when I tried out basketball, I learned that my impression was correct, or at least in my case. The net, looming over my short 5-foot-2 self, challenged me every time it was my turn to shoot with the junior varsity (JV) girls' basketball team.

My experience with the team began with light passing drills, where players toss a basketball to coach Tiara Alexander, who would then throw it at the backboard. Players ran to the proper position and caught the ball before it touched the ground. The team and I repeated this drill multiple times until the coaches called for a break. After a quick sip of water, we began positioning drills. While five players (the maximum players for a team on the court) guarded the net, the coaches, remaining players and I went to offense, passing the ball among ourselves while Coach Tiara directed the defensive players on how to perfect their technique.

Additional drills included passing the ball back and forth to one another. Moving around in different positions, we passed diagonally and horizontally, then shot (or in my case, attempted to) it into the hoop. The final activity I did with the team was footwork. Apparently you cannot hold the ball for more than two steps at a time. If you do, it's penalized as a travel foul. I didn't know that, and "travelled" a lot. Whoops.

Teammates are like family, and this family loved to talk with one another. However, once the chattering got out of hand, we were forced to do suicides. Suicides are when you run to a certain point in the court, then back again, moving farther each round. After doing two rounds of this, up and down the tennis/basketball court, I felt more mentally awake, but more physically exhausted. This punishment certainly stopped us from being exceedingly chatty.

All in all, the JV basketball girls were welcoming and accepted me as one of their own. The coaches were both mentors and friends, laughing and joking along with us while doing basic drills. This encounter with the sport reinforced my impression of basketball being a difficult sport, yet also exposed me to the familial feeling being on a basketball team can offer.

From the Bench
BY ALEX BECKER
Filleting the Fish

Derek Jeter must love cook. The new-part owner of the hometown Miami Marlins has taken out every single crucial bone that helped the team score the most runs since 2009.

The future Hall of Fame Yankee shortstop has already ditched three all-stars in second baseman Dee Gordon and outfielders Marcell Ozuna and MVP Giancarlo Stanton, as well as up-and-coming outfielder Christian Yelich.

Gordon, who was traded to the Mariners for next to nothing, led the MLB in steals last season while batting .308 with 201 hits, while Ozuna was sent to St. Louis after batting .312 and hitting 37 out-of-the-park.

Gordon and Ozuna are just the icing on the cake. Stanton, the reigning most valuable player who hit 59 home runs last season, is gone. Although the move was expected as it saved the Marlins $300 million on this move alone, the trade wasn't all good. In return, the Marlins received all-star second baseman Starlin Castro. Castro has been on the team for about a month and has already asked to leave. That's how bad this organization is: the newest player, who hasn't even practiced in Marlin uniform, already hates being here.

The moves did nothing but set the team back. The offense was the least of the worries for the Marlins. The Fish ranked 11th in runs scored, but gave up the fifth most runs to opponents. Before Hurricane Jeter tore the roster to shreds, the Fish were in search of bullpen help to complement the strong offense. Now in its aftermath, the team will look for both a lineup and a bullpen.

Jeter is trying to copy the Houston Astros' strategy: start from scratch and build up a team to win a pennant in four seasons. Problematic for the Marlins, when the Astros did it they had young talent to build around and brought in new players. The Marlins have none of that. The closest thing to talent the Marlins have is a second baseman who wants out and three minor league prospects Jeter brought in.

Not only has Jeter taken the talent out of the team, but by removing one of the most exciting outfields in all of baseball, he took away fun. Without talent or fun, the team won't make money, which was Jeter's motive in the first place.

Jeter may have 3,465 hits as a Yankee, but with the Marlins he has done nothing but strike out.

V-Day

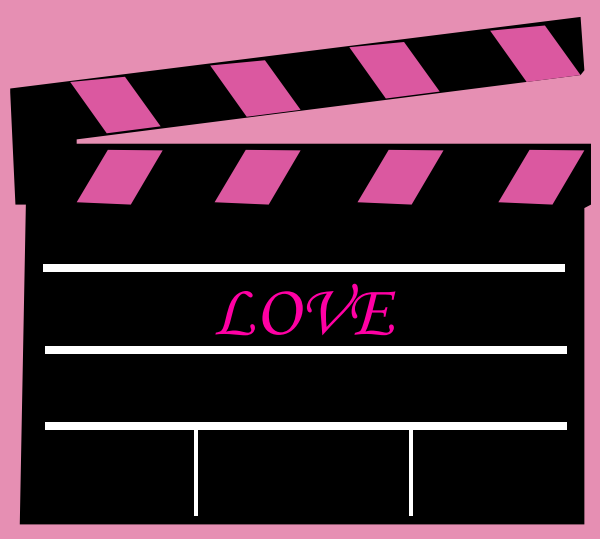
Declassified Valentine's survival guide

If you can't figure out just what gift to give, what activities to do or what movie to watch this V-Day, check out these suggestions to ensure a special day for your special someone.

(Graphics/Sloane Kapit)

Movie ideas:

- La La Land
- The Notebook
- When Harry Met Sally
- The Vow
- Valentine's Day
- Love Actually
- Titanic
- Pretty Woman



Activity ideas:

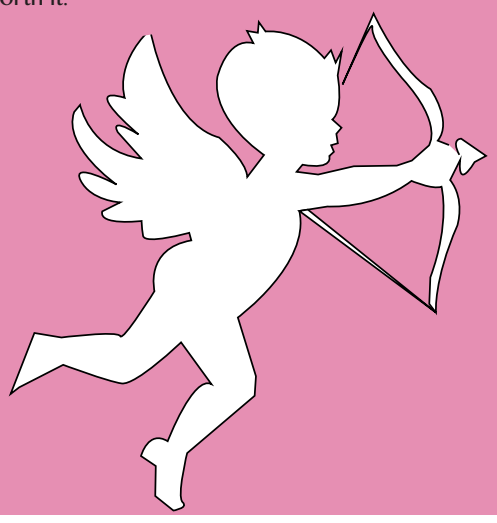
- Go ice/roller skating
- Have a picnic
- Get a treat at Jaxson's Ice Cream (landmark parlor in Dania Beach)
- See a movie at a drive in theater
- Hit up a food truck
- Explore a museum

Cuteness overload: V-day gestures like no other

Read these quote stories to hear about your peers' special moments.

Senior Noah Brenner

"Actually Valentine's Day is when I started dating my girlfriend Gianna Sanchez (she graduated from Heritage last year). So I left school and drove to her house to go pick her up because we were going to hang out. On the way there I stopped at Publix to get flowers and a card. I set up the flowers and card in the glove compartment of my car so that right when she opened the door she would see them (she loved them). After that, I drove her to this secret place in Weston that I go to, behind some bushes, which opens up this whole area like pretty much in the Everglades. I sat there with her and we watched the sunset together and it was really sweet. That was my first real Valentine's Day I guess and I got to make her happy so it was all worth it."



Senior Christian Fadel

"I wanted to do something special for my girlfriend (Ailine Mora) last Valentine's Day, so I thought I would set up a surprise for her. She was usually one of the first to walk into the band room every morning, so I decided that I would get there earlier than her, and leave a giant teddy bear with a card and a box of chocolates by the door. The plan was to let her walk up to it and see that it was for her (her name was on the card), at which point I would pop out of a side room and greet her.

Thankfully, everything went well, and she was really happy with the surprise, though it never dawned on me that she might have a gift for me, too. Needless to say, I was surprised to see her hand me a giant Valentine's Day card and a small, unlabeled box. I opened the card first and it was really cute. When I got to the box, I opened it to see about 30 tiny slips of paper, each with a little message or phrase on it such as 'your honesty' or 'your laugh.' I was a little confused until she said 'Those are some of the things I love about you.' Aside from the fact that my store-bought gifts felt immediately inadequate, you can definitely say that I was pretty much on cloud nine for the rest of the day. To this day, it's one of the best gifts that I have ever received, and she always says the same about hers."

Sophomore Michelle Zapata

"Well, we [Michelle Zapata and Teddy Rackauskas] started dating officially Feb. 3, so I didn't expect anything too crazy. I was wrong in the best of ways. In school we celebrated Valentine's Day with a teddy bear and just a fun day with other couples. After school it was kind of nerve-racking though. Teddy had invited me to his house to have dinner and watch a movie, but that also meant meeting his parents for the first time. His father is over six-feet, a black belt with muscles to show, a brown beard and piercing blue eyes, and I, being a 5-foot-1 small girl, was intimidated to say the least.

Well, I arrived at Teddy's house, and waiting for me were these red roses that made my face turn to match their color as well as this massive heart-shaped box of chocolates. We had dinner with his parents and then we finished the date by watching 'Elf'. That may sound weird, but our friend group, a couple weeks back, had made a whole plan to get me to watch 'Elf' since I had never watched it before. Outside the chat, before even dating, Teddy and I had made a pact to watch it together in secret away from the group. We had never gotten around to actually doing it, but that night actually was the perfect opportunity. We plan on doing the same thing this Valentine's Day. I am still very lost on what the movie is about since that night is such a blur of happiness to me, but after the movie ended I left this cute guy's house with red roses, chocolates and a smile to match."

Compiled by: Sloane Kapit, Yasmeen Altaji and Joanne Haner