

The Westword

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Student voice of the Westhill community
"The test of good journalism is the measure of its public service."

Welcoming a new principal

Westhill formally introduces Michael Rinaldi as the new principal after the end of the school year.

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The Westword

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May 2017

Note from the Editors

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the sixth print edition of *The Westword*. We are incredibly proud of this issue and hope you can see the hard work we put into this month.

To start off, the Editorial this issue brings to light the controversy of discussing politics in school. The Westword observed whether this is proper, and how students and teachers should handle this serious matter.

In News, you can read an interview with Michael Rinaldi about his recent placement as the new principal of Westhill

High School. In Viewpoint, readers can take a look at the pros and cons of a dress code for boys and girls at prom.

Following Viewpoint, our Las Noticias section looks into the benefits of having AP and SAT exams. Within Supplement, we go over sexual education and how we think it should be taught to teenagers.

Additionally, on the Feature pages, we highlight the Concilio Project, which three Westhill seniors took part in.

In Scatterbrain, we go over some ways to cope with the common "sickness" of senioritis. In Sports, we included a beginner's guide to spring sports such as

golf, tennis, and lacrosse.

On Online, read about the opening of the Granola Bar in Stamford, the start of senior internships in May, and a review of Disney's must see, *Beauty and the Beast*.

We encourage any readers with comments, questions, or concerns to contact us by either dropping a letter into Dong Zhi Guo's mailbox in room 224 or emailing us at westwordwhs@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Dong Zhi Guo, Maddy Cohen,

& Josh Eimbinder

Editor-in-Chief, Print Executive Editor, & Online Executive Editor

Editorial Policy

The Westword will be guided in the publication of material by a concern for truth, human decency, and human benefit. It is published during the school year by the late night staff, along with the Journalism and Communications classes. Letters to the Editor, advertising requests, comments, criticism, or suggestions are always welcome. The views expressed in Viewpoint and the Op-Ed page do not necessarily represent the opinions of *The Westword*.

The Editorial Board consists of Dong Zhi Guo, Maddy Cohen, Josh Eimbinder, Noah Klein, Caroline Boccuzzi, Maeve Ronan, Nicholas Zarrilli, Michael Hernandez, Liz Yamron, Janet Manina, Jenny Gorski, Melanie Gorski, Yaciana Taveras, Sarah Goldberg, William Evans, Mr. von Wahlde, and Mr. Wooley. The Editorial can be found on page 3.

Announcements

Congratulations to Ms. Taylor on her marriage.

Corrections

The Westword has no corrections to address at this time.

If you have an announcement or an advertisement you would like published in the next issue, please e-mail us at westwordwhs@gmail.com.

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EDITORIAL

Facilitating discussions in the classroom

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An essential element of any high school education is learning how to synthesize and connect what is learned in the classroom to current world events. In history, government, communications, English, or even environmental science classes, it is useful for teachers to facilitate healthy discussions with their students about recent events and apply what they have learned. Often times, students share their own personal beliefs if the issues being discussed are controversial. However, at what point does the debate or discussion become less of a learning experience and more of a battle of beliefs? When the teacher abandons their role as devil's advocate or tries to influence students to support their own beliefs, it can create a toxic environment for student discussion.

Westhill is a diverse community; students and teachers alike hold different political, religious and social beliefs. Communicating these ideals are important to the development of students and prepare them for the diversity they will encounter in the future.

In wake of last year's presidential election, many classes have included more formal and informal discussions about political beliefs. In the current polarized political climate, tempers often run high when it comes to controversial topics like abortion, or giving money

to political campaigns. Ms. Figluzzi has clear feelings about these discussions as she said, "Teachers shouldn't say their opinion but should facilitate healthy discussions within the class, in order to really have these conversations."

Heated debates do not stop outside the classroom door, many students and teachers are engaged in the news and have strong opinions about it. When students and teachers disagree, it can be a hard to decide how much to share, as a teacher has authority over students, creating an awkward situation for both parties. By law, a teacher is allowed to share their personal beliefs as long as they do not pontificate them. A teacher has to decide how much to share, when it is appropriate to share, and so on and so forth. When asked if she felt she had ever gone too far when ex-

and does not alienate members of the class. "I would honestly hate for a student who felt differently from me to feel unable to express themselves in my classroom. I didn't become a teacher to stifle or silence young people," said Ms. Tobin.

In March, Superintendent Kim sent a memo to all Board of Education employees in regards to how to have proper political discussions. The memo goes into explain how teachers should "always model a democratic society" as well as "Maintain awareness of the full range of political views that are held by students and colleagues."

Classes like AP Government and Politics, Contemporary Issues, and Communications are often centered around or at least involve the news. Current events and controversial topics can be used to enhance learning and ap-

ing to vote and the election process in general. Some students also feel that these discussions are beneficial, and enjoy talking to teachers about their own views. "I often find myself in political debates in various classes, whether it be by AP Gov class or even Chambers, and it is always interesting to hear my teacher's perspectives on different issues because they add new information and usually enhance the discussion as a whole," said Ben Freedman ('17). In college and in the workforce, students will be exposed to and have to engage with people who have different beliefs, so knowing how to have mature and respectful conversations with them is an important skill to learn early on.

Students should not be sheltered from difficult topics such as gender equality, racism, and

name calling. It shouldn't be an off the table topic because it is a major part of this world so it should be addressed in a mature way."

These issues are often the eye of the storm in political debates, but in a diverse environment like Westhill, teachers and students alike must toe the line between debating rights that people possess and accepting others for who they are. "Political party is a choice. The size of the government and how your taxes are spent are opinions. Treating one another as people, first, as equals - that's morality. That's ethics. That is not up for debate, at least not in my classroom," said Ms. Tobin.

However, when teachers express their beliefs in class with no clear educational or intentional purpose, it can be detrimental to the students and the class environment. Ethical guidelines should be met so that students do not feel alienated or like their beliefs are inferior. Debate is essential to education and learning how to talk to others who have views you disagree with. More importantly, the topic must be related to the material being learned in class so that the discussion is appropriate and facilitated toward learning. Politics and current events absolutely have a place in the classroom as long as they follow these guidelines.

The bottom line:

It is beneficial for the teacher to share their personal views as long as it facilitates healthy and intelligent discussion, and does not alienate members of the class or create a toxic environment.

pressing her political beliefs, Ms. Tobin, an English teacher, said, "I try - and it's a constant 'trying' - to make sure I have addressed sides of an issue, not just 'my side.'" It is beneficial for the teacher to share their views as long as it facilitates healthy and intelligent discussion,

ply ideologies and theories to issues that America is dealing with. For instance, the AP Government classes organized a mock election last November in order to mimic the presidential election between Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton and teach students about register-

LGBTQ rights, which is why it's so important to discuss them in school. Math teacher Ms. Manning said the following in regards to political discussions in the classroom, "A teacher should be able to express their opinion. As long as they can express both sides without any

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WHAT THE...?



STAY HUNGRY, VIKINGS A half-eaten sandwich sits alone in one of the boy's bathrooms.



The new king of the hill

After a lengthy interview process, Stamford Public Schools introduces Michael Rinaldi as the new Westhill principal starting fall of this year

Noah Klein & Ryan Murace
Ombudsman & Media Manager

Ms. Figluizzi will be retiring at the end of the school year. Since the news of her retirement broke, the Stamford community anxiously waited to know who would be taking her place. Within last few weeks, the Westhill administration has been focusing on what qualities the school as whole wants to see in its new principal by conducting board meeting as well as taking input from students. After a series of interviews and discussions, the Board of Education and Superintendent of schools Earl Kim unanimously voted Michael Rinaldi to be the new principal of Westhill on April 25. Michael Rinaldi has been the assistant principal of Rippowam Middle School for the last four years. He worked at Stamford High School and Dolan Middle School as well. He has served the district of Stamford for 30 years. His experience and dedication to the educational system made him the best choice for this position. He will join the Westhill community on July 1, 2017.

The Westword: What made you apply for this position?

Michael Rinaldi: I've been interested in being a principal for a while. Westhill in particular is pretty special to me because I went to high school [here], and it was at Westhill that I discovered I wanted to be a teacher. That whole full circle experience

and being able to come back to the high school I attended and the place where I discovered my passion for being an educator, it's storybook perfect. That would be my biggest reason for wanting to come to Westhill.

TW: Can you take me to a specific moment when there was a teacher or a student [that impacted your decision to become a principal]?

MR: It really was Mary Ellen White, but it started with Diane Blackwell, a PE teacher at Westhill. She worked down in the pool with Special Ed students and I had a study hall. My chemistry teacher said if you had a study hall that period, you could go down to the pool instead and help the kids learn how to swim. I only went down there to go in the pool but I discovered how much I really enjoyed helping these students learn how to swim. Many of them would see me in the halls and they would call me and come to our classroom. Mrs. White took me under her wing and she allowed me to work with those students. She taught me how to write a lesson plan. I remember I taught one particular student how to tie his sneaker and that was it. That was it. It didn't take very long. I discovered I wanted to be a special education teacher and just took it from there.

TW: What is most important to you in terms of the school, for the student body?

MR: I think about the kind of student that I was prior to discovering

that I wanted to be a teacher. I was never a bad kid, but I had what they call a "fixed mind-set." When I struggled, I just figured I just can't get it and I might as well just not try as hard as I could. Those students helped me change my attitude about my own learning. For years now as a teacher and then as an assistant principal, I've always felt one of my most important responsibilities was to help teachers and help students understand that if they apply themselves and believe in their own abilities and work as hard as they can, they can achieve anything they want. I would want to do that on a larger scale as the principal of Westhill.

TW: How do you feel about an open campus policy?

MR: I would certainly want to learn more from Ms. Figluizzi and the student's perspective. I think that it's something I'm willing to consider and expand on if we can ensure that there's going to be a system so that it's safe and not just a free-for-all. It's really important, especially for seniors, to be given more opportunities to be independent because when you leave high school, you're going to be on your own, so I think we owe it to [seniors] to exercise that freedom.

TW: How would you describe yourself as an administrator?

MR: I want to be the principal I wish I had. I am certainly someone who truly is invested in every student's success and I take that role

very seriously. I definitely have a sense of humor, and I remember very clearly what it is to be a kid. I can relate on that level to students and at the same time I think being a principal isn't much different than being a parent. You're going to love your students, and want to give them a voice and a choice while at the same time setting boundaries.

TW: How important is it that your son attend school within the Stamford Public Schools?

MR: My son is currently at Toquam Elementary, and my wife teaches kindergarten there. I wanted to be a principal here at Westhill because this is where I live, this is where my son goes to school, this is where my parents and grandparents were born. Attempting to make the district the best as it can be, is even more important to me now for the last ten years after having a child.

TW: How will your work in Puerto Rico help you at Westhill?

MR: When I started teaching at Northeast Elementary, there was a bilingual program there and most of the kids spoke Spanish as their first language. When I would need to speak to their parents or make calls home, I would have someone translate for me. I am a people person, I like to make contact with someone face-to-face and build a relationship that way. There is something missing there with a translator so I wanted to learn Spanish. I took a leave of absence and I moved to Puerto Rico. I got a job teaching in

one of the schools in the mountains. I was there for an entire year, and I learned Spanish and about their culture. It allows me more of an ability to connect.

TW: What do you hope to accomplish in your time at Westhill?

MR: I would want part of my legacy to be that I came to work every day with the single goal to create an environment for kids that was the absolute best it can be to support their academic, social, and emotional growth. So when [students leave Westhill] they leave with lessons regarding character, integrity, and an attitude that they will accomplish anything they set their mind to. That's what I would like somewhat connected to my legacy.

TW: What is one thing that you will take away from your time at Rippowam, Northeast Puerto Rico, and other places and apply to Westhill?

MR: This work is a process. What I've learned from all [my experience], especially from Puerto Rico, is that the success of the school requires a collaborate effort from everybody that works in the building including students. No one person can affect positive change, no matter what their energy is, and no matter what their commitment is, no one person can get it done by themselves. There has to be a spirit and a real sincere collaborative process in place where everyone feels valued and relies on each other to move the school forward and improve it.

BRIEFS

Agriscience Plant Sale

This May, the Agriscience Program will be holding their annual plant sales. The dates of the sales will be May 6, May 13, and May 20 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., with a dog wash on the 6th and a car wash on the 20th. The AG classes have been preparing for the plant sale since early March, starting with transplanting flower bulbs and germinating vegetables seeds. Plants range from geraniums, to cucumbers, to many different types of tomatoes. Per usual, all sales will go towards scholarships for graduating seniors. "The plant sale is a great way to showcase what the AG program is all about and allows the public to see who we are," said Hayley Smith ('17).

Westhill named art partner of the year

This year, Westhill has been awarded "2017 USA Art Partner of the Year" by Creative Connections, an International Cultural Education Organization. Creative Connections is a program that encourages students to have a certain understanding and knowledge on different cultures and traditions. Frantz Gabriel ('17), Maria-Paula Guerrero ('18), Judylyz Cleto ('19), Wincharm Grant ('18), Munera Begum ('17), Djesnie Glaude ('18), Kevin Hurtado ('17), and Tageria Davis ('20) were all chosen to display their work at the "2017 International Children's Art Exhibit." These students were carefully selected by certain educators and artists to represent the theme "TEAM up" based on the quality and thoughtfulness of their pieces. The artwork that will be displayed is made by students from all around the United States and twenty other countries.

Briefs by **Maddy Cohen**
& **Nicole Segal** / Print Executive Editor

School security in danger

Noella Fefe
Staff Writer

In the latest weeks, multiple schools in Southwestern Connecticut have faced safety threats in various forms.

On March 24, at approximately 12:30 p.m., Darien High School was put into a lockdown due to threats that were scrawled on the boys' bathroom wall. One which stated, "Gonna shoot the school per. 6. B ready," triggered the lockdown that lasted 20 minutes as police came to the scene and found no viable threat to the students or staff. Along these lines a different message read, "Do not come to school on 3/23," and rumors that a gun was present on campus that day had students and parents alike in a state of confusion and fear. "We are continuing our investigation in collaboration with the Darien Police Department to identify

the person or persons who were responsible for these incidents. I can assure you that once identified, we will discipline the individual(s) to the full extent of educational and criminal law. Once again, there is no more important mission for a school district than to keep our school community safe. Please know we will do everything in our power to ensure a safe and secure school environment," said Dan Brenner, Superintendent of Darien schools.

More severely on March 29, Greenwich High School was prompted to go into an approximately 4-hour lockdown due to an apparent threat found in the school from a student. The lockdown was over around 4 p.m. causing major delays for students inside the school while also leaving parents anxiously waiting outside to hear updates and to see their children. "Do-

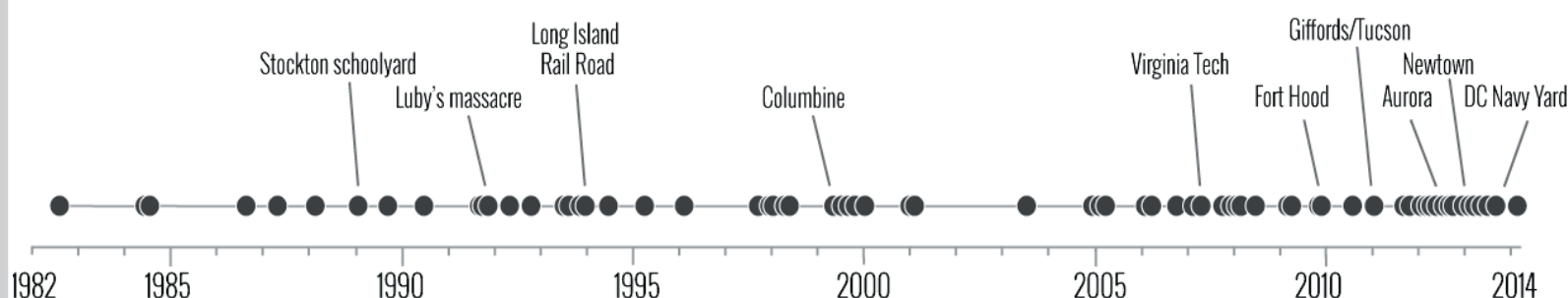
zens of police officers rushed to the Hillside Road campus after a threat against the school community was found scrawled in a girl's bathroom shortly after noon. The school was immediately placed in a state of security confinement, and some 2,000 students were searched, a process that took several hours," said the Greenwich Times. "It was a threat that was communicated through graffiti on a wall in a bathroom, and it was specific to a time and location," said Police spokesman Lt. Kraig Gray.

Most recently Stamford High School was prompted to go into a "soft" lockdown, meaning all exterior doors were locked and entry was limited to the main entrance. A student posted an Instagram picture of a boy holding a shotgun which was captioned, "SHS people, don't come to school tm." According

to Sharon Beadle, a spokeswoman for Stamford Public Schools, "The 14-year-old boy who took the photo was charged with threatening on Friday morning, but the school was locked down from 7:30 to 11 a.m. to ensure there were no others involved in the potential situation." "With all of the violence that is going on around the world, kids should not be joking around like that," said Ali Essallamy ('18), a student at Stamford High School.

With these threats becoming more of a common occurrence it is important for student bodies at all schools to remember the seriousness of what they may perceive as jokes, and the consequences that arise with these claims. It also becomes important to remember safety precautions here at Westhill and to be alert and report anything that can cause a threat to our community.

Time Between Mass Shootings, 1982-2014



Data analysis by **Harvard School of Public Health**.

What do students want in a principal?

D'angelo Howard
Staff Writer

Dr. Stephen Falcone, the Executive Director of Human Resources for Stamford Public Schools, usually deals with issues specifically about teachers and staff. However, on March 31, he spent the day speaking to students about qualities they are looking for in the new principal.

Dr. Falcone was here to conduct an open forum for students to discuss the qualities that they were looking for in a new principal at Westhill High School. Ms. Figluizzi, the current principal, is retiring at the end of the current school year. The meeting was held in the Purple Pact room adjacent to

the Raynor cafeteria. While Dr. Falcone spent most of the day in that room, most of the students that he met with came to talk to him during the lunch waves. Students from all grade levels attended this meeting where they were given a chance to discuss their suggestions and thoughts on what they want in their new principal. Many of these students want a principal that interacts and creates friendships with all the students in the Westhill community. They also want a principal that is willing to move our school in a positive direction in the future.

In separate meetings earlier in March, Westhill faculty and Westhill parents had an opportunity to voice their opinions

about the characteristics they felt the new principal should have. The meeting on the 31st gave that same opportunity to students who will be directly affected by the vision and decision-making of the new head administrator of the school. Students expressed that they appreciated the opportunity to provide input about who should succeed Ms. Figluizzi as Principal. "I liked [speaking with Dr. Falcone] because I felt included in the process of determining the new Principal," said Nick Rich ('17).

According to the students, Dr. Falcone was very open to hearing what they had to say about what they wanted in a new principal. "He accepted our

opinions and built ideas from the questions that we asked," said Rich. "He was glad to hear so many opinions about the decision about our new principal," said Daniela Paredes ('17).

The main qualities that students identified as important characteristics for a new principal include "a sense of responsibility," "caring and understanding," and most importantly a commitment to "being involved with the students and faculty." Students identified that it is important that the new principal gets involved in their lives.

Hopefully the newly selected principal, Michael Rinaldi will live up to the students' expectations and prove to be a good choice.

Annual Fashion Show graces the stage

Lexi Boccuzzi
Reporter

The Westhill Fashion Show has been an exciting and a highly anticipated event for Westhill seniors over the past several years. It had previously been organized by the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) as a way to fundraise for the senior “after prom” event. However, this year the PTO found a different way to raise the money, and thus the fashion show was not needed. It was offered up to the students. If they wanted to participate in the event, they would have to organize it themselves. Rachel Fein (’17), a member of the senior student council, alongside Nova Nahiyen (’18) decided that they were up for the challenge. “After speaking to a bunch of seniors, Nova and I noticed the

demand for the continuation of the fashion show. So the two of us, along with the help of the Class of 2017 Student Council, decided to take on the management of the fashion show,” said Fein. Once they realized how much it meant to all the students they knew that they had to figure out a way to bring it to life.

Nevertheless, despite all of the excitement surrounding the show it was a challenge from the start. The first obstacle they faced was finding stores to provide clothes on such late notice. “Being that we did not know we could even have a fashion show until mid-February, we were a bit behind on reserving local shops to provide clothing. But we managed to get Zemo Men’s Store, A Step Ahead, and Lord & Taylor on board,” said Fein. The stores provided many ‘prom-

style’ formal outfits for the seniors to model. This is one of the biggest changes that was made to the show this year, unlike the past, only formal wear was modeled and only seniors participated in the event. Although, many more issues came up during the planning for the show, because of help from many people the show was successful. Fein explained that she was so grateful to all the people who helped with the event including Zoe Schwartz, Angelo Sagnelli (the head of Westhill tech), Nova Nahiyen, Mr. Pereira, Ms. Grant, Ms. Barlet, and Mona Spinelli.

Overall, the show which took place on Thursday, March 30 was a success. Everyone who participated in the event, both those on stage and off, had a great time and really got to enjoy quality time together before

graduation this June. It was also very popular amongst the audience who got to enjoy not only the show but also entertainment by their classmates including a performance by the Westhill Chamber Singers, the cast of this year’s Spring Musical *Guys and Dolls*, and the student band Flight Crew.

The show was also complemented by commentary from Gil Daniels (’17), Nick Smeriglio (’17), Imani Morgan (’17) and Tatyana Owens (’17). “I would definitely consider it [the fashion show] to be a success. Not only did we raise over \$1,000 for the senior class, but the seniors who participated, myself included, had a great time in the end,” said Fein. The money raised from the show will go towards helping to decrease the price of senior prom tickets.



Photos contributed by **Steve Fein**.

The Untold Stories

Column by Noah Klein

For this issue, The Westword sat down with Lessly Reyes to talk about her constant battle against the dangers of going down the wrong path. Reyes is a junior in Mr. Sandoval’s 7th period Bi-Lingual History class. The Westword would like to thank Maria Mirafuentes for translating in order to allow Reyes to speak her mind in the way she was most comfortable. We can all learn from Reyes and should remember that our friends are sometimes a reflection of ourselves.

The Westword: When did you come to the United States and why?

Lessly Reyes: I came to the United States one year ago, I came for an education and to get away from bad people and the dangers in Guatemala.

TW: What are some of the differences between your high school in

Guatemala and Westhill?

LR: The rules here are strict. In my school the delinquents were able to get away with things. Here it is better, it is easier to be more independent. In Guatemala I needed to walk around with a parent constantly because it is so dangerous.

TW: Do you do any after school activities?

LR: Yes, after school everyday I work for seven hours at Sunny Daes ice cream.

TW: How do you balance school work with your job?

LR: I usually do my homework after I get off from work, around 11:00 p.m. Sometimes I have time during the day and I can do some of it then.

TW: What do you like to do for fun?

LR: I like playing soccer in the fields, and just hanging out with my friends;

I have met a lot of good people.

TW: What do you miss most about Guatemala?

LR: I miss my friends, my family, I definitely miss my parents a lot, I try to talk to them every day but it is difficult when I work, sometimes I will call after work.

TW: Do you feel you are treated differently because you are an ESL student?

LR: It is definitely more comfortable for me to be in these classes. I take gym with everyone in the school, and that is kind of uncomfortable because no one really speaks Spanish.

TW: How difficult is it for you to learn English?

LR: It is really, really difficult. I cannot understand people.

TW: What do you want to do after high school?

LR: I want to go to college and be-

come a veterinarian or nurse.

TW: How do you stay focused when some kids do not take school as seriously as you?

LR: I keep myself surrounded by good people. I understand that if I am surrounded by bad people, I will go in a bad direction.

TW: How did you learn to keep yourself focused and surrounded by good people?

LR: My parents taught me from the day I was born right vs wrong. While I was growing up they taught me the right way to treat people and how to act.

TW: If you had any advice for kids that may be coming to the United States like you did, what would it be?

LR: I would say make sure you study, and do not get influenced by bad people, and be sure to keep your head straight.

BRIEFS

Granola Bar opens a location in Stamford

The Granola Bar originated in Westport, CT in 2015. It is a relatively new place to dine, and has recently opened a location in Greenwich, CT and will be opening two more stores in Rye, NY and Stamford, CT by the end of summer 2017.

The Granola Bar is earthy, and has a cool modern vibe inside. The food is mostly healthy and organic, but all for a reasonable price. The menu is unique as it creates trendy names for each item. For example, the ‘crunchy elvis’ is a yogurt parfait with almond butter, honey, granola, and banana. “My favorite thing to get is the avocado toast because they offer a wide variety of toppings,” said Riley Magrath (’17).

The Westport location has become extremely popular and due to its success a similar Greenwich location was opened. In the spring The Granola Bar will be opening a location in Harbor Point, Stamford CT, but this location will be different from all other locations as it will just be for pick-ups.

Juniors take on the SAT

Starting in 2016, juniors were offered a free SAT to be taken in school. This was ultimately done as a test run for the new SAT that came out last year. The College Board has gone from grading on a scale of 2400 to a scale of 1600. The opportunity of a free SAT test is not one to take for granted; each SAT test costs \$43 with no writing, and \$55 with writing. To be offered this standardized test for free is a large opportunity for kids who cannot afford it.

In Westhill, approximately 500 juniors took the SAT on April 5. “It was helpful that we did not have to pay for the test, but it was too cramped,” said Amanda Deenihan (’18).

Some juniors seemed a little frustrated by the fact that they had to waste a day to take the SAT. Some kids were simply just unhappy because they did not want to take the test while others may have been preparing for the ACT instead of the SAT. “I think it is good for practice, but I don’t think it should be a graduation requirement,” said Juan Mato (’18).

Briefs by **Paige Savitt** / Social Media Manager.



Good Month Bad Month

Column by
**Max Zussman &
Matthew Greenbaum**

Good Month For...

Serena Williams Serena Williams revealed that she is pregnant over social media this month. She is due to have the baby this coming fall with Alexis Ohanian, the founder of Reddit and her fiancé since late December. This is a big surprise for the tennis network because now she will not be competing in any tournaments for at least a year. The last match she played was on January 28, when she won her 23rd Grand Slam at the Australian Open.



Westhill Boy's Lacrosse The Westhill boy's lacrosse team has enjoyed their best start in program history, being undefeated through their first three games. They opened with a dominant 11-1 victory over North Salem followed by an 11-6 win over city rivals, Trinity Catholic. Doubts about the team were silenced following a huge 7-6 overtime win against Bunnel. The team was recently ranked 10th best Connecticut.



Russel Westbrook The front-runner for the 2017 NBA MVP recently achieved a remarkable accomplishment. He is just the second player in league history to average a triple-double (double digits in at least three statistical categories, points, rebounds, assists, etc.). Westbrook also surpassed the previous record of triple-doubles in a season and stands alone at 43 triple-doubles.

Bad Month For...

Bill O'Reilly Bill O'Reilly has recently been forced to leave Fox News. The prime-time host has been kicked off the show because of sexual harassment allegations against him. Multiple women have issued complaints about his inappropriate treatment towards them. To make matters worse, he tried to cover his tracks by paying off the women who spoke up for themselves. His departure from the show is a big blow for the news station.



Venezuela At least two people were killed in Venezuela when violence broke out during marches by the opposition as well as supporters of the President. The President of Venezuela, Nicolas Maduro, has been disliked and blamed for creating a dictatorship in the last few years. During the march a 17-year-old man was shot in the head only an hour in. A 23-year-old woman was shot and killed during the march.



Commercial fishing The industry ranks high on the list of human inflicted stresses on world pollution and global warming. The fishing industry also impacts the people who need the fish for food. The European Union and China cleared the oceans of Senegal and other African countries of fish, leaving many hungry. A study showed that Chinese ships catch as many fish as a Senegalese boat would catch in a year.

Illustrations by **Nova Nahiyan, Alexis Marchetti, Zac Kitay & Jonathan Russo** / News Editor & Illustrators.

Computer virus creates chaos

Noah Klein
Ombudsman

So much of education today depends on technology. PowerPoint, Powerschool/PowerTeacher, Microsoft Word, Activinspire, and so many other programs are used in the classroom.

Weeks ago, a virus by the name of "Conficker" attacked the school. Conficker is a virus that essentially locks users from allowing them into their accounts, this makes the virus very popular for business and government settings as it can do severe damage due to the various accounts. The virus also blocks users from going to antivirus websites in order to clean their computer. According to Mr. Otterspoor whom along with teaching biology, is the Webmaster for Westhill, Conficker was either brought in by an external source through a flashdrive, or opened in an e-mail.

The virus affected students and faculty alike, changing up almost every lesson plan in the entire school. It is fair to say the educa-

tion was made more difficult for the time. "Having no internet, and teachers not being able to get online definitely made it difficult to learn, almost all of my classes were adjusted because my teachers had presentations on their computers," said Jessica Ostroff ('18).

Teachers were all instructed to shut off their computers to allow the system to be cleared of Conficker. Obviously this obstacle made it very difficult to include technology into the classroom, but also gave everyone a look into what school was like before tech.

"It is definitely easier to teach now than it was 30 years ago... except when the internet goes down," said Psychology and Civics teacher Ms. Tintle. Ms. Tintle described how she had to go back to her roots and lecture students without a PowerPoint, or any sort of presentation. In terms of protection in the future, Anti-Virus protection is running on all computers and will make sure that although Conficker did teach us a proper lesson in what it was like to grow up in school without tech, we all hope Conficker stays far, far, away from Westhill.



Photo by **Ryan Murace** / Media Manager.

Senior internships

Amalia Skoparantz
Staff Writer

Westhill seniors have been offered an amazing opportunity to receive professional job experience before college through the help of Michelle Lappas, who runs the Senior Internship Program as well as the Mayor's Youth Employment Program from the Government Center located downtown.

Seniors are able to apply for an interview and eventually an internship of their choice. Before choosing a position, the student must write an essay, obtain a teacher recommendation, create a resume, and must meet a certain GPA requirement. After applying students will have to make an appointment for an interview. This entire process was created in order to help teach and prepare students for the working world. The interviewers ask a series of questions which are typically asked in a real job interview. Afterwards, they provide feedback on both communication skills and resume structure. After a successful interview, students will apply for a position of their choice ranging from positions such as mar-

keting interns to teacher aids at local elementary schools.

Having an interview with the creators of the Mayor's Youth Employment Program means that students do not have to go to an interview with the company or business they were working for. The interview is used to determine if the student is a good fit for the job.

The internship will begin for seniors after AP Exams on May 15. The program will run for five weeks until June 16. Throughout that time period, students are expected to have a total of 108 hours completed, or approximately 30 hours a week.

If students decided not to pick from the numerous job listings, they had the opportunity to "build their own internship." All of the same criteria applies, however students who choose to search out an employer need to make the connection and work with them to get approval for the internship. "I plan on pursuing physical therapy in college and I knew about the [Orthopaedic & Neurosurgery Specialists] in Stamford. I am familiar with the practice and wanted to continue my experience there. I am so grateful that I was able to build

my own internship with this program," said internship participant Jessica Rubin ('17).

Since students will be missing the majority of fourth quarter, the grades they have will freeze. Some students were hesitant about missing so much school. "I wish that I took the opportunity when it was presented. I would have liked to trade in one quarter of being a student for time as an intern at a company that could help benefit my future. On the other hand I would have found it hard to leave my fellow classmates, especially since my time at Westhill is coming to a close," said Frank Dente ('17).

Whatever assignments are left in the system will remain that way and they are exempt from the other assignments that they will be missing.

With this experience, students are meant to gain real life techniques both with communication and teamwork as well as technological skills. In today's age, it is hard to keep up with the evolving workplace. By having students participate in internships during their senior year, they will be challenged, and the preparation they gain will prove to be extremely beneficial.

Prom dress codes: Hot or not?

Emily Savitt
Photo Manager

Many people describe prom as “a night to remember.” One of the first steps after deciding to attend is finding the perfect outfit. Whether it is a long or short dress, it is important for this dress to be appropriate for the dress code.

Different trends come in and out of style every year. For example, last year, two-piece dresses were trending, which exposed the mid section. This was extremely trendy and made many appearances. There is no pinpoint trend for this year since we have not seen

all of the dresses, but there have been many high slits and plunging necklines. Slits can be stylish, but when they get too high, they start to stray away from stylish. Slits can be a risky statement piece to master because one wrong move may expose too much.

The dress code is in place to make sure students are covered while still looking fashionable. Plunging necklines have the same problem as slits. One wrong move can show too much, which would be more of a wardrobe malfunction than a fashion statement. The dress code is in place to protect everyone and

make sure that prom, a school event, is appropriate.

Students also need to make sure that they are dressing for the right event. Prom is an elegant and fancy event. Some dresses push the limit and are more frisky than fancy. The dress code is in place so that all outfits are suitable for the event.

In fact, this is not limited just for girls; it applies for boys as well. For example, boys should not wear shorts. In reality, we are going to prom, not the beach. It is important to know the event you are dressing for and make sure your outfit is appropriate. Prom

is too fancy for shorts or a t-shirt. Boys should wear a tuxedo instead of a suit. Tuxedos and suits are different. Suits are less fancy due to the material and accessories.

Following dress code does not mean risking your fashion sense, it just means dressing appropriately for the event you are going to. It is still possible to remain true to one’s style while still obeying the dress code.

Some students agree with the dress code, while others are opposed to it. “I do believe in [a dress code] sometimes. When it comes to the actual dress it is important to have a formal-looking

dress for an event like this,” said Erica Abela (’17). One student opposed stating, “I disagree because the school may have a different definition of provocative then our senior class. While there should be a limit within reason, girls should wear what they feel best in,” said Lilu Em (’17).

The different views show that students can follow the dress code, but still have some freedom in deciding their style for the event. The dress code does not restrict what you wear, it is in place to protect students, not limit their options. Regardless of the dress code, prom is a night full of fun and fashion!

**Decoding
the prom
dress code:**
-SHORT HEMLINE
-EXPOSED CLEAVAGE
-FITTED PANTS
-LOW BACK
-EXPOSED MIDRIF
-TRANSPARENT
MATERIAL



Alyssa Goldberg
Reporter

Back in April of 2015, a Michigan teen was sent home from her prom when school officials declared her dress to be a violation of the dress code. Her shoulders were covered, and despite the dress’s long length, it was deemed to be inappropriate due to its open back. Prom is an event many students anticipate for years in advance, and this young woman’s night was ruined by objectification and a sexist dress code.

To some extent, regulations are required to ensure that the event remains classy, but most reasonable standards can go un-

spoken, as most teens can understand what to wear at what times. What one wears represents who they are, and when students are exiting high school, they want to put out their true selves to be remembered in that way. By enforcing a dress code which inevitably focuses more on girls’ attire than boys, students’ ability to express themselves and their style is limited. If a girl can feel comfortable in what she wears, no one should stand in the way of that. “Schools creating a dress code for prom is not right. To dictate what style is suitable for specific body types is not okay, it’s body shaming. In many cases the dress code only affects girls of certain sizes,” said Sam

Hamilton (’18), the president of Westhill’s Feminist Club. With today’s unrealistic beauty standards, it is much harder to feel confident and comfortable in one’s body.

Alexus Miller-Wigfall, a student at Sci Tech campus of Harrisburg High School in Pennsylvania worked with her mother to design her perfect prom dress, which ended up being a red lace gown that was quite modest. Aware of the schools dress codes, Alexis’ mother decided against a leg slit and added sleeves to the dress design. Alexis was sentenced to suspension when a school administrator decided her very modest dress was “too

revealing,” but she believes it was due to her being plus sized. According to Alexis, the assistant principal claimed, “You have more boobs than the other girls. The other girls have less to show.” Being subjected in this way can be very detrimental to someone’s self esteem, and the schools should be embracing self-empowerment instead of targeting it. “Dress coding is body shaming. There is no sugar coating it. It is the most pure form of telling someone that their body is unacceptable to be seen. Nobody should be told that on prom night when it is their chance to feel beautiful,” said Ray Deutsch (’18).

Additionally, there are vari-

ous teachers who can weigh in on this debate. “It is important to provide standards for what is appropriate for a function that is an extension of a school activity. We have dress codes in place to help uphold a standard for our community and its expectations,” said Ms. Miraballes. Though she does argue some form of dress code is necessary, there are limits to what the school can and cannot permit.

Ultimately, the school does not hold the authority to completely dictate what students can and cannot wear at prom, as it limits expression and imposes on the excitement and happiness surrounding the night of many teens.

Graphic designed by **Sakshi Patel** / Creative Director.

Good will in Goodwill

Dong Zhi Guo
Editor-in-Chief

Thrifting has risen in popularity over the past years, emerging prominently in popular culture. From vintage finds to designer steals, the thrift culture appeals to a wide range of shoppers, contributing to its wide success.

The driving force behind the thrifting phenomenon is both the inexpensive vintage

price tag and the environmental consciousness of buying and donating secondhand clothing.

Fusing together the environmentalist movement and the vintage fad, thrifting is the second best way to decrease the detrimental effects of the garment industry on the earth's climate, the first being to simply consume less and purchase only necessary clothing. Although a percentage of donated clothing do end up in landfills, it is still

a better alternative.

Goodwill, an American nonprofit organization, is one of the leading companies in retail thrift stores operating in 17 countries around the globe. In addition to providing a wide range of secondhand clothing to thrifters, they are also pioneers in providing job training and employment for veterans and those facing employment challenges. In a statement about their company, Goodwill stated

"As a unique hybrid called a social enterprise, we defy traditional distinctions. We hold ourselves accountable to a triple bottom line of people, planet, and performance."

While many thrift to be environmentally conscious, others do so in order to find hidden gems in the sea of secondhand clothing. "I like creating new looks with old styles. It is a way of kind of keeping vintage trends alive by integrating the

thrifed pieces with modern outfits. By thrifting, I am preserving vintage clothes and in my own way, making them relevant again," said Isabella Fiore ('17).

Instead of giving more money to companies that contribute to the destructive ecosystem of "fast fashion," all shoppers should take a stab at the world of thrifting; they will find that not only are they saving a couple dollars, they are also saving the planet one garment at a time.

A call for better social spaces in Stamford

Ryan Murace
Media Manager

With around 6,000 teens ranging from ages 15-19 living in Stamford, it is surprising that there are not more places for such a large population to hangout. After over 30 hours of school every week, one of the most desired things for teens to do is relax and hangout with their friends on the weekend, but sadly their choices of where to go are very limited.

"Teens should have more places to hang out. It would make meeting up easier and help with Stamford's reputation of being 'boring,'" said Etan Gabay ('18). This is a common view about Stamford, which leads many teens to look for places outside of the city to hangout. The Stamford community is fortunate to live in close proximity to New York City, which can provide these op-

tions. From restaurants on the Upper West Side to the lively Midtown Manhattan, there are many places that attract teenagers from places all around the New York Metropolitan Area, including Stamford. However, getting to the city can be a task and is not cheap, which makes travelling to New York more of an occasional weekend trip, not a place that teenagers can enjoy going to everyday after school.

Of course no one has to leave Stamford to hangout. Stamford has many notable attractions for teenagers, including Chelsea Piers, The Stamford Mall, and a number of parks and beaches. However, it lacks a place where the primary purpose is for teens to come and socialize. There needs to be a place where teens can go to hangout as the main reason for going to that place. Stamford

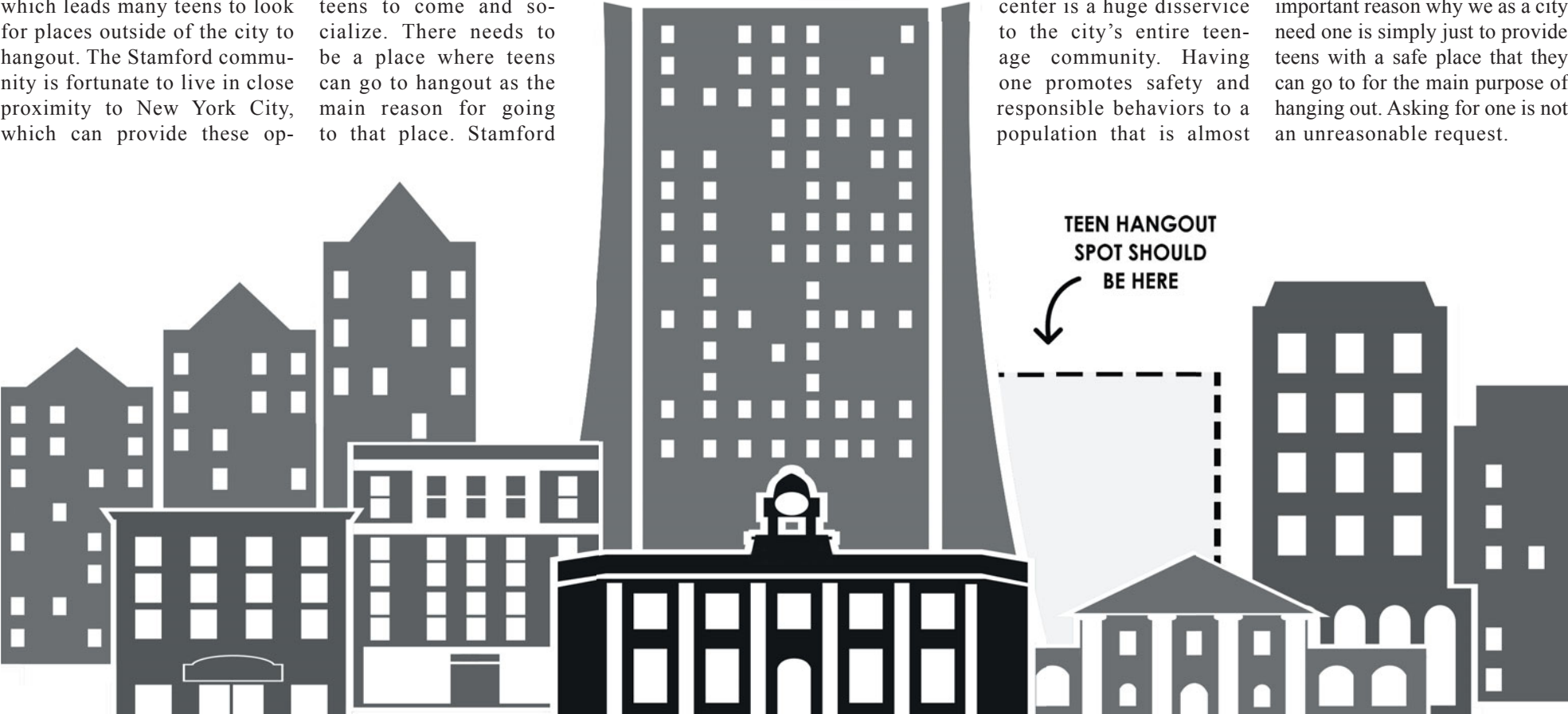
should look at neighboring cities that have teen centers like Greenwich's Arch Street and Darien's The Depot as an example. Both are popular hangout spots and are nearly perfect models of what Stamford should create for its teenagers.

A Stamford teen center would be an ideal solution to many of the problems teenagers face, but it is important that it is run the right way. Making it accessible is an important feature. "There are a lot of teens and young adults who are wandering aimlessly downtown and they should have more places to go so they do not have to wander," said physics teacher, Ms. Handy. "Those places should provide transport too because

a lot could go but cannot get there." Additionally, it should be open all, if not most, days of the week so that teens have a place they know they can go to hangout on a regular basis. Inside, there should be some games, organized activities, as well as a snack bar or a small restaurant among other aspects. Naturally, this is not an easy task for one person to handle as an owner, so who better to help run it than the teens it serves? Making it partially teen run would allow the teens to plan events that they want to see and even open possible jobs like running the snack bar, or DJ-ing dances they may have.

The fact that Stamford does not host to a local teen center is a huge disservice to the city's entire teenage community. Having one promotes safety and responsible behaviors to a population that is almost

entirely made of adolescents preparing to live alone at college in the near future. Both Arch Street and The Depot report on each of their websites, respectively, that they are alcohol and drug free, an important distinction from what teenagers can get access to in independent hangouts. "The teen center is a very nice place for kids to hang out in a drug-free environment. If that was in Stamford it would make the town even greater," said Greenwich High School student Reese Ochoa ('18). This is a positive addition to the community giving teens an easy place to eat, get a job, and plan events for their peers. Those are all great and features, but the most important reason why we as a city need one is simply just to provide teens with a safe place that they can go to for the main purpose of hanging out. Asking for one is not an unreasonable request.



Graphic designed by **Ryan Murace** / Media Manager.

Perks of community college

Bria Pettiford
Staff Writer

In today's generation it could be beneficial for a student to go to a community college. However, this choice comes with some downfalls as well.

There are many advantages to a student choosing to go to a community college. Financially this is a better choice. "Especially if [a student] have financial issues, they can attend [community college] until they can afford to go to a university," said Arianna Nguyen ('17). If one chooses to go to a community college in their home state, it is a great way to save money. In addition, if students are unsure of what to major in or what career to pursue, one can take core classes at a com-

munity college. That way, a student can get a feel for what they enjoy doing.

Students may also want to earn credits towards their universities. In high school, students may have been able to meet the minimum requirement to graduate; however, they still may not be fully prepared for the college classes.

Another advantage of going to a community college is being familiar with the community. In contrast to being at a university in a potentially foreign place, students at a community college will already be acclimated to the area. This creates more focus for getting a job or an internship, rather than trying to adjust to their new surroundings. In addition, students will have a great op-

portunity to make money while receiving an education for a lower cost.

On the other hand, a student who chooses to go beyond community college to further education may have more opportunities. People who have a degree from a higher ranked university tend to have increased chances at receiving a job compared to someone who went to a community college. Society is more likely to accept or hire people with degrees from top schools and there is often a stigma associated with community college.

Furthermore, choosing to go to university instead of community college allows students to greater expand their horizons. Students get to experience new surroundings and people. This creates a more well-rounded

person, who may develop better people skills by being in a new environment. It is beneficial to communicate with a diverse amount of people.

"In my opinion, students should consider a community college. Throughout high school maybe even earlier, most students, have a top university or dream school that they wish to attend. Not many people have dreams of settling for a community college. I feel that community colleges come with a negative stereotype. Some people only go to a community college because they cannot get into their dream school. However, community colleges are helpful. The tuition of a community college is significantly less compared to a 4-year university. Going to a university

usually requires you to be a full time student, while going to a community college you have the opportunity to work also," said Aja Mullins ('17).

There are many students who have attended Westhill High School that have graduated to begin their college education at a community college. Many students attend Norwalk Community College or the UCONN Stamford branch. Just because you start off at a community college does not mean they cannot move on to a university if they choose.

Whether a student attends a university or a community college, they still are receiving a college education. Students will still be able to receive a degree and be successful in their career.

The fill-in on gap years

Daniela Paredes
Staff Writer

With competitiveness and financial demands soaring through college and household roofs, it is not surprising that taking a gap year is a growing trend amongst recently graduated high school students across the nation – it is even becoming a viable option for many college students and even college graduates. According to the American Gap Association, gap year practices are growing by the year in a "substantive" manner, and will continue to do so in upcoming years.

Many reasons lay behind the increase in gap year tendencies, the most dominant being lack of financial resources, college preparation, and career decisiveness. Furthermore, college selectivity has also begun to weigh in on the problem; most Ivy League colleges continue to decrease their acceptance rates every year, and other highly ranked colleges are not falling too far behind. "I know someone who took a gap year because they did not get into their top choice [college]. They wanted to use the time to their advantage in hopes of doing better the following year," said Ray Deutsch ('18).

Other students also choose to take the gap year in a quest for redemption of poor performance in high school, or in order to perform volunteer and missionary service.

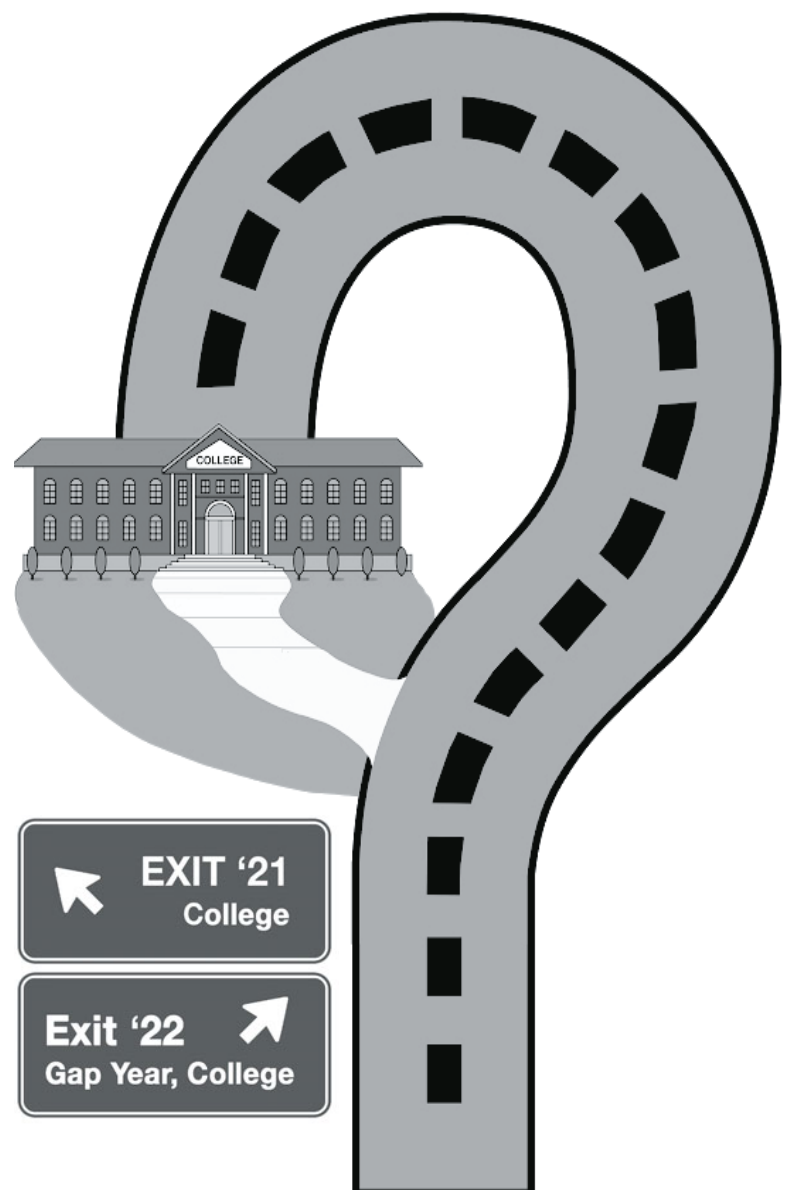
However, it is also important for students to consider the drawbacks of a gap year. While many students do it in order to work for a few months and earn some extra money for their collegiate endeavors, others decide to travel the world or get involved in recreational activities. This may not always be a wise investment if it will eventually take on a greater financial toll than a year of college tuition itself. Skills such as essay writing may suffer, and other factors could make "the transition back to school difficult," according to an article on *students.org*.

Predictions for the future also show an increase in the likeliness of gap years amongst generations to come. An article on *CNBC* released in March 2017, shows alarming statistics on what the future holds for affordable college costs, especially at private institutions, "without financial aid, the sticker price of a four-year college degree for children born today could reach half a million dollars at private schools, and a quarter million at public ones."

Ultimately, a student's decision on whether to take the gap year or not should be based on their final conclusions surrounding the benefits and drawbacks, as well as their own personal outlook on taking a year off of college. "I am starting college a little late because I am working on finding scholarships, and since I won a few already I am holding on to the money so I can spend it on the university I really want to go to," said Andrea Vega ('17) who has decided to take a semester off of college.

Vega has clearly considered other major aspects in her decision, which ultimately provides clear benefits in opting for a few months off. "I also got an internship over the summer that is related to the career that I want to go into, so I think having some experience before being in college is smart, and it will make things more clear in regards to the career and the path I want to take," said Vega.

Parents, friends, and school faculty can often persuade or dissuade students from it, but it should be a personal decision in which the student contemplates the benefits and the downsides, and which of the two outweighs the other.



Graphic designed by **Ryan Murace** / Media Manager.

Fighting for Planned Parenthood

I support Planned Parenthood because it is a vital part of the health community in the United States. While many people automatically consider abortions when they discuss the organization, abortions are only three percent of the work Planned Parenthood does in the U.S. Many people go to Planned Parenthood to seek birth control, sexually transmitted disease or infection screenings and treatments, and a number of other reproductive health services.

The most important service that Planned Parenthood provides is family planning. This service allows couples and single women to choose when and how they have children, thus enabling society to move forward. Women are allowed to further pursue careers, children are born into more stable and loving households, and teenagers and

mothers unable to care for their children are less likely to have children at all. It has been proven that a larger access to birth control and family planning services results in fewer abortions since women are able to control whether or not they get pregnant in the first place. In turn, this supports the concept that Planned Parenthood is not all about abortions and actually works to lessen its occurrence.

Planned Parenthood is drawn into the political spectrum since it is a government funded health service. In fact, without its federal and state funding, it is unlikely that Planned Parenthood would be as helpful an organization as it is today. The issue arises when legislators identify Planned Parenthood as purely an abortion provider. Conservative legislators have become determined to defund Planned

Parenthood in order to “protect the lives of unborn children.”

Today, Planned Parenthood supporters are more concerned than ever for their security to provide its services. The Trump administration has issued an executive order to pull federal funds from any abroad health service that even discusses abortion as a service. Trump has also issued an order to repeal Obama’s provisions requiring states to provide Planned Parenthood and other abortion providers with federal funds allotted for family planning across the country. Some states now having a way to block funding from Planned Parenthood, the looming action of defunding the organization entirely is closer than ever.

The most important fact to realize in the Planned Parenthood conversation is that pulling federal

funding will not stop American women from accessing its services. Women who have the money for it will still be able to get abortions and birth control services from their doctors, but poorer citizens will not have access to family planning and safe sex services. This creates a further inequality among socioeconomic classes rather than eliminating abortion to protect fetuses.

Furthermore, Planned Parenthood’s extensive work to educate young people on how to safely be sexually active will deteriorate. Increased amounts of sex education not only protects young Americans from infection and disease, but it decreases the amount of teen pregnancies. This gives millions of young men and women a better chance at graduating and leading successful careers.

Finally, women have practiced and received underground abortions before. It was unsafe and killed many of its users, but an illegal abortion circuit will be created again if necessary. Defunding Planned Parenthood will not stop abortions; it only will stop safe abortions.

Supporting Planned Parenthood is a step towards greater equality for women as well as a healthier and more educated population. It is simply human decency and logic that we extend all health services to all classes of Americans, making the funding Planned Parenthood a discussion of equality and kindness rather than a political, religious, or theological debate.

—Sophie Ciokajlo ('18)



Graphic designed by Dong Zhi Guo / Editor-in-Chief.

New Supreme Court Justice confirmed

On April 7, Neil Gorsuch was confirmed by the U.S. Senate to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court for while now. The Supreme Court is supposed to have nine Justices serving. Once appointed, Justices serve for life until they resign or die. A Supreme Court Justice appointment has been waiting to be decided since a spot has opened after the sudden death of Justice Antonin Scalia in February 2016.

Since Justice Scalia’s death occurred under Obama’s presidency, Democrats expected that he would nominate a new judge. However, the Republican U.S. Senate majority reasoned that because Obama was serving his last year and the 2017 Presidential Election was under way, that the appointment of a new Justice should wait until the next president was elected. This decision was highly contested. Republicans refused to hold hearings for Obama’s nominee, an action that takes no precedent. With

President Trump’s election to office, Republicans felt that it had come the time to nominate a new justice. Democrats pushed back against this decision.

Of course it is reasonable for Democrats to push back against Republican nominees. After all, Republicans held off on simple hearings for Obama’s nominees for almost ten months. The Democratic Senate minority allowed for Gorsuch’s hearings in a way that Republicans did not extend for Obama’s nominations. To make matters worse, Republicans utilized the “nuclear option” to get their way; the Senate actually changed the rules of the game in order for them to win. Traditionally, the Senate would need to accumulate 60 votes to break a filibuster, but now only 51 votes are required. This allowed for Republicans to overrule the Democrats efforts to stop the confirmation.

Many people have argued that it is hypocritical of Democrats

to block a nomination after they were upset when the Republicans blocked Obama’s nomination for a Justice. However, I would argue that Democrats were the first to be provoked. And while it is not necessarily the most mature way to approach an issue, Democrats feel that Republicans deserve a taste of their own medicine.

All this fighting and political warfare has taken us further and further away from the important question: who is going to fill the ninth spot on the Supreme Court? This question makes us wonder why everyone is so against Gorsuch. Is it that he is not smart enough? Not experienced enough? Well, no one can argue that Gorsuch is not smart. He has graduated from Oxford, Harvard, and Columbia. Nobody can say he does not have enough experience. He clerked for two Supreme Court Justices and worked for the U.S. Department of Justice.

However, one reason people are against his nomination is over the concern that his conservative ideology will impact his judging and make the Supreme Court a politicized branch of government. Gorsuch has an originalist method of interpreting the U.S. Constitution, meaning that he reads the Constitution with the intentions of the Framers in mind; there are seven Framers who recognized as the Founding Fathers of America and helped create the Constitution: John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and George Washington. As a result of this mind-set, Gorsuch would be more likely to argue against rulings like legalizing same sex marriage or abortion, which are both considered as more liberal issues.

“I think that it is hard to argue with his background and experience, and hopefully he will bring that experience to the bench,” said Leah

Taylor ('17). As a liberal individual myself, it is easy to understand why Democrats are very against Gorsuch’s opinions. But, just because I disagree with Gorsuch’s opinions does not mean that he would not make a fair judge. I may have a few doubts on whether or not he will be able to keep his values out of his rulings, but to keep any opinion out of every ruling is too much to ask from any Justice. After all, Justices were raised a certain way and have their own beliefs just like any of us.

At the end of the day, this battle is nothing personal towards Gorsuch. Both Democrats and Republicans are attempting to make the Supreme Court a place where politics do not overlap with rulings. However, both parties have failed in this attempt, considering that the nomination and confirmation may be the most controversial in American history thus far.

—Melanie Gorski ('17)

¿Qué beneficio tienen los exámenes AP y SAT?

Daniela Paredes
Escritora del Personal

Westhill es considerado como uno de las mejores escuelas preparatorias en cuanto a la variedad de cursos AP que ofrece. Las clases que están bajo el programa AP se refieren a que la dificultad del material y la velocidad de la clase pertenecen a un nivel avanzado, similar a un nivel universitario.

El número de cursos AP que son ofrecidos en Westhill ha crecido de manera impresionante en los últimos años, y cada vez más y más estudiantes toman la decisión de registrarse para estas clases. Tomar un curso AP es equivalente con afrontar el gran desafío que cada uno de estos cursos conlleva.

Sin embargo, la situación suele diferir para estudiantes ELL y ESL por una variedad de

razones: no siempre existen las opciones suficientes y adecuadas para ellos. El curso que es tomado con más frecuencia entre ambos grupos de acuerdo a varios profesores del Departamento de Lenguaje Mundial – es Español AP, el único curso de lenguaje a nivel universitario que se ofrece en la escuela, el cual es enseñado por el profesor Cabanillas.

En un artículo para el National Writing Project, la profesora Jennifer Pust recomienda que para aquellos alumnos que son English Language Learners (ELL), los maestros deben de estar preparados para instruirlos y ayudarlos a sobresalir en los cursos tan demandantes que son las clases AP.

Enfatizó que los profesores deben de ser “concretos y específicos” pero simultáneamente deben de “celebrar la duda y la confusión”. “Sé que muchos de

nuestros estudiantes ELL y ESL eventualmente toman Español AP,” dice la señora Herz, quien es la encargada del Departamento de Lenguaje Mundial y ESL en Westhill.

La profesora Michelle Dunbar dice que también es común ver a estudiantes ELL que toman otras clases de nivel AP – como son las de inglés. Westhill ofrece cursos AP de inglés tanto para estudiantes de los grados 11 como del 12, las cuales son muy populares y frecuentemente de las más pobladas en cuanto a cantidad de alumnos.

La profesora Dunbar también cree que las enseñanzas que ofrecen las clases ELL son cruciales para los alumnos si quieren encaminarse hacia la toma eventual de cursos AP. En otras palabras, los maestros del programa bilingüe cargan la responsabi-

dad de preaparar a los estudiantes para que eventualmente puedan tener las destrezas que exigen las clases AP.

En cuanto a los exámenes SATs, suele ser un caso similar – pero la diferencia es que los SATs son prácticamente obligatorios, y aunque hay estudiantes que por diversidad de circunstancias no los toman, no tenerlos en su transcripción puede afectarles en el momento de aplicar a universidades. Los estudiantes ELL y ESL tienen la opción de tomar los SATs en formatos que les benefician – sin embargo – no deja de ser de suma importancia que los estudiantes dediquen tiempo a estudiar, y se sugiere frecuentemente que busquen apoyo con tutores o clases de preparación para el examen.

El examen SAT ha cambiado mucho en los últimos años, tanto

como en su estructura como en los tópicos que son probados. Las matemáticas ahora son probadas hasta el nivel de pre- cálculo, un nivel de matemáticas que es raramente alcanzado por estudiantes bilingües. Las desventajas no terminan en la sección de las matemáticas ya que la sección de comprensión y escritura en inglés requieren un amplio conocimiento del idioma.

Hoy en día, las universidades y otras instituciones de educación postsecundaria han alcanzado niveles nunca antes vistos en cuanto a exigencias académicas y requerimientos, por lo que es de esencia que los estudiantes (especialmente aquellos que se aproximan al grado 11 o 12) sean dedicados, estudiosos e involucrados en todo tipo de actividades posibles sin importar si son pertenecientes a clases ESL, ELL o no.

Las protestas contra el gobierno de Venezuela

Guilmar Valle
Escritora del Personal

Los mercados en Venezuela están muy vacíos, y hay una gran falta de energía tan severa que las oficinas del gobierno solo están abiertas dos días por semana. La economía de Venezuela está en ruinas, la inflación está muy severa, y se sigue empeorando las cosas.

Como paso todo esto? Unas de las mayores razones es porque el precio del petróleo haya bajado muchísimo. El petróleo es el exporte mayor de Venezuela. Como Venezuela depende tanto en el petróleo, tiene mucho menos dinero para poder pagar sus deudas externas, y como resultado, el presidente Nicolás Maduro tuvo que

cortar las importaciones para no defecar en sus deudas. Para tratar de recuperar las cosas, el gobierno subió el salario, y imprimió más bolívares (la moneda de Venezuela). Este fue un desastre, como resultado, la tasa de inflación creció exponencialmente, hasta el 1,500%.

Para empeorar las cosas, el precio de los productos externos han crecido en precio. Para ayudar con esto, el gobierno abrió tiendas revisadas por el estado. En estas tiendas, la comida y petróleo se vende por mucho menos de lo que en realidad valen. Como consecuencia, se crearon líneas gigantes por las mercancías, que rápidamente se acabaron. Algunas personas se están aprovechando de estas tiendas, ellos compran de estas

tiendas baratas, y la vuelven a vender a un precio más alto, en tiendas llamadas bachaqueros. Están llamadas bachaqueros por las hormigas grandes y violentos que cortan hoja y la llevan a su colonia. Cuando Kevin Alvarado (año 10) escuchó sobre la situación, dijo “Me siento muy triste, por todo lo que está pasando allá, es de mucha desolación y tristeza de saber que no hay solidaridad por parte del gobierno, y de como esta de complicada la situación en Venezuela.”

Por supuesto, la gente no está muy contento con estas condiciones, la gente han derramado entre las calles protestando las condiciones, con las más reciente en el 20 de abril. Esta protesta estaba supuesto ser la más grande de to-

das. Tristemente, 3 fallecieron en las protesta, subiendo el número de muertos en las protestas a 29. Naomi Julca (año 11) cuando preguntado por una opinión sobre las muertes en las protestas dijo “Lo que siento por todas las personas que murieron en las protestas es que es muy cruel y está creando un problema más grande.

La violencia no debe ser la respuesta, especialmente teniendo a alguien para luchar en lo que creen. El gobierno debe dar a la gente una oportunidad de hablar en vez de simplemente disparar, pensando que van a detener la protesta”. La gente está protestando en la contra del gobierno, cual ellos piensan que no está haciendo suficiente para mejorar la situación. Las metas de

la gente protestando varía, desde elecciones libres, hasta que se renuncia el presidente.

Es seguro que las protestas van a seguir, pero como podremos ver algún remedio? Puede ser que la remedia es un nuevo gobierno, y que minimice la dependencia en el petróleo. También que acepte la ayuda externa para aliviar la crisis económica de inmediato. Juan Sanchez (año 12) cuando preguntado sobre qué puede ser el gobierno para ayudar “no se, la situación se mira muy difícil, y no puedo ver una situación en la cual todas las personas involucradas se quedan felices”. Nuestros pensamientos están con todos afectados por la situación en Venezuela, y esperemos que todo se resuelva rápidamente.



Fotos Cortesia de commons.wikimedia.org.

Educación más allá de la preparatoria

Joseline Garrido Valenzuela



The Westword: A qué universidad vas a ir?

JGV: Norwalk Community College

TW: Que carrera quieres estudiar?

JGV: Quiero ser una azafata

TW:Cuál fue tu dificultad para ingresar a la universidad?

JGV: Me fue difícil aprender a hablar Inglés porque me sentía incómoda al hablarlo.

Otra dificultad fue que la mayoría de las clases que tenía eran en Inglés.

TW: Vas a ser la primera en tu familia en ir a la universidad?

JGV: Si, mis padres no tuvieron la oportunidad de asistir a la universidad porque no tuvieron los recursos económicos necesarios para inscribirse. Por lo tanto, yo seré la primera en ir a la universidad.

The Westword: A qué universidad vas a ir?

MG: Norwalk Community College

TW: Que carrera quieres estudiar?

MG: Quiero estudiar psicología, el comportamiento de la humanidad es un tema que siempre ha interesado y espero crecer en esa carrera.

TW:Cuál fue tu dificultad para ingresar a la universidad?

MG: Aprender Inglés fue fácil, ya que en mi familia todos hablan el idioma. Al principio fue difícil ya que me daba pena hablarlo. Otra dificultad que tuve al ingresar a la universidad fue el costo, el colegio puede tener muchos gustos. Espero que todo salga bien.

TW: Vas a ser la primera en tu familia en ir a la universidad?

MG: Soy la primera en mi familia en ir al colegio y espero lograrlo y hacer que mi familia se sienta muy orgullosa.

Maria Gudiel



Andrea Vega

Reportera

El conocimiento y los estudios son la herramienta más poderosa que el ser humano puede poseer.

En la escuela secundaria "Westhill High School", he tenido la oportunidad de entrevistar a 5 estudiantes del doceavo grado que estudiaron ELL (Aprendices del lenguaje Inglés). Cada uno de estos estudiantes me dieron a conocer sus planes para el futuro. Un futuro que para muchos hispanos es difícil de obtener, pero estos estudiantes están rompiendo el estereotipo y cumpliendo el sueño Americano. Algo, que sus generaciones antes no pudieron cumplir.

Esta entrevista, demuestra que los estudiantes tienen un propósito en común: Tener un mejor futuro.

Fotos de Andrea Vega.

The Westword: A qué universidad vas a ir?

BMS: Norwalk Community College

TW: Que carrera quieres estudiar?

BMS: Ingeniería de Sistemas

TW:Cuál fue tu dificultad para ingresar a la universidad?

BMS: Mi dificultad fue hablar en Inglés, me da vergüenza a veces, pero no es muy difícil aprenderlo.

TW: Vas a ser la primera en tu familia en ir a la universidad?

BMS: Si seré el primero de mi familia en ir a la universidad. Me parece importante tener una carrera y hacer con esfuerzo lo que sueño para darle una buena vida a mis padres.

Braian M. Sanchez



Jenny Lineth Galicia Hernandez



The Westword: A qué universidad vas a ir?

JLGH: Norwalk Community College

TW: Que carrera quieres estudiar?

JLGH: Enfermería

TW:Cuál fue tu dificultad para ingresar a la universidad?

JLGH: Aprender Inglés fue muy difícil porque lo tienes que aprender de forma ligera y también si te lo explicaran en Español y en Inglés lo que significa sería más fácil para aprender, no solo para mí pero también para las demás personas.

TW: Vas a ser la primera en tu familia en ir a la universidad?

JLGH: Soy la primera persona en mi familia que va a ir a la universidad. Estoy emocionada!

The Westword: A qué universidad vas a ir?

KGCP: Norwalk Community College

TW: Que carrera quieres estudiar?

KGCP: Ciencia Ingeniería

TW:Cuál fue tu dificultad para ingresar a la universidad?

KGCP: Aprender Inglés es un reto más en mi vida ya que cada día se aprende algo nuevo y yo todavía aprendo de ello.

TW: Vas a ser la primera en tu familia en ir a la universidad?

KGCP: No soy la primera en ingresar a la universidad pero sé que mis padres están felices porque día a día voy creciendo.

Katheryn Guadalupe Chafila Pilco



14 | SPECIAL REPORT: EVALUATING

A look into the technology

Here is a brief look into the technology and its applications in various professions, such as the retail world and archaeology.

James Hicks
Head Illustrator

3D printing, or additive manufacturing, sometimes abbreviated as AM, is a method of manufacturing that allows a user to construct nearly any shape or piece of geometry from a 3D model or an Additive Manufacturing File (AMF). The 3D printer “prints” incredibly thin layers of material, typically plastic or metal, which slowly build up the desired structure.

This process can take hours to complete, depending on the size of the object being printed. The unique nature of the printing process allows for the

creation of incredibly intricate objects that would be otherwise impossible to create by conventional means, such as using molds. The models used to print objects come from a variety of sources. Software can be used to painstakingly “sculpt” the item out of a sort of digital clay, or use a more geometric style to allow for smooth edges and unbeatable precision. Conversely, a 3D scanner can be used to scan an object, translating the shape into a digital file that can then be replicated through printing.

3D printing currently has one unparalleled use in the manufacturing world: prototyping. Due to the relative

speed of printing compared to traditional manufacturing, prototypes can be manufactured “on the fly,” rather than having to painstakingly construct molds for new pieces. Once the AMF file has been created, it is then able to be edited to fix issues found in the prototype, allowing for the creation of multiple iterations of an item in a fraction of the time it would have taken to create the initial object.

In the retail world, the ability to rapidly prototype items has led to companies being able to make affordable, custom items for customers. For example, Nike is using 3D

printing to prototype and create custom shoes for athletes. To a lesser extent, some are attempting to meld additive manufacturing and the culinary world, shaping chocolates and many other foods.

Another useful application found for 3D application is in the replication of historical items. By using 3D scanning, archaeologists are able to create incredibly detailed replicas of items such as statues and bones. This files can also be mass produced, allowing more historians and archaeologists to interact with the items. Jonathan Russo ('17), an avid prop and replica maker, uses 3D printing “nearly daily.” In

his opinion, the main downsides for the average Joe are the startup cost and learning curve associated with creating unique models. “It takes practice, as with anything, but you eventually get the hang of it. For me, the harder part was sanding, painting, and touching up the models after they have been printed,” said Russo. “On the other hand, you are able to fabricate three dimensional items in a fraction of the time it would take by conventional means.”

As 3D printing becomes more affordable and accessible, more applications for it are being found in the artistic, culinary, industrial, and bio-

The Lulzbot Taz 6 is a high-end consumer 3D printer. It has features like an auto-leveling, heated print-bed, and can work with many materials.



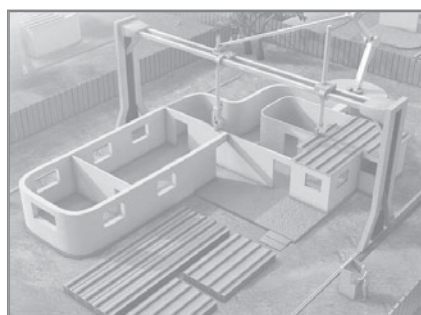
Cost: **\$2,500.00**
WiFi Printing: **No**
Build Volume: **1185.8 in³**
Print Quality: **10/10**

“The LulzBot TAZ 6 is, in my opinion, the most complete 3D printer currently on the market.”

-Brent Hale, 3DForged.com



A working 3D-printed saxophone.



A 3D-printer making a house.



3D-printed figures of people.



3D-printed sneaker.

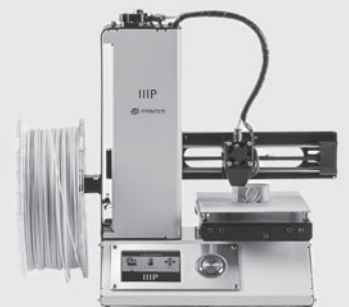


A 3D-printed prosthetic hand.



A 3D-printed foot for a baby duck.

The Monoprice Maker Select Mini is a low-cost, high-performance printer. Almost no calibration is necessary, meaning this printer is “plug-and-play.”



Cost: **\$199.99**
WiFi Printing: **Yes**
Build Volume: **103.8 in³**
Print Quality: **7/10**

“This is an ideal choice for beginners looking for an easy way to learn the fundamentals of 3D printing.”

-Bulent Yusuf, all3dp.com

3D PRINTING

Utilization in the medical field

From creating prosthetic limbs to artificial organs, 3D printers have permanently transformed the medical industry.

Hannah Nekritz
Reporter

In the medical field, the applications of 3D printing technology are rapidly increasing. This technology has proved useful in areas such as tissue and organ fabrication, creation of customized prosthetics, implants, anatomical models, and assorted research applications. Medical applications of 3D printing have already entered the commercial field with companies such as Helisys, Ultimaker, and Organovo. However, the commercial influence of its medical applications represents only 11 million dollars out of a seven hundred million dollar industry. While this industry is currently small, it is expected to grow.

The earliest medical appli-

cation of 3D printing was the creation of dental implants and custom prosthetics. However, technology has significantly evolved since those early years. Recently, 3D printing has been used to produce bones, ears, windpipes, tissues, organs, and even blood cells.

Further research into the possibilities is still needed, but experimentation has successfully produced a heart valve and repaired cartilage. Thus, extensive studies have demonstrated that the manufacturing of tissue using 3D printing is possible. This technology has already helped countless individuals coping with medical conditions and threats.

Further potential uses include medical testing. Current experimentation is working to

create complete model human organs. This will improve the accuracy of drug and treatment testing. For instance, the creation of a model organ identical to that of a patient would enable doctors to test and find an appropriate treatment customized to the needs of the patient.

In the field of prosthetics and implants, medical professionals often struggle to create the specific implant or prosthetic appropriate to an injury. However 3D printing has allowed greater successes in designing prosthetics. A common example of this is hearing aids. Approximately 99 percent of hearing aids in use today that fit into the ear are customized using this technology, as ear canals are seldom identical in shape. Invis-

align braces also demonstrate the benefits of this form of manufacturing. In fields like prosthetics, 3D printing allows a degree of customization that enables greater precision in technology, as well as personalized treatments for each patient.

Various forms of organ failure are a serious medical threat. Doctors have increasingly turned to organ transplants as a solution. However, shortages of organ donors and organs available for transplant cause thousands to die while waiting to receive an organ. "In 2009, 154,324 patients in the U.S. were waiting for an organ. Only 27,996 of them received an organ transplant, and 8,863 died while on the waiting list," according to National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI).

Meanwhile, the surgery itself is extremely expensive. 3D printing provides a potential solution to these complications. Instead of relying on donors, a patient's own cells could be used to manufacture the organ that they need, without the concern of finding an organ with compatible tissue. While this technology is not fully developed, expert researchers are consistently expanding our knowledge and capabilities.

Even though research is ongoing, the progress already achieved is revolutionary. The ability to manufacture heart and blood vessels, heart valves, synthetic skin, and even bone has been instrumental in saving countless lives. As this technology continues to develop; the full impact remains unknown.

3D tech in Stamford

3D printers can be found all around Stamford. In fact, the Ferguson Library offers classes to young users of 3D printers.

Molly Cannon
Reporter

The Ferguson Library of Stamford offers a wide variety of classes in 3D printing to members of every age and experience level. On May 11, 2016, the library hosted a children's event, for ages 10 to 12, where participants had the opportunity to meet and talk with 3D printers and then were invited to create their own 3D printing creations. They also learned about engineering software and how it is used to create real 3D items.

This event and many others are part of the Youth Maker-space program and the MATCH Room, which "provides comprehensive programming for kids and teens" in various areas, such as but not limited to, technology, audio visual, wood-working, computer programming, electronics, and handi-

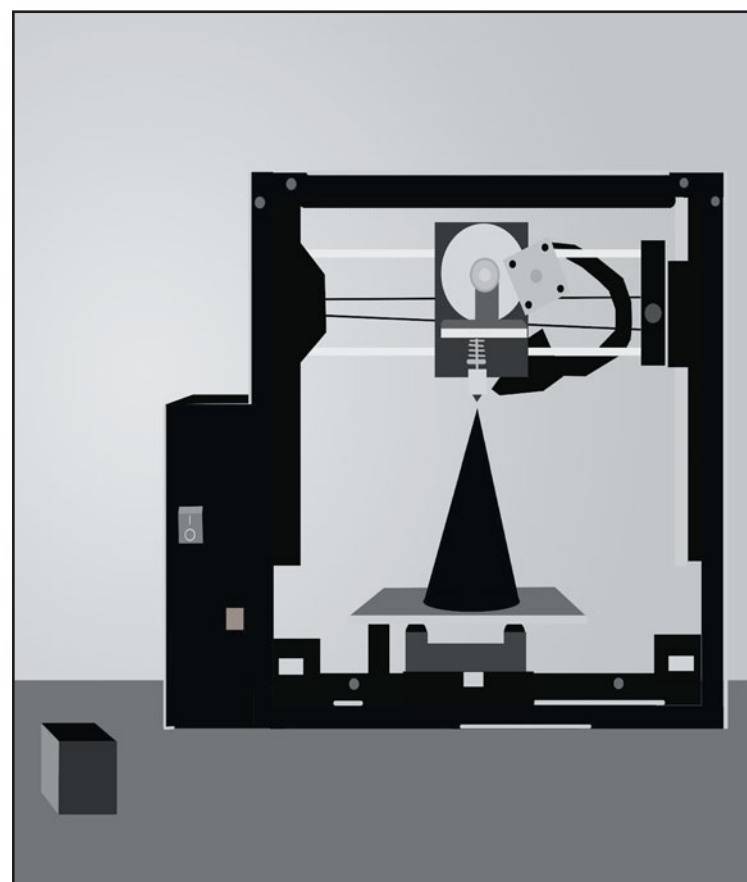
crafts. Some of the 3D printing tools that the library has available for their programs use include Makerbot 5th Replicator 3D printer, Makerbot Mini 3D Printer, 3Doodler, Poly clay, sculpting tools, and a craft oven. According to the Ferguson Library website, "The goal of the MATCH Room is to provide young users with the tools, technology, and opportunity to learn 21st century skills by giving kids a place to learn, imagine, tinker, make, and share." By offering classes and services to children and adults of every age and skill level, the Ferguson Library continues to hold classes for the Stamford community.

At the University of Connecticut's (UConn) 3D Printing Studio, interesting ideas are becoming reality. The university recently opened up their first publicly accessible printing studio which is staffed and run by UConn 3D Printing Club.

The students that run the studio are there to assist and help students with their designs. The studio also has a gallery that displays an array of the works that are printed in the studio. The studio also has cameras set up so students can watch their creation print. The rate to print their items are very low, about 10 cents per gram.

After the creation has completed printing, students will get a notification to pick it up at the lab in the Homer Babbidge Library.

As of the spring of 2016, they have two machines in the studio that are available for student use, the Two Rostock Max v2 and Ultimaker 2. To start their design process, students must design their creation using 3D modeling software and then proceed to email it to the studio, where it then has to go through a few phases before it will be able to be printed.



Graphic designed by **Sakshi Patel** / Creative Director.

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THE BIRDS
& THE
BEEES

Types of contraceptives

Dental Dams

Dental Dams are a way to protect from Sexually Transmitted Diseases during female oral sex. “A dental dam is simply a rectangular piece of latex that is used to cover the genitals so there is no direct mouth-to-genital or mouth-to-anus contact,” said Dr. Madeleine Castellanos. It protects against STDs such as gonorrhea, chlamydia, herpes, HPV, hepatitis A and B, and syphilis that can be transmitted orally.

Birth Control Pills

Birth control pills are the most common female contraceptive. One of the reasons it is so common is because of its effectiveness and multitude of uses. A lot of young women first start “the pill” not because they are sexually active, but because it helps control their acne and regulate their periods. “Birth control allows you freedom to do whatever you please. We have a right to take it and there is no reason not to,” said Samantha Ripegno (’17). The pill contains hormones, progesterin and estrogen, which are both found naturally in females. Certain combinations of these hormones stop the woman from ovulating, or releasing an egg. If there is no egg for sperm to fertilize, there will be no baby. The pill’s hormones also thicken the mucus on the cervix. Thicker cervical mucus makes it hard for the sperm to swim to an egg.

The Implant

Another hormonal form of female birth control is called the implant. It’s a tiny rod, about the size of a matchstick, implanted in the skin of the upper arm. It releases progesterin, which thickens the mucus on the cervix making it harder for sperm to get into the uterus. It also stops the eggs from leaving the ovaries. Once it is implanted, it stops pregnancy for up to four years. The implant can also decrease the severity of period symptoms and in most patients case, stop their period all together.

IUDs

An Intrauterine device (IUD) is a small piece of flexible plastic shaped like a T that is inserted in the uterus to prevent pregnancy. It implants itself into the lining of the uterus. This way, the fertilized egg cannot implant and grow. There are 5 different brands of IUDs that are FDA approved for use in the United States: ParaGard, Liletta, Mirena, Skyla, and Kyleena. These IUDs are divided into 2 types: copper IUDs, like ParaGard, and hormonal IUDs, like Liletta, Mirena, Skyla, and Kyleena. Copper IUDs last up to 12 years and the hormonal ones work for three to six years depending on the type.

Condoms

Condoms are the most popular and one of the only male contraceptives. It is made of either plastic or latex and protects against sexually transmitted diseases. It goes over the penis and stops pregnancy by catching all of the semen. Condoms are super easy to get from many different stores, community health centers, and online. There is no need to get a prescription or ID to buy them, and they are inexpensive or sometimes even free. Condoms are a small, discreet, and portable way to get big protection from pregnancy and STDs.

Briefs by **Amelia Daube** / Feature Editor.

The history of contraceptives

Guilmar Valle
Reporter

Contraceptives used to look very different from what most people are used to seeing on the shelves of local stores.

Today it is easy to learn where and how to get them. However, it has not always been this way. The first evidence of the existence of contraceptives is from a cave painting located in France dating back to 11000 BCE. The painting depicts the use of condoms, although it is very abstract and does not shed any light on what material they may have been made of. The first hard evidence of condoms dates back to the 1400s, specifically in Asia with the Glans condom. This condom only covered the head of the penis. It was made

out of materials such as animal intestines or oiled paper and was primarily used as birth control, but was also used against sexually transmitted diseases. Early European condoms were also made out of intestines and were designed to prevent syphilis. They covered the whole penis much like the ones sold today. Use was limited to the upper class due to high production cost and, in turn high sales prices, so most people could not afford them.

However, condoms never gained much popularity in Europe, as they were seen as immoral, with Catholic theologian Leonardus Lessius being the first documented religious figure to oppose the use of the condom. This all changed in the 1800s, when the first rubber condoms were introduced. They were much

cheaper to produce and became readily available to the working class and not just the upper class. Latex condoms began production in the 1920s and were regulated by the Food and Drug Administration by 1930. They were even distributed to soldiers on all war fronts by their respective governments.

Eventually people started to look for other ways to prevent pregnancies. In 1950 Margaret Sanger conducted the research necessary to create the first human birth control pill, and raised \$150,000 for the project. It was not until 1960, when the first oral contraceptive, Enovid, was approved by the FDA as contraception. “I understand why the birth control pill was not made earlier, because the medicine may not have been as good” said Emely Medina (’19). A common misconception about the

birth control pill is that it is only useful to prevent pregnancies. However, contrary to popular belief, the birth control pill also has a myriad of health benefits, such as the easing of menstrual cramps, decreased menstrual cramps, treatment for acne, and hormonal imbalances, to name a few. “The birth control pill is very important because it is very safe to use and it works well in preventing pregnancies,” said Maria Cruz (’19).

Condoms and birth control pills are not the only effective types of contraceptives out there. Intrauterine Devices, or IUDs are a long-acting, but reversible form of birth control. There are two types of IUDs, one that uses copper, and one that uses a synthetic hormone, levonorgestrel, a form of progesterin. Both IUDs work by

preventing sperm from fertilizing an egg, the difference being, the copper IUD works by releasing copper into the uterus, which works as a spermicide. While the hormone IUD releases progesterin into the uterus which thickens the cervical mucus so that sperm cannot reach the egg. IUDs were first conceptualized in the early 1900s and were tested throughout the century. It took until 1995 for copper and 2000 hormone IUDs for successful, safe IUDs to be introduced to the American market.

Contraceptives have come a long way. From having being made primarily from animal skin, and being expensive, to having one at your disposal with relative ease, and it is important to realize how far we have come in the field of contraceptives.

Sexual health

Theresa Persico
Staff Writer

In health class, students are taught about the importance of proper hygiene. Failure to maintain proper hygiene can result in infections.

A way to maintain proper hygiene for both sexes is by wearing clean undergarments. Both men and women should avoid wearing undergarments worn during physical activity that are sweaty after finishing exercise routines. By not changing out of sweaty underwear, even if the sweat has dried, it can make private parts vulnerable to infections from bacteria. In addition, both sexes should avoid wearing synthetic materials and wearing tight underwear to allow breathing room.

Another helpful tip is for to not hold in the urge to relieve oneself. Urinating helps clean out bacteria in the urinary tract. If urination is delayed, bacteria is allowed to grow.

While taking a bath, men should avoid washing their penis. If they are uncircumcised, they should only gently pull the foreskin back without causing discomfort until they see the head of the penis. Then, they should use lukewarm water to wash it. By not washing the head of their penis men can have a build up of smegma, or dead skin cells. Smegma can cause men to have infections.

While undergoing their menstrual cycle, women should change their tampons or sanitary pads every three to six hours, depending on

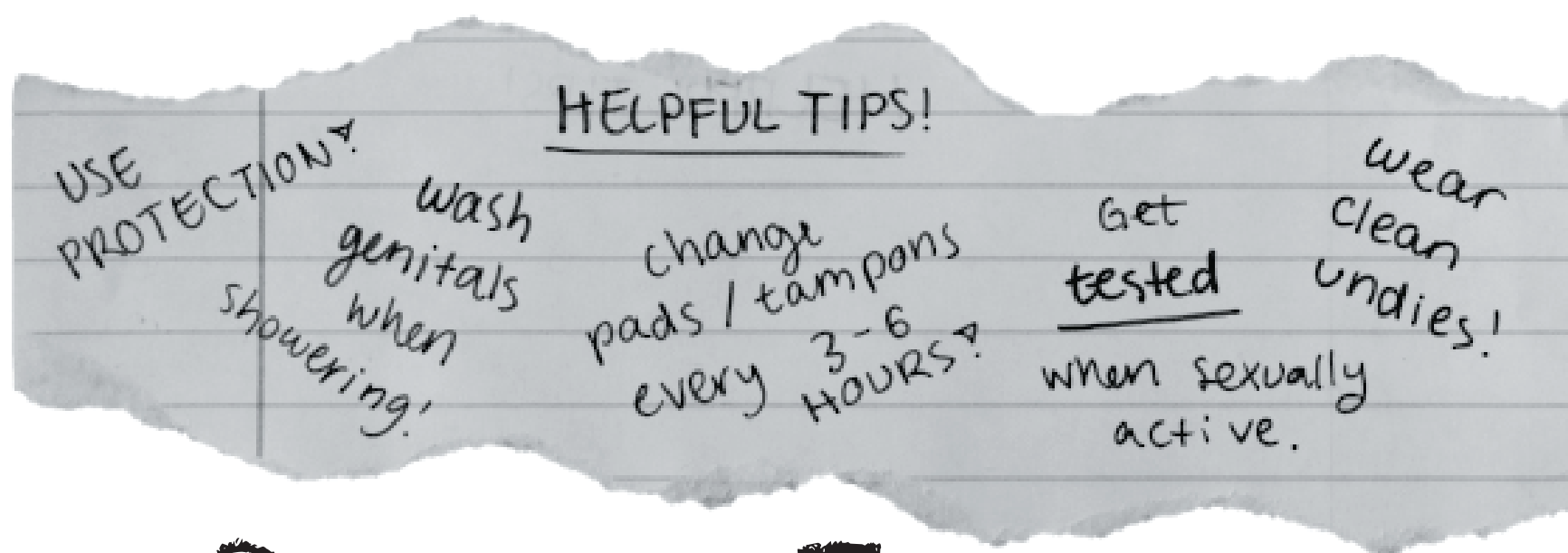
their menstrual flow. Leaving a stale tampon or sanitary pad for a long time encourages bacteria to grow, creates a bad odor, and causes infections. It is also important for women to clean their vaginas every day. Women should wash their vaginas mildly and gently with soap and warm water. However, do not use too much soap because this can be harmful. Regardless of these simple tasks, some people have poor hygiene, which results in infections. These types of infections are not treatable with over-the-counter medication, and are therefore known as bacterial STDs. They are only curable if one sees a healthcare provider, get tested and treated, follow through with the medication, avoid sexual contact until

they are cured, and make sure their sexual partner(s) gets tested and treatment as needed.

If someone has had sex and did not use a condom, female condom, dental dam, or barrier, they should talk to a healthcare professional about STD testing. To get an STD test, they can visit their local Planned Parenthood health center, other clinics, and private healthcare providers. There, they will ask them personal questions before being tested. This will help them determine if they need any tests and which one(s) they may need. The catch is that many infections do not cause any symptoms. Many people who have had STDs never knew about them. This can cause them to

unknowingly transmit infections without any symptoms.

Personal questions can include sexual practices, how many partners one has had, what method of contraception they use, whether they have symptoms and to describe them, when their last period was, whether they have had symptoms in the past, if they have ever had an STD, and more. Because the doctors are trying to help someone, it is important to be completely honest with them so that they can make accurate decisions about what test(s) may be needed. Once they figure out what test is right for the situation, they will conduct a physical exam, take blood samples, and take urine samples.



Pads vs. Tampons

Stefanie Ruiz
Staff Writer

One of the biggest debates regarding feminine hygiene is that of pads versus tampons: which is more comfortable? Which is more practical? Is there a difference? For some, alternative methods are better than both, but regardless of the method of menstrual protection that is chosen, it is important to weigh all of the options as well as clear up the myths that exist regarding both.

There are many advantages and drawbacks that exist for both pads and tampons, and which one to pick is largely based on personal preference and circumstance. When girls at Westhill were asked on which

they preferred, the majority said that tampons were the better option. They believe that they last longer and are much easier to be active and mobile in.

Tampons are one of the most common forms of menstrual management and are insertable, as opposed to sanitary pads. Pads are attached onto one's underwear with an adhesive surface. Many women prefer tampons because they offer more comfort and security, with less of a chance of leaking throughout the day, which is more suitable for a long school or work day. Tampons are a great option for those who play a sport or who might not have a bathroom available to them for extended periods of time, since tampons

can be used for more time.

Pads, on the other hand, are known for their simplicity. For most, it is less of a hassle to put on a pad and go about your day. They are attached onto underwear and may have "wings" that wrap around the bottom of the underwear and have a less invasive fit. It is also easier to track when it is time to change pads, which reduces the risk of a bacterial infection, a common fear that lingers around wearing tampons.

While using tampons, some women fear of their increased chance of getting Toxic Shock Syndrome (TSS), "a rare, life-threatening complication of certain types of bacterial infections," according to Mayo Clinic. Many stay away from

tampons because of this, however, the chances of contracting this disease is very rare. In fact, manufacturers have adjusted their design of tampons in order to further reduce the risk of disease, which had greatly decreased the prevalence of TSS.

A method of menstrual management that has been on the rise in popularity is the Diva Cup. The Diva Cup is a soft silicone menstrual cup that is insertable, similar to tampons, but can be worn up to 12 hours with guaranteed leak-free protection. Diva Cups are preferred by some because they "help to reduce the eco-footprint of feminine hygiene by providing reusable solutions," according to Diva Cup's website. The en-

vironmental website, Down to Earth, estimates that "432 million pads are disposed every month." This does not include tampons, making the Diva Cup a more sustainable option.

There are many aspects to consider when it comes to deciding what to use to manage menstrual periods. For some, the comfort and security of a tampon is better than the ease of a pad, while others might decide that a menstrual cup is better due to its environmentally-friendliness. No matter which feminine hygiene product one decides on, it is important to be informed on each option and to research the advantages and disadvantages of each different product on the market.

Breakdown of Sexually

HIV is a disease that breaks down the immune system. HIV causes people to easily become very sick with infections that much. HIV cannot be transmitted by casual contact like kissing, hugging, or sharing drinks. This disease is also the cause of the AIDS, which is the most advanced stage of HIV. Most HIV contractors do not have symptoms. A person will either quickly years before any arise. Symptoms for someone with HIV can include swollen glands in the throat, armpit, or groin; slight fever, s. Since AIDS is the most advanced stage of HIV, their symptoms are worse. The most common are thrush, recurring yeast infection, severe and frequent infections, and severe period of fatigue. To get tested for HIV/AIDS you can go to Planned Parenthood, th clinics. Unfortunately, there is no cure, but there are treatments for people living with it. If you have HIV/AIDS, you can take “cocktails.” This drug is designed to strengthen the immune system and to keep HIV from developing AIDS or to relieve AIDS e often very expensive, can cause serious side effects and may only work for a limited amount of time. The only way to avoid this stain from sex and sharing needles.

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection from the bacteria known as chlamydia trachomatis. Young people who are sexually chlamydia. You can get chlamydia by having vaginal, oral, and anal sex with an infected person. Unprotected sex; and childbirth are ad. Many people who have chlamydia do not develop symptoms, but they can still affect others through sexual contact. Symptoms ge from the vagina or penis. If the chlamydia infection is not treated, about 30 percent of cases spread within the pelvic organs (PID). This can ultimately cause permanent damage to the fallopian tubes in a woman and can lead to future infertility. This can gnancies and preterm labor. However, affected patients and patient’s sexual partners can easily be cured with antibiotic therapy. dose or a 7-day course. During your treatment you should abstain from sexual intercourse to avoid spreading the infection to oth- you should either abstain from sex or make sure your partner(s) is negative for chlamydia and use condoms every time you have can go to your local Planned Parenthood, local clinics, or private health care providers.

Gonorrhea

Gonorrhea is a microscopic, protozoan called trichomona, this infection affects more than eight million Americans every year. However, it is the ch is easily transmitted through vaginal intercourse, sharing sex toys, and mutual masturbation if fluids from one partner are passed n men and women can have Trich, men are more likely to be unaware of the infection because of their lack of symptoms. Women can ge and/or blood spotting discharge, itching in or around the vagina, swelling in the groin, or the need to urinate often. When men do arge from the urethra, and the urge to urinate often. To see if you have Trich your healthcare professional can do tests. To get tested imary care provider or go to a clinic. You will then be set up to have a pelvic exam so that they can sample your discharge. The pro- e using a microscope to make a diagnosis. To be treated for Trich you have to take prescription medicine. To avoid this infection you ct with certain fluids like, semen, vaginal discharge, and menstrual flow. Another alternative would be abstaining from intercourse.

Transmitted Diseases

Genital Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

HPV is the most common STD reported in the U.S. and contains more than 150 related viruses. It is usually spread by skin-to-skin c- sex. HPV is named for the warts (papillomas) that some HPV types can have. Since genital HPV infections are so common, nearly a get it at some point in their lives. However, most people who have HPV don’t know it. Luckily, most HPV infections have no harm cause genital warts while High risk types can cause cell changes that can sometimes lead to cervical cancer and certain other genit- for high-risk types of HPV for both women and men are not easily recognizable. Most people feel fine even when they have contr- Fortunately, most HPV infections go away within 8 to 13 months, yet some HPV infections remain dormant in the body for years. That is why it is almost impossible to trace an infection. HPV can go away naturally, but there is no treatment to cure HPV itse- available for abnormal cell changes in the cervix caused by HPV. The most common treatments are colposcopy, cryotherapy, and women from two types of HPV that are known to cause 70 percent of all cervical cancer cases. To get tested for HPV you can go local clinics, or private health care providers.

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is a serious liver infection caused by the hepatitis B virus, or HBV. Hepatitis B is super contagious and easily transmitted blood and urine. You can contract hepatitis B most commonly by having sex. Other ways include, sharing toothbrushes and razors getting stuck with a needle that has the hepatitis virus on it. However, hepatitis B cannot be spread through saliva, kissing, hugging, ing, or breast feeding. However, because the symptoms for hepatitis B usually do not show, and when they do the normal symptoms For example, the flu. When people do have symptoms it will usually show between 6 weeks to 6 months after you have contracted typically last for a couple of weeks they can stay for months. The most common types of symptoms are yellowing of the eyes, abdo- notice any hepatitis B symptoms, it is important to get tested because even though hepatitis B can go away, it may become chronic liver. Nonetheless, in often cases the condition clears up on its own. Chronic cases will receive medication and possibly a liver tra- hepatitis B get the vaccine and use contraceptives.

Molluscum Contagiosum

Molluscum Contagiosum is a viral skin infection that results in round, firm, painless bumps called mollusca. The small growths are pink, white, or skin-colored and may have an indented center. It is most commonly transmitted through nonsexual, close contact. it to be transmitted by sexual contact or an infected object. Symptoms usually appear two or three months after the infection, m- symptoms. The most common people to contract Molluscum Contagiosum are kids ages 1 to 12. However, it can also affects athlet- like wrestlers and people whose immune systems have been weakened from other illnesses. Most of the time the growths will go aw- occasions where they will not. In those cases a healthcare provider will have to remove the growths by chemicals, an electrical cur- medicine. However, if you leave the growths untreated it could take up to two years for them to fully go away. To prevent yoursel- giosum you should reduce your chances of contact with it. Thus, wearing condoms during sex, avoid sexual contact until they are bandages, and careful hand washing.

Sexual education at Westhill

Jennifer Carias
Staff Writer

Every student at Westhill high school is required to take a health class in order to graduate. A good sex education curriculum communicates and elaborates on the many aspects of sexual encounters and situations a teenager may have to face during high school and beyond, as well as ways to safely navigate these situations.

“We cover sexually transmitted diseases, birth control, abstinence, how to keep your reproductive system healthy, as well as birth control, and the emotional, physical, and social consciousness of teen sex,” said health teacher Mr. Bertone. Many agree that sexual education should be taught extensively, but the question is, does sex ed really cover everything a student needs to know?

“I do not think [the current sex ed curriculum covers everything] because they skip around [sex] and do not really elaborate,” said Fabrice Souffrant (’19). The common theme is that teachers tend to not

give enough information on sexual intercourse, leaving students in the dark. “It taught us the basics, but it never went into depth with the information. By not going into depth, there is a misconception about everything we need to know. This leads to teen pregnancies and a higher risk for STDs. If we would spend more time on the subject, it would benefit the youth,” said Valerie Neyra (’18).

Another student, Allie Colorado, brought up an entirely different yet important point. “Sex ed has taught only the basics of [heterosexual relationships], which leaves those who are attracted to the same gender clueless. It is unfair and to be honest, I agree with the idea that sex ed should also provide a unit on same-sex sexual activities so that they are not out of the knowledge loop,” said Allie Colorado (’18).

This goes to show that although the health teachers believe they are doing enough, some students would prefer it if they took more time to help them understand the concept instead of simply telling them the facts.

| | |
|---|--|
| Stamford Public Schools | |
| Health 1 | |
| Human Sexuality Section | |
| A) Reproduction | |
| B) Consequences | |
| C) Abstinence | |
| D) Condoms | |
| E) Awareness and Classification of STIs | |
| F) Intro to HIV/AIDS | |
| Health 2 | |
| Human Sexuality Section | |
| A) Healthy Relationships | |
| (dating, love, infatuation, sexual orientation) | |
| B) Review of Male and Female Reproduction | |
| C) Pregnancy and Childbirth | |
| D) Abstinence | |
| E) Birth Control | |
| F) STIs | |
| G) Advanced HIV/AIDS | |

Test your health knowldege

- 1) Which part of the female reproductive system produces eggs and hormones?

a) the cervix
b) the fallopian tubes
c) the uterus
d) the ovaries
- 2) The vas deferens.

a) makes Testosterone and generates sperm.
b) transports mature sperm to the urethra.
c) brings the sperm to maturity
d) carries urine from the bladder.
- 3) A women can't get pregnant while breastfeeding

a) True.
b) False.
- 4) What is a vasectomy?

a) An operation that prevents a women from getting pregnant
b) A type of STD treatment
c) An operation that prevents a man's testes from releasing sperm
d) A part of the male reproductive system.
- 5) You must use a new condom every time you have sex.

a) True.
b) False.
- 6) Which of the following is NOT a way HIV/AIDS is transmitted?

a) semen
b) saliva
c) blood
d) breast milk
- 7) How is Gonorrhea cured?

a) It can't be cured
b) oral antibiotic
c) injectable antibiotic
d) both b and c
- 8) Which of the following is NOT an STD?

a) HPV/Genital Warts
b) Hepatitis C
c) Celiac Disease
d) Chlamydia
- 9) When used perfectly, how effective are birth control pills?

a) 50%
b) 85%
c) 99%
d) 100%
- 10) Pregnancy happens when.

a) an egg is produced by a women.
b) a fertilized egg implants in the uterus.
c) sperm enters the fallopian tubes.
d) a baby is born.
- 11) The embryo develops into a fetus after.

a) 1 week
b) 5 weeks.
c) 20 weeks.
d) 10 weeks.
- 12) When used perfectly, how effective are condoms?

a) 98%
b) 90%
c) 70%
d) 100%

Sex ed and teen pregnancy: worldwide

Nabilla Harahap

Reporter

Thailand currently has the highest teen pregnancy rate in Southeast Asia. Due to the lack of sex education, the rate of teen pregnancy is rising, despite the declining birth rate. In Thailand, sex education was a part of the school curriculum. However it had little impact, insufficient teaching. In recent years, sex education has become a nationwide initiative.

However, sex is still seen as taboo topic. People believe that teaching sex education will encourage young adults to have sex. The goal of the initiative is to change their attitudes since there are many misconceptions about gender and sexuality.

Contraceptives are actually very accessible in Thailand. A prescription is not needed to cheaply purchase contraceptives. However, there are very strict laws against abortion, the only exceptions being rape or if giving

birth puts the life of the mother in danger. Unfortunately, the law is not strictly enforced. There are about 15 illegal abortion clinics in the country but there is only one known abortion clinic that practices it safely.

In France, teenage pregnancy has a stigma around it because it is very uncommon to give birth before the ages of 25 to 35.

However, compared to the United States, France's teen pregnancy rate is approximately 1/3 lower, which leads to lower abortion rates. French culture is generally open about sexuality and is considered one of the most adulterous countries.

Sex education has been implemented in French schools since 1973 and students get 30 to 40 hours of it throughout the year. Schools also have to provide students with condoms. The vast majority of teens engaging in sex in France are using readily available contraceptives.

In many countries in the

Middle East, such as Algeria, sex is still considered a complex and taboo topic. Pre-marital sex is something that is not spoken about if it does happen. There is not much lengthy research on teen pregnancy, as it is not out of the norm to be a grown adult and still a virgin, because of the close ties to their religion. While sex before marriage is prohibited, public displays of affection are not seen so favorably either. This implies that sex education is not taught in Algerian schools and not something parents openly discuss with their children. Most Algerians eventually learn about sex on their own. Abortion is only acceptable if it endangers either the physical or mental health of the mother and does not apply to situations such as rape or incest. Teen pregnancy in Algeria is rare, despite the lack of sexual education.

During the past few years, Senegal has had a rising trend of teen pregnancy. Lack of sex education may be a factor, but

it is more likely because young girls are getting married. In more impoverished villages, girls as young as 10 are given to men as brides. While this practice is not as common as it used to be, the result is higher rates of teen pregnancy.

However, teen pregnancy rates have started to slow due to a Christian-Muslim interfaith cooperation by Enhancing Christian Witness in Senegal (ECWS). Their goal was to encourage change with the help of various religious to reduce pregnancy rates. Getting pregnant before marriage is not widely accepted in Senegal and social barriers are not ready to evolve yet in order to change people's mindsets especially because it is a cultural influence. Contraceptives are not prevalent and barriers prevent access to them for women. Laws also make the problem worse.

Like France, Germany has a low rate of teen pregnancies. In schools, sex education is imple-

mented, and rather than focusing on abstinence, it teaches much more safe sex and the use of contraceptives. Sex ed is considered a public task.

Recently Germany is attempting to modernize sex ed by incorporating the LGBT community in their teaching to students. Last year, this resulted in protests that oppose this approach under the pretense that it is not something that should be taught especially to kids of young age. Otherwise, sex is something teenagers are familiarized with early on.

Abortion in Germany is a complicated topic and is illegal unless it is an abortion due to criminal grounds such as rape, or if it endangers the life of the mother. The usual contraceptives are always available in Germany, with condoms being most easily bought in stores, and other forms such as the pill or IUDs that can be prescribed by a gynecologist.





Students promote water conservation

Samantha Gallant

Staff Writer

In the late fall of 2016, Maanav Sunderaraman ('17), Tyler Lasicki ('17), and Vivek James ('17) entered and won the adjudicators award for the Coca-Cola Clean Water Challenge with their project called Concilio.

The challenge was designed as a way to raise awareness about the mass amount of chemicals and other hazardous materials that are polluting the water at an alarming rate. It has gotten to a point where more than 600 million people do not have access to clean water according to *innovation.nfte.com*, the challenge's website.

In light of this, The Coca-Cola Company and the United Nations teamed together to sponsor a challenge that revolved around the creation of a sustainable water bottle that would inspire others to help protect the aquatic ecosystems.

Lasicki was the first to find out about the project. Ms. Poyser, a teacher in the business department, suggested the project to him. "Ms. Poyser was one of my teachers for sophomore year entrepreneurship class and she told me about [the project], then I told Maanav and Vivek. From there we did a little research on it, found the challenge that interested us the most, and we thought we could get done in the allotted amount of time and here we

are," said Lasicki.

"Part of this competition involved the UN and its various directives and goals for the next century. Since I have experience with Model UN, I decided to join and Tyler approached me with that initiative," said James.

The team name Concilio was created much earlier than the competition did. "It actually began in August when Tyler and I went to the international business competition in Canada. The word concilio is actually the latin word which means 'to win.' I thought it was more like a good luck charm for me so I decided to suggest the word concilio and the guys agreed," said Sunderaraman.

The product itself is a water bottle made from carbon-free plastic with a QR code on it. "You just scan the QR code [on the water bottle] and it takes you to an application that you play. Every time you win a game, X amount of water is donated," said Lasicki. This concept was modeled off of Free Rice: an educational platform where every time a question is answered correctly, a grain of rice is donated.

"We took little known research about carbon free plastic and we actually brought it to the limelight because there is so much research that nobody really hears about, but can really change the world in such positive ways and we were able to do that given the open nature of this project," said James.

Although they did not win the popular vote, the team did end up winning the adjudicators award, which is one that is given by judges of the contest. By receiving the adjudicator's award, "three of us get \$2000 which we are going to split it \$666 each and we are spending the two [leftover] dollars on candy. Westhill High School gets \$500 and I think \$250 is going to Best Buddies [a club at Westhill] and the other \$250 is going to the business department," said James.

Even though they did not win the popular vote, the team received 6,227 votes from not only students at Westhill but also people from all over the world. "We did a lot of on-line marketing like social media, Instagram, Facebook, [and] our [family's] Facebook," said Lasicki.

"What was most effective overall was giving talks in our school to people to classes saying vote for us explaining our mission," said Sunderaraman. Westhill students were asked to vote by using their personal email. In order to garner as many votes as possible, the team also sent out an email to connection time classes to vote for their project.

The project that both Coca-Cola and the UN have managed to create not only brings awareness to a growing issue but inspires students like Lasicki, James, and Sunderaraman to work innovatively and creatively.



Air Carbon

Made from carbon capture



High - Performance



Sustainable



Carbon - Negative



Photos contributed by The Concilio Water Project.

STRUT IN STYLE

Aziza Couture is a boutique based in Stamford. Its large variety of top designers, such as Jovani or Faviana, allow for prospective shoppers to get the most high quality dresses. Aziza Couture is a highly reliable store to shop at and not only sells prom dresses, but participates in various other prom related services. For example, the boutique includes a makeup bar and prom registry, and makes alterations for those in need of last minute touch ups. The large variety of dresses and services allow for shoppers to get exactly what they are paying for: a high quality experience.

AZIZA
Dressing life's memories...

Nordstrom is a very convenient website and store for prom dress shoppers. The fact that it houses hundreds of different designers allows shoppers to find exactly what they are looking for, whether it is ball gowns, long dresses, or cocktail dresses. The prices of the dresses at Nordstrom vary from around \$50 to over \$1000, allowing a large variety of designer dresses at prices comfortable for the customers. The selection of dresses are definitely trendy, with two piece dresses, long dresses, short dresses, and varying sizes. There is definitely a prom dress for everyone at Nordstrom.com.

NORDSTROM

Promgirl.com is a well known website that is known for carrying an enormous variety of prom dresses. The constant five star reviews from previous customers ensure that this website is most definitely reliable. The prices range from under \$50 to over \$500, making customers feel comfortable when looking for their desired dress. The easy side menu also allows prospective shoppers easy accessibility and is very trustworthy. "I know it can be hard on your wallet buying a prom dress, but buying from a source that is not as well known could be even worse on your wallet. With all the recent scams, It would be better to spend \$300 rather than lose \$3000 trying to get a cheap dress," said Praneetha Desu ('17).

PROMGIRL

Lord and Taylor is one of the most popular places to get a prom dress. Its location in Stamford allows for easy and accessible shopping. The prices range from as low as \$70 to as high as \$800. The large variety of designer dresses and the constant sales allow for prom dress shoppers to find exactly what they need. "There are a lot of nice dresses at Lord and Taylor. However, I think that the styles are flashy, meaning people who like more simple dresses might not find them there. There may be one or two but you really have to look for them," said Amani Twal ('17).

Lord & Taylor

Briefs by Sakshi Patel / Creative Director.

The Reel Review: Beauty and the Beast

Column by Ashley Shapiro



The live action version of *Beauty and the Beast* premiered March 17, 2017. It is a remake of the original *Beauty and the Beast*, which premiered November 22, 1991. The movie focused on seeing the beauty inside and not judging someone by what you see on the outside.

The live action remake starred many famous actors and actresses, including Emma Watson as Belle. Watson is known for many movies but her most notable role is as Hermione in the *Harry Potter* franchise. Dan Stevens, who starred in this movie as the Beast, is known for his role in *Downton Abbey*. Josh Gad, a Disney veteran, also starred in the movie as Lumiere and previ-

ously voiced Olaf in Disney's *Frozen*. All of the actors were talented singers and actors.

The plot was almost parallel to the classic cartoon but went even further to close loopholes and improve the moviegoer's experience. When watching the two movies back-to-back, one can see the effort and care that went into keeping the integrity of the story intact. The cinematography gave the feel of a live performance.

The actors cast in each role were clearly chosen with great care so the characters would appear the same as in the original. Watson portrayed the part of a smart, headstrong Disney princess in an elegant and poised fashion that very few actresses could have achieved. Luke Ev-



ans portrayed Gaston with the same boastful and misogynistic personality that appeared in the original animated version.

In order to incorporate talking furniture Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) was used to create human-like characteristics. The technology used in this movie made the audience feel engrossed in the world Disney created. The set and scenery made the cartoon world come to life in a magical way. The combination of CGI and live acting blended perfectly to do the original movie justice.

Beauty and the Beast, as many other Disney productions, was a musical. The new movie used the same songs and lyrics but were slightly revamped. The songs were

catchy and engaging. The audience will be hard pressed to get the songs out of their head. Although Gad has previously been heard singing, Watson surprised everyone with her beautiful rendition of "Belle" and "Something There". The songs were incorporated into the plot in a effortless way and did not seem as forced as one might expect from a musical movie.

Beauty and the Beast is the top grossing movie of the year to date. It received a 71 percent on Rotten Tomatoes, although many people thought it deserved a better rating. With a talented cast and already perfected plot the movie could not have been anything but flawless.

AT PROM FOR LESS

Zemo's Men's Store is located on Bedford Street in Stamford and is open Monday, Wednesday-Saturday until 6:00 p.m. Zemo's sponsors the annual Westhill, Stamford High, AITE, and Trinity Catholic High School's fashion show. Zemo's gives students the ability to buy or rent tuxes including shirt, vest, jacket, pants, tie/bow tie, and shoes all within a price range that is typically \$200 or less. At Zemo's one will find tuxedos of hundreds of different brands and one of the largest selection of colors. Zemo's is popular with students for its affordable price and decent service.

ZEMO
MEN'S STORE

Men's Wearhouse is a chain store that can be accessed online as well as in real life. Men's Wearhouse is open seven days a week until 9:00 p.m. on weekdays and 7:00 p.m. on weekends. At Men's Wearhouse students can buy and rent tuxedos which includes the shirt, vest, jacket, pants, tie/bow tie, and shoes. The price for renting tuxedos is typically two hundred dollars or more but customers receive many promotional offers come prom season to lower prices. Men's Wearhouse is popular with students because of its helpful service and high quality material however they lose customers who feel their tuxedos are out of their price range.

MEN'S WEARHOUSE®

Macy's, located in the Stamford mall, is open seven days a week until 10:00 p.m. Macy's only offers the option to buy suits from their featured brands. Tuxedos start at two hundred dollars and could go all the way up to five-hundred dollars or more. While there are many sales and discount offers to lower prices there is not much flexibility or help in selecting a tux. Macy's is not very popular with students as they typically are looking to rent rather than buy.

★ **macy's**

Serpe Brothers is located on Bedford Street and is open Tuesday-Saturday until 5:30 p.m. Serpe Brothers is very much like Zemo's in terms of availability and quality however the price range is even lower. Tuxedo rentals start at \$50 and various promotional offers during prom season. Serpe Brothers offers complete tuxedo rentals including shirt, jacket, vest, pants, tie/bow tie, and shoes while also giving the customer the ability to purchase as well for a very similar low price. Serpe Brothers would seemingly be popular with students due to its low prices. However it is overlooked since Zemo's is more thoroughly advertised throughout high schools.

SERPE BROS.

Briefs by **Matthew Masi** / Staff Writer.

72 Hours: Outside my comfort zone

Column by Courtney Xu



For 72 hours, I decided to focus on stepping outside comfort zones. I did not do anything extraordinary, but I took on much more mild experiences, which were things I normally would not do.

The first day, I mended a friendship that had been strained for over a week. This was something new for me because if something is wrong with a friendship, I usually end up drifting away from that friend. I originally planned on doing nothing and letting the problems with the friendship take over. However, I ended up taking the more difficult path and confronted my friend.

I thought simply talking about the problem that we both had would resolve the issue quickly and easily. However, it was not as simple as I thought. I did not realize the effects of anything-but-

strong communication. I never really thought of the importance of communication skills. It turned out that both of us did not express our thoughts as well as we had hoped, which caused for additional strains. After multiple talks, we ended up having to need another person to help resolve the issue. It was awkward; it was not a one-talk-and-everything-is-better kind of experience. Although I first regretted reaching out because the situation was not as easy to handle as I had thought, I was happy that I decided step outside my comfort zone. Every day, the friendship feels less offbeat. I am satisfied with how it was resolved, and overjoyed about how the friendship is working out.

The second day, I met up with a friend that I had not seen in three years. The idea of meeting came

up two weeks before, during the weekend of the women's march, when my friend had posted an Instagram of him and some friends at the march in New York City. After seeing his post, I later texted him privately to express my support of his actions at the march, and that was when the idea of catching up together turned up. I met my friend over the summer of freshman year, and have not talked to him since, even though he lived nearby, in New York City. I am hesitant to reach out to lost friends, because you never know if you are just being annoying, or if the openness will not be reciprocated. Even if two people do agree to meet up, they may find themselves with nothing to talk about. For these reasons, I fully understand why people who have not seen each other in years may

doubtful about reuniting.

However, after having brunch with him in the city, I could not have been happier. There was almost too much to talk about, and we laughed as if no time had gone by. I found myself smiling to myself on the train back home. The greatest feeling is when taking a risk proves to be worthwhile.

The third day, I agreed to write a controversial and opinionated article for the newspaper. I agreed to write an opinionated response to President Trump's immigration ban. I have always thought of politics as something personal, because your stance reflects your intimate beliefs and values. In addition, I always feared, and still fear, that a part of me was under-educated, and I did not know enough to have the right to understand or believe in one

thing over the other. Because of this, I spent too much time reading articles and other resources to get information on the side that I was about to fight for while writing. While there definitely are things that I still do not fully understand or know, I was satisfied with the article. I was able to better understand why I felt the way that I felt, and I became more educated about the topic by hearing other perspectives.

At the end of my 72 hours, I was really happy with how stepping outside of my comfort zones turned out. At first, it did start off rather slow but, I was proud of myself and overjoyed with the experiences. As usual, I highly recommend trying to do something new or something the have always wanted to but was a little fearful of what may happen.

Keeping your cool during Prom season

Prom season is here and some people are already stressing. Some people are worried about finding a date, finding the perfect color, planning a perfect promposal, etc. Here are some tips that anyone stressing about prom can use. Everybody, keep your cool during prom. The day is arriving but don't let it stress you out. Keep reminding yourself that everything is going to be okay and you're going to look beautiful. Enjoy the last time that you may ever see these people ever again. Have fun and don't ever leave the dance floor!

TIP 1: If you cannot find a date, it is okay. Yes, the pictures are nice if you have a date, but if you are having fun with a group of friends, that is all that matters. Prom is all about having a good time with the people that you might never see again. It is a night to enjoy the people that you've spent four years with. Why stress over not going with someone that you probably were not going to be with the whole night anyways? If you really want to have a date, think out of the box. Think of someone that is in your class or a friend that you have had that would love to go with you. It does not hurt to try. Ask someone that you know would be up to being on the dance floor the whole night.

TIP 2: Lately, people have been planning promposals. If you are having a hard time planning on how to ask your date, check out Pinterest. Type in the search bar "Promposal Ideas" and there will be a ton of pictures with ideas on how to get started. Try to find one that really fits your date's personality. If you feel like you have bad taste, have someone that may know the person you plan on asking help you. Make sure your handwriting is eligible. Hint: the corniest sayings make the best promposals.

TIP 3: When choosing your dress, try on styles and colors that you normally would never pick for yourself. You never know, the dress you end up loving the most may be one you never otherwise would have tried. Do not be afraid to step outside of the box and your comfort zone. As for the guys, not everyone has to wear black. When finding a tux, try a new color or unique style. You may find something special for one of the most remembered and photographed nights of high school.

TIP 4: There are small ways to save while still feeling like royalty. Instead of an extravagant expensive promposal, opt for a more personal, homemade one. You can keep your looks simple and still look beautiful. Work around your budget. Instead of paying tons of money to have your hair and makeup done, find a style online and work on it with a friend. Having an expensive dress does not define your beauty, your confidence does.

SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVALS

ALIVE@5

The closest and most common choice for teenagers living in Fairfield county used to be Alive@Five, a local outdoor summer concert held in Downtown Stamford. This concert takes place in Columbus Park Thursday nights at 5 p.m., spanning from July to August. Past headliners have included Cee Lo Green, Boyz II Men, Hot Chelle Rae, and MC Hammer. Recently, the concert was made a 21+ event, due to issues with underage drinkers in past years. For this upcoming summer, Westhill students would have a difficult time getting past security as an ID is now required to enter the venue. This year's line up will be announced this spring.

TERMINAL 5

A convenient option for live music for Westhill students is New York City, and not only during the summertime. Terminal 5, a concert hall, is attended year-round and is very cheap compared to larger concerts held at Radio City or Madison Square Garden. At Terminal 5, concert-goers are able to hop on the Metro North Railroad and take the subway directly to Terminal 5. The whole night will cost less than a single ticket to events held at Mohegan, which range upward of \$100. Transportation to and from the city add up to \$20, dinner around \$15, and a ticket to Terminal 5 that could span anywhere from \$30 to \$55.

BROOKLYN

Brooklyn hosts its own festival during the spring season called BRIC Celebrate Brooklyn! Festival. Brooklyn, being the hipster capital of New York City, they have their own free cultural programming system that displays forms of art ranging from music to film to youth media festivals. With numerous Event Series, there is a wide range of options that Brooklyn goers can choose from, including BRIC Jazzfest, The Brooklyn Poetry Slam, Fireworks Residency, Dance at BRIC House, Media Talks, and many BRIC Artists in Residence events. Locations include Prospect Park Bandshell, Brooklyn Bridge Park, and seven different Brooklyn Public Libraries. Take a look at bricartsmedia.org for a complete schedule for the upcoming season.

GOV BALL

The most popular music festival for teenagers in the tri-state area, spanning for three full days, has been the Governor's Ball (Gov Ball) for the past few years. This year, Gov Ball will take place as it always does, on Randall's Island Park in New York. Sadly, for Westhill seniors, the festival occurs during the same weekend as Senior Prom. Starting on Friday, June 2 (with arguably the best lineup of the three days), the festival goes on through Saturday, June 3 and ends on Sunday, June 4. Past headliners have included Drake, Lana Del Rey, and Kanye West, whose performance was unfortunately cancelled due to heavy rains on Sunday in 2016. This upcoming Gov Ball the headliners include Chance the Rapper, Lorde, Flume, Schoolboy Q, and Wu-Tang Clan. Prices for Gov Ball are around \$125 for a 1-day pass, and \$350 for a 3-day pass. These prices are very similar to the Panorama Music Festival, being held from July 28-30, also on Randall's Island Park in New York. Headliners include Frank Ocean, Tame Impala, and A Tribe Called Quest.

NEWPORT FOLK

For those willing to take a road trip to Newport, Rhode Island, the Newport Folk Festival does not have the typical rap and EDM that major festivals like Coachella and Lollapalooza will bring. On July 28-30, 2017, the Newport Folk Festival will occur for their 57th consecutive year at Fort Adams. Tickets are cheap, and Newport is a common summer destination for many students at Westhill. For those who are looking for a festival that plays music other than ear-piercing pitches and heavy basslines, Newport Folk is the way to go. This years headlines include The Avett Brothers, John Prine, The Head and the Heart, and Fleet Foxes. The festival takes place in Fort Adams State Park.

Westhill students showcase talents

Maeve Ronan
Managing Editor

Every year, Westhill students are able to showcase their special skills and abilities at the annual Talent Show. This year's show had a collection of exceptionally talented groups and solo acts. Performances ranged from dance numbers, solo songs, duets, and two student bands. The show, run by the senior class and adviser Ms. Tobin, was hosted by Frank Mastrone. Mastrone is the husband of Westhill security guard Mona Spinelli and father of three daughters who are freshmen at Westhill. Mastrone is a Broadway veteran and showcased his vocal talents by starting off the show

with "Willkommen" from the Broadway show *Cabaret*.

The student portion of the show began with a brother and sister duet between Blake ('17) and Nicki Newcomer ('19). The siblings performed a cover of the folk rock band Mumford & Sons "I Will Wait," with Blake on the acoustic guitar and Nicki on lead vocals. Following the duet were multiple solo vocal performances by Trinity Wilson ('18), Rachel Lese ('17), Ewa Misiak ('17), and Hannah Cassara ('17), who beautifully sang "A Change is Gonna Come" by Sam Cooke. Shayla Hernandez ('17) showcased her powerhouse vocals and riffing skills with her rendition of Alicia Keys' "If I Ain't Got You." Not every

performance was vocal, however. Vivek James ('17) and AITE student Jack Polo ('18) performed two classical pieces on the piano and Paris Vines ('18) danced original choreography. "My favorite act was Paris Vine's dance routine. She danced with abandon and freedom and she was LIVING," said Will Bruno ('17).

The night featured performances by two student bands. Making this their third performance together in a Westhill Talent Show, the band Flight Crew performed covers of Maroon 5's "This Love" and Coldplay's "Viva La Vida." Flight Crew is made up of Nick Smeriglio ('17) on lead vocals and guitar, Ben Freedman ('17) and Blake Newcomer on bass

guitar and backup vocals, Andrew Blum ('17) on keyboard and Jacob Stockman ('17) on drums and percussion. An overall lively and high-energy performance, "Viva La Vida" was a new cover for them, and was a more technically difficult song than they were used to performing. It included the addition of bells and other percussion instruments that are not typically used by the band.

The other band of the night was backpack, featuring Liam Gelling ('19), Bill Williams ('19) and Jahdavid James ('19). They performed a cover of Deep Blue Something's "Breakfast at Tiffany's" as well as an original song. As the talent show closely followed the release of Ed Sheeran's

album *Divide*, the talent show featured two covers of songs from this album. Zoe Reyes ('18) and Marcos Pinto-Leite ('18) performed a mashup of "Shape of You" and a few of Sheeran's older songs. The performance featured Reyes on the acoustic guitar and loop pedal and Pinto-Leite on vocal. Andy Putterman ('17) and Tyler Lasicki ('17) closed the talent show with a cover of Sheeran's "Galway Girl" and "Shape of You."

The talent show is a great way to feature student performers towards the end of the school year. Students and parents alike enjoy cheering on their children or peers for a fun evening of dancing, singing, and instrumentals.



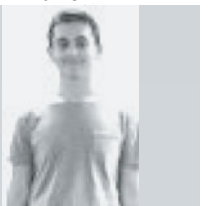
Photos contributed by Tyler Lasicki.

Record review of the month



Nebraska by Bruce Springsteen

by Zach Radin



In this case, you can judge a book by its cover. Originally a demo tape, Bruce Springsteen's sixth album, *Nebraska*, released in 1982, presents ten rootsy songs about isolation, struggle, desperation, morality and hope. *Nebraska*, musically speaking, is very simple, consisting of easy melodies, discreet guitar work, a harmonica, and sometimes a tambourine. Even without the glorified bar band, the E-Street Band behind him, Springsteen manages to carry the whole of *Nebraska* on his own.

The songs are subtly brilliant, performed with a simplistic beauty and offhand sensitivity. When Springsteen tells these

stories, he gives voice to his sad characters and you find yourself entering into their lives, if only for a moment.

Nebraska is an allegory of killers, cops, and folks that have been driven to where they can no longer find their way through compromising; people who can no longer live their lives drifting in grey areas.

All over *Nebraska*, flashes of hope shine like a break in the clouds, but are all too often swallowed up in a hard rain.

The album opens with the song "Nebraska," based on the true story of Charles Starkweather and Caril Ann Fugate, who murdered ten innocent people.

The song is stark and sung as a first person narrative from the perspective of Starkweather. Caught and sentenced to death, Springsteen sings, "They declared me unfit to live/ into that great void, my soul'd be hurled." Any hope for explanation, Springsteen concludes "there's just a meanness in this world."

The track "Atlantic City" is the essence of *Nebraska*. It is a tough-as-nails story of someone compromising their morals to get a better life for him and his partner. "I've been looking for a job but it's hard to find/ It's just winners and losers, don't get caught on the wrong side of that line," he sings. Rationalizing the

characters' decisions, Springsteen hits the nail of hope on the head with the line "Everything dies, baby, that's a fact/ but maybe everything that dies someday comes back..."

Weaving through haunting stories of robbery, murder, memory, family and dreams, the album wraps with "Reason to Believe," leaving the listener with a quiet and private optimism, somehow balancing out all the helplessness, pessimism and nihilism found on the record.

Ultimately, *Nebraska* is a metaphor of cultural decay conveyed through desperate people in bad situations. It is not by any means something to put on at a

party, or really around anyone else at all. It is an album that lends itself well to isolation.

If you have never really gotten into Bruce Springsteen, I highly suggest giving *Nebraska* a chance or two. It is very different from any of his other albums and that is primarily why I have been coming back to it so often.

If you enjoy *Nebraska*, you may also enjoy Springsteen's other albums like *The River*, *Darkness on the Edge of Town*, Johnny Cash's *American IV*, The Rolling Stones' *Exile On Main St.*, Albert Camus' *The Stranger*, Bob Dylan's *The Times They Are A-Changing*, and Billy Joel's *Turnstiles*.

SCATTERBRAIN

Ways to cure senioritis

31

There is no doubt that senioritis is truly unbeatable, especially during second semester. These are some ways to help deal with the “sickness.”

Sleep More

Being tired is almost unbearable for most teenagers, and it feels even worse when seniors have no motivation to go to school anymore. Do not be afraid to allow yourself some time to rest up, whether it be a long nap after school or going to bed earlier.

Treat Yourself

It is very important to treat yourself with positive reinforcements. Spend what is left of your leisure time with friends, because you will never be able to get these days back.

Get Excited

Remind yourself of the exciting times ahead. A great way to get pumped for graduation is decorating your graduation cap with quotes, initials, ribbon, glitter, etc. Picking out graduation outfits is another great way to get excited.

Have Caffeine

Caffeine is the perfect way to wake up when it feels impossible to get out of bed, which is almost every morning when you are a second semester senior. Whether it is coffee, tea, energy drinks, or chocolate - getting a source of energy will help.



Set Goals

Becoming lazy and unmotivated is expected when seniors are in the home stretch of high school. To avoid this, set smaller, attainable goals when it comes to homework and studying, so there is no scrambling at the last minute.

Get A Job

The new internship program at WHS provides a great opportunity to test out potential jobs, but if you missed out, plenty of paid jobs are available around town. Check with the Guidance department for listings, or Craigslist.

Eat Better

The end of one's high school career is filled with myriad opportunities for grilled foods and pizza. Make sure to balance that with healthy, rounded breakfasts and lunches filled with fruits and vegetables.

Be Productive

Many seniors start to leave work till the very end and often either complete it poorly or not at all. When an assignment is given, get it done right away and do something to celebrate it when you have done so!

Briefs by **Caroline Boccuzzi & Michael von Wahlde** / Managing Editor & Adviser.

The Twitter bird's name is Larry. The first alarm clock could only ring at four AM. Slugs have four noses. The bible is the most shoplifted book.

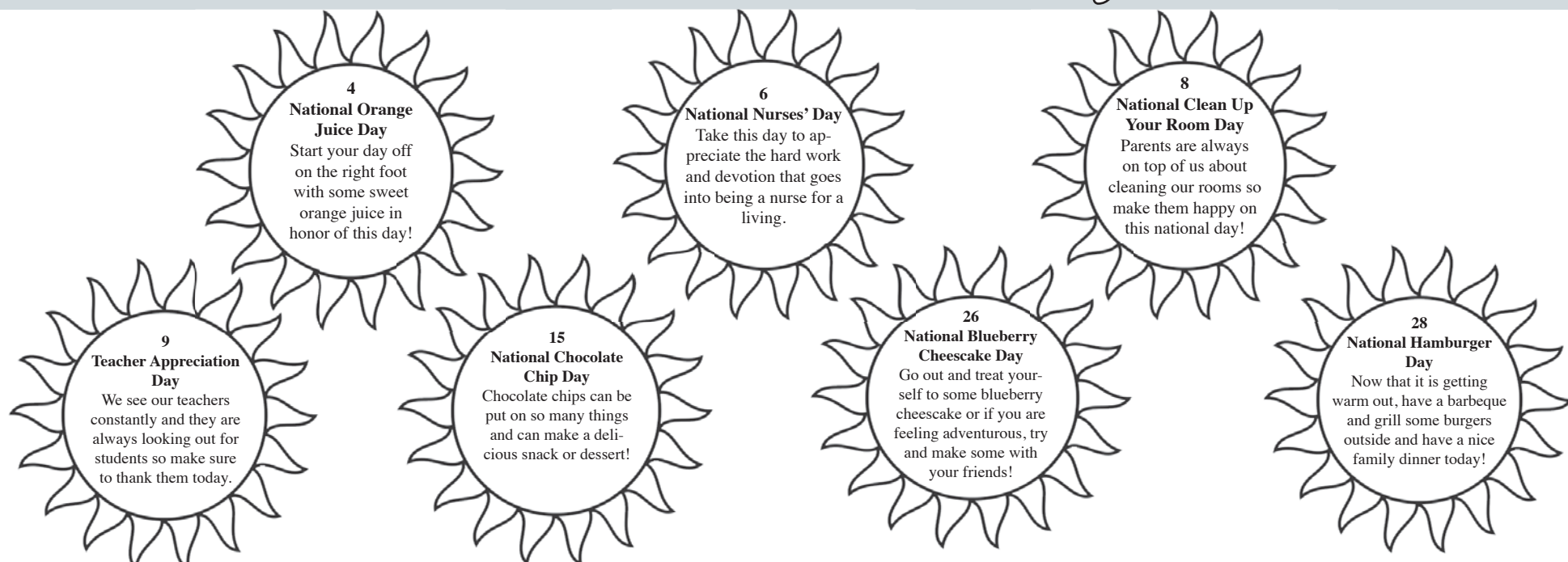
FROM RUNWAY TO HALLWAY: BRANDON PELLICONE

My style is different from most of the other people at Westhill. I do not really care for name-brand clothing, I just wear what I think looks good. I only started caring about my clothes this year, and one thing that I learned is to wear what you like, do not dress to impress others, only dress to impress yourself; that is very important when figuring out what to wear. The clothes you wear help to express yourself in a way where people can just look at you and get an idea of what kind of person you are. While a lot of my clothes are from a variety of stores, H&M is a reliable store I go to to get casual and comfortable clothes for an inexpensive price. It offers a wide range of different clothes that mix well together to create great outfits. Some stores I enjoy shopping at are Zara and Pacsun. Another way to get cool clothing is by thrift shopping. You will not always find stuff you like, but once in a while you will find something that is unique and stylish that can be used in an outfit. My inspiration for style of clothing originally came from different photographers on Instagram and just seeing people in public dressing in a very unique way. I could tell that the clothes that they were wearing made them feel good. Then I decided to try it out for myself. My friend and I began researching different clothing and what styles were trending. I look for outfits and styles that I think are interesting and twist them up a little to make them more me.

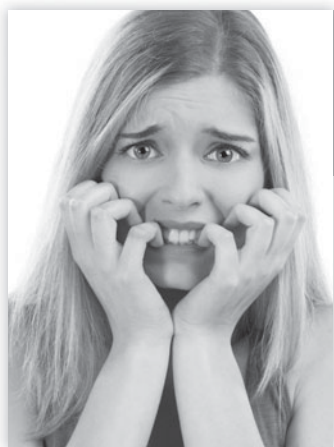


Photo contributed by **Brandon Pellicone**.

To Do Next Month : May



When hippos are upset, their sweat turns red. Cherophobia is the fear of fun. A lion's roar can be heard from five miles away. Birds do not urinate.



Be careful, you don't want to say...

“I'm in the Wrong Driving School”

Don't be fooled by the “Driving School Factory” or Part-Time operators, who have brought the fast-food mentality to driver education in Stamford.

Since 2005, **High Ridge Driving School** has offered the Greater Stamford area a locally owned and operated driving school that's focused on the individual needs of Stamford students, not fixated on monopolizing the state. **As a result, we've taught more Stamford teens to drive than all of the other driving schools... combined!** And even though they appear to be determined to bring the driving school factory approach to Stamford, it just doesn't seem to be appealing.

Even though some companies do not agree, when it comes to driver education, just like shoes, **one size doesn't fit everyone.** We believe every student deserves the focus, care, and concern that comes from an organization run by local businesspeople who are actively engaged with their instructors, students, parents and community. Please see the chart below to learn more about one of the most important decisions you will ever make...

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THE HIGH RIDGE DRIVING SCHOOL ADVANTAGE

| | OTHER DRIVING SCHOOL OPTIONS | HIGH RIDGE DRIVING SCHOOL |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Flexible Schedule | No, they schedule sessions that begin and end. So, if you miss a class, you might need to go to another town, or wait quite awhile to finish your training. | Our classes NEVER end. We teach in the classroom 52-weeks a year; 7-days a week in the summer; 5-days a week during the school year. |
| Driving Hours | We know of students from other driving schools that have needed to go to other towns to finish their driving hours. Some schools do not even offer in-car sessions on a regular basis! | We drive 7-days a week, all year long. You're assigned an instructor who's dedicated to providing you with the best driver education experience possible. Plus, we pick-up and drop off ANYWHERE locally. |
| Off-site Testing at the School | As of this mailing, NO OTHER driving school offers DMV License Testing in Stamford! | Available in Stamford multiple times a month since 2005 - And always will be! |
| Customer Service | Questions, phone calls, and DMV paperwork usually handled by a corporate office or a branch office in another town, generally only by phone. Some schools do not generate DMV CS-1 certificates in Stamford. VERY limited office hours in Stamford, if at all. | We're almost ALWAYS open – in person or by phone. All phone calls, certificates, and paperwork handled in Stamford. No phone queues or customer service reps, we deliver REAL customer care with our dedicated Stamford staff. We invite parents into our facility, and offer training and support to ensure the time spent driving with your teen is productive. |
| Locally Owned | No. | Yes, one owner lives in Stamford, the other lives nearby. Ownership or G.M. on-site 80+ hours a week. |

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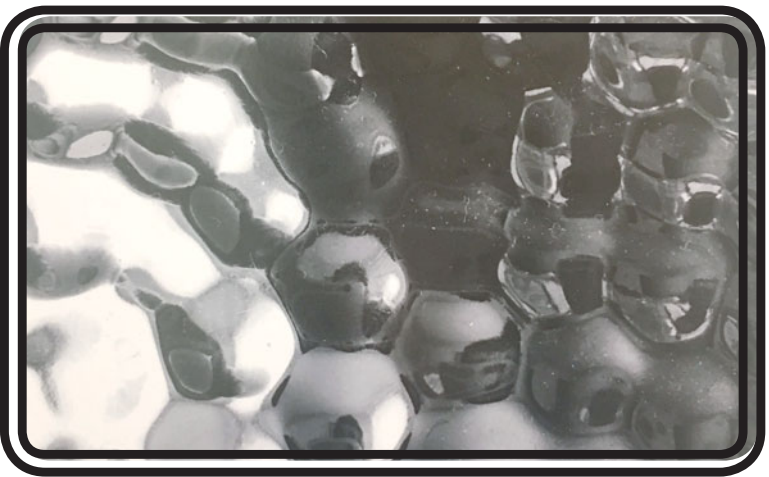
992 High Ridge Road, Stamford
(203) 329-3030
 HighRidgeDrivingSchool.com

Just south of the Merritt Parkway, Exit 35 – High Ridge Road, next to Town Fair Tire.

Express



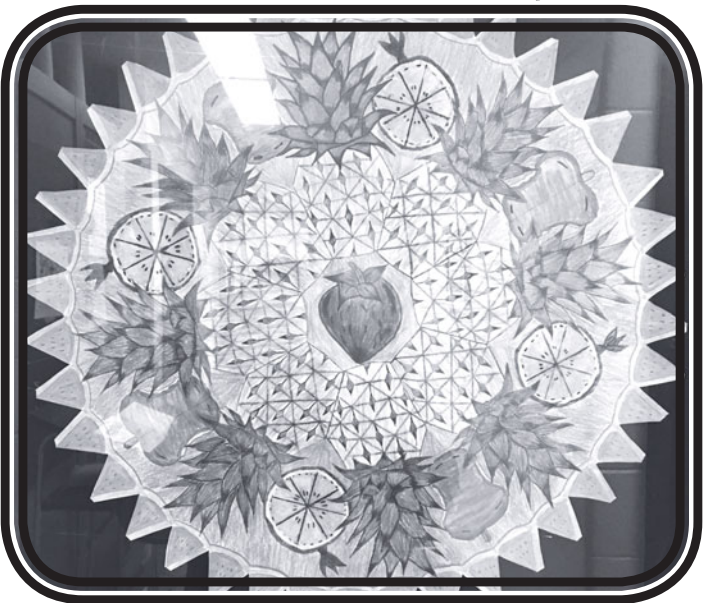
Lindsay Crevecouer '18



Maggie Barr '18

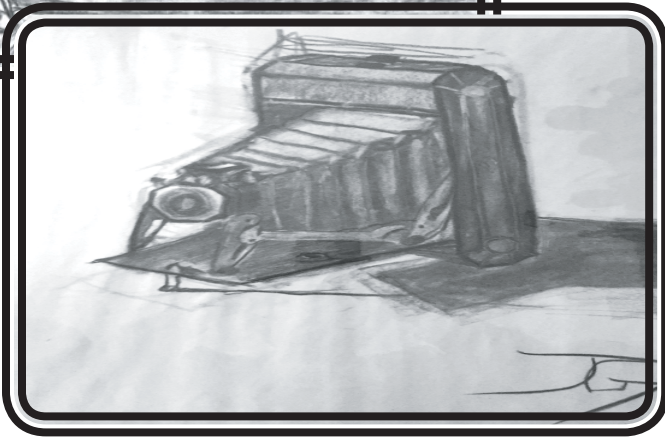
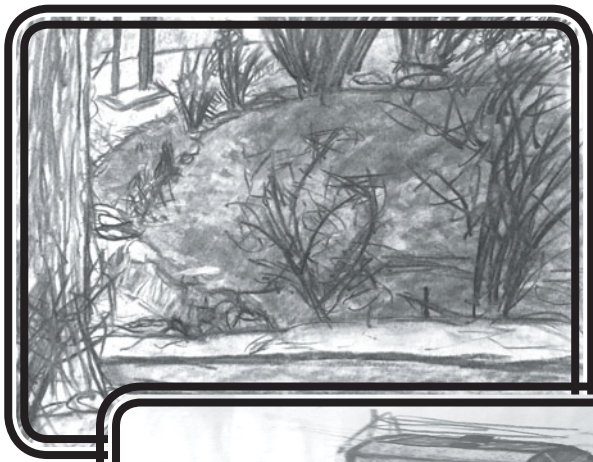


Djesne Claude '18



Eduar Suazo '18





Artist of the Month Joshua Greenburg

Junior Joshua Greenburg sat down with The Westword to discuss his passion for drawing. Using charcoal as his medium of choice, Greenburg is able to make intricate designs of the natural world.

The Westword: How did you become interested in art?

Joshua Greenburg: I first became interested in art and design when I was young. I used to build with Legos and Rokenboks which spurred my creativity. Today I use art as a way to test my ability and skill with different art forms and tools.

TW: How would you describe your style?

JB: I would describe my style as simplistic yet purposeful. What I mean by that is that I try to create visually pleasing works that either have a meaning or an inspiration.

TW: What has influenced your style?

JB: I'd say that the current wave of modern design has shaped my style a lot. Today's every day items are sleeker and more simple compared to the same ones from a decade ago.

TW: What medium do you like to work in?

JB: I work in multiple mediums so I like a few of them. Wood appeals to me because of the many varieties of wood there are as well as the fact that every piece of wood has a unique grain. Also, wood is very easy to shape and work with yet also strong and durable. Charcoal is very simple to work with and allows you to shade and add emotion to your drawing. More recently I've been experimenting with 3D computer design and hopefully will learn how to make sculptures with metal working and welding.

TW: Did you teach yourself art?

JB: A lot of my art is from my own ideas, however I usually get my inspiration from every day objects. In a way you could say that I taught myself art as I never really took any art classes growing up, however, I believe that art can't be taught, it can only be interpreted.

TW: Do you have any advice for students interested in art?

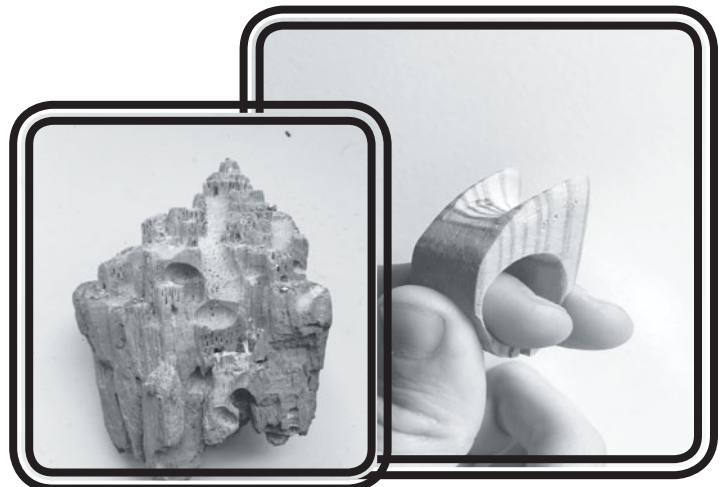
JB: I would say that you should work with mediums that please you and in subjects that interest you. To me, art is 50 percent the artists enjoyment, so the process takes precedent over the product.

TW: What are some goals you have for your art?

JB: As previously mentioned, I hope to expand my abilities with different tools and mediums, but my ultimate goal is to use my design skills to design for companies or even design my own products.

TW: If you could be featured in any museum in the world, what museum would it be?

JB: I would love to be featured in the Design Museum in London.



36 | SPORTS

Going from Love to 40

Charlotte Kriftcher
Reporter

The tennis point system is a confusing and unconventional one. It takes years of playing to fully understand it and be able to recite it correctly. “A match is two sets, which is 12 games total. It starts at love, meaning zero. At the first point it is 15, then 30, then 40. The next point is the winning point. If both sides have 40, it is called deuce and one side has to get two points in a row to win. At deuce, once someone gets a point, it is called ‘advantage in,’ or more commonly ‘ad-in.’ If that person

gets another point, they win that game. However, if the other side gets the point at ‘ad-in,’ it becomes deuce again. If the other side gets a point at deuce, it is called ‘advantage out,’ or ‘ad-out.’ Again, if they get another point, they win the game. It is important to say the score before serving every time. So for example, if player A has 30 and the other side has 15, player A would say ‘30-15,’ saying their score first. If both had 30, they would say ‘30-all,’” said captain Caroline Montalvo (’17).

Along with a complex point system, tennis also has a number of different shots. Given a

lot of experience and a quick athletic mentality, a player can determine which shot to use when and how to most effectively play the game. Hannah Soifer (’17), another captain of the girls tennis team, explained some of the most common tennis shots, and when they would be used.

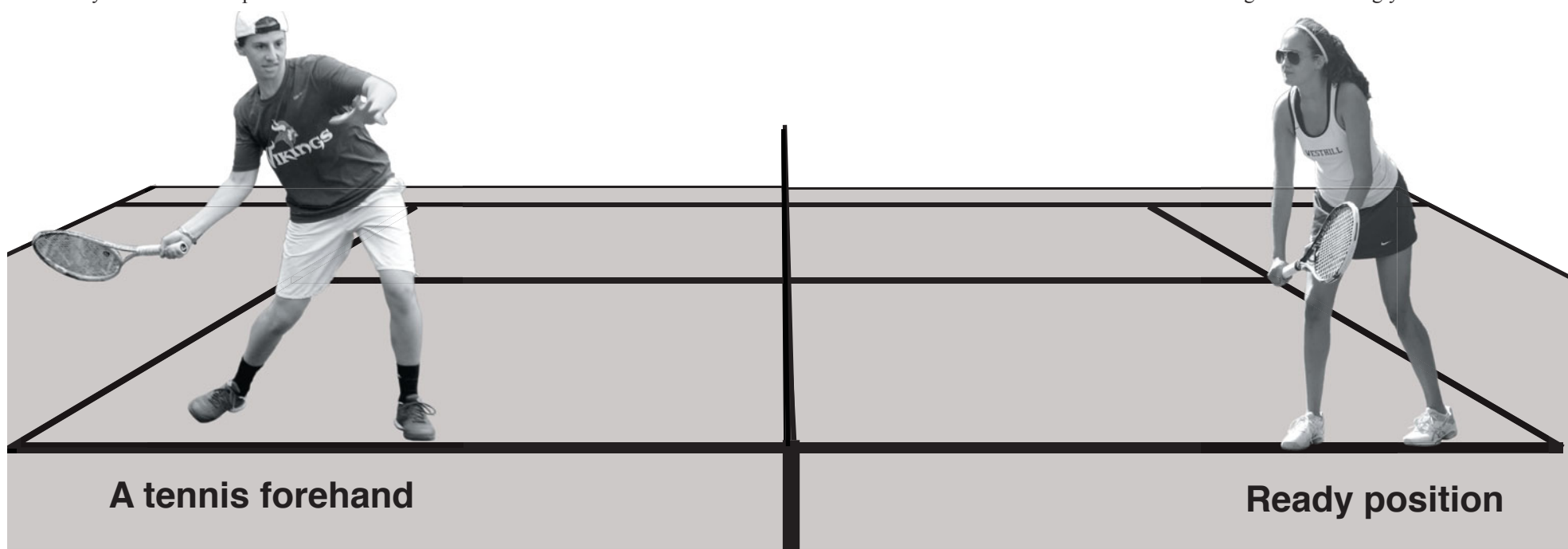
“There are various shots in tennis that a player could use, depending on what they want to achieve in that given play. If the player is far back in the green of the court then they would most likely hit a defensive shot, which is high and deep in the court. If the ball bounces closer

to the middle, the player would most likely hit an offensive string shot with a lot of topspin. Then if the shot from the other play is a fairly short ball, the player will run in and hit an offensive shot, either down the line or cross court and then stay in to try and win the point with a volley,” said Soifer.

Like in any sport, the tennis team also sets some physical expectations for their team members. “To be on the team you have to be in good shape with good stamina. In tennis there’s a lot of running and sprinting to the ball, so you have to be quick. Also our arms have to be strong

to hit powerful shots and serves. In order to make sure everyone is fit, we do workouts at every practice, are going to do crossfit as a team, and soul cycle as a team,” said captain Lily Jackson (’17).

Tennis is certainly a sport that requires the full body, as well as the mentality, of the players to be in shape. Quickness, agility, arm strength, and thinking of your feet are all expectations to be a successful tennis player. Given the preparation and preseason workouts that the girls tennis team has been exemplifying, there is no doubt that this season’s team will be ready for a strong year.



The hole run down of golf

Nathan Salm
Reporter

One of the most popular spring sports at Westhill is golf. The players use various clubs to hit the ball into a small hole, which can be anywhere from 200 to 400 yards away from where the players tee off from. There is a patch around the hole, known as the green, and the putter is usually used in this area.

There are 18 holes on a standard golf course, but for high school matches, players only play on nine holes. Each hole is basically graded on its shot difficulty and given a standard called Par, and a player’s score consists of how many shots the player takes

to finish the holes. There are 12 players on the team, but only 6 players participate in matches. The score from the player in the number 6 role is not counted, leaving the scores from the top five on the team available to count. The judges count the four players with the lowest score for each team and whichever team has the lowest score is the winner. “I love getting out on the course and playing with my friends. I like that golf is a competition against others, but still you are competing against yourself to keep your composure and consistency,” said captain Ryan Hart (’18).

Golf is not the most physically demanding sport: players do not have to be the most athletic to

be good at the sport. Skill is what makes a golfer good. A player can be strong, but if they putt the ball 10 feet past the whole, they will not be an effective player. Considering this, the Westhill’s golf team practices at the E. Gaynor Brennan Golf Course, and focuses on honing their skills. They are split into three groups and switch from station to station. One of the main stations is the driving range, which they use to help them improve the length and accuracy of their tee shot and other far to medium range shots.

Stamina is important in golf because players must maintain their focus until their last hole. “This year I hope to be more consistent. This has been a slight problem of mine in the past. One day

I will play my best and the next I will play my worst. In the game of golf, every mistake counts and therefore, I try to keep my mistakes down so I can play the best that I am capable of playing,” said captain David Lang (’18).

The team has been experiencing a turnover from last year, as they had a couple key seniors and overall the team was successful. Competition between players helps everyone improve. “I have been focused on earning a spot in the top 5 so I can play in the matches. I feel like playing in the matches helps me to become a better golfer because I will get valuable experience I can use for years to come,” said Tiernan Duffy (’20). This year, the team

has been focusing on developing their skills and building a team bond. “This season I hope to bring my teammates closer to each other than they were coming into the season. If at the end of the season, every player has built a bigger and stronger bond with each other, then I will feel as if my job as captain has been done,” said Lang. It seems as though Lang has done a good job of this so far. “It has been really fun getting to know everyone on the team. Even though we are in different grades, we still get along great,” said Duffy. The team has started the season with one win and three losses, but hopes to turn things around in their next match against New Canaan.

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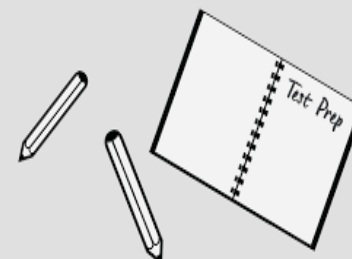
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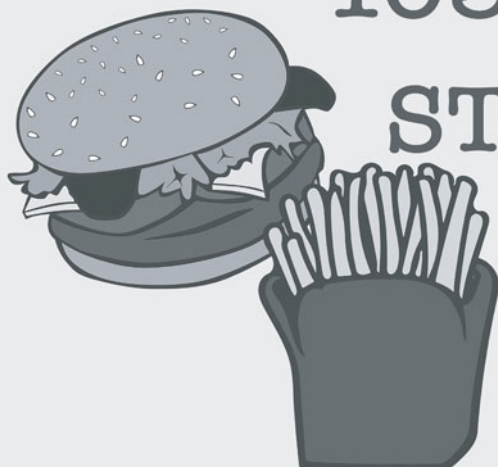
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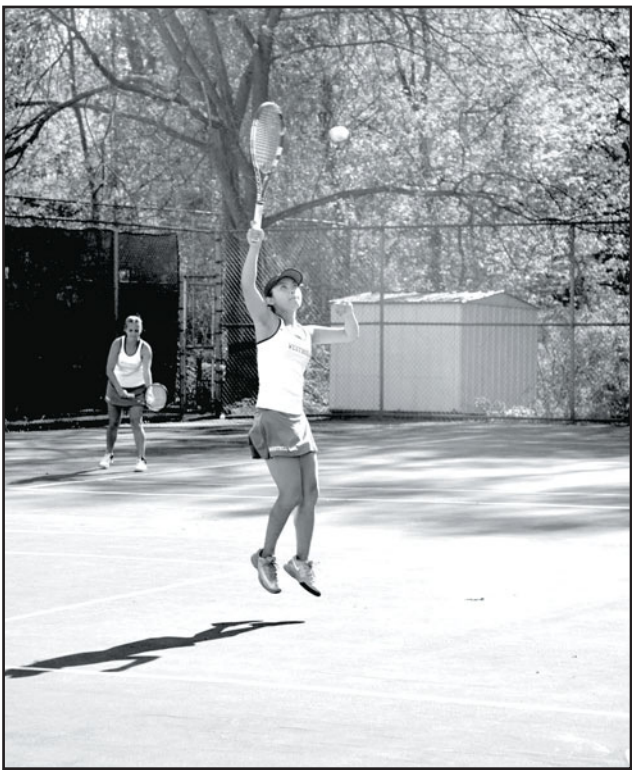
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Virtudes' getting into the swing of things



SERVING UP SKILLS Virtudes has grown as an athlete over the years with her father's guidance and tricks.

Sakshi Patel
Creative Director

The Westword sat down with Shana Virtudes, a senior on the girls tennis team. She told us about her experiences regarding tennis.

The Westword: What age were you when you started to play tennis?

Shana Virtudes: I started playing tennis at the age of 10.

TW: Why did you start playing tennis?

SV: My dad inspired me to play tennis. He taught me the tips and techniques of the sport and motivates me from time to time about my love for tennis.

TW: What is your favorite part about the sport?

SV: My favorite part about tennis is that it is a whole body workout and it is a lifelong

sport. Tennis sharpens the mind as it shapes the body. Every time a ball is hit, you must react and respond quickly. Tennis has taught me so much about mental toughness which pays off in the future.

TW: Do you have a role model?

SV: My role model is my dad. He never gives up, keeps fighting, believes in his ideas and principles. As for my favorite tennis player, it has to be Serena Williams.

TW: Do you have any pre-game rituals?

SV: I do not really have any pregame rituals, but talking to my teammates and listening to some music usually calms my nerves before a match. I also make sure to bounce the ball three times on my first serve and twice on my second.

TW: Are you planning on continuing to play in college?

SV: Unfortunately, I do not plan on playing tennis in college because I plan to prioritize my studies and my chosen major.

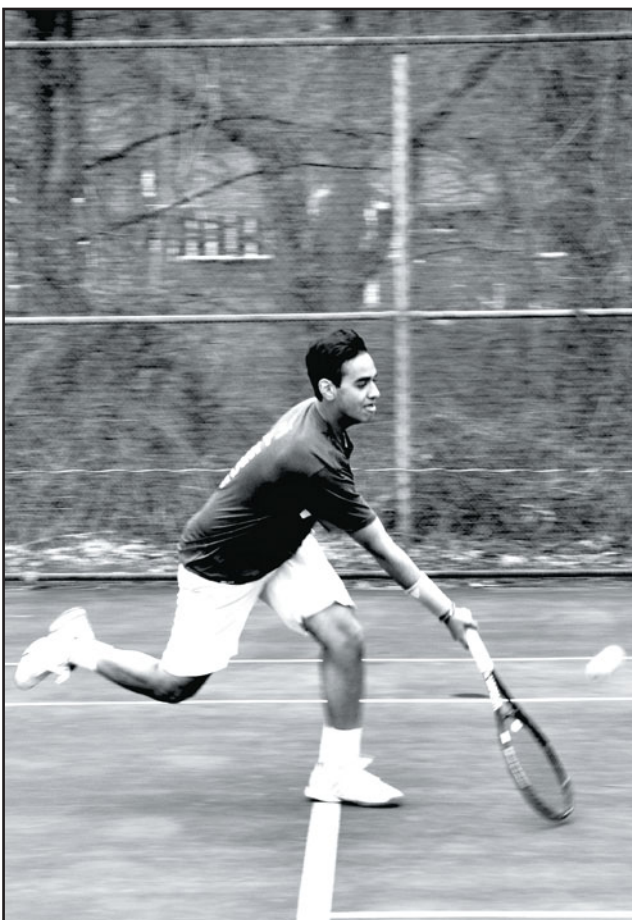
TW: What is your favorite memory from Westhill?

SV: My favorite memory from Westhill would definitely be the bus rides to our games. My team is my second family and the bus rides are a place we become even closer. They make tennis more enjoyable. They are irreplaceable.

TW: Any advice for someone planning on playing tennis?

SV: This may be cheesy or cliché, but my advice for someone planning on playing tennis is to never give up. Tennis is a mental game and there will be times where you will hit some bad shots or lose some matches, you cannot get yourself down, but instead fight for that next point and win the match.

Tandon's causing a racket on the court



HIGHLY COMPETITIVE Tandon hopes to end his senior year with a bang as he hopes to excel at states, and hopes to continue to play tennis in college as well.

Nick Rich
Staff Writer

The Westword had a chance to talk with Rishabh to discuss the type of committed tennis player he is and his progress to become better.

The Westword: When did you first start playing tennis?

Rishabh Tandon: I first started playing tennis when I was 3 years old.

TW: Was there a certain age when you really started to get into tennis and realized you wanted to make it a part of your life?

RT: When I was 13, I thought it was time for me to start playing in USTA tournaments and really get into competitive tennis. Although I did not obtain results right away, in due time I would see myself in the top 25 players in New England.

TW: Have you been playing for the team for all four years? Do you play doubles and/or singles?

RT: I have played on the varsity team for all 4 years. Freshman year I played 1 doubles. Sopho-

more year I played 3 singles. Junior year I played number 2 and 3 singles. And this year I switch between 1 and 2 singles.

TW: How do you train in the offseason?

RT: I train at Intensity Tennis Academy during the offseason. There I focus on improving my fitness and overall game.

TW: Do you play any sports besides tennis?

RT: I do not play any other sports aside for tennis. However, I used to play soccer.

TW: How has your experience been as a senior and leader on the team?

RT: As a senior and leader of the team this year, I look to bring the tennis team together in order to achieve success during both the season and postseason.

TW: Who is your biggest rivalry that you hope to defeat this season?

RT: We are looking forward to the Darien game. We lost 4-3 to them last year and hope to come out on top this year.

TW: What are personally some

of your strengths?

RT: As a player my bigger strengths are my forehand, serve, and net game. My favorite shot is the inside-out forehand.

TW: Weaknesses?

RT: My biggest weakness is my backhand. But I have learned to run around it and attack with my forehand for better results.

TW: What are some of your most memorable moments?

RT: My most memorable moment is the Staples game last year. I won the first set 6-4 and was down 4-1 in the second. I found myself mentally and was able to come back and win 6-4 6-4. My win ended up tying the game at 3-3. Matt Greenbaum then won his match and we beat Staples for the first time in program history.

TW: How do you feel now that your experience in high school tennis is coming to an end?

RT: I am definitely going to miss playing on the high school team. Hopefully I end my high school career on a good note with a win at States.

The load-down on lacrosse

Alex Fischer
Staff Writer

Although the game of lacrosse is relatively new compared to other team sports Americans have practiced over the skills required to play it centuries, lacrosse shows many similarities with some well-known sports. The lacrosse team with the most goals by the end of the 4 quarters, or 2 halves, wins. Each game begins with a face-off or a draw, creating tension between two competitors and a 50/50 chance of ball control and possession, dependent upon gender.

Both attackers and defenders are contained within the boundaries of restraining lines while midfielders are allowed to run wherever they so please. The concept of the restraining lines often creates confusion for players and officials. "Lacrosse is definitely the hardest sport to learn the rules of," said lacrosse coach Joey Devellis. Despite the complexity, defenders must play within the lines of their opponents offensive zone for the

duration of the game. In girls' lacrosse, all players with the exception of the goalie must remain outside of the crease, the homebase of the goalie, whereas in a boys game, the defenders are allowed inside. If any player who is not allowed inside the area of the crease enters, a penalty is given to the team, therefore granting possession of the ball to their opponent.

There are several rules which differentiate the actions within boys' and girls' lacrosse. Most notably, the level of physical contact directly correlates to the length and pocket depth of the stick. Boys have more contact and deeper pockets in their sticks than girls. With that said, in an environment where there is a lot less physical contact between two competitors, all girls lacrosse players use sticks of the same length and pocket depth.

Prior to tryouts, the girls must purchase their own stick along with other pieces of necessary equipment. In addition to a mouth guard, girls are required to wear eye goggles to protect the most sensitive areas of the face. The

goggles have less protective substitute for helmets used in boys lacrosse. "If the boys wear helmets in order to stay safe, why shouldn't we?" said Yuika Kominami ('17). As this sport is played on a turf surface, turf shoes or cleats are recommended.

The standards of athleticism are set high. Westhill girls lacrosse tryouts have become widely known for their high fitness expectations held for each player. Many girls drop out after the first few days of tryouts. "[High school lacrosse] is much tougher overall, as stick checking and contact on the body become more of a norm," said Grace Hansen ('19). With that said, only those girls willing to push themselves to the limit will be able to persevere through the intense training. Pre-season conditioning is almost essential for positive results as the season rolls around, so the girls hit the weight room twice a week during the winter months, accompanied by regular captain's practices as the weather progressively begins to get warmer.



Photo by **Ryan Murace** / Media Manager.

MAY SPORTS CALENDAR

Week 1 (1-7)

DATE: 1

EVENT: Varsity Girls Tennis
OPPONENT: Greenwich
LOCATION: Home
TIME: 4:00 P.M.

DATE: 4

EVENT: Varsity Golf
OPPONENT: Stamford High, Trinity
LOCATION: Rippowam
TIME: 3:15 P.M.

DATE: 5

EVENT: JV Boys Lacrosse
OPPONENT: Fairfield Ludlowe
LOCATION: Taft Field
TIME: 5:00 P.M.

Week 2 (8-14)

DATE: 8

EVENT: Varsity Baseball
OPPONENT: Brien McMahon
LOCATION: Home
TIME: 4:00 P.M.

DATE: 10

EVENT: Varsity Softball
OPPONENT: Ridgefield High
LOCATION: Away
TIME: 4:00 P.M.

DATE: 13

EVENT: JV Girls Lacrosse
OPPONENT: Fairfield Ludlowe
LOCATION: Taft Field
TIME: 11:30 A.M.

Week 3 (15-21)

DATE: 15

EVENT: Varsity Boys Tennis
OPPONENT: New Canaan
LOCATION: Home
TIME: 4:00

DATE: 16

EVENT: Varsity Boys Outdoor Track
OPPONENT: Stamford High
LOCATION: Home
TIME: 4:00 P.M.

DATE: 18

EVENT: Varsity Boys Lacrosse
OPPONENT: King Low Heywood
LOCATION: Away
TIME: 3:00 P.M.

Week 4 (22-31)

DATE: 26

EVENT: Varsity Baseball
OPPONENT: St. Joseph
LOCATION: Home
TIME: 4:00 P.M.

DATE: 27

EVENT: Varsity Boys lacrosse
OPPONENT: Stamford High
LOCATION: Home
TIME: 5:30 P.M.

DATE: 29

EVENT: JV Girls Lacrosse
OPPONENT: Norwalk
LOCATION: Home
TIME: 4:00 P.M.

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Girls varsity lacrosse charges towards the new season

Athletes of the Month *p.38* / A beginner's guide to spring sports *p.36*



Shana Virtudes



Rishab Tandon