

The Westword

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Student voice of the Westhill community

"The test of good journalism is the measure of its public service."

Student mock election informs the public

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October 2016

Note from the Editors

Dear Reader,

We are extremely excited to present the first issue of *The Westword* for the 2016-17 school year! We, on staff, have worked tremendously hard to produce this month's paper that encompasses an array of topics and issues.

We are also incredibly honored to be awarded the highest recognition given by the Columbia Scholastic Press Association, the Gold Crown Award, for the previous year.

Our first Editorial this month tackles the issue surrounding the lack of preparation prominent in the freshman classes in the Stamford Public School education system. We believe this is an important topic that needs to be addressed and brought to the attention of the Westhill Community.

Following our Editorial, we have the News section where you can read about the comeback of the buildOn club. The new student WiFi and new teacher advisor for the Debate club are also important highlights in the section.

As you delve into the Viewpoint section, you can read the perspective of both a Republican and Democratic on why they identify with their respective party along with a relevant and important pro-con on the newly implemented attendance policy.

In Supplement, we examine the effects of technology on many aspects of our lives, with a spread emphasizing its impact on our brains.

Inside the Special Report section, we have an in-depth look into the before and after of Hurricane Matthew.

If you flip to our Scatterbrain section, you will see a highlight of senior parking spots, along with the first Slay of the Month of the year. In the Express section, the artist of the month is Emma Cali.

Inside Sports this issue, there is a highlight on senior athletes that have already committed to college. In Las Noticias, you can see the opinions on the election, as well as the effects of Zika in Stamford.

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
Editor-in-Chief & Executive Editor

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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, Melanie Gorski, Yacianca Taveras, Sarah Goldberg, William Evans, Dan Skigen, Mr. von Wahlde, and Mr. Wooley. The Editorial can be found on page 3.

Announcements

Congratulations to...
Ms. Miraballes on her engagement!

Corrections

The Westword has no corrections to issue 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

EDITORIAL

Bridging the education gap

Middle school is a very difficult time for students around the nation as their bodies are changing and developing, this makes learning very difficult and sometimes this can lead to problems once they come to WHS. Students often feel that middle school did not prepare them enough with the necessary skills required to excel in high school.

“More than ever, middle school students need core academic knowledge and skills that will prepare them for high school, college, careers, and life,” said former Superintendent Dr. Winfred Hamilton. Hamilton stressed the importance of middle school in preparing students for high school and beyond. However our middle school education seems to be falling short.

It is important to look at all the students in the system. Stamford’s diverse student body includes various levels of learners. There are many students that struggle with this transition and their grades reflect this struggle. Of the 516 members of the freshmen class of 2015-16, 53 were held back, 12 of which were special education students.

Ten percent of students were not able to complete 9th grade. Even though that 10 percent did not proceed to the 10th grade, Mr. Dunlap, the ninth grade administrator, has done a great job in making sure that the other 90 percent did move on.

However, doing the minimum and just moving on to the next grade is not enough to prepare students for the “real world.”

This is something that Westhill administration has yet to pick up on. While the school is doing a great job in making sure kids move on to the next grade, administration has acknowledged that grades tend to drop from 8th grade to 9th grade. The problem in the Stamford Public Schools (SPS) is that middle school, which is claimed to be preparing kids for high school in the reference guide, in reality are doing a poor job in doing so. When looking for research to substantiate what was assumed to be a drop, it became clear that the statistics do not even exist in an easily accessible format. Middle school statistics are not regarded nearly as highly as high school statistics. For example, GPA is not calculated in middle

school, which is why it is difficult to bring up numbers proving the drop.

With the lack of statistics, it can be assumed that not enough attention is given to the academic achievement, or lack of, within the many middle school.

“The grades in middle school are mostly A’s, B’s, and C’s with smaller numbers of D’s and F’s as opposed to high school, where we see a larger dispersion of grades with more D’s and

The bottom line:

While middle school is a difficult time that usually focuses on social development, the middle schools need to provide more of a simulation in terms of expectations. Westhill also needs to continue, if not extend, their work with freshmen during the transition period, and must communicate with middle schools.

F’s,” said Dr. Judy Singer, head of research and statistics for SPS. This could be due to the fact that to some regard, middle school students are not given enough responsibility and accountability for their work by teachers.

Dr. Singer explained that middle schools have different grading systems and teachers have more personal discretion in weighing homework, classwork, and tests, as opposed to in high school with standard grading policies.

“I could see how it definitely would be difficult for a student to adjust to high school expectations from middle school expectations with grading. Grading can differ from class to class based on how much the teachers want to weigh each assignment,” said Jason Martin, Rippowam Principal, and former Westhill administrator.

With such a major difference in grading policies, students may develop different work ethic in middle school that could not be as effective in high school. Student A may get F’s on tests but A’s on homework, classwork, and participation. Student B does well on tests but may not do so well on homework, classwork, and participation. In this situation, Student A would not be prepared for the high school work ethic, which involves preparing for tests and quizzes to get the best marks. On the other hand, Student B will be better prepared for the high school grading system but may not get the best grades in middle school. The question arises: Is middle school not preparing kids or

is high school not helping the students reach their true potential?

Middle school is doing a great job getting kids ready for high school “socially, academically and mentally,” said Mr. Dunlap. “There is a normal transition period where grades are going to drop no matter who the student is.”

To help this, Westhill has implemented many programs for freshmen to aid with the transition to high school.

LanD Crew, a freshmen mentoring program headed by Mr. Dunlap, Purple PACT, the student athlete-tutoring program has done wonders with the student athletes thanks to Coach Frank Marcucio, Mrs. Figluzzi, and Mr. Dunlap, Period 8 Tutoring, which allows NHS members to tutor kids needing extra help in classes keeps kids from falling behind, and so many more programs for freshmen are in place to make sure students do well. In recent years a new team program takes place freshmen year. This is when groups of freshmen are put onto teams that coordinate with core classes with the same teachers. This allows for better communication between teachers to help students keep their grades up during the “transition period” that Mr. Dunlap talked about. Most teachers that were asked about the team system said it works very well, but sometimes kids are not placed on correct teams and might not work as it is supposed to. Various teachers also agreed that if the team system somehow was able to communicate with the middle schools and implement a team system that would connect the two, that this would help kids greatly.

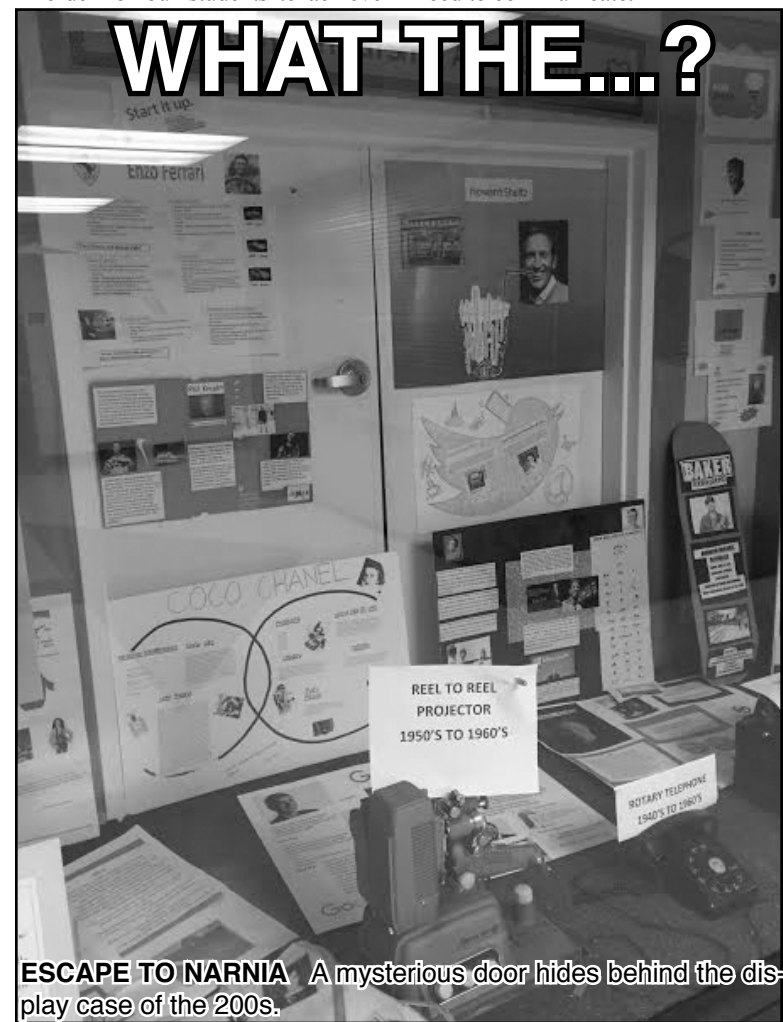
Some teachers still see a deeper problem. “I can only speak for the World Language Department but in the majority of middle school kids I see a lot of them come in and are not prepared for high school. The kids just do not have what they need to be ready for high school,” said Spanish

teacher Mrs. Petrizzi.

Petrizzi also emphasizes the the idea that the problem lies within the lack of graduation requirements in middle school. This system pushes students to high school regardless of their readiness. That being said it is difficult to tell whether or not the grade drop is due to normal transition period or if it is due to policy problems, student preparedness, or something more. It is

their true potential and to “prepare them for high school, college, careers, and life.” Mr. Dunlap also proposed more Professional Development between middle school and high school staff to help bridge the gap. Another solution might be changing middle school policy to make it more similar to a high school experience.

It is very difficult for middle school students to understand what will be expected of them in high school when they have completely different expectations in middle school. In order to bridge this gap SPS must create communication between middle school and high school, possibly by bringing the team system to middle school. The middle schools also must start to make middle school more of a simulation of high school with similar expectations in order to prepare students once they come to WHS. Westhill has taken steps in the right direction but in order to continue on and bridge the gap the schools need to communicate.



ESCAPE TO NARNIA A mysterious door hides behind the display case of the 200s.

Please submit op-eds and letters to
Dong Zhi Guo's mailbox in Room 224 or
email them to westwordwhs@gmail.com.

The Purple Pack is back



Photos by Ryan Murace & Devon Ostheimer / Media Manager & Photographer.

Adriana DiSalvo
Staff Writer

"If it ain't purple, it ain't poppin'." This is just one of the many chants that the student cheer section, better known as the Purple Pack, repeats with pride at any Westhill sports games. The Purple Pack is a group of Westhill students who come together during sporting events to root for athletes and get the audience excited. "The best part is bringing kids together for the events. It is a great feeling when you manage to

get more than 50 kids all yelling the same thing at the same time. When there is a game that has a successful turnout and everyone is jumping and screaming and having a good time I like to think I did my job," said Nick Smeriglio ('17), one of the leaders of Westhill's Purple Pack. The group has been around since 2012 and it is always one of the reasons kids enjoy going to sports games. The chanting, the face paint, the Viking shirts, and the posters make Westhill's sporting events

spirited and enjoyable for both spectators and athletes. The Purple Pack leaders change each year. There are usually four captains of the pack. The captain positions are passed down by the previous captains every year. This year, the leaders are Smeriglio, Mike Grafstein ('17), Blake Newcomer ('17), and Charlie Teeters ('17). The presence of the pack is not limited to sports games. It is common to find students wearing their jerseys, Westhill spirit wear, and Purple Pack tee-shirts.

"I would say the presence of the Purple Pack has seemed to increase each year. Each year more and more people want to get involved because it's a great way to show your school spirit. I've talked to a bunch of different athletes and they've said that it really motivates them to play hard when they have an entire section cheering them on. So in my time at Westhill the presence has only increased and has become a bigger part of what being a Viking is all about," said Grafstein. The Purple Pack is sure to

hype athletes up during games and they perform even better knowing that their fellow classmates are watching them. "It's awesome knowing that my friends are watching me play and cheering me on during the football games. It makes me want to play even better knowing that they are all watching me," said Newcomer, who is also captain of the football team. The Purple Pack will continue to improve and keep athletes and students excited for sporting events to come.

The Untold Stories

Column by Noah Klein



The ESL program at Westhill High School is something that is not talked about very much in the general population, however the students in the program all have a story that is usually not told. This column will allow for the ESL students to share their stories. For this issue, The Westword sat down with Carlos Albano, a junior in Mr. Sandoval's seventh period Bilingual History class.

The Westword: When did you come to the United States? Why did you come?
Carlos Albano: I immigrated in 2015, I came because my family was

here. I got into a motorcycle accident and was in a coma for one month. I was just driving and a truck came up from behind and hurt me, so my mom said I needed to come to the U.S. I did not really have much in Guatemala and so I came here.

TW: So you were living in Guatemala without your family?
CA: Yes, in Guatemala I did not have anything, my family was here. I lived with my aunt and uncle.

TW: Your English is really good. Where did you learn how to speak English?
CA: I used to study books in my country. I learned some in Belize

and I learned even more when I came here.

TW: What do you think of Westhill High School?
CA: Before I was here I went to Stamford High, I was so excited to come here. This school is better; it has a swimming pool and many more things to do after school.

TW: Are you involved in any after school clubs?
CA: I am not right now but I want to do the newspaper, or [join] the swim team.

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

CA: No, I think in this school we are all the same, everyone is treated the same.

TW: What is your favorite class?
CA: I like biology, it is interesting we learn a lot about genetics and the body.

TW: What do you want to do after high school?
CA: I want to become a detective and [work] with forensics. I like [forensics] a lot and I want to go to college. I would be the first in my family, I think that would be pretty cool.

TW: What is your favorite memory in the U.S.?
CA: Seeing my mom for the first

time in eight years was great. In Guatemala, I did not even have a picture of her or anything.

TW: Do you ever miss your home country of Guatemala?
CA: Of course. I miss the food, the culture, and the people. I think about it all the time.

TW: My last question, I have to ask, which is better Westhill High School or Stamford High School?
CA: Westhill has many more clubs like Spanish club afterschool and many other things to do. I could never have imagined a place like this, the teachers are good, the people are good, everything is good.

BRIEFS

Interact club runs annual blood drive

This month, the Interact volunteer club ran their annual fall blood drive in cooperation with the American Red Cross. Over 70 students signed up to give blood to those in need. However, the drive was not as prosperous as it has been in the past. With disasters such as Hurricane Matthew greatly impacting southern states like North Carolina, there has been a decrease of Red Cross phlebotomists in Connecticut. This factor impacted the efficiency of the blood drive which took place in the freshman gym. Instead of the usual ten beds set up, there were only four, and only four nurses were on staff to draw blood. This left several students waiting for hours to give blood, and some were even sent away due to overcrowding. The Red Cross will return to Westhill again in the spring, hopefully with a more successful outcome.

Agriscience haunted house lives up to the hype

The Westhill Agricultural Science program held their Haunted House Fundraiser shortly before Halloween this year. The Agriscience program definitely delivered on their promise to scare with no shortage of blood, ripped stuffed animals, dead bodies, and jump scares done by students in zombie prosthetics. The students also offered a less scary Halloween activity with a Fall Festival which included Halloween treats, games and prizes, and a costume contest. The festival was attended by young families from all over Stamford. The events raised over \$1,500 for the Stamford FFA. "I had an awesome time and I could tell that everyone who came out to the event enjoyed it too," said Hayley Smith ('17), chapter treasurer of the Stamford FFA. The Agriscience program hopes to host the same event with the same scale of success next year.

Briefs by **Melanie Gorski** / News Editor.

The beginning of a new era for Westhill Debate

Amelia Daube
Feature Editor

When former history teacher Mr. Hoffman left Westhill this summer, fellow teacher Mr. Petrone not only took over his room, but his role as the debate team coach.

While many of the returning debaters miss Mr. Hoffman's leadership, the transition has been seamless. Mr. Petrone wanted to be the debate coach as soon as he heard that Mr. Hoffman was leaving, and eagerly took on the role.

His excitement for debate is really making an impression on the students. He is working closely with the debate captains Leah Schwartz ('17), Ben Freedman ('17), Rachel Fein ('17), and Vivek James ('17) to maintain the same format as the previous debate team meetings.

The students really appreciate having an advisor that cares as much about the team as Mr. Hoffman did. "I am excited for the opportunity to continue the tradition that Mr. Hoffman has established. I am looking forward to seeing it continue to grow and I am proud of the senior leadership this year," said Mr. Petrone.

The debate team holds meetings every Tuesday and Wednesday. On Tuesdays, the captains distribute articles and pose questions about them, which helps everyone stay informed and work on their public speaking.

On Wednesdays, the team holds workshops to help underclassmen get used to the format of debates. They also hold mock debates, practice rounds, and case writing.

Because Mr. Petrone is new to the role, the debate captains have had more responsibilities than in

years past. "Mr. Petrone is great, but this is still his first year. He is learning about the many details about debate and how it works. The captains have been immersed in debate since we were freshmen, so we help Mr. Petrone learn about the debates through the meetings as well," said Freedman.

Mr. Petrone handles all of the logistics like Mr. Hoffman did, and the captains work with fellow members. This year, the captains are taking a more active role in teaching new members about debate.

Westhill hosted the first debate of the season, which was a lot of work for both the captains and coach. The team held the first ever Westhill vs. Stamford High scrimmage on October 26, so underclassmen could get experience. "This novice scrimmage not only benefited our younger members, but gave our upperclassmen the

chance to practice case writing. Hosting events like this will prepare all our debaters for future competitions, ensuring a successful season for the Westhill debate team," said Fein.

The captains of the team reached out to state representative, Caroline Simmons, about coming in and talking to the team about public speaking and being involved in politics. "Even though we are sad to see Mr. Hoffman go, we're excited to have Mr. Petrone as our new advisor. We have a great team of novice debaters this year and the captains are working hard to integrate them into the team," said Schwartz.

If anyone is interested in learning more about the debate team or public speaking and writing, go to room 418 after school on Tuesday or Wednesday to attend a meeting.



Photos by **Valeria Carias** / Photographer.

The sitch with student WiFi

Ryan Murace
Media Manager

Among several changes brought to Westhill at the start of the school year was Stamford Public Schools' new WiFi policy. According to the district's Acceptable Use Policy, which was amended to include the new WiFi policy this past April, students are now given their own WiFi network, a school-issued Google account, and access to Google Chromebooks, small laptops, in some classrooms.

The new WiFi policy is a step towards creating a more modern and simplistic way of Internet use and other forms of electronic communication in the Stamford Public Schools. This goal will be accomplished by moving towards a system where all of the students and teachers in the district use the school issued Google accounts

as their main means of communication for all matters related to school. This new system includes emails sent through Naviance, turning in all electronic assignments through Google Classroom, and Google Chromebooks.

In classrooms that do not contain any Google Chromebooks, students can use their own devices for academic purposes, which is where the Students BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) network becomes important. "The goal of having the BYOD program is to decriminalize the use of cell phones and WiFi for academic purposes," said Mr. Otterspoor. As the school's Technology Professional Development Leader, Otterspoor is responsible for helping staff learn how to use technology in the building.

Installation of the network took place throughout last year and concluded by the time the

year was done. According to Otterspoor, students were not given access to the system until this year because the school district was not ready to provide support to that many devices at once before then. However, the network was tested by students when it was briefly made available for a survey conducted during one of the Connection Time periods last year. Now that the network has arrived, students are able to enjoy a very wide variety of advantages it provides for academics. "It's easier to go to websites for school and homework projects," said Shahrear Javed ('17).

Of course, using the network is not as simple as just signing in. It comes with several restrictions and expectations that students must abide by in order to use the WiFi. Students are required to turn in an Acceptable Use Agreement form and be taught the Digi-

tal Citizenship Curriculum. According to Principal Figluizzi, the curriculum teaches how to safely use the school's technology and will be taught by different departments throughout the year.

Then there are the restrictions set out by the school district and Westhill. This has made some students displeased with the overall policy. "It's our phones, it's our social media, we should have access to our own things," said Yahaira Novoa ('17). According to the policy, Stamford Public Schools have the right to monitor all activity technology related in the schools. They also block access to all inappropriate content, in addition to whatever the schools block individually. At Westhill, the administration has blocked Snapchat and some aspects of Instagram. Any other blocks students may experience are unintentional by the administration.

Simmons assists in advocating for open campus

Janet Manina
Supplement Editor

Caroline Simmons, the Democratic candidate for Connecticut's State Representative, learned at a past LanD Crew meeting upon hearing that Westhill did not have an open campus policy. A possible state representative speaking out for the school's open campus policy would push its efforts forward with great stride, especially since talk has been going on for years by Westhill's students and little has been done.

Talk has circulated throughout the years, there is not much progress that the students have made due to lack of initiative to go through the legislative process.

In terms of Stamford Public Schools and its history with open campus policies, Stamford High does not have one implemented. Westhill and Stamford High both have closed campuses, while schools in other towns have had open campus policies for years.

Greenwich High School (GHS) allows seniors, with a signed permission slip agree-

ing "not to institute any action or lawsuit against the Town of Greenwich, the Greenwich Board of Education and/or any of their agents or employees arising out of the student's participation in the Open Campus Option while the student is off school property." GHS students are required to sign in and out of the school upon arrival and exit, and seniors exercise this right on a daily basis.

Seniors of Darien High School are held to a slightly different policy. They are allowed to miss the first or last block of their school day, only if they have a free class period at the given time, in addition to requirements of signing in and out of the front entrance of the school.

While other schools have had these policies in effect for years, for Westhill to begin an open school policy it would demand extreme cooperation between students, administrators, and the Board of Education (BOE). "She said that as students we should start a petition and talk to Ms. Figliuzzi," said Erica Abela ('17), who attended the LanD Crew



Photo courtesy of Caroline Simmons//Contributor

OPEN CAMPUS CREW Students from the freshman mentoring program LanD Crew stand with Mr. Dunlap, the advisor, and Simmons after her presentation.

meeting that Simmons spoke at. While Simmons would advocate for Stamford's progress in this heated debate, it is up to the students of Westhill to start the change from the inside out. Simmons explained that because the policy is a local issue, they would have to present their cause to the BOE to gain support.

Simmons would be able to walk students through the legislative process that comes with petitioning and presenting an open campus policy change to the BOE, which would be a tremendous help for students who have

nearly no experience with the BOE. Simmons said, "it was wonderful to hear from students who care about issues in their community and I explained to them the process and how they can advocate for their ideas."

For students who have a strong desire to leave campus during lunch, or students who think a free period during long block would be better utilized at home, the only way to get this policy in operation is with student action and the help of Connecticut's possible State Representative, Caroline Simmons.

Music petitions for Muslim holiday recognition

Melanie Gorski
News Editor

In today's divisive political landscape and the widening range of races, religions, and creeds in America, it is hard to get 200 people to agree on anything. Despite this challenge, Jasmina Music ('17) compiled a petition of 208 Westhill students who sided with her argument to give a day off for two of the most holy Muslim holidays, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha.

Muslim holidays rotate based on the Hijri, the Islamic lunar calendar. The days are placed one after the other, Eid al-Fitr being the first. The first day marks the breaking of the fast that takes place throughout Ramadan, the Islamic holy month. The second day is Eid al-Adha, meaning "festival of the sacrifice." On the second day, families practicing Islam sacrifice a lamb to honor the prophet, Abraham, for sacrificing his son to God. On the second

Eid, families will keep a third of the lamb for themselves, give the last third to relatives, and give the last third to the poor.

Music points out that there are several vacation days given by the Board of Education for Jewish and Christian holidays, but they have yet to grant any breaks for Muslim holidays. With other Connecticut school districts such as Waterbury appointing days off for Eid, it makes one wonder why the Stamford school district is not doing the same. The Westword sat down with Music to discuss her position on the matter and what she is doing to support it.

The Westword: What is Eid and how is it celebrated?

Jasmina Music: There are two Eids, it is a Muslim holiday. The first day is after the holy month of Ramadan where Muslims sustain from eating and drinking until sunset. On the first day Muslims are supposed to thank God for

their strength and motivation during the holy month. On the second day, there is supposed to be the sacrifice of a lamb to symbolize Abraham's sacrifice of his son to God and thank Abraham for his sacrifice. Both days are a time for Muslims to celebrate and indulge.

TW: What made you start the petition to give a day off for the Muslim holiday, Eid?

JM: I remembered one other time someone started a petition to make the food better at Westhill, a lightbulb kind of went off. So I started the petition, and within one day, I got 208 signatures.

TW: I understand that you presented your idea to make Eid a day off for Stamford Public Schools to the Board of Education, what exactly was that process like?

JM: They called people up by name. I stated who I was, why I was there, and explained what Eid was. I spoke about what it means to the people that celebrate it, and

what I wanted them to do about it. I let the board know that there was no money involved. I explained my own personal experiences, how I went to school for 12 years and would have to miss a day or two every year.

TW: What does Eid mean to you?

JM: Eid is essentially our own Christmas, we get presents, we get money. I love being with family and friends, but I hate worrying about school and what I'm missing while I am celebrating my holiday; it is just not fair.

TW: How would you be impacted if the Board of Education decided to allow a day off for Eid?

JM: I have little cousins and sisters and I don't want them to experience what I did. It's not fair for them to be thinking about what lessons they're missing or how they're going to get their absences excused on such a special day. It would be great to get to celebrate our holiday without those worries.

BRIEFS

Petition to restore safer tennis courts

The Westhill tennis team has created a petition for safer tennis courts. The tennis courts currently have sink holes, black mold, and the surface is peeling off. As the weather changes, it will only become more dangerous. Mildew and mold worsens in a damp ground. Steps need to be taken to provide our Vikings with a safer and better place to practice. Not all the courts are usable. It takes more than a day for the courts to dry up after it rains. Games often need to be rescheduled, creating a greater inconvenience for all the players. Our tennis team has worked really hard and has won several state championships. They deserve to have a nontoxic environment to practice. They need at least 1000 signatures for the Government to take action. The petition is posted on the class Facebook group page. The link to the petition is posted there.

Interact collects food for Thanksgiving food drive

Every year, the Westhill community empties their pantry cabinets to spread the joy of Thanksgiving by donating food to those in need. The Interact club hosts this annual Thanksgiving food drive. JROTC helps them to organize this drive. The purpose of this is to contribute to the society and help the less fortunate. The interact students made posters and decorated boxes with festive turkeys and distributed them throughout the school. Teachers encourage their students to bring in cans and boxes of foods. Many teachers even agree to give extra credit to students for bringing in food to donate. They are looking for nonperishable foods, preferably sauces and food items that can be used as turkey stuffing. The donations are sent to different charitable organizations like Stamford Food Bank and Inspirica. Donations will be collected through Tuesday, November 22. Donate to the Thanksgiving food drive and let everyone have a happy Thanksgiving.

Eid al Fitr July 6 and Eid al Adha September 12



Good Month Bad Month

Column by
Noah Zussman &
Matthew Greenbaum

Good month for...

People with Peanut Allergies Scientists have created a patch to treat children and young adults with peanut allergies. This wearable patch delivers small doses of peanut proteins into the skin, which allows the body to build up its immunity. The treatment, called EPIT, has been deemed safe. This will reduce the burden of peanut allergies all over.



Chicago Cubs Seventy-one years. That is how long Chicago Cubs fans have been waiting for their team to make it back to the World Series and hopefully reclaim their overdue championship. The long wait will finally come to an end this season when the Cubs match up against the Cleveland Indians.



Westworld Highly anticipated HBO series, *Westworld*, premiered October. The science fiction thriller is adapted from the 1973 movie of the same name. The series premiere was met with great response as three million Americans watched. The HBO original recently won "Most Exciting New Series" in the 6th Critics' Choice Television Awards.

Bad Month for...

Debate Millions of Americans tuned in to watch the presidential debates to get a better understanding of the candidates and their policy. Trump and Clinton went back and forth, accusing each other of harsh allegations as opposed to discussing issues like climate change, Wall Street regulation, and the Black Lives Matter movements.



Hurricane Matthew This month the natural disaster, Hurricane Matthew, swept the Caribbean, leaving behind a path of destruction. Following the disaster, an estimated 1.4 million people were left without food and in need of assistance. Nearly 1,300 people were killed from this tropical storm.



Children of Aleppo In areas of Syria, civilians have been trapped in a living nightmare. There is a civil war taking place in Syria, and the city of Aleppo is in the center of it all. Already 470,000 people have been killed throughout the country. It is estimated that about 100,000 of those killed have been children, and millions of them remain in the country at war.

BuildOn is back, and better than ever



Photos by **Ryan Murace** // Media Manager

BUILDON BUILDS UP AGAIN Ms. Walden, supervisor of buildOn, holds the group's first meeting for the 2016-17 school year to discuss projects for the year and requirements for new members.

Samantha Gallant

Staff Writer

After taking a year off, the community service club buildOn is back and better than ever. Club members are excited to begin service projects and help, not only the Westhill community, but Stamford and international communities as well.

Two years ago, buildOn members were shocked to find out that the club would no longer be running in Westhill. After the club went on a hiatus for a year, members realized how necessary buildOn was to the Stamford community. They decided that it was time to take action.

Funding for the club was cut from Westhill by the buildOn national program in order to save money for other schools. Veteran members of buildOn were upset by this news so much so they decided to take action and come together to perform the community service, get sponsorship, recruit

students, and perform global education activities to form a new and improved buildOn.

Ms. Walden currently advises the club with the help of the many team officers of buildOn, including Andrea Vega ('17), Brittany Ramos ('17), Christian Perez ('17), Emely Yanes ('17), Lise Baptiste ('17), Mandy Chery ('17), Michael Hernandez ('17), Munera Begum ('17), and Shannon Vieux ('17).

The club does many community service activities that all help to break the cycle of poverty, illiteracy, and disease.

Members commit to service activities and fundraising so that they can ultimately have the opportunity to build a school abroad in an impoverished country.

"We do a lot of service, for instance, set up for the annual Hispanic Heritage Health Fair, and we helped participants register for health care. We also sort food in The Lower Food Bank of Fairfield County," said

club President Perez.

BuildOn is back thanks to former dedicated "buildOners" who were determined to help the community, whether it be here in Stamford or in another country across the world.

Previous members valued the program so much that they wanted to revive the club and continue the same experience at Westhill once again. "Since freshman year, buildOn has been that space within the school that is able to give you a sense of identity and community. We all abide by the same principles: to help each other and the Stamford community," said Hernandez.

BuildOn members have shown tremendous dedication to the Westhill, Stamford, and international communities.

After a year off, members seem ready to take on important community service projects and come back to Westhill even stronger than before.

Debating the new attendance policy

Amalia Skoparantz

Staff Writer

At the beginning of the Westhill school year of 2016-2017, a new attendance policy was created. Assistant to the Superintendent, Dr. Fernandez, Dean of Students Mr. Pereira, as well as a Stamford High history teacher, Mr. Moynihan, sat down and produced new regulations regarding attendance.

This year's new attendance policy is more firm to ensure proper education for students as well as respect to their teachers and mentors.

Most students, especially seniors, find this new policy to be a nuisance and out of line. "It has become way too strict,"

said Lindsay Crevecoeur ('17). Students believe that making a stronger policy will not stop them for not attending class or arriving late. However, these students fail to realize what benefits these rules provide.

Last year's policy allowed three tardies, which would add up to one unappealable absence. This year's students are allowed to have four tardies. Students should take advantage of this. Most upperclassmen drive to school which constantly makes them late. They sometimes stop for breakfast, sleep in later or get stuck in the morning traffic. Students should realize they now have an extra chance to come go grab that quick breakfast or

few extra minutes of sleep.

Also, if a student has five unappealable absences per semester they would lose credit for the class, but they would not fail, unlike the previous policy. This should be great to news to those who participate in sports. There is a certain GPA needed to be kept when playing a sport. Under this new rule there is a lesser chance of failing off the team.

Another factor students fail to recognize is the overall purpose of the policy. There has been an ongoing problem of students leaving early or coming in late. With this new policy, students will be encouraged to come on time and continue to attend class regularly.

The reason behind the firmer regulations is the behavior of students and the drive for administrators and the drive for administrators and parents/guardians who want the best for their students and have them geared toward success. Mr. Pereira states that the new policy is extremely beneficial and that "it will help with truancy."

By this new policy, motivating students to attend class is a clear benefit; just attending and paying attention can better your chances of doing well in class. The act of being in class and hearing the material will result in the growth of Westhill students. In the wise words of comedian Woody Allen, "80 percent

of success is showing up."

Coming into senior year, many students believe it won't be hard, that all their classes will be a joke, and that they do not actually have to attend class. This idea, for the most part, is false. A student's senior year is just as important as the first three. This is why the new policy is very beneficial to those seniors. It can serve as a wake-up call to realize the importance of going to class. Colleges still look at your first two quarter grades, and for some, it can be the one factor that makes or breaks your acceptance. By having a slightly stricter policy, it can only better the student body.

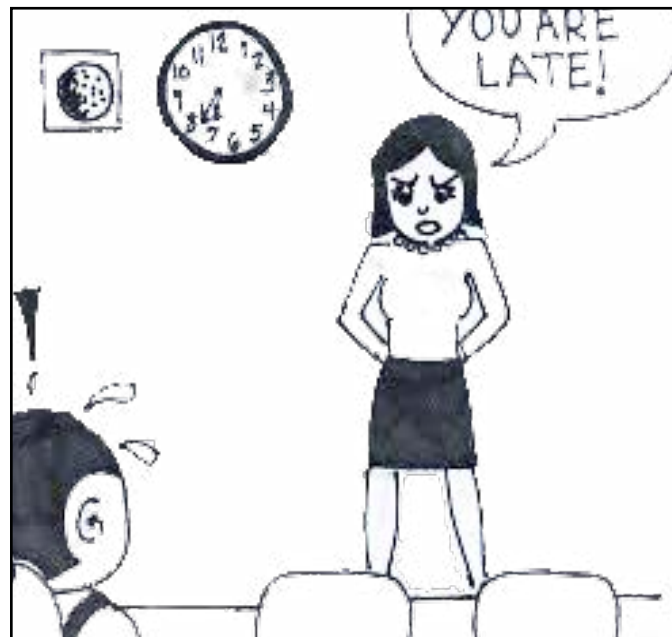


Illustration by Alexis Marchetti / Illustrator.

Nicole Segal & Bria Pettiford

Staff Writers

Westhill High School has decided to start its year off with a bang by changing the attendance policy due to the amount of students that were not coming to school on a regular basis. Ten appealable absences per semester, or five unappealable absences are all students have before losing credit in a class.

Losing credit in a class that is a graduation requirement would end in a consequence of not being able to graduate on-time, even if you have a passing grade in the course. "The new attendance policy seems more complicated than an attendance pol-

icy really needs to be," said Mr. Raymond Mazzaa, a history teacher at Westhill.

Attendance does have a direct correlation with a student's performance. However, is enforcing a stricter policy going to help or hurt students? While the new attendance policy may force a student to physically be on the premises, mentally they may not be focused in class, causing others to be influenced and distracted from another's lack of wanting to participate. Instead of having a punitive system where those who are absent are punished, we should enforce a correctional method such as speaking to the children that are frequently absent as well as their parents to see if there is an issue that is affect-

ing their presence in school.

The Pioneer Central School District in Yorkshire New York has come up with an attendance policy that does not result in the loss of credit, decline of current grade, or punitive action, rather results in a learning experience for the students. Each student has a certain amount of time to make up work that was missed, giving them the opportunity to show they genuinely care about their grades.

However, if the student does not make up the work and continues to not show up, he or she will lose school privileges in activities such as clubs and sports. This method encourages students to want to attend school and perform to their best

ability in order to be involved in extracurricular activities.

If we want students to come to school more, we should not only have a policy that gives them the chance to make up for what was missed, but also give encouragement and support instead of enstiling fear of how much work they will have to make up.

"With the new attendance policy, if you have a real emergency and administration doesn't consider it as appealable, you have an absence for something important and could risk not graduating in a class you need credit for," said Anna Astudillo ('17).

Another solution would be giving students a learning experience by having them do com-

munity service for however many hours they missed giving them the chance to learn outside of the classroom and make up for lost time. The new attendance policy gives students two choices, to show up for school no matter the situation, or to miss a handful of days and have their punishment be not graduating. This policy may work as a way to discipline and scare kids into going to school, but can also harms those who follow the rules and have a legitimate reason for their absence. While the new attendance policy should be strict enough that students come to school regularly, it should not give students anxiety and fear at the thought of five days every quarter could determine whether or not they graduate.

Westhill students: Democrat or Republican?

Ben Freedman
Contributor

I consider myself a Democrat because of their social and fiscal policies.

The core value of the Democratic Party is that the best way to improve the country is through an involved federal branch of government. This is a value I agree with heavily, because there are many issues in this country, such as racial and wealth inequality, that cannot be solved at state or local levels. Government actions and programs are the only effective ways to make change, in my opinion, in situations such as anti-discrimination policies in the

1960s and government job programs in the 1940s.

Another reason why I identify as a Democrat is because of the party's social platforms. The party supports marriage equality and a woman's right to choose abortion. The Democratic Party's beliefs for common sense gun legislation as well as universal healthcare are other policies I agree with.

One past president that best represents the core values of what the Democratic Party stands for is Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR). He was president at one of the hardest times our country has seen, the Great Depression and World War II. His presidency was a time in American history where

it was very clear that the federal government had to take control and be the most involved it had ever been in national policy.

In his first hundred days, FDR's New Deal, aimed at combatting staggering unemployment as a result of the depression, Roosevelt created dozens of government programs that served many purposes, including providing aid to states and creating jobs. His success as president and how much our country grew under him is part of the foundation of the modern day Democratic Party.

I thoroughly support the party's nomination of Hillary Clinton. She is the most

qualified candidate to ever run for president, having served as First Lady of Arkansas and the United States, a New York Senator, and Secretary of State. That level of experience is something that makes her stand out as a candidate. Politics is complicated, and I would not feel confident with a candidate who has no political experience. Clinton's stance on minimum wage is one of the best things about her, as she has outlined what she believes is the best way to start fighting income inequality.

I also agree with her tax plan, which involves raising taxes on the very rich, but no-

body beneath that. By eliminating tax loopholes and taxing those who can comfortably afford to pay their fair share, Hillary Clinton's economic policies would do a lot for the economic state of our nation.

Our next president could nominate up to four justices to the Supreme Court. That is a huge responsibility, and Hillary Clinton would nominate justices that would uphold the social progress we have made as a country in the last few decades.

The Democratic Party is about being progressive and enacting positive change for everyone, and that is why I am a Democrat.

DO YOU LEAN MORE TOWARDS THE LEFT OR RIGHT?

In terms of abortion, I side with...

- A. Pro-Life
- B. It depends on the situation
- C. Pro-Choice

Should there be increased limitations on gun purchases?

- A. No, it is a violation of the Second Amendment
- B. Somewhere in the middle
- C. Yes, there needs to be stricter background checks

Should the U.S. accept refugees from Syria?

- A. No
- B. Yes, but only after extensive background checks and continuous monitoring
- C. Yes

Should taxes be raised on the rich in order to lower student loans and interest rates?

- A. No
- B. No, but there needs to be government actions to decrease the rates
- C. Yes

Should the government enforce regulations against climate change?

- A. No
- B. Yes, but it should not have a large impact on consumers
- C. Yes

Information from isidewith.com.

Vivek James
Contributor

To many Americans, politics is this unknown, shadowy mass that is constantly evolving, one that usually sparks furious tirades, name-calling, and comments teeming with profanity under YouTube videos and Facebook posts. Yet, this mysterious force is what drives our nation's government.

As a staunch Republican, a student in an A.P. Government and Politics class, and a witness of the ongoing monstrosity of a presidential race, politics is indubitably one of the biggest parts of my life right now. It is fundamentally tied to everything that I am interested in and studying, whether that be statistics or economics or even science.

I identify as a Republican because I have fiscally and socially conservative characteristic of most Republicans out there. A devoted adherent to the Catholic faith, I am a strong proponent of a pro-life stance on abortion. A legal immigrant from India, I am against pathways to citizenship for illegal immigrants. A student learning about how the economy works, I am against raising the minimum wage. These are positions that have led me to support the officials in government whose policies support my conservative views, who are often Republicans.

There is no other president that exemplifies my views as much as Ronald Reagan, the neo-conservative. He not only touted legal immigration and enacted policies that allowed millions of immigrants to

seek residency in the United States and eventually obtain citizenship. Reagan was the champion of the unborn, fiercely denouncing abortion. Reaganomics catapulted the American economy out of years of the "stagflation" so prevalent in the Carter years. No other person defended conservative values and brought the United States to such a degree of excellence as well as Reagan did. The Reagan years were the glory years. Not only did Republicans follow his successful conservative movement, but so did Democrats. His model is one all presidents should follow.

So when Donald Trump styles himself as the next Reagan, I shrivel my nose in disgust.

After working as the policy speechwriter for the school's Trump

campaign, I studied Trump's positions on the various issues surrounding our nation today. I'll be honest; I support many of them, such as his propositions to defund abortions and his stand against illegal immigration, sans building a ridiculously expensive and ineffective wall and deporting ten million illegal immigrants, both of which are unfeasible.

His plan to reduce the taxes for all is also very attractive. However, it is his personality that trumps his viability as a candidate. By now, I am sure that you, the average American, are aware of the multitude of controversies Trump has led himself into. Trump's claim that he is a true conservative is dubious; he used to be a Democrat and has supported rather liberal policies, changing his policies with the ap-

pointment of the ultra-conservative Mike Pence as his running mate.

I wish Trump was not the Republican nominee. John Kasich was my choice, and an excellent choice at that. This man proved himself knowledgeable of the variety of issues troubling the nation today, such as racial disparity and gender inequality. His policies, consisting of tax cuts, defunding abortions, support of the Trans Pacific Partnership, and curbing climate change, are ones that I completely agree with. Kasich's honesty, genial nature, and willingness to collaborate with Democrats and Republicans of all kinds are qualities of the ideal president. You can imagine my disappointment when a buffoon was picked over this shining paragon of a conservative as Republican nominee.

Answers:

Mostly C's
Left Wing: Overall, your ideas side more with the Democratic Party, or Liberals.

Mostly B's
Moderate: Overall, your ideas are a mix of Democratic and Republican.

Mostly A's
Right Wing: Overall, your ideas side more with the Republican Party, or Conservatives.

Sweatshop 'til you drop

Dong Zhi Guo
Editor-in-Chief

The decaying building's air is dense with a concoction of different stench as rows of wary children and adults line the room behind sewing machines after working for 16 hours without a break. This is the horrific scene of a trillion dollar apparel industry that has swept the world of fashion into the second largest waste producer. It is responsible for 10 percent of all global

carbon emissions, according to *Forbes Magazine*.

Laborers working strenuous hours and being denied of basic rights are just a few of the distinctions marking the sweatshops of Bangladesh. Unfortunately, this problem exists around the globe in many developing nations, where the lack of government intervention serves as a catalyst for the mistreatment of garment workers, allowing apparel stores to capitalize on cheap labor. In Bangladesh, the minimum wage

is approximately \$38 a month and in most cases, the average garment worker in Bangladesh only makes approximately \$2 a day, according to *waronwant.org*.

In addition to unfair wages, the very infrastructure that many garment workers are placed under is structurally unsound and unregulated. Approximately 16,000 garment workers have lost their lives in numerous horrific factory-related disasters in the past three years.

In 2013, the collapse of the

garment factory, Rana Plaza, in Dhaka, Bangladesh caused the death of 1,135 workers and left approximately 2,500 injured, the largest casualty of any garment-factory accident in history, according to *The Guardian*.

It was reported that the factory owner had illegally added floors to the building as well as placing heavy equipment that the structure was not built to hold.

In the aftermath of Rana Plaza, major apparel stores such as Primark, H&M, and Zara made headline news for sourcing their clothing from Rana Plaza and not supervising the ethics of the factory prior to the incident. Agreements have been signed to implement safety requirements as a preventive measure to ensure this does not happen again.

Not surprisingly, however, many of the apparel companies are far behind schedule in their supposed plan to improve the garment industry. Today, 61 percent of the factories H&M sources from still do not have fire exits, according to Quartz News. Though H&M's revenue hit a high of 21.7 billion dollars in 2015, they are still unwilling to provide a safe workplace and fair wages for all of their employees down their supply chain.

This is the stark reality of how companies are able to sell five dollar shirts and dresses.

Furthermore, the effects of fast and cheap garments transcend more than just morals but the very environment that we live in.

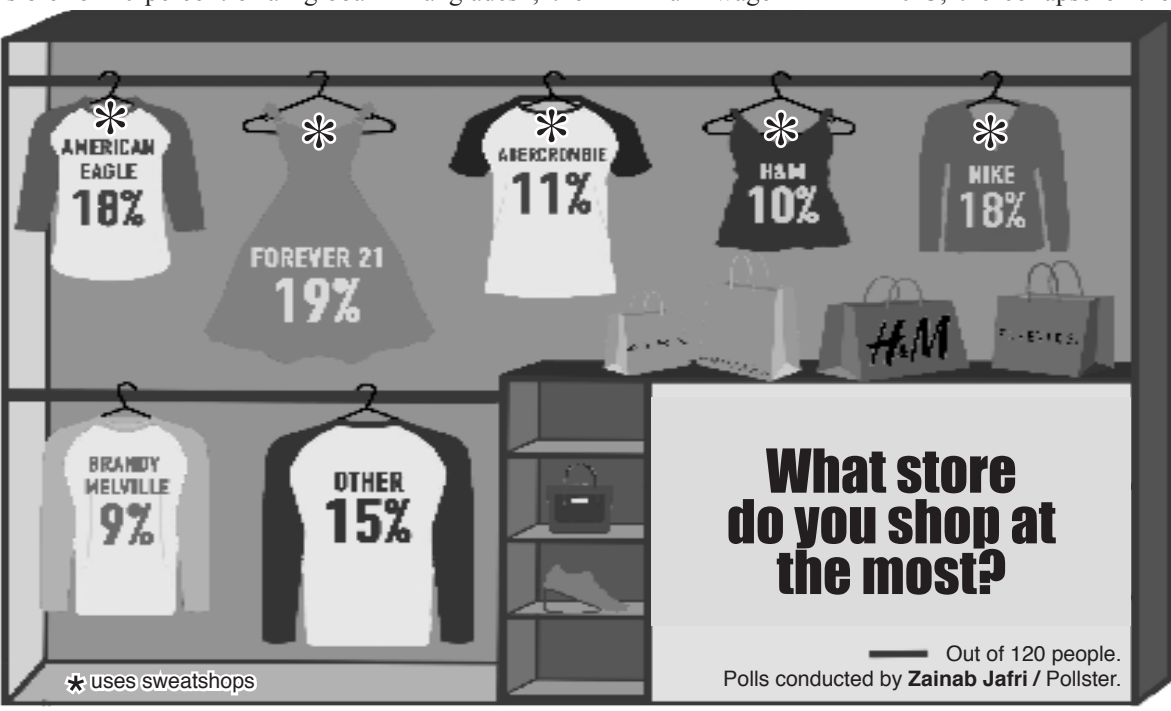
Formerly, fashion follows a seasonal plan, only releasing new clothing four times a year. However, this way of business is practically nonexistent now with large stores releasing new clothing 52 times a year, a practice known as "fast fashion."

The effect of producing incredibly inexpensive clothing on a weekly basis has left a long lasting impact on our environment and the people that make it.

As consumers begin seeing garments as disposable items that need to be replaced weekly, the issue of waste production arises even more.

However, there is another option: donating. "It would be a waste to just throw clothing out, so I donate most of the clothing that I don't like or fit in anymore," said Le-Andrea English ('18).

**Read the full story at
thewestwordonline.com**



Colin Kaepernick kneels during national anthem

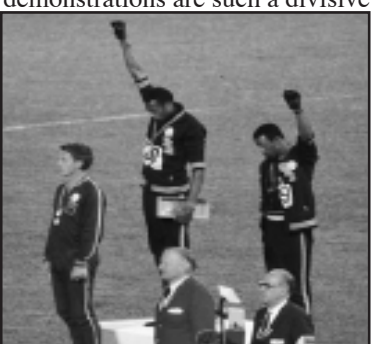
Jenny Gorski
Supplement Editor

Colin Kaepernick, NFL quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, has continued to kneel during the national anthem at football games. Kaepernick's actions are perpetuating the ongoing debate between those who believe this is an act of anti-patriotism, and those who believe he is simply exercising his freedom of speech.

The national anthem was originally a poem, written by Francis Scott Key in 1814. After Key saw the Maryland fort being attacked by the British during the War of 1812, he noticed that the American flag was still standing at Fort McHenry despite the hardship that had surrounded it. This inspired him to write the poem that was later set to music in 1931 and became America's national anthem.

The United States is known

for its patriotism and nationalism. To some Americans, the flag and the national anthem are everything. On the other hand, some Americans believe that our national anthem has lost some of its significance. "Not that it doesn't mean anything, but it's not as important as people make it out to be," said Katie Cotton ('17). This split between American citizens about the importance of the national anthem is why Kaepernick's demonstrations are such a divisive



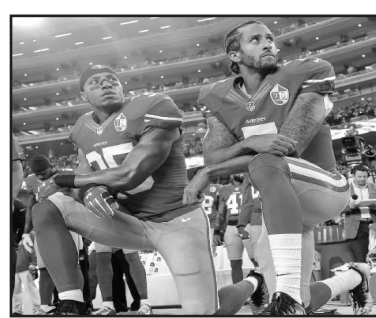
FISTS UP Smith and Carlos raising their fists in the 1968 Olympics in salute to black power.

topic in America.

Kaepernick told the press that his protests are in response to police brutality and the mistreatment of African Americans. In an interview, Kaepernick said, "I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses black people and people of color." Although Kaepernick has sent the media and American citizens into a frenzy, he is not the first athlete to protest a cause during the national anthem.

Dating all the way back to 1968, Olympic sprinters Tommie Smith and John Carlos, protested by putting a fist in the air to salute black power on the Olympic medal podium. They received backlash from Americans, such as death threats, and were suspended from the U.S. Track and Field team. They later said they still did not regret what they did.

In 1996, Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf, a basketball player for the Denver Nuggets, protested the flag



KNEELING TOGETHER Teammate Eric Reid (left) kneels with Kaepernick (right) during his third protest on September 12 in San Diego.

by closing his eyes and covering his face with his hands. He later told the media his justification, that it was against Islam to honor a symbol of persecution.

There is one thing that ties all of these protests together, and that is the First Amendment: freedom of speech. Kaepernick's actions are protected by the Bill of Rights, making his protests legally constitutional. Our flag and the national anthem are symbols of veterans who sacrificed their

time and sometimes, their lives, to protect our country.

But, let's be honest. Do we really think about soldiers and veterans every time we look at the flag, hear the national anthem, or stand for the pledge of allegiance? In my experience, the answer to that would be no. In fact, I can only think of two people in my classes that even say the pledge in the morning. For most of us, the whole ceremony has become a monotonous routine, something we do without thought, which defeats the purpose of the pledge.

If the pledge is really that important, why do not we merely expend the energy to say it? If showing your patriotism is so necessary, why is not the pledge said in offices instead of just schools? If caring about your country and its citizens is a core value to the United States, then why is it that Colin Kaepernick's protests are considered disrespectful?

Dakota Access Pipeline causes riot

In the peaceful, non-violent protest against the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) being built on the sacred Standing Rock Sioux tribe land in North Dakota, hundreds of attendees were violently attacked by the Dakota Access Pipeline Co. for protesting the 1,173 mile long pipeline's construction.

Twenty-seven of the aforementioned protesters were arrested, including actress Shailene Woodley, who was strip-searched and imprisoned in Morton County Jail. On October 10, the same day as Indigenous People's Day, Woodley pleaded not

guilty to the charges. In a letter she penned in response to the arrest, she wrote, "What if we took the hashtag #FreeShailene and made it #ProtectCleanWater, or #HonorNativeTreaties. Simply feeding off the hype of a celebrity's arrest isn't going to save the world. But, standing together will." Woodley was not the first notable figure to be arrested. *Democracy Now* journalist, Amy Goodman, was also arrested at the protest in September.

The 3.8 billion dollar construction of the pipeline was paid for by the Energy Transfer Partners com-

pany, and the plan was first proposed ten years ago. The pipeline is intended to connect production fields in North Dakota to Illinois refineries. Protests against the DAPL originated from the Standing Rock Sioux tribe, who argued that the pipeline would contaminate the tribe's drinking water and damage their irrigation system. The pipeline intersects a tribal burial ground with "significant cultural and historic value," and the tribe claims the pipeline crews have damaged Sioux artifacts.

On September 9, a federal judge denied the tribe's request for an injunction to halt completion of the pipeline, according to *The Conversation*. The construction was put on hiatus, but on October 10, the injunction was completely denied and construction reconvened.

The right to protest the pipeline has been wrongfully violated. Protesters have been attacked by mace and dogs, and threatened with lawsuits even though they have done nothing wrong. We live in a time where protecting our own well-being and standing up for a marginalized group of people threatens our lives.

"I don't think anyone should be arrested for peaceful protesting and I don't think anyone should be arrested for protecting their land. [Energy Transfer Partners] is just trying to get away with this to save money," said Westhill teacher Daniel Breshard. Indeed, the protesters have reported several times that they are all unarmed, yet have been assaulted by the offending company.

"If it's nonviolent, and they're not hurting anyone, then what's the big deal?" said Meghna Sharma ('17). "They're just expressing their views. I mean, there's gotta be other ways of handling it."

Many American citizens have already taken up the goal of halting the protests. A petition on the White House government site was initiated with a goal of 100,000 signatures to "stop construction of [DAPL] which endangers the water supply to Native American reservations," and has already received 367,000 signatures (as of November 2, 2016), yet no one is listening.

"It's a waste, and I think it's unfair," said Matthew Vahsen ('19).

— Stephanie Zachariadis ('17)



WATER IS LIFE The Standing Rock Sioux tribe marches in protest against the construction of the pipeline.



LOCKED UP Shailene Woodley was arrested for protesting DAPL.



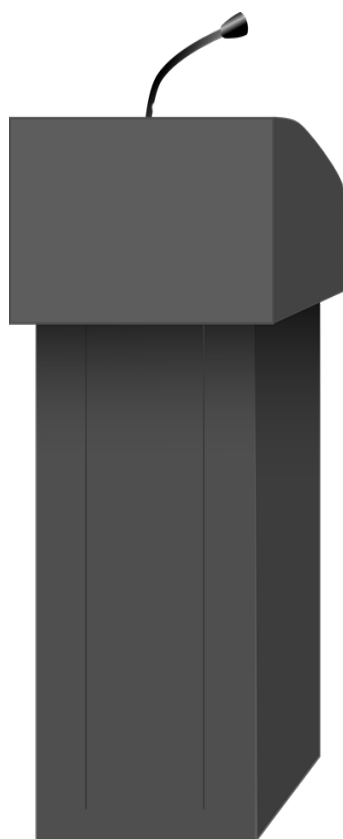
TAKING A STANCE Shailene Woodley (left) protests the Dakota Access Pipeline and poses with two supporters on October 10, 2016.



Andrea Vega
Reportera

¿Estamos preparados para tener una mujer gobernando este país? ¿Estamos preparados para que Donald Trump haga todos los cambios drásticos que esta planeando? ¿Cuál sera el futuro de este país?, estas son algunas de las preguntas que los estudiantes de Westhill quieren saber sobre las elecciones presiden-

La estudiante del undécimo grado Daniela Paredes opinó, “Creo que Hillary Clinton, comparada con Donald Trump, es mucho más calificada para ser presidente. Este país necesita, finalmente a una mujer gobernando como Presidenta de Los Estados Unidos”, muchos estuvieron de acuerdo con ella, como algunos no. “La pregunta no es tener a una mujer como presidenta, sino tener a esta mujer como presidenta” dijo la estudiante de noveno grado Jhosy Bazan, ella opinó que no es justo que haya tanta propaganda solo para estos dos candidatos ya que los dos tienen el mismo nivel de rep-



La perspectiva estudiantil varía, lo que ilustra la diversidad de la identificación política en los Estados Unidos. Este fenómeno no es sorprendente debido al ambiente

Evidentemente, los estudiantes están siendo expuestos a esta información lo cual está formando y expandiendo sus opiniones. Esta es una temporada tanto de angustia como de aprendizaje, como los es cada experiencia en la vida.

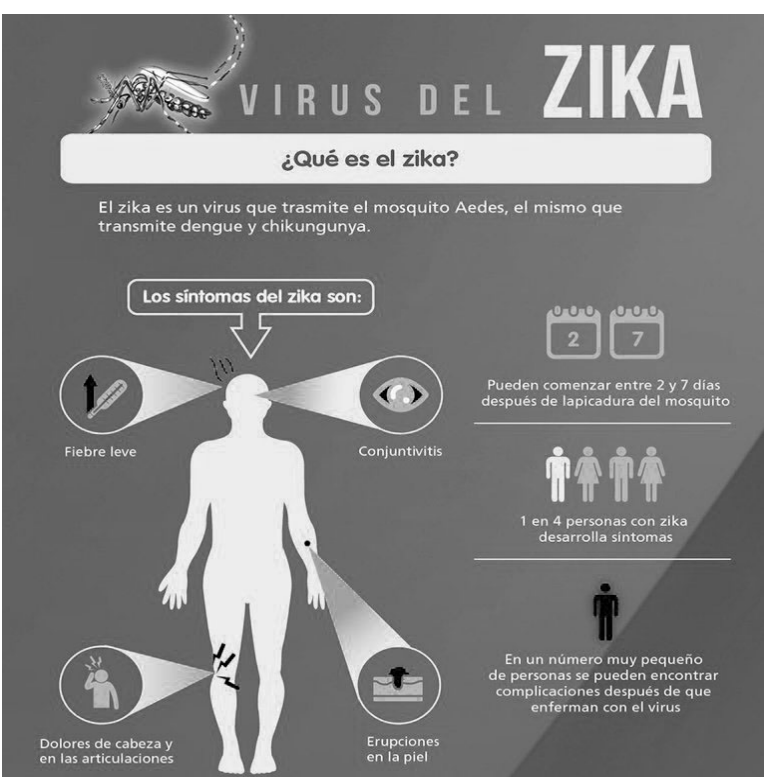
Fotos Courtesia de pixabay.com



Fotos de Ryan Murace & Ewa Misiak/ Administrador de medios & Fotografo.

LA IMITACION DE LAS ELECCIONES Como Trump Nicholas Smeriglio, Como Hillary Rebecca Siegal, y como los asesores Rachel Fein & Tyler Laiscki

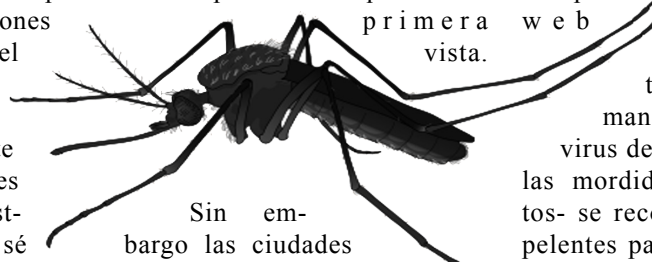
La prescencia del virus del Zika en Stamford



Michael Hernández
Viewpoint Editor

El virus del zika ha alarmado a muchas personas por todo el mundo ya que una ola de casos se han reportado a lo largo de los últimos meses. En nuestra comunidad, las personas sostienen opiniones que varían en su nivel de conocimiento y preocupación. En una entrevista, una residente de Stamford, Lourdes Hernández, dijo a Westword lo siguiente, “no sé nada sobre el virus del zika en Connecticut. Pensé que sólo estaba afectando a países en Centroamérica.” Su respuesta corresponde con un consenso en la comunidad de Stamford que carece un conocimiento básico

sobre la transmisión del virus y las áreas siendo afectadas. El virus es transmitido principalmente por mosquitos y según el Departamento de Salud Pública de Connecticut, el primer caso del virus del zika en Connecticut ya ha sido confirmado. Esta noticia puede ser inquietante a primera vista.



Sin embargo las ciudades de Connecticut han establecido planes para prevenir una epidemia. Por ejemplo, ningún niño ha sido infectado con el virus del zika en Connecticut.

Talvez más alarmante son

las noticias sobre las más de 50 mujeres embarazadas que han sido infectadas en la ciudad de Nueva York. La proximidad de Nueva York a Stamford puede angustiar a muchos. El gobierno de la ciudad de Stamford está consciente de los riesgos y ha publicado en su página web una advertencia para los residentes que lee: la mejor manera de prevenir el virus de zika es previniendo las mordidas de los mosquitos- se recomienda utilizar repelentes para insectos y cubrir áreas corporales expuestas para prevenir una mordida. Además de sus advertencias, las autoridades estarán pendientes de cualquier desarrollo y por lo tanto continuarán a estudiar la propagación del virus.

Fotos Courtesia de [pinterest.com](#) & [pixabay.com](#)

El entrenamiento de ELL para los profesores

Daniela Paredes
Escritor del Personal

El entrenamiento para los profesores y profesoras de ELL comenzó el año pasado, dice la profesora Niwa del departamento de Lenguaje Mundial. La profesora, quien trabaja con los estudiantes de ESL, dice que el programa es muy bueno, que ha dado excelentes resultados, y que se han reflejado positivamente tanto en los alumnos como en los mismos profesores.

El entrenamiento se ha resumido este año debido a la llegada de los nuevos maestros y maestras en nuestra escuela, Westhill. En los medio días, que se dan en el último miércoles de cada mes, los profesores continúan su riguroso entrenamiento en las aulas, horas después de que salen los estudiantes. Los profesores con la finalidad de mejorar la calidad del programa y asegurar que ellos estén proveyendo lo necesario para que las clases sean dadas y recibidas de la mejor manera posible.

“El 40% de los estudiantes del distrito de

Stamford, están en ELL y ahora los profesores están recibiendo entrenamiento para apoyar a la población estudiantil,” dice la profesora Michelle Dunbar, quien incluso está asistiendo a clases por la noche para recibir su certificación para el programa.

“Estamos tratando de clarificar conceptos para que podamos explorar temáticas y símbolos en la literatura, incluso si la literatura se trata de algo difícil, les estamos tratando de probar todos los recursos posibles para que puedan comprender los símbolos y las temáticas, y puedan tener experiencias a niveles más profundos con la literatura” dice la profesora Bonnie Kelley-Young, quien ya está certificada para enseñar a los estudiantes.

“También queremos motivarlos a continuar desarrollándose en su lengua natal, para que de esa manera puedan aprender esas cosas en inglés también,” la profesora Kelley-Young cree que una parte importante de las clases ELL es permitir y apoyar a los estudiantes a que continúen expandiéndose

en conocimientos que ya han obtenido en sus lenguas primerizas, para aplicarlas a sus aprendizajes en inglés. “Si no entienden el significado de simbolismo en su lengua natal, tampoco podrán entenderlo en un idioma que no es el suyo, por eso estamos tratando de asegurarnos de igual manera que aprendan estos términos en sus lenguas primerizas.”

Sin duda algunos, podemos decir que los profesores que forman parte del programa de ELL ponen gran empeño, dedicación y esfuerzo a su labor, ya que por medio de los largos y difíciles cursos y las clases nocturnas, lo demuestran a nuestra comunidad estudiantil bilingüe.

Sabemos que ellos tienen el enfoque principal, que es expandir el alcance del programa en la preparatoria de Westhill y poder alcanzar las metas propuestas para tanto alumnos como profesores en un trabajo conjunto, el cual requiere de ambos partidos para tener los resultados exitosos que ha demostrado hasta ahora.



Fotos de Ryan Murace / Administrador de Medios.

CLASE DE ELL En su ámbito cotidiano en la clase de Mrs. Dunbar, aquí ellos riefortzan el inglés.

Hurricane Matthew: a

Maeve Ronan
Managing Editor

Hurricane Matthew hit the coast of Haiti in early October. The storm formed from a tropical wave that pushed off of the African coast, just east of the Cape Verde Islands, in late September. The wave moved westward in the Atlantic Ocean, towards Central America and curved back up towards the Caribbean Islands. According to The Weather Channel, it was predicted that the storm would take a few days to organize as it moved closer to the east coast of the Caribbean, potentially causing a period of life-threatening conditions in parts of Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica, and Bahamas.

Once Matthew reached the Windward Islands, it was sufficient enough to be dubbed "Tropical Storm Matthew," but once it reached the eastern Caribbean, it severely intensified and became a Category 5 hurricane, with winds up to 160 mph. It was predicted that the hurricane would hit Haiti first, along with other neighboring Caribbean countries. Then the storm would move up the coast of Florida and into the Carolinas

and Georgia.

Unfortunately, some areas were not able to weather the storm as well as others due to lack of preparation and resources available.

In Haiti, their national government regularly ranks among the world's least effective in disaster preparation. In the days leading up to the storm, many of the Haitian people were unaware of the coming disaster and were therefore unable to prepare. After the storm, the government failed to provide food and water, according to *TIME Magazine*.

Haiti, being the poorest country in the northern hemisphere with over two million people living in extreme poverty, lacked the resources to prepare for the storm, including adequate shelter to withstand the extreme winds.

Cuba was much more prepared, as they conduct a mandatory hurricane drill every May in preparation for hurricane season. The people of Cuba were warned to take cover, and while hundreds of homes were destroyed, few deaths were reported.

In the United States, more than two million people were ordered to evacuate ahead of the

arrival of Matthew. The Governor of Florida declared the storm a State of Emergency. President Obama addressed the nation, encouraging the American people to listen to the evacuation warning. Florida ordered about 1.1 million people to leave the coast while South Carolina called for 500,000 evacuations.

Many measures were taken to protect the people from the oncoming brute force of the storm. Since the hurricane was expected to have a long term path on land, long-range forecasting was imprecise. The National Hurricane Center reported to *CNN* "when a hurricane is forecast to take a track roughly parallel to a coastline, as Matthew is forecast to do, it becomes very difficult to estimate impacts this far in advance." Although the direct path was hard to predict, necessary precautions were taken.

Addressing the gap between the damage brought on by extreme weather events in wealthy and underdeveloped countries

was a key point in the Paris Agreements last year. The Paris Agreement is an agreement within the United Nations. They addressed the issues of greenhouse gas emissions, adaptation and finance at the 2016 Convention.

The deaths brought on by Hurricane Matthew were devastating, and

would have been avoidable if not for this gap and the lack of mobilization for storm safety within developing countries.



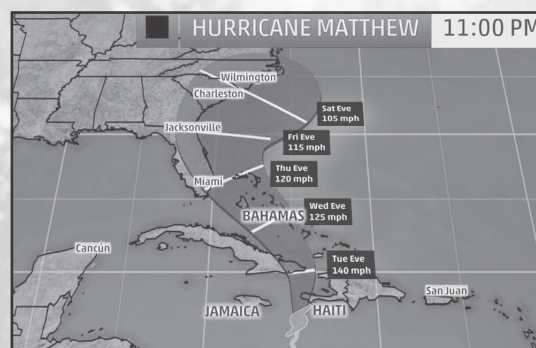
Flooded shores in the southeastern U.S.



Destroyed street covered in debris.



Original estimated path for Hurricane.



Updated projection of Hurricane Matthew.



Americares deployed medical teams.

disaster to remember

Caroline Boccuzzi

Managing Editor

Hurricane Matthew, the first Category 5 hurricane since Hurricane Felix in 2007, left major damage after striking in the beginning of October. This tropical storm started on the African coast and quickly made its way towards the Caribbean islands, even affecting the southeast of the United States.

Matthew had a devastating impact on the Caribbean islands, specifically Haiti, Jamaica, and Cuba. The damage was most severe in Haiti. In fact, the National Hurricane Center advised Haitians that there would be approximately 40 inches of rain.

The storm caused extreme flooding, which damaged housing, and left thousands of people in need of shelter. It also affected food production, as many plantations were completely destroyed. Overall, a little over 1,000 people were

left dead from the tragedy.

In addition to the damage caused by the storm, water contamination has led to a Cholera outbreak. Island officials have been working hard to get medicine and shelter to civilians as soon as possible. However, Cholera is a deadly disease if left untreated. It has been a tough several years for Haiti, as the nation was hit with a disastrous earthquake in 2010 and is still recovering from that.

Hurricane Matthew then made its way into the United States. Students of Westhill expressed their concern and urged others to take part in relief efforts. "The widespread relief efforts occurring in affected states and countries can be aided through small but widespread monetary contributions," said Andrew Blum ('17).

By the time the storm reached the U.S., the storm was already down to a Category 2 storm. Matthew mainly affected Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. As the hurricane started to die

down, many people were at ease. Nonetheless, President Obama asserted that it was still a serious matter by saying, "I want to emphasize to everybody that this is still a really dangerous hurricane." By the end of the storm, there was a total of 27 deaths in the United States.

Despite all the abrupt aftermath that followed Hurricane Matthew, there are ways that the Westhill community can help victims of this tragedy. "I think the aftermath is terrible and very sad. I believe we can help by donating food and clothing to help people in need. I also do know some people who were affected by the hurricane and they're devastated," said Brianna Martin ('17).

Many charities such as Unicef, Red Cross, Flood Help New York, and World Vision, are donating money towards repairing cities and helping victims. This hurricane caused mass damage. Though it will take a long time to get these countries back to where they were, every bit of support counts.



Children standing in their flooded village.



Hurricane Matthew aftermath in Haiti.



AmeriCares emergency response team.



Coordinating aid shipments for survivors.



Workers cleaning up wreckage in Florida.

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TECH
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The evolution of technology

Nabilla Harahap

Reporter

The concept of the modern computer had been introduced in the early 20th century, with mobile phones beginning to make an appearance only in the past few decades. Technology has evolved tremendously within the past 20 years, and it is changing rapidly.

Starting in 1946, technology began to evolve with the invention of the first computer. The Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC) was one of the first versions of the computer ever invented. It was designed by J. Presper Eckert and John Mauchly at the University of Pennsylvania. Its original function was to solve large classes of numerical problems. Originally it was meant to be used to calculate army artillery firing tables for the US army ballistic research laboratory. The first personal computer was invented in 1971, called the KENBAK-1 by John Blackenbaker of Kenback Corp. The impact of Google, since its creation in 1996, is tremendous. "Google has helped us by allowing us to look up information from the comfort of our homes. We can [use our] energy for greater things," said Francis Alvaro ('17). At this time, Motorola and Nokia were the most reputable mobile phone brands that people owned. The speed was still at 2G, and digital technology was focused on creating these phones. In 1997, the portable MP3 player was invented. In 2001, Apple released

their first generation iPod. A few days later Apple launched iTunes which was an app used to simply transfer music from a library and into an iPod.

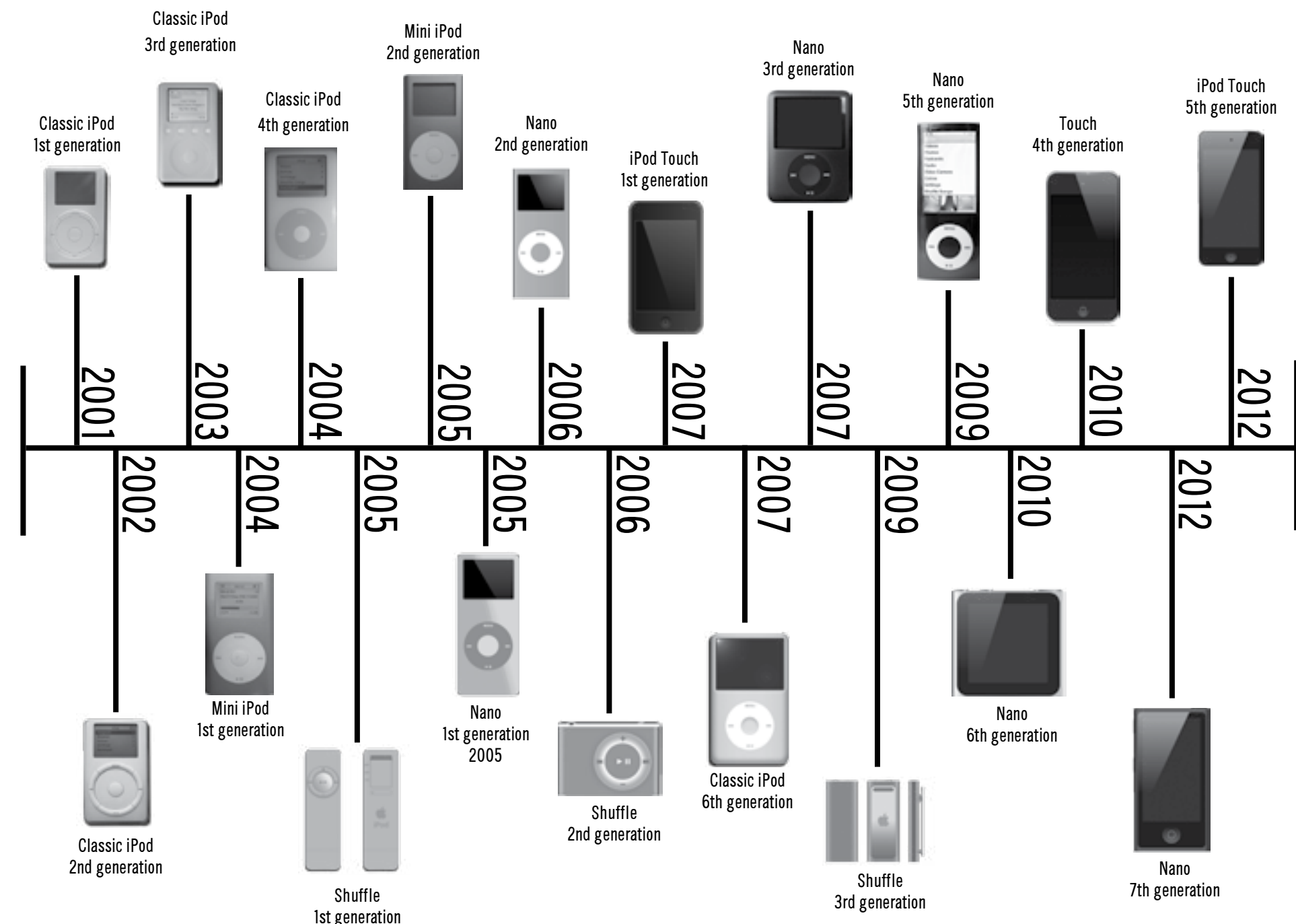
As time passed, the Internet became more and more impactful as several information platforms began to pop up such as Wikipedia. What also came to exist was social media. "In the past 20 years technology has evolved to make things more convenient especially with social media," said Stephanie Vargas ('17). Some of the earlier social media platforms include Friendster and MySpace, which were both launched in the early 2000s. Facebook was the beginning of a prevalent social media influence on society. As the use of Facebook declined, new platforms

such as Twitter are capturing the attention of users. In 2005, when Youtube was created, no one thought it would have the worldly influence that it has now.

Blackberry made the first smartphone, and dominated the tech world. They were popular amongst businessmen. Apple released the first generation iPhone in 2007, while Samsung released their first smartphone in 2009. Apple's app store was released in 2008, which is responsible for every other function that is not a default on iPhones. Instagram was released in 2010 on the App and Play Stores, followed by Snapchat in 2011, and these two very relevant apps are still in use today. There is an application for just about anything. "Apps are the melting

pot of technological advancements," said Praneetha Desu ('17).

Today desktop computers have become smaller and more efficient, although many people utilize laptops. The original iPod is slowly dying out as Apple keeps advancing iTunes, and other music streaming platforms such as Pandora, Spotify, SoundCloud, and Apple Music are being more widely used. Social media is a part of daily life now. "The most exciting thing about the development of technology is the potential for change. With new and more powerful technology, it is becoming easier and easier to make the world a better place," said Matt Greco ('17). The future that technology holds is promising and changing our world along with it.



Technology's effect on newer generations

Zach Rubin

Reporter

In the past 20 years, social media has changed social interactions and normal day-to-day conversations as we know them.

Applications such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, and numerous other social media applications have shaped the modern day era into something many call "living behind your phone."

Whether it is having a conversation with someone through video chat or snapchatting, the connection that exist in real life is not comprable. Social media can affect relationships by changing the feeling you would have when you are speaking to someone face-to-face. According to the Millennial CEO website, "Social media has also changed the way that we interact, mainly the way we have lost some of our social skills. Some people are com-

pletely incapable of carrying on a normal conversation or interacting with people in person because of the dependency of social media. Social networks are becoming one of the most dominant ways we communicate with each other." People are more obsessed with checking their smartphone every two minutes than engaging in meaningful conversation with their child or spouse.

Social media and technology are double-edged swords. It is a great tool to have access to, but it also distracts people to the point of being blind and deaf to their surroundings. In essence, social media can leave many people in the present day with a life full of "behind the scenes" conversations and exchanges.

Almost any average teenager that is seen around high school or is in a public vicinity owns a smart phone. The iPhone, made by Apple, is a sweeping trend among teens

and kids around the world. Apple has innovated a new way of communicating that is so simple, yet so different from what it used to be.

However, some families feel as if the iPhone is a distraction from reality and therefore do not provide nor allow their children to have one. Someone can just be sitting in their room alone while they are sending a text message by simply typing or even just by using their voice to activate Siri. While it can be so easy for kids and teenagers, many of the adults and seniors ages 35-100 have an extremely difficult time communicating with their friends, grandchildren, and sons or daughters in the technology generation. The people in that generation are very familiar with using an iPhone and use it as their primary source of communication. Whereas many adults who did not grow up with this technology, are lost.

The way people used to interact with each other was

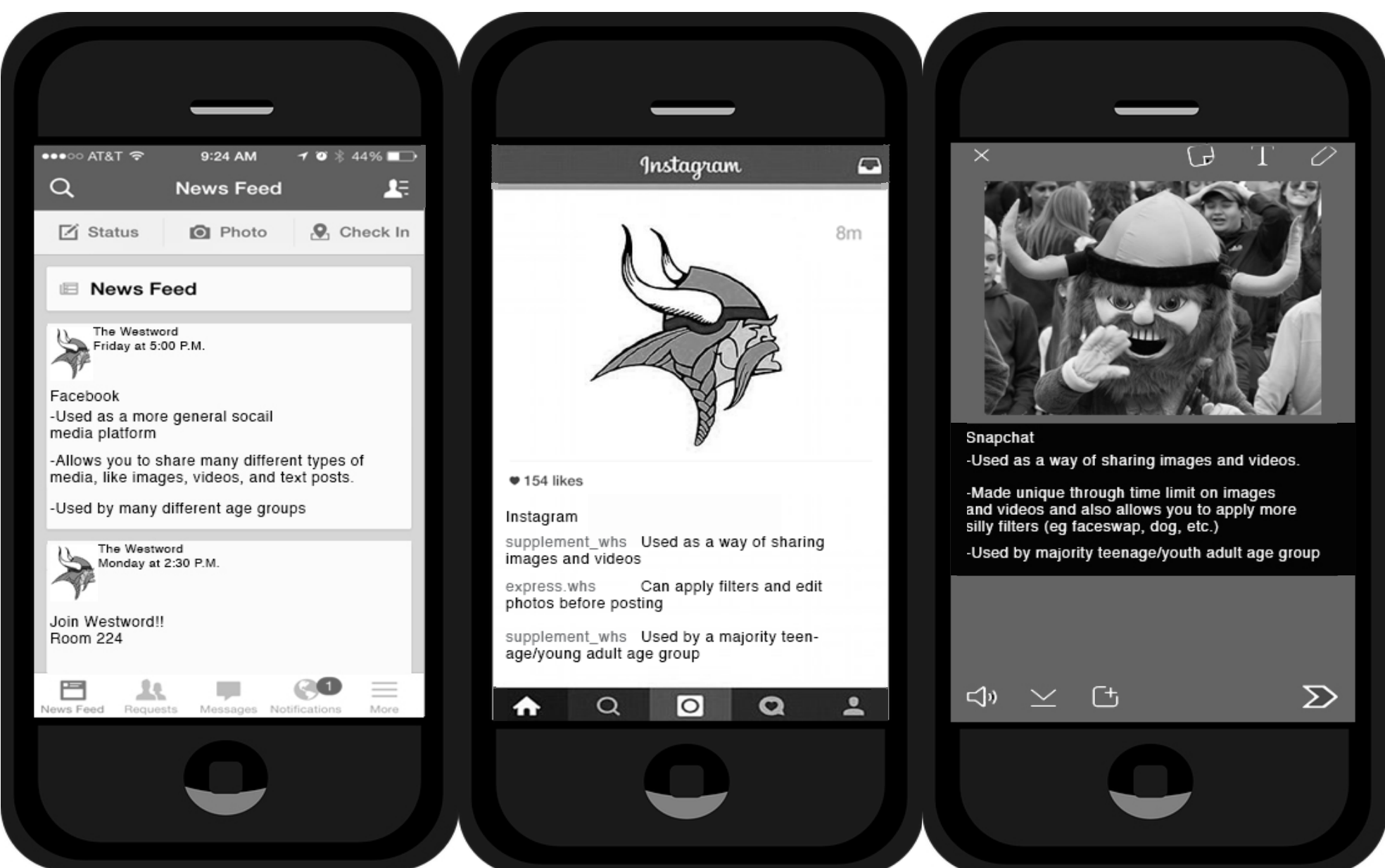
"healthier" for the human mental and emotional well-being in many proven ways through statistics and research. According to a source from linkable.com, "Social media today is a powerful communication tool, with social networks being one of the most dominant ways we now communicate. The rules of engagement between a business and their audience have shifted. Gone are the days of one-way interaction.

Today, people expect a multimodal experience. Anyone with a social network login has the capability to interact with thousands of people worldwide. We can now share our messages and opinions with a significantly larger audience. We no longer have the same filters we feel obliged to use in a face-to-face conversation.

Individuals and businesses now reveal so much more to each other. Social media allowed us to break through those barriers

and redefine how we communicate." This is true in many ways displaying that there is almost no filter in what people say to each other when talking via technology. People can chose to respond when and how they want, and edit their response. There is no longer, "having the wrong word slip out" or "I didn't mean to say that." A person either says something or does not when texting someone. People can now edit their responses while in the past if something was said to someone that was wrong or hurtful, there was not a backspace button and it was permanently out there.

The impact of technology has pros and cons. On one hand, phones could be a distraction to teenagers and can prevent them from focusing on school or other important tasks. However, technology can also provide unlimited resources for students to study and broaden their knowledge.



Technology's effect on the brain

Lexi Bocuzzi
Reporter

With the use of technology becoming more and more prevalent, we must ask the question; how do these devices and programs affect our brain when used on a regular basis? "We are becoming impatient because everything we need or use is so accessible," said Betsy Sachs ('20). To that point, technology can have a negative impact on the brain. However, it is beneficial in terms of creating better communication between people and allows for easy access to information at a moment's notice. According to Nicholas Carr, an American author that specializes in technology and business, and Rutgers TV Network, the use of technology deteriorates interpersonal skills and is hurting the brains' ability to fully complete the process of memory consolidation.

The most important effect that technology has on the brain is its disturbance of the process of memory consolidation. According to Carr, memory consolidation is the process with which learnt information moves from short term memory to long term memory. Technology disrupts this typical neurological function every time someone hears the ding of a text message or Snapchat signal.

When the brain first learns new things, that information resides in the short term memory. When the phone rings, that distraction pushes the information out of the short term memory. This process stops the memories from becoming long term and keeps the information from being remembered in the long run. As a result, the brain is then in a constant state of distraction and is never able

to obtain the focus that learning requires.

Many students in the Westhill community realize that technology affects their performance in school. "I think that it conflicts with the learning process in the brain which has an effect on my grades because I enjoy using technology," said Hannah Burston ('20). Although technology can have a negative effect on learning in this respect, it can also positively influence it.

One of the main benefits of technology is how it makes education easier. As stated by Rutgers, technology can allow students to learn information at a quicker pace. This comes from both the increased virtual connections between students and learning resources, as well as their ability to scan information rapidly, which comes from their daily exposure to technology. "Through instant messaging, you read and write more, so it helps with your comprehension," said Francesca Figueroa ('18). Yet with the use of digital interaction, comes harm to interpersonal skills. As people interact less in person, they begin to lose their ability to have conversations face to face. "We don't know how to socialize any more, so people are becoming more awkward socially," said Figueroa.

Despite the negatives and positives associated with technology, it has become so prevalent in our everyday lives that we cannot live without it. "I am aware of how it is negatively impacting my time management skills as well as other things, yet I can't not use it," said Sachs.

It is important to recognize the impact of technology on how people think and act, and be wary of the consequences it may have on the brain.

The nature of technology, the accessibility to information, applications, and photos, creates an obsession with switching tasks quickly. This causes one's attention span to decrease drastically.

Over time, technology has also managed to make our quick thinking skills worse and our brains skim more often than read for all detail.

The frontal lobe of the brain does not fully develop until one is 21 to 26 years old. This area controls someone's judgement and decision making.

Do you think technology has a big impact on your life?
Yes- 98%
No-2%

A 2008 study conducted by UCLA found that the use of internet search engines can potentially enhance brain functions in adults.

Without technology, we would not have many important life saving medical procedures, including brain surgeries.

Recent studies show that children who play violent or gruesome video games tend to have more aggressive behavior patterns.

Bright screens from most technology can cause the brain to think it is still day, making it harder to fall asleep and changing someone's sleep cycles.

Not only can technology make you have a shorter attention span, this can lead to worse memory, both short term and long term.

Technology has also helped the brain. Without modern technology, scientists, psychologists, and doctors would not know nearly as much about the brain as they do. Also many brain surgeries wouldn't be possible without technology.

Technology's impact on schools

File Edit View Go Window Help

Mon 6:59 PM

Hannah Nadelson

Reporter

In schools throughout the nation, technology has recently been implemented in more helpful ways for teachers to educate their students and to make teaching more effective.

Powerschool is a simple and easy way for schools to manage and make attendance and grading easier. This is good as it can make the class more organized. As for the students, it shows the performance for each individual as well as helping their growth in the classroom. It can help to empower teachers because it saves them time and it makes the class run smoother.

Khan Academy is another great source for students

because it allows them to take control of their learning and work at their own pace. With this website, students can access free tutoring to different subjects such as math, science, computer programming, history, art, economics, and more. The free tutoring on the site helps sharpen the students' skills with various interactive exercises without the pressure of the classroom.

Schools in Stamford have now provided Promethean boards in almost every classroom which is a huge difference from generic white boards. Teachers use a specialized pen to bring hands on activities to life with its multi-touch capabilities. Up to four students can now interact on the board at the same time.

This creates an engaging and interactive learning experience for the teachers and students.

However, since all of this new technology has surfaced in the public schools of Stamford, the schools had to change and adjust to the new influence of the technology that is now being provided.

"The teachers have a harder time because they are not used to the system and they are trying to understand it better," said Meghna Sharma ('17).

"Teachers are forced to know and learn how to work with the new technology that has come up," said Sophie Caceres ('17).

Of course with the update of technology, most of

the teachers will probably have some difficulty learning the new tactics of many of the websites. As a result, teachers have struggled to get used to the new high-tech resources that have been provided for them by the district.

"Many schools have had to make technology a central part in their classrooms," said Nicole Rei ('17). "Since technology makes it easier to teach classes, schools are now expected to speed up the learning process as well."

Other online resources that have benefited the education system in the schools in Stamford include ClassZone, Google Classroom, Edmodo, and Kahoot. All of these valuable websites have something in common; their ability to

improve the learning skills of students and to make class time more effective, useful, and easy.

The new school WiFi that has been set into place earlier this year has also given the opportunity for students to access school related information for their subjects, as well as for college materials. They can access this WiFi on their smart phones and other forms of technology that are provided in the school.

Other schools in the Stamford district such as AITE, have given students laptops in order to benefit and help their learning experience even more. This modern view on education could provide students with a leg-up when leaving high school.



Photos by Sydney Lesser / Photographer

Students of Westhill High School using Chromebooks in the classroom

Images courtesy of pixabay.com, wikimedia.org, & flickr.com.

Technology's effects on print news



James Hicks
Head Illustrator

Social media is changing, not only the way news gets out, but also how much of it we are actually reading.

According to the 2016 Reuters Institute Digital News Report, the number of people paying for online news in the United States dropped from eleven percent to nine percent in the last year. YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter were also found to be the most predominate forces in the online news market, especially with those between the ages of 18 and 24.

Those who frequent such places for their daily dose of the

news are quick to applaud the speed at which news can go viral, getting the word out faster than print could ever hope to, but this itself poses an issue.

Earlier this year, a study by Columbia University and the French National Institute found that 59 percent of URLs shared on Twitter had not been opened, despite receiving thousands of shares. This means that people were simply reading the headline, which often can be exaggerated to get views, and not actually reading the article. This study analyzed the Twitter presence of five major news outlets, *CNN*, *BBC*, *The New York Times*, *The Huffington Post*, and *Fox*, over the course of a month.

When asked as to whether or not he thought the speed and organic nature of social media made up for its potential for inaccuracy, Communications and English teacher Michael Von Wahlde said “No, I think accuracy, objectivity, and the wholeness of the story is more important. Speed is no excuse for sub par journalism, even if it gets more clicks.”

This issue also extends into print as sales decline. The Pew Research Center found that in 2015, weekday circulation of print news fell seven percent, with Sunday circulation falling by four percent. Both of these showed their greatest drops since 2010. In the same year,

advertising revenue dropped by eight percent, the largest decrease since 2009.

“[Social media] has affected the business side of news, as they’ve got to curtail the number of workers as revenue drops. They just can’t afford that number of staff. Remember that print news is a for-profit equity, simply due to necessity,” said von Wahlde. “I think there’s now too much of a premium put on who gets the story done first, rather than who gets the story done best.”

Public discourse is shaped by the journalism and news at that given time, and where we get the news from is a large component of this. This trend away from print towards not only the

web, but also social media, represents a fundamental change in the way we both receive and view news.

As Arnaud Legout, a co-author of the study done by Columbia and the French National Institute, told *The Washington Post*, “People are more willing to share an article than read it. This is typical of modern information consumption. People form an opinion based on a summary, or a summary of summaries, without making the effort to go deeper.”

Editor’s Note: Even though Michael Von Wahlde is one of The Westword’s Advisors, he is also a communications teacher and has a degree in Media Studies.



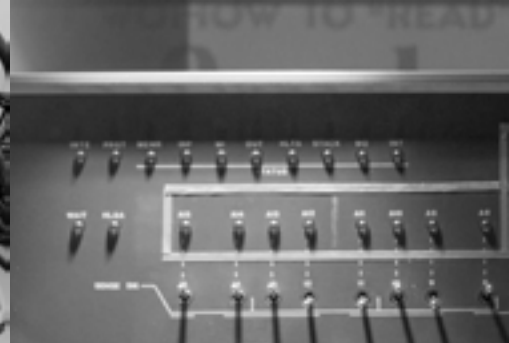
ENIAC 1946



KIM-1 1971



WANG 2200 1973



ALTAIR 8800 1974



MOTOROLA DYANATAC 1973



APPLE II 1977



ATARI 2600 1977



OSBORNE-1 1981



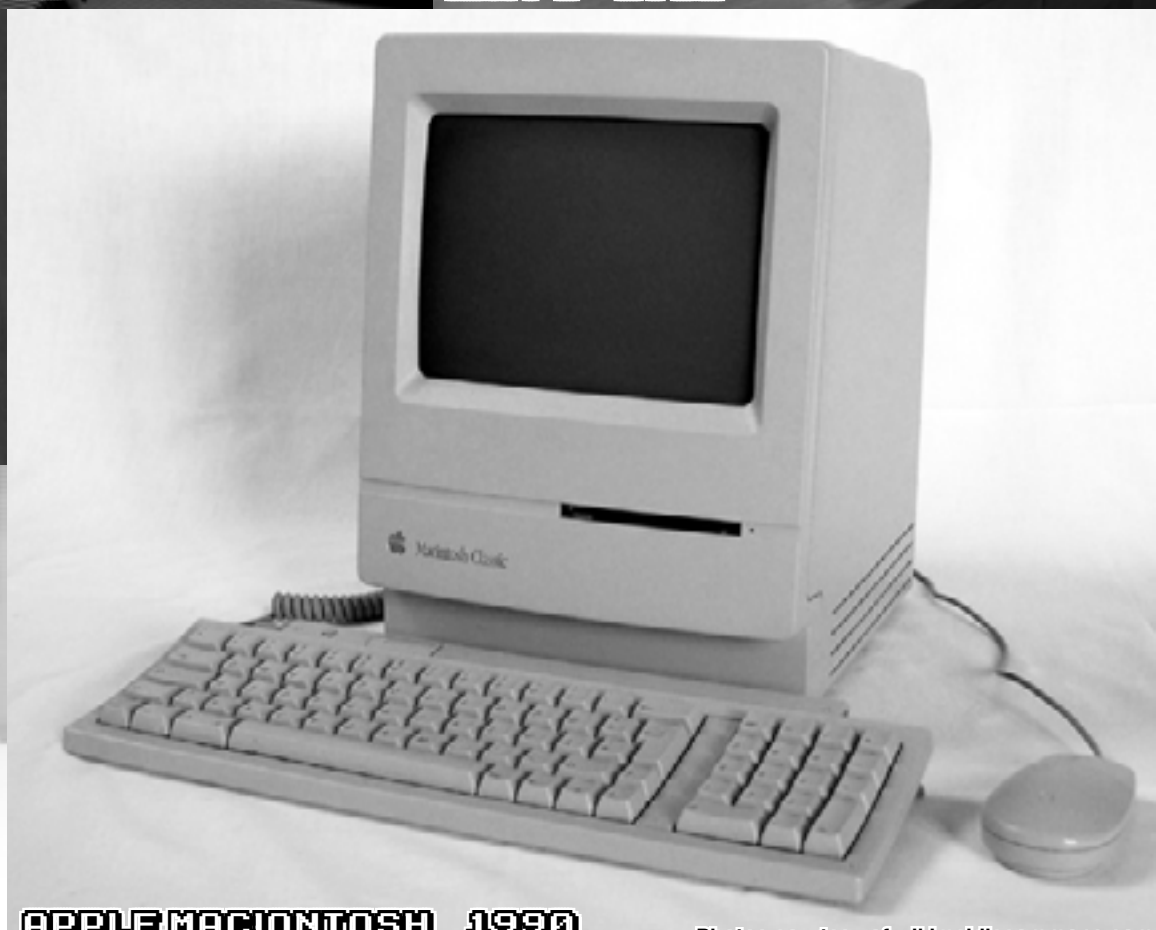
IBM PC 1981



COMMODORE 64 1982



APPLE LISA 1983



APPLE MACINTOSH 1990

Heard it in town hall: Westhill’s mock election

Charlie Mahoney
Contributor

Ever since the beginning of the year, the two Advanced Placement Government classes have been campaigning for a mock election within the school. Students have taken on various roles, from campaign manager to candidate to radio announcer. The students, through their own initiative, are tasked with registering students to vote, as well as having their respective candidates prepare for and compete in a public debate on November 4 in the auditorium.

The students each were given roles to play for the campaign. Two students, one for

each class, were selected to represent either Hillary Clinton, portrayed by Rebecca Siegal ('17), and Donald Trump, portrayed by Nick Smeriglio ('17). Under the candidates, a student in each class was selected as the campaign manager, a social media correspondent, a video advertiser, a radio broadcaster, and a few were selected to help “get the word out.” This is the reason for the numerous posters in the hallways advertising either candidate with information in regards to their policies.

Without any one piece of the arrangement, the entire campaign would grind to a halt. The campaign manager is needed to organize different aspects of the

campaign into a cohesive effort, while the social media, radio announcer, and “general use” individuals are necessary to get the larger student population interested in the election. The candidate, meanwhile, acts as the face of the campaign: the public figure. They are the ones answering questions, debating, and arguing their position.

The overall goals of the undertaking are simple: to educate the students of the school on how an election works. This is achieved through the advertisement department of both campaigns, who encourage students to register to vote in the mock election. The registration process for the mock election is

simplified from the actual voter registration process. However, the AP Government students are instructed to explain how the actual voting registration and process works. Additionally, the effort is to try to enlighten students on the different candidate’s policies on a given subject.

This is crucial, as most Americans today are very ill-informed on politics. If the mock election could educate students on the candidate’s beliefs and policies, then they could make a more informed decisions come November.

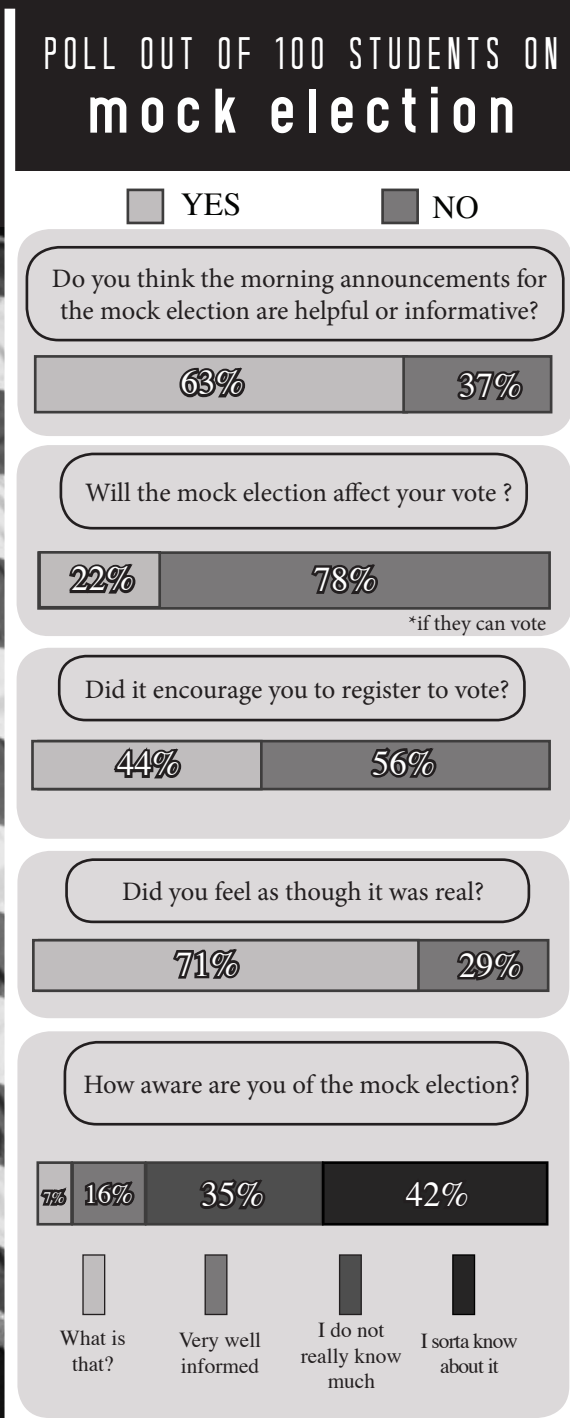
“My most important job is to make sure all the policies they release and everything we say say is in line with the message we want to convey.” said

Ben Freedman ('17), the campaign manager for the mock Trump campaign. He went on to give several examples of what that entails, from making sure every morning announcement was acceptable, to writing and reviewing questions for the town hall meeting and the upcoming debate. On that subject, he had this to say: “I’m sure Rebecca and Nick are well informed and ready to impress the school with why they should be elected.”

The students have been working hard on their individual campaigns. We will see if the in-school election results match up with the actual presidential election.



REBECCA SIEGAL AS
Hillary Clinton



NICK SMERIGLIO AS
Donald Trump

HORSE POWER: TAYLOR JUMPING HURDLES

Melanie Gorski
News Editor

Senior Leah Taylor, like your average teenager, enjoys watching television shows once in a while and goes to high school. But it is what she does outside of school that makes her far from ordinary. In her free time, Taylor competes in high level of equestrian shows all across the east coast. Taylor was included in this year's "Teens to Watch" issue of Stamford Magazine for her academic excellence as well as her equestrian success. The Westword interviewed Taylor over the phone as she drove up to West Springfield, Massachusetts to compete at the New England Equitation Finals to tackle the unanswered question: "How does she do it?"

The Westword: How did you get into horseback riding?

Leah Taylor: I went to a birthday party and they had ponies, and I was obsessed. Then my parents got me lessons in this little back-

yard barn once a week when I was five and I wanted to go every day, I loved it.

TW: What kind of division are you in and what does that division include?

LT: I show my horses in the jumper division which is all based on how fast you go and how many jumps you knock over. The goal is to knock down the least amount of rails. The other division I do is the equitation which is all about style, my skill as a rider, and how I look on the horse.

TW: How much have you had to practice to get to the level you are currently at?

LT: I put in more hours than people would expect. I am at the barn six days a week and ride one or two horses every day. I also commute an hour to the barn and an hour back every time I go. On the weekends and during the summer I am away at competitions. During the winter I go down to Florida every week for shows down there.

TW: Why do you go to Florida

to ride?

LT: Florida is the winter equestrian hub. In Wellington, Florida there is an international competition every summer. There are thousands of competitors from all over the world and it is one of the biggest shows in America. I go down to Florida in the winter because in the northeast, shows shut down, so there is more opportunity down south. It is fun because it is a huge complex and because the divisions and classes vary, you could walk between rings and see an Olympian in front of you.

TW: What have you accomplished in your equestrian career?

LT: I have been at it a long time so I have had my fair share of things I have won. As I move up to a higher level the competition is so hard, that it gets more difficult to place. So, most times I base my victories off of my personal best. If I am happy with my performance compared to my personal best, the placings don't really matter.

TW: Do you plan on riding

throughout college?

LT: I plan to participate in club team at college. There is a program called Intercollegiate Horse Show Association, so I plan to show on that circuit in college. I did not really want to ride for division I mainly because I wanted to put more focus on my academics.

TW: You have two horses that you compete with. What kind of relationship do you have with your horses?

LT: I love them all. Every horse I have ever ridden, I absolutely adore them. Each horse offers me something. One horse I have had for three years now, and I love him, he's my partner. It is like having kids. I am protective of them.

TW: How do you balance riding and school?

LT: It is definitely difficult to balance. I try to think of everything ahead of time and do work in advance. It takes some working with my teachers especially with traveling to Florida, but it is all about time management.

TW: This year you were in Stamford Magazine's "Teens to Watch" issue. Tell me about that experience.

LT: That was a really cool experience, I had no idea I was in the running. It was cool to have my own photoshoot and interview. It was a special experience to be recognized for my academics and riding because I always feel like those two worlds are very separate but here they were celebrated as a whole.

TW: What have you learned from riding that you can apply to your life and future?

LT: I have learned so much from riding horses, it has taught me to be patient and to deal with stress and perform under pressure. I think the most important thing is to deal with what comes up in the ring. There are things you cannot always control. I make a lot of mistakes but I have learned that I just have to adjust and roll with the punches.



Students serving the global community

Alex Fisher
Staff Writer

As Phineas and Ferb once said, “There’s a hundred and four days of summer vacation, and school comes along just to end it, so the annual problem of our generation is finding a good way to spend it.” Although there are not really 104 days of summer, you may as well spend the time allotted doing something impactful.

Over the past few years, several students in the Westhill community have spent their summers exploring different countries all across the world. These “summer service trips,” as most call them, are affiliated with organizations such as Rus-

tic Pathways, Overland, Global Travel Works, and more. These programs partner up with developing countries and gather people from across the United States who are eager to help.

Service programs are offered in the Caribbean, Asia, South America, and even in the United States. Each program is different. Some are community service, some are strictly for adventure, and some provide teenage participants with a little bit of both. *The Westword* spoke with students who have previously been on these trips to learn about why they went and what they did for their service.

Anna Schlachtenhaufen (’17) has been on two service trips

throughout high school. During her second summer in Thailand, Schlachtenhaufen spent one week in local villages teaching English to young kids, and another in an elephant sanctuary. “We worked with elephants from abusive circuses who had been released and left on the streets. We were paired with their mahoots, or elephant caretakers, in acclimating them back into their natural environment and understanding the creatures,” said Schlachtenhaufen. In the future, she sees herself working with the organization again as a leader.

Nicole Segal (’17) journeyed to Botswana this past summer, where she explored the wildlife as well as did many

community service acts. “It was definitely an eye-opening experience that gave me the chance to see that not everyone is as well-off as people in Fairfield County or anywhere in the U.S.” said Segal.

These trips not only benefit the community they serve, but provide teenagers with a sense of self. On most, if not all of the trips, the students are not allowed to use their cellphones. This makes for a different experience, where there are no social pressures and more opportunities to dive deeper into the unknown. “I learned a lot about the environment of where I was, but I also learned a lot about myself,” said Ian Ostheimer

(’17). Ostheimer traveled to Patagonia, a shared region between Argentina and Chile, where in addition to learning about their culture, he hiked through the snow covered mountains.

Overall, going on a service trip is truly a life-changing, experience. After soaking in the culture and customs of a foreign country, these teens have received a new kind of education. Instead of the usual “study and test” method, they are able to collect this information first hand, and become more well-rounded. These select students had the opportunity to view life from someone else’s shoes, and as a result, see the world differently.



NEW CLUBS JOINING THE HILL

GIRLS WHO CODE

Started by Aamisha Kini ('18) and Reshmi Ranjith ('18), Girls Who Code was brought to Westhill to advocate and encourage women to get involved in the field of Computer Science and make coding a fun experience. Kini and Ranjith created the club after taking a computer science course here at Westhill. After noticing that not many girls were in their class, they decided that they wanted to get more girls interested and excited about coding. "Coding is all about trial and error, but the end result can be really fascinating and anything is possible through code. In the future, knowing how to program will be a key skill that everyone should have and so we wanted to get more girls interested in technology either to pursue a career or just for fun," said Kini. Girls Who Code is the perfect place for anyone interested in learning more about technology and coding regardless of their skill sets.



WHEN:
Mondays
WHERE:
Room 414

WHEN:
Every other
Thursday
WHERE:
Finch Cafeteria

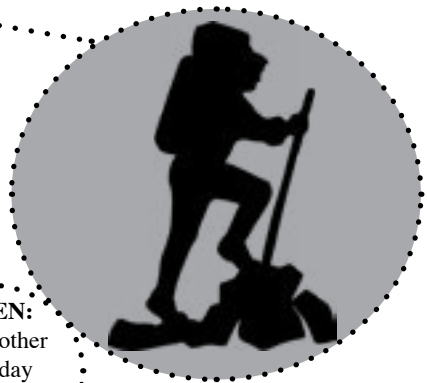
THE FEMINISM CLUB

Created by Sam Hamilton ('18), The Feminism Club was created to promote the equality of all genders, races, and religions. "The term feminist is commonly misconceived into something bad, almost representing the superiority of women, but that's not what we're here to do," said Hamilton. The club plans on helping make Westhill a place where everyone is viewed as equals. The club is targeting issues like the wage gap and rape culture. Hamilton created the club along with the help of her friends. "It's important to take action and fight for things you're passionate about. We are the voices of likeminded people trying to make our school as free of sexism and inequality as we possibly can," said Hamilton.



THE HIKING & CAMPING CLUB

Created by Joshua Dampf ('17), The Hiking and Camping Club was created to encourage individuals at Westhill to learn more about nature. This club was created by Dampf to showcase his personal love for hiking and camping. He wanted to know if others shared the same interest so he asked around and got resounding results. He wanted to share his interest for hiking and camping with everyone else. His club was created to advocate for better education in nature. "My ultimate goal is to show the students of Westhill that nature is all around us and it's an important and vital part of our community," said Dampf. Students interested in exploring nature and cleaning up our environment should definitely stop by The Hiking and Camping Club.



WHEN:
Every other
Tuesday
WHERE:
Room 613

Briefs by **Sakshi Patel** / Creative Director.

From runway to hallway

Column by **Sasha Ostrovsky**



This October, celebrities are taking the fashion industry by storm with their clothing lines. Clothing items are not always designed by professionals in the fashion business. Rihanna, Beyonce, and Pharrell Williams are just three of the many artists surprising the world with their unique clothing lines. But none can compare to the success of one particular artist, whose profits keep growing. He is not just known for his Grammy-winning records, but also for his

distinct clothing line.

Kanye West is no stranger to fashion. He has made it a key component of his tours and a consistent theme in his lyrics. For his sold-out 2014 Yeezus' tour, West collaborated with Maison Martin Margiela to create the show's wardrobe which included crystal studded face masks, embroidered bombers, and blanket coats. He has produced numerous New York Fashion Week shows, including one in Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms park.

In these shows West's main color scheme included a lot of olives and beige neutrals.

West expanded his brand with his sweater and shirt line modeled after his most recent album, *The Life of Pablo*. This clothing line is comprised of regular shirts and sweaters with slogans of "Pablo" printed or the name of his songs. The tee-shirts are printed on Gildan shirts along with Cali Thornhill DeWitt's signature gothic lettering. The font resembles English gothic, giving

the shirt an old aesthetic. What makes the line unique is the colors he uses. Orange is not a very popular color amongst teenage shoppers, but when it comes to West's clothes it is.

West's Air Yeezy I and II designs for Nike set a new standard for resale values and have arguably made the biggest impact on sneaker culture in the last decade. After the switch to Adidas, the sneakers have only gotten more popular. Originally they were sold in black, grey,

off-white, and cream colors. Now they can be seen in more bright colors, such as orange and reds. These sneakers combined with the sweater makes for a colorful outfit.

Without a doubt, in these coming colder months students will be seen left and right in the hallway, wearing West's sweaters. The winter is all about comfortable, big, and warm sweaters. West's line fits all these descriptions while adding a pop of color to winter's icy tones.

MARY POPPINS TAKES FLIGHT ON THE ALL SCHOOL STAGE!



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

Maeve Ronan
Managing Editor

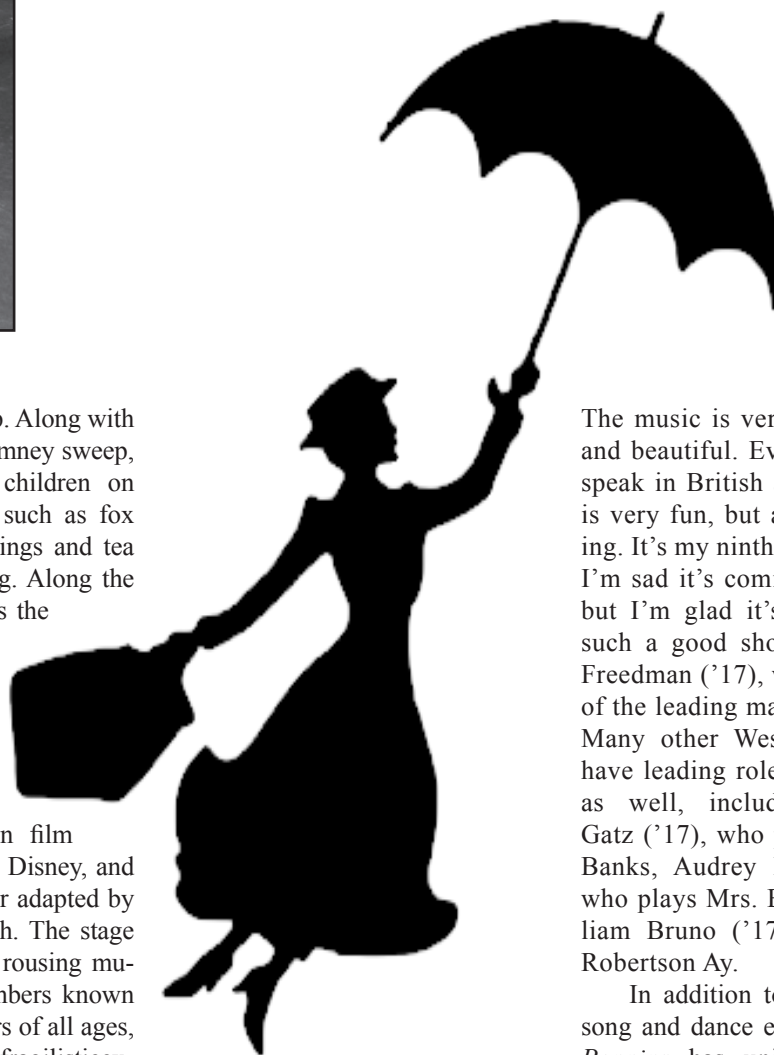
Everyone's favorite nanny is taking the Westhill stage this winter as the Stamford All-School Musical presents *Mary Poppins*, based off the book by P.L. Travers and the film by Walt Disney.

Now in their tenth year, the All-School Musical brings student thespians, grades 5 through 12, together from all Stamford schools. Each year they produce a full-scale musical production under the guidance of theater professionals and many dedicated student and adult volunteers.

For those unfamiliar with the story of *Mary Poppins*, it tells the tale of the wealthy Banks family living in London in 1910. When in need of a nanny, the whimsical and proper Mary Poppins

flies to their doorstep. Along with Bert, the singing chimney sweep, Poppins takes the children on magical adventures such as fox races in chalk drawings and tea parties on the ceiling. Along the way Poppins teaches the children, Jane and Michael, valuable life lessons that end up having a profound impact on the Banks family.

The well-known film was created by Walt Disney, and the musical was later adapted by Cameron Mackintosh. The stage production includes rousing musical and dance numbers known by audience members of all ages, including "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" and "Step in Time." Many students participating in the All-School are excited to



be performing in such a high energy show. "It's a Disney classic and a really fun show.

The music is very well-known and beautiful. Everyone has to speak in British accents which is very fun, but also entertaining. It's my ninth All-School so I'm sad it's coming to an end, but I'm glad it's ending with such a good show," said Ben Freedman ('17), who plays one of the leading male roles, Bert. Many other Westhill students have leading roles in the show as well, including Rebecca Gatz ('17), who plays Winfred Banks, Audrey Molina ('19), who plays Mrs. Brill, and William Bruno ('17), who plays Robertson Ay.

In addition to the complex song and dance elements, *Mary Poppins* has unique technical aspects. The largely student-run tech crew, along with the professional set designer Clifton Chad-

wick and other parent volunteers, are working hard to build the sets for the show. The show also requires multiple characters to fly and perform tricks onstage.

Many graduating seniors are savoring every last moment of their final All-School performance. "It's a little bit bittersweet, and it's weird to be at the top of the hierarchy. The music and all of the dancing is really cute, and I'm excited to see what the final product will look like. I've participated in All-School for seven years, and it's been one of the most worthwhile endeavors I've pursued. *Mary Poppins* is the best way to end my All-School experience," said Bruno.

Performances are taking place at Westhill on December 3, 9, and 10 at 7:30 pm, and December 4 and 11 at 3:00 pm.



TAKING THE FALL DRAMA TO LOFTY HEIGHTS

Maeve Ronan
Managing Editor

The Northstar Playmakers are kicking off their 2016-2017 season with their annual fall drama. Shifting away from the more serious plays they have done in the past, the Playmakers chose *Lofty Larceny*, a two-act comedy that all audiences will love. Originally written in French titled *Haut Vol* by Bruno Lacroix, the comedy was translated into English by a Westhill alumni and past co-President of the Playmakers, Kate Greenberg.

In this French style farce set in a penthouse, a man's desperate attempts to save his failing business cause a hilarious heist to ensue. Tom Flores, played by Liam Gelling ('19), is a wealthy industrialist who owns a knitting needle company that is about to go bankrupt. To save the company, he plans to steal the jewels that belong to his wife, Veronica Flores, played by Sydney Steinberg ('20). Lucky for Tom, Veronica is too busy contemplating the jewels of Tom's secretary, Yves, played by Fernando Gonzales ('18), to notice. To assist him with the theft, Tom hires the bumbling actor Greg Hasbine, played by Marcos Pinto-Leite ('18), to play the role of a win-

dow cleaner who will steal the jewels. When the heist does not go as planned, hilarity ensues as the cast become caught up in their own plans.

In previous years, the Playmakers have chosen darker, more dramatic shows for their fall drama. Last year they chose *Our Town*, the story of a fictional small town in America and the everyday lives of its citizens. The year before they produced *Frankenstein*, a very dark and gruesome show filled with death and torment. While these shows did attract audiences, the Playmakers wanted something with a lighter more comical feel. *Lofty Larceny*, relying heavily on characterization and the use of entrances and exits, definitely embodies that feel. It is sure to leave the audience gasping from laughter in their seats.

The show will run from November 17 through 20, with both 7:30 night performances and a 3:00 matinee. The cast is hoping to have an in-school preview before the show opens. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$10 for adults. The cast is offering a pre-sale where tickets are \$3 and you receive a tag as a voucher. If you enjoy comedy and supporting the theater, come see *Lofty Larceny* this November at Westhill.



Photos by Emily Savitt // Photo Manager

FRENCH FARCE Students practice for the fall drama, *Lofty Larceny*. The show follows a storyline about a man trying hard to save his failing business. The actors have been working tirelessly to perfect the show.

Record review of the month



Ride by Catfish and the Bottlemen

by Paige Savitt



Catfish and the Bottlemen are an alternative indie rock band that got their start performing at a bed and breakfast in Wales in 2007. Since then, the four artists, Ryan McCann, Matthew van Blakeway, Robert Hall, and Johnny Bond signed with two labels and released two albums. The British boys recently released their second studio album, *Ride*, in May of 2016. The album has received both positive and negative feedback from viewers.

I first discovered Catfish and the Bottlemen in June of 2016, after they performed at the Governors Ball music festival. Although I did not see their performance, I knew

they were on the lineup, so I looked into them. Their album *Ride* has a similar sound to the band Oasis, yet they maintain a fresh and individualistic sound. The opener "7" is an amazing introduction to the overall feel of the album. The chorus, "I don't think through things, I never get time cause I don't think things through," presents the theme of recklessness that the whole album embodies. Catfish and the Bottlemen base their songs off of hangovers, and heartbreaks which many young listeners feel they can relate to.

This past October, I saw Catfish and the Bottlemen live at Terminal 5 in New York City. After listening to *Ride* for a month straight, I was more

than prepared to experience them live. The second song they performed, "Emily," is the eighth song on their album. The song starts with light drums and the lyrics, "New York surprise me, 21 and I need something/Emily just phoned for me to smoke with her and on her furniture." The song is about a girl in New York City. The verses are slow in tempo, but the drum comes in strong at the end. It makes you want to dance and sing along and is meant to be performed live. McCann performed the song flawlessly, and the crowd responded with a lot of enthusiasm.

Another song they performed was entitled "Anything," the fifth song on *Ride*. This song is much

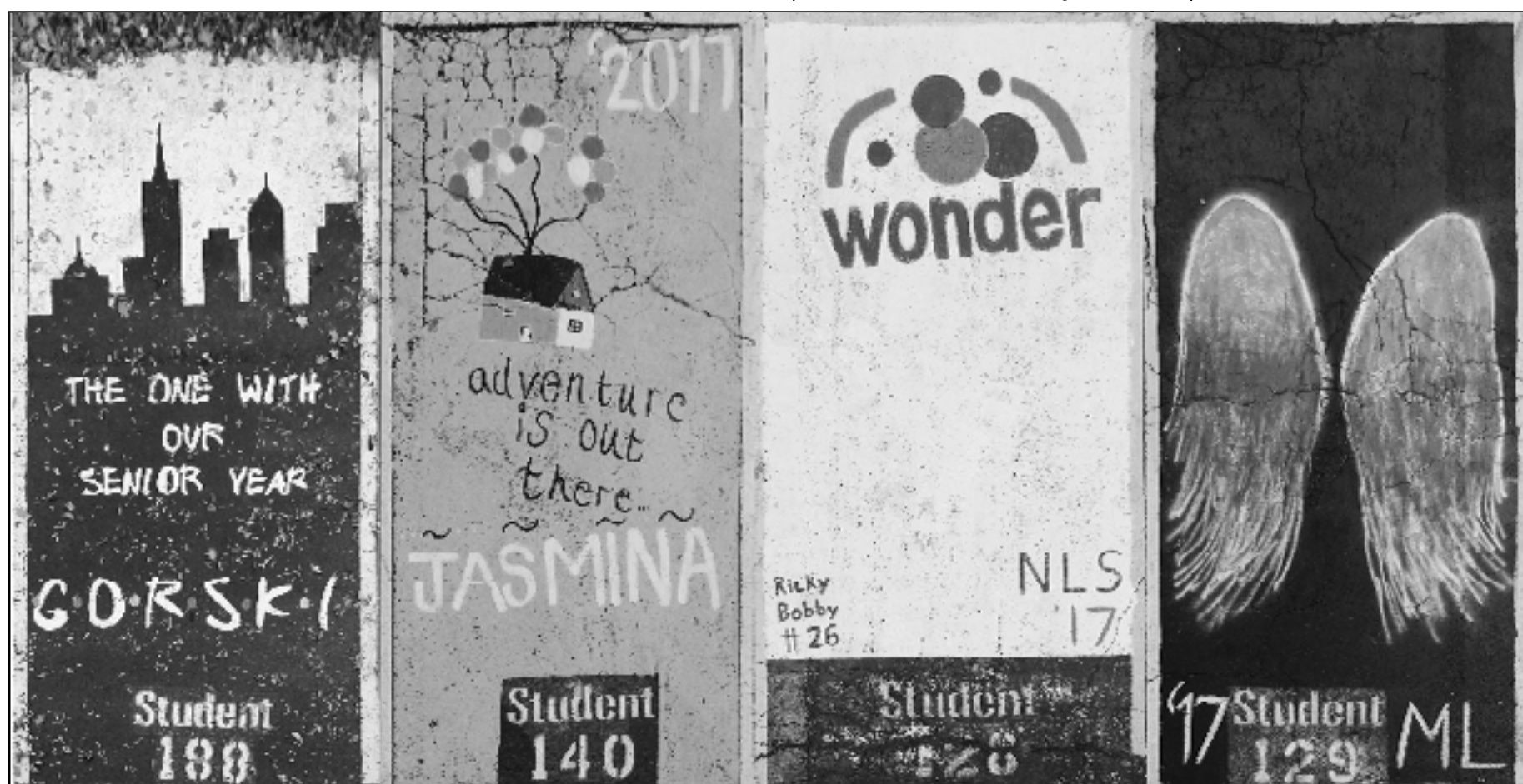
slower than the others, but has the same alternative indie feel to it. Catfish and the Bottlemen write about heartbreak, and how they overcome issues in relationships. The song is catchy, transitioning from slow verses to an amazingly upbeat chorus. The song ends with the chorus followed by a guitar solo and then the chorus one last time. McCann danced through the entire stage, engaging not just the crowd but his band mates as well. Some songs are simply written to be performed live, and Catfish and the Bottlemen did that perfectly with the album *Ride*.

McCann said that it only took a month to record *Ride*, although the songs were written

sporadically. The album consists of eleven alternative songs that are perfect to listen to in any situation. "Soundcheck," the third song on the album has become one of their most listened to songs on Spotify. It has an amazing upbeat sound to it, going from a fast verse and chorus, to a slow bridge. The song tells a story. "I raced through soundcheck/just to meet you/you convinced me to put life aside and want you." This alludes to the reckless theme once again.

Ride by Catfish and the Bottlemen is a fun second album. This album has a unique sound, and if you like alternative or indie music, *Ride* is a must.

Painted senior parking spots



“When we were deciding what we wanted our spot to look like we knew we wanted it to be kind of funny, so we thought of *Friends*.”

JENNY AND MELANIE GORSKI

“It reminds me everyday to keep going, chase my dreams, and do what I love. Push yourself, and it will pay off in the end.”

JASMINA MUSIC

“I’m going to add ‘If you ain’t first you’re last’ because everyone is adding inspirational quotes and I wanted to add a satirical one.”

NICK SMERIGLIO

“I was inspired by street art in Los Angeles and New York City. I’ve seen so many butterfly wing murals, and I put my own spin on it.”

MAIA LUDERS

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



The Hungry Vikings

Column by Jake Dardis, Ryan Hart, & Naresh Kumanduri

Soul Tasty:

Price: ★★★★★
Service: ★★★★★
Food: ★★★★★

On a cool October day, three Vikings brewed with excitement for their reunion since summer. The trifecta of norsemen chose to meet in a humble tavern known as Soul Tasty to kick off the new season. As they entered the restaurant in the downtown village of Stamford, their stomachs rumbled in anticipation for the meal ahead.

Our first Viking entered Soul Tasty to be met with welcoming faces greeting people entering the restaurant and loud hip-hop music perfectly setting the ambience. As he lumbered up to the front to order off the menu, he was met with wide varieties of

fried foods and other varieties of southern culture, but he instantly set his sights on the fried chicken that would come with macaroni and cheese and french fries.

Our Viking also got water from the fridge to help wash down the large portion of food that was about to come his way. After a very short wait, the food was ready, and our Viking could not be more prepared for a good meal to kick off the Hungry Viking season. He instantly tore into the meal and was met with a well-seasoned chicken fried to perfection, macaroni and cheese, that left you wanting more, and fries that were crispy.

Between bites of his chicken and multiple sides, the Vikings talked up a hearty conversation in the warm atmosphere of Soul Tasty. Upon completion of the meal, our Viking was left full and released a grunt of approval to his fellow peers. Our Viking knew he was definitely going to come back at a later date.

The second Viking trudged into the restaurant with a rumbling stomach and upon arrival, he fixed his eyes on the BBQ pork chops. He immediately demanded the meat be presented to him with french fries and macaroni and cheese. The meat was so well cooked that

it was falling off the bone, and the BBQ sauce was embedded within, to the Viking’s satisfaction. While scarfing down his meal, he then began to notice the friendly atmosphere he was in and how all of the staff and customers were interacting with one another. It reminded him of the nordic country, where he and his fellow Vikings would feast and talk.

The third Viking, of skinny body but surprisingly large appetite, strolled in eyes wide and mouth drooling as he saw the numerous possibilities waiting for him behind the counter. After a friendly greeting and an

introduction to the menu, the Viking made his choice between southern style chicken and waffles and the fried pork chops he noticed another customer eating. His Nordic instincts had him go with a pork chop meal and sides of heartwarming macaroni and cheese and crispy sweet potato fries. To his delight, the tender chop was smothered in a rich gravy that made him lick the dish clean. As he downed his meal, he enjoyed the joint’s liveliness and of course, the company of his fellow Vikings.

At the end of the meal, our Vikings left the restaurant with full stomachs and wallets.

Elephants are the only mammals that can not jump. 10% of the worlds population is left handed. You cannot snore and dream at the same time.

SLAY OF THE MONTH: SOPHIE CIOKAJLO



Photos by Emily Savitt // Photo Manager.

I try to shop at a lot of different places. I definitely love Brandy Melville, but I also go for small boutiques and such when I'm shopping on vacation. Forever 21 and H&M are awesome because they have so much to choose from and it is all so inexpensive so I can really go all out trying new things. I am a huge designer girl too. I am loving Kate Spade's design right now and I always have fun looking around Nordstrom and Saks Fifth Avenue. I always try to challenge myself to wear things outside of my comfort zone. I always try to look nice for school, so I'm constantly trying to find new outfit combinations and trends to try to keep things interesting. If I had to describe my style in three words, they would probably be outgoing, elegant and colorful. I wear a lot of different things. I can be sometimes more bohemian and sometimes more preppy. My original style inspiration really comes from my mom and grandmother. They are both very focused on higher end brands and designer accessories. Whenever I was with my grandmother growing up I had to look absolutely put together, which I think brings a sense of modesty to my style. I find inspiration today from modern trends and magazines mostly.



TO DO Nex+ month: November

6

Daylight+ savings Time

On this day, we fall back an hour, so sleeping in is a must. Take advantage of your extra time!

8

Election Day

If you can, go out and vote! If not, spend your day off encouraging your parents and all people you know (over 18) to vote for our next president!

11

Veteran's Day

Honor the people who pledged their lives to our country to protect us. Try looking up famous veterans and see if you know any.

12

National Pizza Day

Go eat pizza, obviously. If you are daring, make your own. This is a fun activity to do with friends or family.

17

National Take a Hike Day

Get outside and explore nature while it is not too cold outside! Go with your friends, family, or by yourself!

24

Thanksgiving

Today is the day you are allowed to eat as much as you want and not feel guilty. Do not forget to be thankful!

26

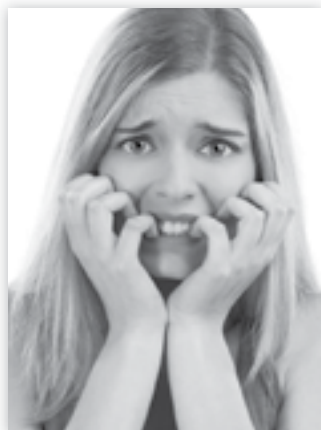
National Cake Day

Again, go eat food. Go on a cake scavenger hunt, try to find the best cake bakery in Stamford.

28

National French Toast Day

Start your Monday off right with some delicious french toast, do not forget about the syrup!



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...

DRIVER EDUCATION.

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.

We think you'll agree that the advantage of

- A Flexible Classroom Schedule • An Expanded and Flexible Driving Schedule
- Taking the Driving Test Here in Stamford • Having Ownership Local and Involved...

Makes **High Ridge Driving School** The Logical & Best Value!

Keep this ad for your **FREE BOOK** to help you pass the

Permit test. A \$10 Value **FREE**,


No Expiration, when you enroll in High Ridge Driving School

Interested in only the 8-Hour Drug & Alcohol Class?

We offer 16 & 17 year old students the chance to take just this class every weekend.

(EXCEPT MAJOR HOLIDAYS)

Always separate classes for teens and adults.



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.

EXPRESSIONS



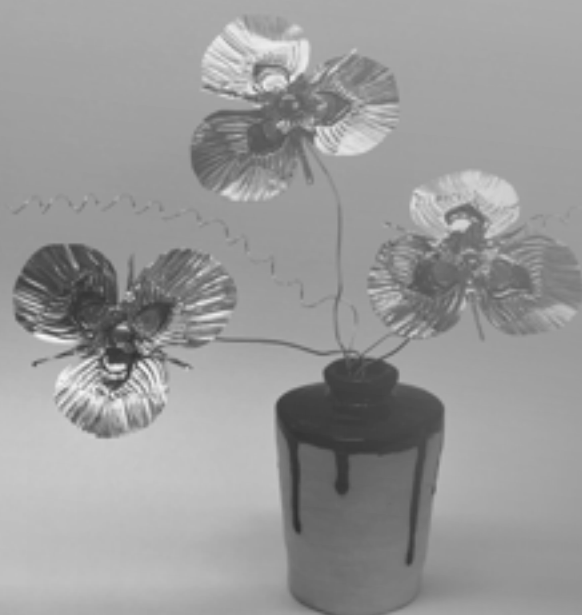
Julianna Lajko ('18)



Matthew Maigan ('17)



Ali Cogan ('18)



Josh Greenburg ('18)



Leslie Gimenez ('17)



ARTIST OF THE MONTH

EMMA CALI

Emma Cali ('18), sat down with The Westword to speak about how art has impacted her life, and the influences that inspire her everyday.

The Westword: How did you become interested in art?

Emma Cali: Ever since I was little, I have always enjoyed art. I really started to take an interest in it during the seventh grade when I had a really supportive art teacher who gave me my first sketchpad. He pushed me to become better and fueled my drive to try new things and explore the art world.

TW: How would you describe your style?

EC: I would say my art style has a very surreal quality. I enjoy painting things that look quite realistic, but have a strange and eerie quality to them.

TW: What has influenced your style?

EC: Artists such as Salvador Dalí and Leonardo da Vinci have greatly influenced my work. I have a great appreciation for the human body, so my art tends to encapsulate different parts of the human figure or face.

TW: What medium do you like to work with?

EC: I really enjoy working with oil paint. The whole mixing, layering, and cleaning process makes the whole experience very enjoy-

able. It requires a lot of work and time, but I find it conveys my style of art the best.

TW: Did you teach yourself art?

EC: I am a self-taught artist. I learned a lot from observing my surroundings and pushing myself to improve.

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

EC: Something that I would advise students interested in art is to not overthink everything. Art is meant to be enjoyed, so getting caught up in minor faults can cloud your work and your mind. It is imperative that you accept the imperfections and continue to work and improve.

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

EC: I really hope that I can get to that point where people look at my art and they just stare. I don't want people to be given an explanation, I'd like them to feel and create their own interpretations. I want them to love my work not because it's a pretty picture, but because it means something to them.

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

EC: If I had to choose one museum where my art would be featured, it would be the Museum of Modern Art. I have really great memories there and also enjoy the artist's work that they feature.



Westhill’s college committed athletes



DEAN DEPRETA

Roger Williams University

Baseball

Dean Depreta will be going to Roger Williams University in Bristol to play baseball. He is a middle infielder, who plays great defense, and can hit well. “I like that the school has made modern and great updates to the buildings on campus. I also like the size of the school and the location because it’s not too close or far from home,” said Depreta. The baseball team is a Division III program, which went 15-22-1 and 1-10 at home last season, so there is a lot room for improvement. “I’m excited about the new coach and that there should be opportunities to play my first year. Depreta brings good overall play and smooth and calming character and hopes to keep his favorite walkup song, “Intergalactic,” by the Beastie Boys, as he transitions to the collegiate level.

Soccer

Temple University

NATALIE DRUEHL

Natalie Druehl will be attending Temple University in Philadelphia to play soccer. This year, the Temple Owls women’s soccer team is 3-14. Druehl is captain of Westhill’s soccer team and is uniquely talented in her ability to play great defense and offense. “I like the campus so much. Philadelphia is a really awesome spot and there’s a lot of opportunities and activities in the city,” said Druehl. “Meeting a whole new team and new coaches is awesome.” Her passion is like none other and she will bring a spark of energy to the Owls.



PAIGE SOTTOSANTI

Lehigh University

Field Hockey

Paige Sottosanti will be attending Lehigh University next year to play field hockey. Sottosanti is a great, versatile player and excels at many aspects of the sport. She weaves in and out the defense with ease. Lehigh University is a private institution, located in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. “The school has about 7,000 students, which is the perfect size for me. I love the rivalry they have with Lehigh and the school spirit in general. The campus is beautiful and in the mountains,” said Sottosanti. The Mountain Hawks field hockey 5-10 so far this year, so they could use some help. “There is a new coach this year, who’s bringing new game plans, philosophies, and strategies. The coach is willing to start a freshman.” We’re sure her positive attitude and work ethic will bring her success next year.

Soccer

Northeastern University

CHELSEA DOMOND

Chelsea Domond is recognized as the best offensive soccer player in the FCIAC by players and coaches, and is on her way to totaling over 80 career goals. Domond’s speed and athleticism combined with her dribbling skills and powerful shot make her a scoring threat whenever she touches the ball. She is committed to Northeastern University, which is a private, urban institution in Boston, Massachusetts and will start there in the fall of 2017. The Huskies are 12-6-1 this year and Domond is joining an already talented team. Before she heads off to Northeastern, she and her Westhill teammates hope for success in the state and FCIAC playoffs.



GABBY LACCONA

Ithaca College

Softball

Gabby Laccona has committed to Ithaca College in New York for softball. She is an infielder and is a skilled defender and powerful hitter. Scott Erikson, a Stamford sports writer, called Laccona the best shortstop in the FCIAC last year. The Bomber’s Softball program is one of the strongest in Division III and they went 35-10 last year. Laccona is a fierce competitor and one of the leader’s on Westhill’s team this year. She is fast on the bases and drives the ball to the outfield regularly. Off the field, she is always laughing and having fun with teammates and friends.

Andrews guides students on and off the field

Guidance Counselor Joseph Andrews balances his love for helping students and coaching soccer

Charlotte Kriftcher

Reporter

Joseph Andrews has been a guidance counselor and boys soccer coach at Westhill for 14 years. He has seen every type of student and soccer player and has used his dual role at the school to allow him to gain a different perspective and connect with his students in a unique way. Growing up, Andrews played soccer, wrestling, and track, going on to play soccer and track at Sacred Heart University and Western Connecticut State University. Despite the number of sports in his childhood, he always knew soccer was his favorite.

"I first started coaching when I was in college, and that was when I knew that it was something I wanted to continue when my playing days were over," said Andrews. Andrews has coached at Westhill high school for 14 seasons, but he also coaches premiere teams in the off-season.

As a coach, Andrews believes he "takes the approach of being firm, while still fair and reasonable." He understands that given the culture of Westhill, the team will be made up of players with a wide range of backgrounds. "I know everyone is different and I take that into consideration."

Before every game, Andrews likes to say a prayer as a team, to bring a sense of unity and togetherness to the group before they take on their rivals. Unlike many other coaches, he is understanding about the different circumstances certain students might have and is very approachable when need be.

It brings Andrews a great sense of pride to hear from former players, some of whom have gone on to play in college.

"I love that I still keep in touch with players who have graduated, and value the opportunity to watch them play at school and continue to represent

Westhill," said Andrews. He is proud of them, and in return feels accomplished.

Out of 14 seasons of great teams, Andrews recalls, "2011 was a special year with a special team." After starting the season having to forfeit five consecutive games, things were not looking so good, but this team of underdogs came back to win the next 11 games in a row. They made states and FCIACs despite all odds.

Being a coach and guidance counselor go hand in hand. "Being on the athletic field does not exempt you from being responsible and making good decisions, and as a coach and guidance counselor I have to emphasize that." However, school and game time are two very different situations.

"When they get to the soccer field, it gives them the opportunity to let go of everything else. It's an outlet."

"The two jobs definitely help one another," said An-

draws. "It is huge to be in school during the day because I interact with players not just in a soccer context. It's helpful to be able to keep an eye on students off the field."

Given that all his students and players have their own stories, it is nice for them to know that if they need anything Andrews is always ready to help.

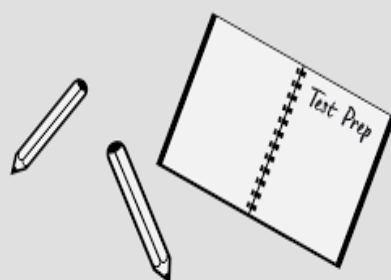


Photo by Ryan Murace/Media Manager

NEED A MATH TUTOR?

IF YOU NEED HELP WITH:

- AP CALCULUS (AB & BC)
- PRE-CALCULUS
- ALGEBRA 1 & 2
- PRE-ALGEBRA
- GEOMETRY
- COLLEGE MATH
- ACT/SAT TEST PREP
- SAT MATH SUBJECT TEST (1 & 2)
- ISEE
- SSAT



CONTACT

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PHONE: 203-391-4161

The Westword would like to thank the security staff for staying after school with us throughout the year and for always being so accomodating.

Chelsea Domond shoots for success



THE STRIKER Chelsea Domond is setting herself for goals in the future that she hopes to succeed in. Domond hopes to win a national championship, and to one day play professionally for the National Team.

Nabilla Harahap
Reporter

Senior Chelsea Domond, one of Westhill's best soccer players, is already committed to Northeastern University for the next year. The Westword sat down with her to reflect upon her high school career and what she is looking forward to in the future.

The Westword: How old were you when you started playing soccer and what position do you play?

Chelsea Domond: I started playing soccer when I was four, and I am a forward.

TW: Do you have anybody that inspires you as a role model?

CD: I would have to say Mallory Pugh, because right now she is the youngest player on the U.S. National Team.

TW: What is a challenge that you have had to face before?

CD: This summer I sprained my ankle before a tournament that was really important. So I

was really nervous that I would not [fully recover] in time. Even though I was not 100% ready for the tournament, I played anyway.

TW: How often do you practice?

CD: During the high school season I practice almost everyday. But during [off-season], I practice around two to three times a week.

TW: Do you have any pre-game rituals?

CD: I do not think I have any pre-game rituals. I do get really nervous especially if it is for big games. Once I start playing, I don't even think about it.

TW: Are there any goals that you want to achieve one day?

CD: I want to get to at least a national camp. I really want to see how far I can go. I even want to see if I will be able to even [play] professionally one day, and maybe to even make it to the national team.

TW: When did you decide to commit to Northeastern University and why?

CD: I really loved the loca-

tion. It is one of the top private schools on the east coast and I am excited to be on the team. But I also considered Providence, James Madison University, and St. John's. I ended up committing to Northeastern last year in September.

TW: What will you miss the most about playing at Westhill?

CD: I will miss everything! I will miss my coach, and the players especially. Playing for Westhill is always really fun because a lot of friends are on my team.

TW: What is your best memory at Westhill?

CD: I would say definitely scoring my first header freshman year against St. Joseph High School, which at the time was the hardest team to beat.

TW: Do you have any advice for younger athletes?

CD: Just keep pushing yourself. If there is something you are not good at, keep practicing continuously and then eventually it will contribute to your play.

Dzieman defines a defenseman



TURF BURN Mateusz Dzieman is a great defensive player but is continuously looking for ways to improve his skills to become a better player.

Matt Masi
Staff Writer

Senior Mateusz Dzieman plays soccer for Westhill and has been on varsity for all four years of his high school soccer career. He was one of this year's four captains and sat down with The Westword to talk about his experience as a player.

The Westword: What would you say your strengths are as a soccer player?

Mateusz Dzieman: My strengths are definitely my height, my communication on the field, and my comfort with the ball.

TW: What are some examples of things you feel need to be worked on in order to improve your game?

MD: I believe I need to work on clearing the ball longer distances and having a little bit better timing on my long passes across the field.

TW: What position do you

primarily play?

MD: I play center back, which is a defensive position. It gives me the opportunity to see the whole field in front of me allowing me to use my skills as a communicator to help my teammates.

TW: Do you have any pre-game rituals that you consistently carry out?

MD: I wouldn't say that I have any rituals. However, the team and I stay consistent in our warm-up routine from game to game.

TW: How has being captain affected your individual play?

MD: Being captain has affected my play by helping me better control my emotions as well as the way I carry myself on the field. I need to be an example to the rest of the team both on and off the field.

TW: Do you play any other sports besides soccer for Westhill or club?

MD: I don't play any sports besides soccer on a team. However,

I'll play basketball or football with my friends.

TW: What are some things you do during the off-season?

MD: The summer is technically the only off-season, but even then I try to go to field at least once a day and kick a ball around. Whether it's actual training or just playing with friends I try to play everyday.

TW: How do you think you have affected the team as leader?

MD: I've had some positive affects along with some negative ones as well. A positive that I take a lot of pride in is how hard I work at practice which typically gets the rest of the boys to do the same and compete on the same level.

TW: What do you believe the future holds for Westhill soccer once you graduate?

MD: We have some young guys on the varsity team that put a lot of hard work in. With that I have high hopes for the program after I graduate.

Crowns on for Senior Day

**Kelsey Kopec &
Paige Sottosanti**

Staff Writers

Senior Day is a holiday of sorts for the eldest athletes at Westhill. Many seniors wait the whole season for this day to come. It is one of the many benefits of being a student athlete at Westhill, and a huge reward for all the hard work poured into the taxing and vigorous sport season.

Although each sport team celebrates the day differently, the goal is the same: to honor the seniors and show them how much they mean to their team. Overall, female teams tend to make a bigger deal of the day than male teams. "It's really just another day, but our motivation changes; we want to win for the seniors," said soccer player Charlie Tee-eters ('17). Other teams, however, spoil their seniors with baked goods, posters, cards, gift bags, and more treats.

Typically the team will assign one or two underclassmen to a specific senior. It becomes their responsibility to get that senior her favorite foods the morning of. "When I got to school my group was waiting for me at my parking spot and greeted me with my favorite breakfast and coffee. It made my day," said senior captain, Rachel Melia ('17). Seniors are even given tiaras, tutus, and boas to wear all day.

"Many people asked me if it was my birthday," said Brookelyn Conte ('17). The fun does not stop there. When it is game time, the field or court is decorated with balloons, streamers and posters are setup for each senior with pictures of them. "Every year the underclassmen work really hard to make this day so special. We appreciate all of the gifts and effort they put into this day," said volleyball player Amalia Skoparantzios ('17).

Families are included in the celebration as well. Many sport teams hold a ceremony before the game to announce each senior's name and have their family come

on to the field and take a picture. "Walking down the field I have played on for four years, with my family by my side, made me realize all these years of dedica-

tion and hard work were worth it," said football captain Blake Newcomer ('17). Senior Day definitely makes saying goodbye to Westhill that much harder.



Photos by Paige Sottosanti, Dyamond Winchester, & Caitlin Cooney // Contributors.

SAYONARA SENIORS Underclassmen show their support for their seniors. The soccer players made shirts for their seniors, whereas the field hockey players and cheerleaders whipped out their crowns and boas for the occasion.

NOVEMBER SPORTS CALENDAR

Week 1 (1-7)

DATE: 2

EVENT: Varsity Volleyball

OPPONENT: Bassick

LOCATION: Home

TIME: 4:00 P.M.

DATE: 5

EVENT: Freshman Football

OPPONENT: Ridgefield

LOCATION: Tiger Hollow Turf Field II

TIME: 5:00 P.M.

DATE: 7

EVENT: Varsity Football

OPPONENT: Ridgefield

LOCATION: Home

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

Week 2 (8-14)

DATE: 9

EVENT: JV Football

OPPONENT: Ridgefield

LOCATION: Home

TIME: 3:30 P.M.

DATE: 12

EVENT: Freshman Football

OPPONENT: St. Josephs

LOCATION: St. Josephs

TIME: 4:00 P.M.

DATE: 14

EVENT: Varsity Football

OPPONENT: St. Josephs

LOCATION: Home

TIME: 1:00 P.M.

Weeks 3-4 (15-29)

DATE: 16

EVENT: JV Football

OPPONENT: Stamford High

LOCATION: Home

TIME: 4:00 P.M.

DATE: 19

EVENT: Freshman Football

OPPONENT: Stamford High

LOCATION: Stamford High

TIME: 4:00 P.M.

DATE: 26

EVENT: Varsity Football

OPPONENT: Stamford High

LOCATION: Home

TIME: 10:00 A.M.

Week 5 (30-Dec 5)

DATE: 30

EVENT: Girls Basketball Tryouts

LOCATION: Gym

TIME: 2:30 P.M.

DATE: 30

EVENT: Wrestling Tryouts

LOCATION: Gym

TIME: 3:00 P.M.

DATE: 5

EVENT: Basketball Tryouts

LOCATION: Gym

TIME: 2:30 P.M.



WESTHILL AND PROUD!



Varsity Field Hockey seniors celebrate their Senior Day

Athletes of the Month *p.38* / Westhill's college committed athletes *p.36*



Mateusz Dzieman



Chelsea Domond