

CHRONICLE

COMMITTEE FOCUSED ON SAFETY

by Sam Hart

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, reopening schools this fall was a challenge. In response to this, the Averill Park Teachers Association formed the Health and Safety Committee as requested by the union's leadership. Ten Averill Park teachers were appointed, from different subject areas, to help reopen the schools safely and effectively.

When asked what accomplishment he was most proud of, music teacher Mr. Blostein, the head of the committee, responded, "That we were able to reopen at all." Averill Park opened in a hybrid system, unlike many other school districts in the area which started the year virtually, or

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COMMUNITY TO DECIDE ON CAPITAL PROJECT

by Ashlyn McGarry

The Averill Park School District will hold a Capital Project vote on December 8. The project focuses on both the safety and security needs of each school building, and the personal needs that the different buildings may require.

"Every aspect of this project will impact and enhance the student experience," said superintendent Dr. Franchini. If the project is approved by voters, each district school building would be getting updated security systems at the main entrances to provide maximum safety for students and

staff. Each main office would also have an additional window put in for secure transactions when checking into the building and other purposes.



Other benefits include fire alarm replacements, roofing replacements, lighting upgrades, heating and ventilation systems being updated and more. On top of these, each building will have its

own focus. At the high school, new fields for sports would be built, Algonquin's PAFA wing would be updated to accommodate new curriculum, and Miller Hill's cafeteria would be expanded.

Security and Safety are to be voted on in Proposition 1 of the project, while additional upgrades, such as the expansion of the construction technology lab, are part of Proposition 2. In order for the second

proposition to pass, the first must pass before it, making safety the number one priority. Board of Education President Jessica Zweig explained, "Even

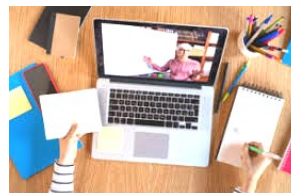
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VIRTUAL MISGIVINGS STUDENTS AND STAFF CITE ON-LINE FAULTS

by Mara Little

The functionality and environment that students have grown accustomed to at Averill Park High School look and feel completely different than in years past. This difference is a result of the installation of virtual learning, which has been implemented throughout the district affecting both students and teachers alike. There is a general consensus that the basic learning atmosphere, teaching

modalities, peer relations, student-teacher relations, and even extracurriculars have



been negatively altered with this new system in place.

Virtual learning is a learning experience that is

enhanced through utilizing computers and/or the internet both outside and inside the facilities of an educational organization. Through this method of learning, teaching activities are carried out online whereby the teacher and learners are physically separated, in terms of place, time, or both.

At this point in the school year, students in grades 6-12 have been given

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VIRTUAL LEARNING (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

the option to carry out their school day 100% virtually or to join a hybrid model, which allows students to attend school in person every other day. This way of teaching and learning has led to feelings of frustration, exhaustion, and isolation due to miscommunications between students and teachers, long hours spent in front of a screen, and lack of social interaction. When asked if virtual learning was a more beneficial teaching modality than in-person instruction, the overwhelming response from both student and teachers was no.

"No, I do not like virtual learning more than in-person learning. I cannot seem to dial in my brain to focus on school whilst at home, so I much prefer doing all my learning in the building," said hybrid student Christian Romer, a sophomore. "One negative thing about virtual learning is a mess of information for classes. I feel like I'm only getting some class information and what is required to learn is jumbled, cluttered, and confusing as teachers and students adapt to the new day rotation. It lacks organization and feels messy, unlike last year."

From a teacher standpoint, virtual learning was found to be equally as stressful, distracting, and difficult to adjust to as it is for students.

"I feel as though I have to remember a lot more daily procedure types of things, which can be a bit overwhelming. Almost as if I have multiple tabs open in my brain at any given time during the day," said English teacher Ms. Mouzakes. "Sometimes it's hard to shut that off at night!"

Ms. Quesnel, a math teacher, said, "I have less free time both in the building and at home. I no longer have those awesome opportunities

to just sit and chat with my students (before school, after school, advisory, etc.) because we aren't allowed to move around the building like before and I am always preparing notes, posts, PDFs for the next lesson. I have less



time with my own children at home because I need to grade papers or reply to emails so that my students get feedback in a timely manner. If I want them to keep working on what I'm assigning then, I have to keep involved in their learning process."

Global and AP US History teacher Mr. Goodnow stated that the "timing is different; I can't use the chalkboard to diagram things or use my maps. All of these things were useful tools for me and my students in the past. I'm still figuring it out."

Freshman Zareena Ansari, a hybrid student, brought up the point of a student-teacher relationship within the virtual learning experience, stating, "Virtual learning impacts the process of knowing my teachers quite negatively, considering most communication is me emailing them, confused about what we're doing." Sophomore Julie Hale, who is 100% virtual, agreed. "Honestly, I barely know my teachers besides their intro on Day 1, and the pickup event. Some

teachers I just know by reputation and this year's experience (for those who gave no intro). But it's also helped us to realize how skillful some of our teachers are, and how unskillful others are..."

English teacher Mrs.

might be thinking. It's probably because being virtual, you don't have so many eyes looking at you constantly. This way you aren't as "prim and proper" as you think you should be. We also have this magical device right beneath our fingertips, constantly. A device of distraction~~~~ electronics!"

Overall, the underlying factor behind most people's opinions on virtual learning resides around this topic of technology. Many teachers found that the inner workings of these different technology systems were hard to figure out and at points are still struggling with how to decipher them. Due to the confusion amongst their teachers, students then become confused when faced with the disarray in which the material is presented online, making the learning portion of virtual learning much more difficult. For example, hybrid senior Katie Armlin stated, "One negative of virtual learning is that it is so easy to make a mistake on a virtual platform. Due dates and assignments are often confusing and sometimes the mistake can be as simple as forgetting to hit the submit button."

In addition to these technological issues, there is a very unpredictable matter: Wifi. Wifi connection is notoriously unreliable once online for a significant period of time, and an internet connection can often be spotty if there are too many people on your network. All these factors must be understood and contribute to the difficulties of learning from home.

In short, teachers and students, whether hybrid or virtual, agreed that virtual learning was not a favored or easy way of conducting the school day. Instead, many new issues have arisen that the school community is working as a team to manage.

Gaboury provided an opposite outlook on this concept. "Sometimes I feel like I know some students better...through their writing or through their mini-conferences. We also take mask breaks and walks, and because of the smaller class sizes, I am getting to know them better. I do love having only half the students at a time in my room, I love the smaller class sizes and feel that helps me get to know them faster."

Junior Rebecca Ware, however, felt "It is super hard to keep in touch with friends in the other cohort, I haven't talked to some of my friends in the other cohort since we started virtual schooling in March. If the only class that you have with them isn't one that you can do group projects in, they just disappear from your life."

As for positive feedback, Hale summed it up well. "Being home I tend to relax much more than what I would in class. Therefore splitting my focus between the current class, and whatever else I

HONOR SOCIETY INDUCTIONS HELD

STUDENTS RECOGNIZED FOR ACHIEVEMENTS AND SERVICE

by Alice Powers

On Thursday, October 22, 57 students were inducted into the National Honor Society at Averill Park High School. Due to Covid-19, this year's ceremony was virtual.

The National Honor Society (or the NHS) is a prestigious program that highlights a school's values of leadership, scholarship, character and service. More than one million students participate in the NHS throughout all 50 US states and territories. Founded by a group of principals looking to promote leadership and develop character, the NHS was the first honor society created across the country, and is now one of the most well-known educational and leadership groups. It will be celebrating its 100 year anniversary next March.

NHS recognizes students for their accomplishments, but also aids in pushing students to participate in school activities and to be-



come involved in community service. "The National Honor Society is a nationwide organization for high schoolers that promotes four pillars: leadership, scholarship, character, and service. All vital to life after high school, members were chosen based on their demonstration and commit-

ment to continue to follow these pillars," said Emma Burdick, the president of the APHS class of 2021's National Honor Society. The average chapter in the US contributes 1,000 hours of community service, \$26,000 in charitable funds, 1,000 pounds of food to local state and notable causes, and 100 pints of blood.

For a student to qualify for the NHS, a school has to have a NHS chapter. Only students who are in grades 10 through 12 are eligible. In order to qualify, students must have a GPA of 90 or above throughout their high school career. They also must also have letters of recommendation from community members, a coach or advisor, and each applicant must write an essay on how they represent the four pillars of the NHS. To show service, students must volunteer in community service with no

compensation. To determine their leadership, the NHS evaluates the student's character. A student with good character is cooperative, honest, reliable, and shows courtesy, respect, and discipline.

Being a part of the National Honor Society is an honor and achievement because it demonstrates leadership, service, and character. It also shows that you are among some of the best students academically. "It is an honor to be a part of the NHS. It is great to be a part of an organization that serves my school and community and know that I am making a difference no matter how small," commented Burdick. She also noted that being in the National Honor Society can help set you apart on college applications.

Congratulations to this year's inductees for their achievement and hard work.

STAYING SOCIAL WITH SOCIAL DISTANCING

SAFE WAYS TO STAY ENGAGED

by Paula De Andres

How do you begin to stay connected in a world that has been forced apart? There are several ways you can remain social while staying safe this fall.

As things begin to slowly re-open, you can see people while still staying safe. By following mask protocols and social distancing measures, you can do many of the things you did before the pandemic. However, seeing people in person now requires a lot more planning. Making sure that seats are six feet apart and that everything has been wiped

down and sterilized is a good practice to ensure that every-



one stays safe. With just a slightly greater amount of planning, you can enjoy a get-together with your friends. Small gatherings are permit-

ted as long as these rules are followed.

One of the ways people are connecting in this changed world are driveway visits! These are a safe, yet fun way to say hello to your

friends and family from a distance. FaceTime and Zoom calls are another thing that can keep you connected with friends you can't yet see in person. Signing up for online classes or virtual events like concerts are a great way to keep you entertained and still feel like you are connected with the outside world.

All in all, you can still go on your regular shopping sprees and friendly visits. You can still go to fun events. All with the small compromise of wearing a mask and staying apart just for now. Now go out and stay social.

EXPLAINING THE NEW NORMAL

WHAT'S IT LIKE LIVING DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC

by Ava Ferriero

The coronavirus. A deadly virus outbreak that no one saw coming. The virus that seemed not that big of a deal in February, turned out to impact everyone's daily life. All of these new regulations made to keep us safe have been difficult to manage and remember. Thanks to this illness, everything has changed. So, the question is, what is the new normal?

Nowadays, everyone has a new perspective on "normal." Due to many different factors, people have different opinions about how the school year is going so far. Students have to adjust to working alone at home or going to school wearing a mask. In many ways, this adjustment has really been tough on everyone.

The new normal has both positive and negative factors. Some people believe the new normal makes learning harder, while



others believe it makes you learn perseverance and teaches you to work harder as a student.

"The new normal is having to wear a mask everywhere you go and nothing fun being open," stated freshman Spencer Agan.

Teenagers have been kept from going to parties and fun weekend activities that allow us to relax and have a good time. "No," Agan said.

"I'm not enjoying it, because you can't do anything fun with your friends on the weekends." This virus has really affected teenagers and young adults by not allowing much time to release the stress of school work.

Since the outbreak, students have longed for the time before the virus hit, while others have gotten used to the new normal. "For me the masks can be annoying at times but it's all for a good reason," sophomore Grace LaLiberte exclaimed. "If everyone continues to wear masks properly, socially distances, and stays home when they feel sick then everything can start to go back to the old normal."

As the virus continues to spread, students have slowly become more used to the fact that this is what life is going to be like until it stops. Although it may be hard sometimes, we all have to put forth our best efforts to stay safe and healthy and if we do, as LaLiberte said, everything can start to go back to the "old normal" once again.

COMMITTEE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

didn't have their elementary schools open fully like Averill Park did.

Averill Park was able to open its middle and high school on a hybrid schedule with full virtual options, and elementary schools fully in-person with full virtual options.

The committee began working on the challenge of reopening the dis-

trict in July with the purpose of representing Averill Park teachers and keeping them as safe as possible within the reopening plan. To achieve this goal, the committee looked at all of the school's reopening plans and talked to all of the administrators, helping to make revisions and suggestions to increase the safety of the plans.

The biggest challenge of the committee, according to Blostein, was the reopening of the elementary schools, because of how different the structure is compared to the middle and high schools. Additionally, it is much harder to maintain social distancing and other safe practices with younger children.

Hopefully at some point all the schools in our district will be able to fully reopen, but for now Averill Park must stay in this restricted hybrid model. The Health and Safety Committee of Averill Park has helped us open safely and efficiently so far, so it is possible that in the future they can also provide assistance with the plans for an all in-person model.

BUILDING PROJECT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

though a new roof is not very exciting, it is necessary to keep providing a learning, teaching and work environment that is healthy and safe."

The vote is being held on December 8th, 2020. A full copy of the plan can be found on the district website. New videos will be sent out weekly about the

Capital Project to your school emails and on Averill Park's social media. These videos will explain more details about each building's changes. If you would like more

information on what the vote will be on, keep a lookout for these videos and be sure to read the full plan.

SHOULD WE HAVE TO WEAR MASKS? STUDIES DO SHOW A CLEAR ANSWER

by Tyler Michaels

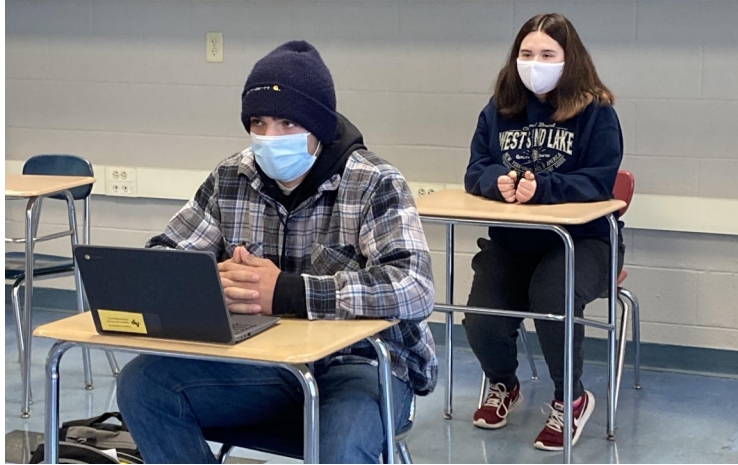
As Averill Park re-opens to students and staff, there is one thing that everyone in the building wears. In every classroom, all students and staff wear masks. However, can all students be forced to wear a mask? Is the fact that masks prevent the spread of the virus enough to make up for the uncomfortableness they cause?

In the beginning of the coronavirus outbreak, both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) said the only people who needed to wear masks were people showing symptoms of the disease and people who were taking care of someone ill. However, now both groups have reversed their position, and have said that masks should absolutely be worn when social distancing is difficult.

Why did both groups change their position concerning if masks are necessary? The answer is because of supply and demand. As the disease quickly spread, the United States was extremely undersupplied, and the need for masks drastically increased. Because of the low supply and high demand, the CDC and WHO said that masks weren't necessary for everyone to ensure that first responders and those taking care of someone sick can get the masks they need. But as the quarantine continued mask supplies increased, placing the supply and demand at a reasonable ratio, and both organizations strongly recommend masks to stop the virus from spreading.

To understand if masks truly help slow the virus, it is important to understand how masks work. COVID-19 is an airborne virus, meaning it

mask significantly reduced the spread of other respiratory viruses. Another recent study in 15 states and the District of Columbia showed



primarily spreads through droplets in the air. Masks can help stop the spread of the disease by preventing respiratory droplets from leaving the mouth of those infected, slowing the infection rate. It has been scientifically proven that wearing masks can help prevent the disease from spreading, as an experiment found that hundreds of droplets ranging in size from 20 to 500 micrometers form when we say a sim-

ple phrase. However, when we wear a mask almost all of the droplets are blocked, since the mouth was covered. Another study of people with the common cold discovered that wearing a surgical



that a mandating of masks led to a slower COVID-19 growth rate, and as time continued this result became clearer. Scientists have proven that masks help slow the spread of the Coronavirus, but can students be forced to wear masks? For a short answer: yes, the government is fully within its constitutional rights to mandate masks in public schools. The government can create regulations to help with public safety, such as banning smoking in public places. This ensures that other bystanders aren't put in danger by secondhand smoke, and similarly, masks help ensure that other bystanders are not endangered from respiratory droplets coming from those infected.

The 10th Amendment in the Bill of Rights allows states to make emergency health actions, including mandating a quarantine

or other business restrictions. This amendment states, "Powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." This means that any powers not specifically given to the federal government become state powers, including emergency powers during a public health crisis.

Because of this, individual states can enforce masks, and even if a state decides not to, specific businesses can mandate masks. Similar to "No shoes, no shirt, no service" signs, a business can essentially add "no mask" to the sign, and is within its rights to withhold service from a customer refusing to wear a mask. Exceptions can be made if the citizen has a medical condition that prevents them from wearing a mask.

Masks have been scientifically proven to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, and the government is well within its constitutional rights to mandate masks. Despite the itching some masks cause, students can be mandated to, and should, wear masks.

We Want Your IDEAS

The Averill Park Chronicle wants your story ideas. Send them to any Journalism Club member, or to Mr. Strich, *The Chronicle's* advisor.

WILL THERE BE A PROM THIS YEAR?

IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKELY

by Emma Deo

The Junior Prom has been a tradition at Averill Park High School and other schools across the country for years and years, allowing many generations to make memories that last a lifetime. This tradition came to a screeching halt last spring when the coronavirus pandemic hit the United States, putting a hold on all large gatherings and non-essential events in an attempt to slow the spread of coronavirus and to control the pandemic, which has been rapidly evolving since early March of 2020 with no end in sight. This presents the question: will there be a prom at APHS this year?

As of October 25, according to data from Johns

Hopkins University, the United States has reported its second-highest day of new coronavirus cases, with 83,718 new cases



across the country on Saturday, October 24. In New York, there were 2,058 new cases on the same day, which is about 1,000 more than Monday, October 19. This was a very steep increase in such a short amount of time, almost mirror-

ing the early days of the pandemic. These case numbers are predicted to rise further as time goes on. This is especially true now as some states are becoming more relaxed on mask-wearing rules and social distancing, with an increase in large gatherings, spreading the virus at quick pace.

Since cases continue to rise across the country and in our state, as of right now it is not safe to hold a dance where a very large number of students will be in a confined space. Looking back to last spring, just five months ago, the school had erroneously thought that it would be safe to hold a prom by September of this school year. This shows how much this pandemic can change and evolve in a short period of

time. It is extremely difficult to try to predict what the situation will look like in the spring, so it is equally as difficult to make assumptions based on the future of the coronavirus pandemic.

With the knowledge we have today about the coronavirus, it is difficult to make a decision, but it does not look like there will be a junior prom during the APHS 2020-2021 school year for either the class of 2021 or 2020. The act of controlling this pandemic is much more important than holding a dance that could potentially pose as a "super-spreader" event, causing a surge in cases, erasing all the hard work the Averill Park School District has put in to keep the students, teachers, and community safe.

THAT'S THE SPIRIT! SENIORS WIN SPIRIT STICK

STUDENTS AND STAFF ENJOY A SLIGHTLY ALTERED SPIRIT WEEK

by Sarah Wallace

Much has changed this year, but we as a school community refuse to let that put a damper on our school spirit. Through October 21 until October 30, Averill Park High School hosted its first Spirit Week of the 2020-2021 school year. But this year, the stakes were even higher.

The unfortunate circumstances that this year has brought upon us have made it very difficult, almost impossible, to host the activities we usually would, two being Homecoming and Pep Rally. While the ideas haven't been totally eliminated

yet, the likelihood is looking very slim, which is why the class presenting the most school spirit would win the school-renowned Spirit Stick.



"When every class officer came together to vote upon our theme days, we came to the decision that the winning class will be rewarded with the Spirit Stick," said senior class president Lauren Paris. "Homecoming week is usually around this

time and that is when we give the winning class the Spirit Stick. This idea does not mean all hope is gone for a possible Pep Rally because we refuse to rule out what the spring will hold."

It has always been a tradition to award the Spirit Stick to the loudest and proudest class who has shown the most spirit at the annual Pep Rally, but because we cannot host such an event this year, the next best thing is to give it to the class with the most school spirit. And here is how that was done.

Last week was your chance to show the school that you and your graduating class had the most school

spirit by simply participating. On October 21 and 22, Averill Park kicked off its annual Spirit Week with class color day. Freshmen wore red, sophomores wore grey, juniors did their traditional white-out and seniors were going with a black-out.

The next theme day was pajama day, celebrated on October 23 and 26. Then came blue and gold day on October 27 and 28, and finally we got to end spirit week with a bang by dressing up for Halloween on October 29 and 30.

Here is a surprising fact that most may not know; advisor Mr. Strich and the

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EDITORIAL PAGES

TIPS IF YOU'RE STAYING HOME

by Alex Gaboury

It's a widely agreeable statement to say that the spring and fall have been two completely different experiences seeming to belong to different people once remembered. Many students are now coming back to the school half the time, and logging onto meets and classes the other times. I am a 100% remote student who decided after much discussion, research, and thinking, that this would be best for me and my family. But as I started back up the year, I was hit by the sudden, quick, and blunt realization that yes, this was entirely different.

By the end of the first week I was exhausted physically and mentally. I had headaches, connectivity errors, and other school

beginning problems amplified by the current situation. I knew that the fall would be a different start and teaching style, and I knew I would need to see



if the learning style I adopted in the fall would be applicable in the current situation.

However, one of the things I forgot to reflect upon was my lifestyle. I've been told countless times that this peri-

od of time is so reflective and telling of how I'm going to continue my lifestyle, whether in college, living alone, or just generally in the future. Although this was initially a stressful thought, I learned to take it as a motivating line in which the work I put in now and how to approach it could be the basis to the future. I was building a foundation to this future.

"Take care of yourself" has been uttered more times than I could possibly count in these "unprecedented times," and expanded as more and more people meant it as a physical and mental comfort. I was staying home to protect myself but what was I doing at home to help myself?

As I picked my way through this mandatory terri-

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- Dani LaPier (News)
- Tyler Michaels (Editorials)
- Sarah Wallace (Sports/Reviews)
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WHAT IF LIFE WERE PASS/FAIL?

by Sean Malenfant

"I hate to break it to yah kid... but it's sophomore year and you still don't have a girlfriend; it looks like you're gonna' have to kick the can. There's nothing I can do for you..." Okay, maybe that's a little extreme, but what would life be like if it were pass or fail?

During the spring when students were engaged in online learning for the first time, grades were pass or fail. While school was pass/fail students were much less worried about how good their grade was, and for the most

part it made ends meet.

What does this mean for the kid who still got



all 100s in their classes and did an amazing job? Unfortu-

nately for them, they were grouped with the kid who got a 65. They both passed and nobody will know who the overachieving students were during quarantine. The pass/fail system casts a big shadow over those who stand out, and really promotes that finding a way to use minimal effort is much more rewarding than trying your hardest.

So how would a pass/fail system be applied to life? Would it be if you were well-liked? Or good looking? Or a good athlete? That's hard to say, but the easiest comparison to school being pass/fail is something that

can be measured similar to grade points, and that's money.

To make a comparison, say hypothetically, once you turned 25, you had to make a certain amount of money a year, and everyone who didn't make that amount of money had to go to jail the next year before being released. Now, unlike school being pass/fail where no one could tell if you got a 100 or 65, you could still make as much money as you wanted and would reap the benefits of your hard work.

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EDITORIAL PAGES

VIRTUALLY ALONE

by Emma Hanlon

As teens in a world full of technology, we can all agree that we are on our devices more than we'd like to admit. We constantly hear parents telling children their concerns of the negative effects of technology, even if some seem out of reach. Technology has made communication across the globe astronomically easier, but what happens when it makes us feel more isolated than before?

Amidst a global pandemic, more and more people started connecting with each other between screens. Websites such as Facebook and Netflix started to see a spike in users as COVID restrictions were put in place. We became heavily reliant on video call platforms like Google Duo and Houseparty to communicate.

Studies have shown this heavy social media usage can lead to feelings of loneliness when online. Brian Primack, the director of Center of Research on Media, Technology, and Health at the University of Pittsburgh con-

ducted numerous experiments to understand the effects of social media on young adults. His research indicated people who said they spent



half an hour on social media platforms a day had half the odds of perceiving social isolation compared to those who spent two hours or more on social media.

Students state that when in-person interaction is no longer safe, virtual connections are a close second.

“Without technology, no one would have been able to stay connected over quarantine, so it’s definitely helped me to feel more connected,” said sophomore Carly Antolick. Most Averill Park peers agreed, but also mentioned the negative effects of sharing our lives through Snapchat, Instagram and Facebook.

As we become more reliant on virtual connections, it becomes difficult to interact with people in real life. This psychological challenge prevents us from wanting to meet new people. We later become more and more alone as we push away those who are right in front of us. Everyone on social media begins to compare themselves with the individuals they see on the screen. They may have more likes, comments, and followers but they still feel just as alone as everyone else.

Ashlyn McGarry, a sophomore, shared a common struggle we face in a world of technology. “There are times when I look at a post and people look like

they’re having a lot of fun, but I’m not there,” she said. This fear of missing out (FOMO) is a feeling often associated with social media usage. Seeing pictures of your friends having fun may trigger feelings that they are living a better life than you are, along with feelings of anxiety and causing lower self esteem.

It becomes easy to forget that people only tend to share the highlights of their life. While we may know this already, the feelings of envy and dissatisfaction in our own don’t disappear when scrolling through what seems like endless photos. Studies show face-to-face interaction provides comfort and joy through triggering hormones, but virtual connections don’t have the same effect.

Technology creates many mental health battles that past generations are unfamiliar with. Modification in social media usage can improve mental health, and prevent being virtually alone.

PASS/FAIL (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

On the other hand, if you failed, your punishment would be a whole lot worse. But...this could be a good thing. If you couldn’t use illegally acquired money as a part of your yearly revenue, then you would be forced to work hard in an honest way to prevent yourself from going to jail. More people would end up making more money simply in fear of going to jail.

Once you made enough money to pass, you would not need to commit crimes to make enough money to live. If you couldn’t make enough money to live without committing crimes, then those people would be placed in jail preemptively before poverty pulled them into even worse crime, and instead of one year in jail they would end up locked up for much longer.

The problem is that they wouldn’t be able to make money coming out of jail, so then the next year they would be in jail again and would just end up in jail for every remaining year of their life.

To help prevent people from falling into the trap of inevitable failure you could try to educate the people who failed, so that the

next year they would be more prepared to hit that mark and give “extra credit” for community service.

In the end, it’s pretty obvious that no, this system isn’t plausible, you are putting innocent people in jail.

Although you may not have realized it, even

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EDITORIAL PAGES

GRATEFUL FOR AUTUMN

by Abbi Fluty

If you are a resident in New York State or the surrounding areas and can't truthfully say that you have been on a hike in the Adirondack Mountain range on a bright, slightly breezy, fifty-eight degree autumn day, all I can say is you must make time to go. You won't regret it.

There's nothing like taking time out of a late September Sunday afternoon to pack a small lunch in a drawstring backpack, throw on a flannel and go trek up the side of a mountain with your parents, siblings, family dog, or whomever you would be willing to spend three hours with.

The thought that you have miles to walk until you reach the peak, Rover barking at imaginary squirrels, constant straining of your Achilles tendon, and shouts of your siblings as they use big sticks to have a sword fight, all turn into a minor detail in the background. Letting your mind wander to the realization that you have never seen so many different shades of vibrant yet rusty and fading golden-yellow leaves, it's as delightful of a feeling as receiving a high score on a test you took half an hour to study for.

Hiking is a good way to get outside for some fresh air and physical fitness while also spending time with your



family, friends, or maybe both. Helping your little sibling up slippery moss-covered rocks makes for great bonding and trust exercises as well. Hiking is soothing for the soul and mind, connects you to nature and forces you to appreciate the simple joys in life.

Ever since I was little, hiking was a way for my family to spend time together and enjoy the views while we were at it. Watching how the sunlight filtering down between the leaves creates bright spots on your family's faces and clothes, making the sunny patches look animated

and almost dancing on their clothes as they take no notice of the performance happening on them as they continue

pebbles bouncing down the path as you keep on climbing up the hill. It is crazy to think that the death of these leaves makes for a sight so beautiful.

The feeling of knowing you're about to reach the top encourages you to use the last of your energy to walk faster. The sight from the top is one out of a fantasy movie. Sure, it's pretty during the summer months too, but something about looking over the sea of colorful leaves that used to be in their uniform green color makes it much more enjoyable. There is only a small window of time to see the leaves looking this magnificent. The time between when you are just getting familiar with your new school schedule and just before you go and pick out your pumpkin-soon-to-be-jack o'lantern.

The feeling of sitting on a large rock or log, knowing you have conquered the mountain, rubbing your arms to try and settle the goosebumps that formed from the chilly breeze, eating a Nature Valley granola bar or cider doughnut if you really want to get into the fall feel, and still in awe looking upon the abundant reds, yellows, and oranges of the textured landscape is a feeling nearly incomparable.

PASS/FAIL (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8)

without using comparisons, life is already pass or fail. Whether or not you pass will determine if you live or not.

Society is so absorbed by grades, money, milestones, cars, clothes, a nice house and so on, that we've forgot-

ten that having a nice cave to sleep in was the equivalent to a free 5-star hotel a million years ago. We're here to eat

and survive. Anything past what makes ends meet is gravy on top, and you should be proud of that.

EDITORIAL PAGES

TIPS IF YOU'RE STAYING HOME (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

tory and started to change my mindset from preventing mental distress to dealing with mental distress, I started noting the habits. Some were strange and others so small that I never really expected them to help with anything, but all were things I wished I had started doing in the spring. That is why I've decided to share them in case there's a problem that needs a solution in your day, or just a tip you have yet to try.

1. Take it with a grain of salt. Everything about these times is about what works best for you and how it's acceptable for something not to work. While adaptability is necessary during these times, so is reflection and considering if something is going to work for you. As much as these tips and tricks have helped me they may not help you, and that's okay.

2. Find your times. I'm an early riser, not necessarily the happiest morning person, but waking up early brings me comfort. I started to learn more about my productivity times during quarantine, including what times and what subjects/ideas work better. Although this year's scheduling is different from the spring, there is still a certain amount of personal scheduling that you can take from this while planning for homework timing, project planning, etc.

3. Write down your accomplishments. I use a planner and, honestly, with this year's uncertainty, having an outlined and easily accessible reminder helps provide assistance for school and schedul-

ing, but also stability. I usually write down what I need to do in the next day, which helps me enter the day with an accurate mindset of how that day is going to go, sometimes going as far to outline a couple days, or a week, just to picture this week as I head into it. This also provides me



with an easy list to see what I did. Whether you highlight or cross off what you did that day, leaving those marks on the page and signifying what you accomplished that day can act as a helpful reminder of little successes or justification for exhaustion. Whatever it acts as, it is nice to have a visual reminder of what you're doing. And if it's not that much, remember that those little tasks are done during a global pandemic, and that what you may think as a "little" task is larger than it is.

4. Phone out of sight: Although this may sometimes be hard, especially in scenarios of technical issues or friends with technical issues, this really helps while learning. Once I tuck my phone away, it's an out-of-sight, out-of-mind mentality, which lets my brain focus. This can be especially helpful if you're experiencing trouble concentrating

or constantly procrastinating.

5. Speaking of procrastinating... When I can feel myself slipping into a form of an unfocused mess, like half my brain has gone to sleep and the other half demands I do anything other than the task at hand, there are times

doesn't always work out, and there have been some times when it has worsened my focusing, but it's always something worth trying, especially if it can sharpen focus while in class, during homework, and with general tasks which can help the feel of accomplishment.

6. "Me-Time." In addition to procrastination-mandated time, I urge you to take the now frequently referenced "me-time". Often said in a joke, this is something you should definitely consider doing. Take at least 20 minutes a day to do something for yourself, something that makes you happy, no strings attached, and that you're doing not for school, grades, resumes, or family but something rooted in your own interest. This should be outside of your mandated procrastination time, but it might actually help with focusing problems, as I have found when I remember to take the time to do so. Especially nowadays, when the world feels as though it's revolving twice as fast, it's good for you (Another note concerning this is to not feel guilty about taking this time. If you still need to train yourself out of this habit, tell yourself it helps your productivity — it does— but know that it is essential to outline time for yourself to breathe for your well being).

7. Get Outside/Exercise. On days when you're home, it is easy to forget to get outside sometimes. It's easy to forget to get some form of exercise. You no longer have the

where I let myself do just that. There is certainly a certain amount of time you have to cut yourself off at, and to help that I attempt to remove some of those distractions or hang a metaphorical carrot over my head that ranges from anything from cookies to reading to extra dog time. Even if these were things I was already planning to do, sometimes just reminding myself that this has the possibility to be in the near future singularly motivates me. But to cut down on greater procrastination, you may need to put in the time beforehand — the procrastination time.

If you give yourself just 10-15 minutes of unrelated-to-task-at-hand time, afterwards you may get through faster. You're no longer taking or fighting against those increasing breaks as your brain is urging you to, but rather giving in momentarily so you can focus afterwards. This

(continued on page 11)

EDITORIAL PAGES

TIPS IF YOU'RE STAYING HOME (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

regular time outside as you walk into school, around school, and on the way home. This is especially important since without the go-to between school and classes, step goals are decreased, but it's not just about step goals and such. Exercise helps mental health and outside time increases vitamin D. Between the two, the act of getting out of your space and home helps remove yourself from a continuous equation, gets you out of your own head, and provides a mini-technological break. Disrupting an easy-to-be habitual day provides a much needed break. This is again something similar to the procrastination idea, where this is necessary. It helps further your focus and work more than working through that time does. Carving out time for yourself and breaking for concentration is necessary.

8. Find some rewards and spontaneity in a day. The forming of habits during this time is what got many through. To implement a schedule that pushed me to remember things like brushing my teeth and combing my hair provided a sense of ease and assured one thing, even just one thing in this crazy and tumultuous world, is taken care of for the day without thought or mind. Although this is important, so is the idea of contributing some non-penciled task to your day. This can be a combination of a carrot sort of reward, and can range from cookies to sketching to watching a TV show. To switch up a daily routine is a decision that has to be made on an analysis of the day, and seeing if that day

may be edging towards the mundane or closer to the flaming mess that has come to embody 2020. This doesn't have to be an everyday occurrence, but reminding yourself that there are still pleasant surprises hidden in 2020 and organizing and dispersing them for yourself gives a de-



gree of control back to you, and contributes a little bit of pleasure and joy into the day.

9. Close up for the night. I do homework and classwork and just general work in my room. I spend a lot of time there, which is why I have tried to separate myself from it, creating a divide between my schooling and my general living — my work and my sleep. After watching myself spiral into a habit of late, late nights and second waves of homework into the late hours during the spring, I decided to take another approach. So I take my homework downstairs, which simultaneously lets me see my family and changes my environment. At least around an hour before I go to bed, I gather up my materials and then lay out my work downstairs. When I go to bed, I have then had a form of removal from my room, albeit brief, seemingly dividing my

day in a conceptual and slightly geographic sense.

A second part of this divide is that before I am ready to actually sleep, I endeavor to clean up my desk. Not everything has to be put away or “clean,” per se, but I close up all my notebooks, stack my textbooks, and

straighten up, creating that division between work and life, and separating the days. It makes sure I don't decide to continue doing work when it's important to get some sleep, and helps separate the days into some form of coherence in the 2020 year.

10. Give yourself some grace. We're living through history, and we have been for awhile now. We're all collectively exhausted as we try to live a normal-ish life, in non-normal times, during a global pandemic, in an important election year, and we're going through high school. There are so many things going on and so many things out of our control and it's terrible and it's hard. As you go through the year and as you encounter these issues, challenges, and collectively stressful scenarios that may have not been so or hadn't been nearly as so before quarantine, remember

that these are “unprecedented times” and for some days, “good enough” is good enough. It is important to try your hardest, but remember that your best is as good as you can do in that moment, and some moments are harder than others.

I give this advice as words I have found in order to describe some habits I've picked up as I work through these odd times. These are things that are challenging to change into habits and, yes, I frequently forget them too. But they are important, or at least taking care of yourself is. Find what works for you — what helps you separate different aspects of your life when it's all occurring in the same place can give you a stress-free break, increase your focus and productivity, and get you through this time. Because you will, and sometimes all you need is to just hold onto that. Be well, be safe.

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-In Color-

EDITORIAL PAGES

ALL SUBSTITUTES ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL

by Owen Perala

Substitute teachers. You're normally happy to see them until you realize that your teacher actually assigned work to do and the substitute doesn't speak a word of Spanish. From this point on, the next block or two could go a few ways. All of this depends on the type of substitute you have. So let's delve into the different types of substitute teachers there are, and what each one means for your class.

We'll start off with the sub that really just doesn't want to be here at the moment. These substitutes are most likely here because they were former teachers and want to continue to make a bit of money, or are recent college graduates who are looking for a job in the competitive teaching field. These kinds of subs will most likely read off the assignments and hope the students can do it on their own. They can be commonly found reading something on their computer or trying, to no avail, to help the student who is confused. They are praying that the students won't start acting up, and that the class will behave themselves. Overall, these substitutes have other things on their minds, and there's not much else to say about them.

Next up is the substitute teacher that I like to call the expert. These are the subs who your teacher always requests for the class to have, as they know some things about what's going on. These subs are often former teachers. They likely start the class

by claiming that they taught the same class at a different school and then try to prove it. Normally they'll show you a problem for the subject and after solving it say, "I bet you guys don't even really understand what I just did" or proceed to plead the Fifth Amendment. Normally these



teachers like to put themselves in an alpha position and prove to the class that they are as good as the main teacher of the class, while trying to figure out how to play the Bill Nye episode that the teacher assigned. The class itself will normally go well unless you have a question, in which case the teacher will re-educate you on not just the topic, but the meaning of existence itself.

A third type of substitute teacher I'd like to bring attention to is the one who actually loves their job and what they can do with it. These subs tend to look back on their school experience or life and wonder how it could

have gone better. So, they pursued a teaching degree in hopes to make every student's day a little bit better. They are normally just out of college trying to find a job, settling on substitute teaching, or are just very cool older people. They're recognized immediately upon entering

ing fudge for the entire school populous, these subs are the best of the few.

A final type of substitute teacher I think should be mentioned is the great leader. They strictly follow the lesson plan and enforce behavior, yet often accomplish neither. These subs come from varying backgrounds, from being former teachers to people who just want to watch the world burn. If you ask them, they probably know which part of the person is best to eat in an emergency situation and why that's legal. They normally will start a class by claiming that they have a list of those who aren't behaving for the teacher and aren't afraid to add to it, as well as claiming they know who you are and where you live. They look at the lesson plan as tasks to accomplish, and at the class as people who need to be conquered in order to do so. In the classroom they can be found enforcing the law, holding phones as hostages, and listening to World War I ASMR as everyone else works. These classes normally go horribly as nothing is accomplished, and are just overall a miserable experience.

Substitute teachers vary greatly in how they treat and teach in the classroom. They are the factor that can make a single block one of the best or the worst of the year. Whether they just don't care, are sort of an expert, a lover of teaching, or a crazed dictator, they certainly play an interesting role in our school.

the building. They look at their lesson plan and try to see what they can do to make it better for the students, whether it's somehow making a game, going outside, or just being really laid back and freewill-giving. These classes are normally the best you have all year. These subs are the ones that stick in your memory throughout schooling. However, it is never just for what they do in the classroom. They really care about the student body; they try to get themselves more involved in the school community. Whether it's just knowing student names, participating in other school activities, or somehow mak-

EDITORIAL PAGES

HOW TO PREPARE THE PERFECT PIZZA

by Parker Brown

It is an absolute necessity to know how to properly create and eat a pizza. Over the short time that it takes you to read this (approximately 2 seconds) about 700 slices of pizza have been consumed throughout the United States. Pizza is a common meal, with Americans partaking once a week or more on average, and with such high numbers it is essential that you know how to cook one correctly. Without proper technique, consuming pizza can be a hassle and dangerous.

For this activity, proper procedure can save you from a life-altering injury. Hot grease is extremely dangerous and can lead to two types of pain. The first kind of pain is topical burn; without proper technique and high quality grease management, you can get torched. Hot grease can drip down you like wax off of a hot candle, and scorch your skin along the way. With proper technique, this can be avoided 100% of the time.

The other kind of injury caused by grease is internal. Eating this can result in indigestion and diarrhea and impaired brain function in the short term, while leading to obesity, acne, diabetes and heart disease over time, but following proper pizza precautions can fix this problem. You must start with the absolute best ingredients and break it down step-by-step.

The first step is acquiring your ingredients. For the dough, the base and potentially most critical part of

the pizza, you need the rarest ingredients that provide the best taste and nutrition. The solution can surprisingly be found in your local supermarket and come in a package named "Lunchables Extra Cheesy Pizza." You will need to buy 10 of them. Then you need the sauce.

The sauce is the tie-in with the dough and is very



important for your palette to experience a good pizza. The sauce is also very simple, go to the pasta sauce aisle and get the "Ragu Simply Creamy Alfredo: Made with Cauliflower" This is important because it reduces the calories for your pizza and makes your pizza vegan friendly as opposed to other meat alternatives. On top of being a health and diet friendly option, it only has a slight cauliflower taste, which is later masked by the cheese and saves the flavor. The cauliflower also adds an

impeccable mouth feel that makes each and every bite more savory. But this ingredient would mean nothing without the next one.

White. Creamy. Moist. All words to describe the most visually appealing part of the pizza..... the cheese. Now, we are building the perfect pizza, so all of this expensive, homemade cheese will not do. You are using only the finest ingredients, so you must go to your local Dollar Store and buy all of their "American Shreds." "American Shreds" are totally tasteless, stiff, and have a disclaimer on the back that they are not designed to melt. Just because the microwave cannot melt them does not mean that we can't. You have to buy all of the "American Shreds" in stock and will need a flamethrower or else this will

not work. The intense heat-to-distance ratio achieved from the flamethrower makes it possible to melt the "cheese." So a simple recap of ingredients is 10x "Lunchable Pizza" kits, "Cauliflower Ragu Alfredo Sauce," "American Shreds," and of course you can't forget the flamethrower!

Once you have acquired your ingredients it is time to prepare your pizza. Now, this step is very important. You HAVE TO just take out the mini pizza

crusts and throw out the rest (except the juice box - it is a must-have to maintain health and wellness while slaving over a hot stove while making the pizza). Once you have these ready to go, put them in a large pan, enough to cover the bottom and then another layer on top of that. Next, you need the sauce. Dump out the sauce onto the double layered crusts, and get the most important utensil, the turkey baster. You then use the turkey baster to aerate and spread the sauce evenly across the entire crust, all the way to the edges. The "cheese" will be applied later because the microwave will not melt them.

To cook, put the pan into the microwave for four minutes in order to warm through the ingredients. Then, you must take the cooked pizza out of the microwave, and to ensure that you do not burn yourself you are required to wear a pair of underwear on your head. Putting underwear on your head while making a pizza is the same as wearing safety goggles and an apron in Chemistry: it is a necessity to ensure your well being.

After you take the pizza out, you need the "cheese." Take all of the "American Shreds" from their container and put it on the top of the pizza. Then, you get your newly acquired flamethrower and let it rip. It usually takes 15-20 minutes of flamethrowing in order to break the bonds in the shreds, but the outcome is

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EDITORIAL PAGES

SHOULD THE REGENTS EXAM BE HELD THIS YEAR...OR EVER AGAIN?

by Isabella Bernstein

As we all know, school looks a lot different this year. From online learning to wearing masks in school and on the field for athletes, teachers and students are all adjusting to the changes. But another big concern to teachers and students is: will the Regents be canceled like last year? You might be like me and are rooting for them to just abolish Regents at this point. Many colleges could not care less about Regents exams since New York is one out of only seven states that mandate them.

On September 30, students and parents received an email from the State Education Department concerning Regents this year. Nothing is definite yet, but if the state does hold the Regents exams then there are some mandatory procedures that must take place. All virtual students will have to come to school to take them, "The

Department has determined that it will not be possible to administer any of this year's state assessments remotely. If they occur, assessments will be "school-based" and



"in-person." We know this will present unique challenges for our schools and we are committed to working through these challenges with you."

Most students who are 100% remote have to remain home due to an at-risk family member or their own health concerns. Forcing a student to come to school is a big issue that might spread some anxiety, as people fear they might catch the virus.

To add to that, these students are already stressed out about a test. A test that New York has the ability to get rid of, like many other states already have. New York State

stresses the idea that a Regents exam tells how smart you are. You can have a 98% average in math, then you take the exam and get a 67%. That's not because the student is dumb, it's because some people just aren't great test takers. I personally experience a lot of anxiety and work myself up when taking big tests. I have high grades in all my classes but am not a good test taker.

Many teenagers suffer from mental illnesses such as depression and anxiety. In New York, suicide rates are at their highest in teenagers in the spring. A lot of Regents exams are held in the spring and adding more stress to a teenager's plate while not knowing what else they are going through is not healthy. Teens should not be worrying about a test that is favoring kids who have long attention spans and or are good test takers. The state should be worrying more about their students' mental health. If abolishing a test will save lives then it needs to be done.

We need to focus on the bigger problem right now, not a Regents exam. Students' mental health matters more. New York state needs to abolish the Regents exam, for the safety and well being of us all.

PIZZA (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13)

well worth the work. The melting of the shreds represents the end of the pizza preparation.

The next step in how to create the perfect pizza and eat it correctly is the cutting of the pizza. To cut, grab the nearest flyswatter, give it a quick rinse in the sink, and cut the pizza in half, then in half again, and then cut each quarter in half again to get eight perfect slices. Once you have these eight slices, you

have graduated to the next step.

After the pristine pizza cutting, you can move on to the serving. To serve, wedge the flyswatter under a piece of perfect pizza and flip it in the air for two full rotations until it lands on your plate. Repeat this process up to eight times for anyone you feel deserves to be a part of the masterpiece you have created. Then, coming up: how to eat, and eating prop-

erly is essential.

How to eat the pizza is an insanely important part of the entire process. You must first take your piece, fold it, and run a sponge down the crease to suck up any grease. After this, you have to put your index finger and thumb onto the tip of the pizza and squeeze, to make sure it's not too firm but is also not too doughy. If it fails this test, throw it out and start over (perfection is the

only thing allowed after all). If it passes, cut your piece into eight smaller pieces and enjoy.

So, the proper technique on how to properly create and eat a pizza has now been created. How generations before me consumed other pizzas than this is criminal to think about. This was a very important lesson that has to be learned for anyone to be truthfully fulfilled in life.

EDITORIAL PAGES

VOTING: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

by Lauren Bradley

When I was a child my grandmother would bring me along with her to the polls on election day. Seeing the big boxes in areas that easily towered over me with swinging curtains was very intimidating. The best part was when she would let me fill in the tiny bubbles on the bubble sheet. My grandmother would always tell me, "Never ever let your voice go unheard." This encounter as a small child has left me yearning for the day that my own opinion finally gets counted.

Every November, every US citizen registered to vote can go to the polls to vote for who they would want in office for the next term of presidency. This process elects a new president for the next four years. The specific process that elects a new president is called the Electoral college. This system gives each state a certain number of electoral votes based on the total number of representatives in Congress. Each elector casts one vote for the general election. In total there are 538 electoral votes. The candidate that receives the most votes wins the presidential election.

It is crucial to our government to vote, because a few hundred votes can decide the next president. Your vote might not directly elect the President. But all US citizens' votes count towards electing a new leader. To vote you must register before a certain deadline. Every state has different requirements to vote. They are all very straightforward requirements

to meet. You must be 18 by election day, a U.S. citizen and meet your state's residency requirements.

The first year I ever went in the room to vote was in 2012. I remember it clear as day. Walking through the



parking lot holding my grandmother's hand. The crisp autumn leaves rustling underneath our feet crunched with every step. As we walked into the giant high school gym, I was very intimidated by all the people almost triple my age. They towered over me like trees in a forest. Almost everything about Election Day was intimidating.

After she placed her ballot and began to leave, my grandmother was handed a sticker that said in big italic letters "I VOTED". Instead of taking the sticker for herself she gave it to me. I stuck the giant circular sticker onto the right side of my shirt. Although I was only eight years old I felt older with that sticker.

Elections are decided by people who go out and vote. If you don't take the

opportunity to go out and place your vote for who you want to be president your voice does not matter. If you don't vote, someone else will make the decision of who has control of our country for the next several years. Also, ex-

does today. She would take the time to understand each candidate running. One thing she would constantly say was, "I never tell who I am voting for", and was reticent on saying. Although, it was typically obvious. Like with Obama and Romney, she would always talk about Obama's healthcare options that he planned to introduce.

Taking some time before you go and drive to vote you must educate yourself on each party. By taking a closer look at each candidate you can understand what they stand for and how they plan on using their presidency to affect our country. The next president changes the future for our country. Take the extra ten minutes before visiting the poll to educate yourself about each candidate to vote for who you want to change the future of the country for the next four years.

Although I still have two years before I can even register to vote, I know I will as soon as possible. You can be sure that in the 2024 elections I will be placing my first vote as a registered voter. My experiences with my grandmother have taught me the importance of your vote at a young age. I hope to continue that tradition with my own grandkids someday. Use your voice to make an impact on our country. Go out and vote and use your voice during this year's election. As my Grandma said, "Never let your voice go unheard."

aming each candidate's campaign and how they plan to spend citizens' tax dollars is very crucial. By analyzing each candidate's plan for how they will spend your tax money you can choose how your tax dollars are spent. This includes how much of your money will go to funding for healthcare and the government and social services. This is an opportunity for you to have an impact on your country. If you are registered to vote then you should use your voice to change who wins the presidency.

In the weeks leading up to the presidential election my grandma would constantly read newspapers and watch the debates at night after she read to me. As a kid I was hyper aware around that time of year because it left a significant impact on me, and still

EDITORIAL PAGES

A TESTAMENT TO DEDICATION

by Aydan Lachar

Since kindergarten up until my freshman year of high school, I've wanted to be done with school. I thought it would never end and that I'd be in school forever. I always thought that the ending was so far away and that it would take forever for me to finally graduate.

This all changed when I started playing football. I was so in love with football and I wanted to be the best player on the field at all times. I had my family's support; my busy hard working parents and grandparents always showed up to my modified and JV games, and even to most away games. Hard working Athletes always say time flies by when you're having fun. That's the truest thing I've ever heard. I'm already in my junior year but it feels like yesterday I was the short meatball kid who thought he had so much time to not work on his biggest dreams. Football became one of my favorite things to do. Putting on the soggy, horrendous smelly shoulder pads after what seemed like a monsoon during practice the previous day,

The squishy cleats with a million blades of grass stuck to the bottom.

The best thing that football brought me was the friendships. I couldn't think of a better group of friends than the ones who motivate you to do your best, to put more



weight on the bar. The ones who give you reassurance that you're better than the other team and that you're special because you are an important part of the team. That is what I will miss the most, The morning practices, the maxes in the weight room, going home knowing you're getting stronger everyday.

All this time I thought there was still so much time to make myself better and to work out and become the player I wanted to be. Then it finally hit me; my time's running out, and I knew

I had to do something. I worked all summer, every single day. Through injury, after a long day of work, only taking rest days if I was physically exhausted. Staying away from large crowds and all the parties I was invited to, so I could workout and know that I

wouldn't get sick and knew that the work I put in wouldn't be for nothing. I became obsessed, knowing I was the hardest working player.

It's now fall of my junior year and there is no football. What seemed like tireless effort in the dusty garage gym, tearing my muscles to shreds and rebuilding myself every single day, whether it was 98 degrees or thunderstorming all day, was all for nothing. I finally put in so much effort into football and all the strength training and being a good athlete and

the world has shut me down.

Working out has now become my new football. It has given me a place to go to take out my anger or release all the built-up stress. I haven't stopped working on my craft. I've stayed disciplined and my effort has been through the roof and I'm proud to say I've put in more effort than anybody I could think of.

I will forever be grateful and have love for the game of football, but I've come to a realization that the end is near. And sooner than my mind can process, I'll hand up the sweaty cleats, the foam pads and the heavy helmet one last time.

I'm dreading the day where I can no longer consider myself a student athlete. But until then I'm going to work on what I can do to better myself and continue my life, pushing forward when I'm out of school and into the real world, where everything will be new to me. And where I will get new experiences, and become something I didn't think I'd become.

SPIRIT WEEK (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

editors of the Journalism Club are responsible for the yearly Halloween Costume Contest that our very own high school puts together. This year there were many thrilling, enticing categories such as funniest costume, most original, scariest, best pair, best virtual and best staff costume. But do

you want to know the best part? This year there were TWO prizes for each category, one prize awarded on each cohort day; but without the help and sponsorship from ShopRite of North Greenbush, these goodie bags would not have been possible.

This school year has

been nothing but different, but we, as a whole, are fortunate enough to even be in school, so let's make the most of it. Stop being scared of standing out and dressing up. Be unique and show everyone just how much school spirit you actually have. Don't worry if you didn't

participate last week, there will be many more chances as we will host many more Spirit Weeks throughout the year, and you never know, you just may be a huge reason why your graduating class takes home the Spirit Stick.

EDITORIAL PAGES

TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' AND STAFF ARE LEARNING HOW TO COPE

by Julie Hale

Teachers always say they want this year to be like no other; well, this year definitely is that. Having both teachers and students being unaware of what this year will bring, mass confusion is a common feeling throughout the school.

When asked how they expected this year to go in comparison to this past spring, teachers were surprised to even be asked - they didn't expect any of this. Aside from their experiences in the spring, this concept of virtual learning was new, and still is, for many teachers. Having 100% virtual, hybrid and in-person students all under one schedule makes school not only confusing, but condensed.

Teachers had been given an extended amount of time to prepare for this year. This entailed working since early March, some planning for nearly seven days a week, in an effort to figure out how this year will go, just to be faced with multiple alternate plans at the ready and to use only one. Some of my teachers hinted at the fact that they had "power standards," which meant that there were a few lessons per unit that they thought could be glanced over, and covered at some other point, if at all. All these alterations brought confusion, such as if it didn't need to be covered, why is it there in the first place? Some teachers responded by saying that they had cut out some of their classes' plans so that they can accommodate everyone

at once, rather than working in separate groups.

Although we're all faced with similar consequences of the pandemic, we all have different ways of going about it, and now a few teachers are shedding some light on how they are handling

ways go as planned.

Some teachers say they see this as a great opportunity, because now class sizes are much smaller, so students can become more connected as a class and form better relationships with their peers and teachers.



the chaos.

Ms. Mouzakes, an English teacher, elaborated as to how she schedules her classes. Mouzakes shared that she had known she wanted her class to feel as though it was one unified and compassionate group. She does this by having each group join into a Google Meet at the start of each class, as an effort to mix the people at home with the people in person, so that everyone feels connected regardless of their physical location. It appears as though teachers like to think of their classes as one big group, so that it's not confusing for them or their students; but how it is actually accomplished does not al-

However, other teachers see this as a challenge that makes them have to think from a completely different perspective. English teacher Mrs. Gaboury, for example, revealed that she likes the smaller classes because now she is able to talk more with her students and get to know them better, thus creating a stronger connection if students were to become virtual.

Virtual students tend to throw a sort of curveball towards any teacher. Most teachers want their classes as one full unit, and the fully virtual kids throw a wrench into this plan, not to the fault of anyone, but rather to the fault of the situation. Inevitably, this makes teach-

ers have to find a better way to accommodate them and make classes more interactive. As for how to make them more virtually accessible and inclusive, that is yet to be determined, but teachers know it will be very different under these strict and uncertain circumstances.

Many schedules involve in-person students interacting with the virtual students, but what tends to happen is 100% virtual students miss out on hands-on experiences, so they don't get the same effect as they would in person. This is elaborated by science teacher Mrs. Hunter, who said that when virtual students are home they don't always have the ability to practice labs. Fortunately, there have been plenty of students that stepped up and took responsibility to help their fellow peers at home.

There is also another challenge teachers have to plan around - technology. Some teachers may view technology as a gift, while others may view it as Pandora's Box, and there are a select few that do not wish to put it into either classification. One such teacher is chorus teacher Ms. Christy, who tries not to live in a negative place. She said, "If you decide it's your enemy, it will remain your enemy." So instead, she likes to think about how she could redesign and get around the problem.

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GET OUT AND ENJOY THE SEASON

THINGS TO DO THIS FALL

by Bella Bernstein

The school year has begun again and we all know what that means; fall is quickly approaching. When the leaves start changing into an aroma of colors of reds, oranges, pinks and yellows followed by the cool wisp of crispy air, you know fall has arrived. Unfortunately, this year fall may look a little different than most. Yes, the leaves will change colors and the air will become cooler, but the real question is what activities can you, your family and friends do to make this fall as memorable as previous years under our new guidelines? Written below are a few examples of just how to make this fall a memorable one.

HAUNTED ATTRACTIONS

Are you more into the spooky side of fall? If so, this is for you! One local attraction, the Field of Horrors in Troy, is known for its most

famous activities: the haunted hayride and the oh-so-spooky haunted houses. People often go there during Halloween to experience the spookiness of the season. It is a fun evening activity to do with your friends!



APPLE PICKING

Apple picking is an enjoyable, fall activity you can do with absolutely anyone, whether it be friends, family or even a simple day spent with yourself. You can walk down the long lanes, picking from a large variation of apples such as McIntosh, Empire, Red Delicious, Cortland, Golden Delicious, Rome, Idared, Crispin, Paula Red, Gala, Jonag-

old, Jonamac, Fuji, Macoun, Braeburn, and so many more.

But there is more to apple picking than just the normal pluck of an apple off a tree. You can sit down and eat one of the best treats this season has to offer: cider draughts and apple cider and there are many local places you can visit. Indian Ladder Farm located in Albany County has many other activities you can choose from, and Windy Hill Orchard is located in nearby Castleton. So gather some family and friends and spend the day picking apples and munching on some delicious cider donuts.

HIKING

One very popular fall activity is hiking as everyone desires to see the beautiful fall scenery that lies ahead. There are several amazing hikes located in the state of New York, Sleeping Beauty Mountain being my favorite as it has an amazing

view overlooking Lake George.

Hiking is a great way to relieve stress and get your mind off of school, and it is also a great way to escape wearing a mask for a little bit. Just make sure you keep your distance.

FARMER'S MARKETS

Fall is more than just Halloween, as it is also the season for a variety of delicious crops such as corn, squash, apples, and so many more.

You can go to a farmer's market and simply spend time walking around and enjoying the beautiful scenery. One farmer's market in particular, located on the waterfront in Troy, has many fresh vegetables, fruits, and baked goods.

Whatever you do this fall, remember for all of your activities to be safe and to always wear a mask.

MISS NELSON IS MISSING!

OBP NOT DETERRED BY PANDEMIC

by Katie Armlin

Just in case you didn't know, there's a missing teacher at APHS this year... Miss Nelson!

Okay so there isn't actually a missing teacher, but a mystery is coming to the Averill Park stage this fall, bringing to life the beloved children's novel *Miss Nelson is Missing!* by Harry Allard. Some of you may be familiar with the quirky, cartoon characters that go on a hunt for a teacher they once took for granted, after a wicked substitute comes in to replace her.



And for those of you who haven't heard of it... you're in for a treat!

With these changing times we all need to learn to adapt and be creative. Just as

we viewed many professional living room performances in the Disney Sing-a-Longs and in music awards this past year, the Off Broadway Players Club will be putting on their performance virtually. The actors will put on the show from their own homes through a virtual platform. And you, the audience, can sit back with a bag of popcorn on November 20 or 21 and watch it from your own couch.

As you can assume, taking on this type of unprecedented performance calls

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SURVEY SAYS: TWO TEACHERS, TWO INTERVIEWS



by Kay Tichy

For this column, I sit down with two faculty members of different ages and subjects, and ask them the same set of questions. The two teachers that this prestigious and distinguished honor has been bestowed upon for this edition are Mrs. Engel, who teaches social studies, and Dr. Panzanaro, who teaches science. They both provided insightful responses to this survey!

If you had to teach another subject besides your own, which would you pick?

Engel:

I think I would probably be an English teacher if I had to teach outside of social studies. I almost always loved my English classes growing up, and writing was always one of my strengths. I would probably change up some of the required reading, though I think there are some excellent modern books we can have students be reading as well.

Panzanaro:

I would teach social studies. I am a storyteller, and history is full of exciting stories.

What hobbies and interests do you have outside of the classroom?

Engel:

My biggest interest outside of the classroom currently is with dog rescue. Our family fosters dogs for Home-ward Bound Dog Rescue – we are currently fostering

puppies 247 and 248! We will have completed our sixth year of fostering in December of this year. I also like to hike, kayak, camp, and travel. I have been lucky enough to travel internationally a few times, with my favorite places being St. John, St. Croix, Norway, and Ireland.

seriously. Being silly is a really great thing. I've come to appreciate that everyone learns at their own pace, and that although our journeys may take different paths, we can all end up at the same destination. And, if you tell them that you have food, they will eat you out of the house and home.



Panzanaro:

I enjoy scuba diving in the Caribbean, cycling, playing guitar, singing, nature photography, and cooking.

Is there anything that your students have taught you?

Engel:

Wow - students have taught me a ton over the past 22 years - especially freshmen! I love watching the academic and social growth in teens over their four years of high school. Students have also taught me a lot about kindness, patience, acceptance of differences, and overcoming adversity.

Panzanaro:

I have learned so very much from my students, including how to be patient and how not to always take things so

How were your grades in school?

Engel:

Oh, I was a total nerd in high school with grades in the mid -90s (except for math - I was happy with a B+ or A- in math!). I was in the orchestra, in a touring group called "The Strolling Strings," all AP classes, chorus, the Outdoors Club...you name it!

Panzanaro:

In high school, I was a math and science crazy-man, and a social studies and ELA lazy-man...and my grades aligned with those approaches. Once I began my pre-med program in college, I put my best foot forward in all subjects and got mostly A's. I got my only C's (third-semester calculus and first-semester organic

chemistry) during my third semester of college because I ended up studying romance for more than academics. Understandably, there was a rapid shift back to academics after that.

What was the last good book you read?

Engel:

The best books I've read recently are by Taylor Jenkins Reid – *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* and *Daisy Jones and the Six*.

Panzanaro:

The Spiritual Teachings of Marcus Aurelius - a marvelous book about how to live your life correctly.

What character trait do you value most in a student?

Engel:

Can I pick a few? Hard-working, honest, inquisitive, self-confident.

Panzanaro:

I greatly value honesty. Honesty is the foundation of a strong and lasting relationship.

If you get the chance to start over and be something other than a teacher, what would you be?

Engel:

I would probably be a travel agent, travel blogger, or a real estate agent.

Panzanaro:

This is a difficult question to answer because I have so many things I would like to do. Unrealistic top pick...lottery winner. Realistic top pick...life coach / motivational speaker.

GOT TENURE?

MEIN AND BROOKS NAMED BY APCSD BOARD

by Michelina Lombardi

Tenure is the earned right that is granted to teachers after three or more years of service, a safeguard that protects teachers from unfair firing. This year the Averill Park School District Board of Education granted tenure to ten educators. Of those ten, two were staff from the high school: assistant principal Mrs. Mein and physical education teacher Mr. Brooks.

This is a very important milestone in an educator's career and it is certainly something to be proud of. However, for both of these two educators it wasn't their

first time. Mein previously received tenure when she taught special education at Niskayuna High School, while Brooks received tenure when he taught Physical Education at Hoosic Valley High School.

Getting tenure was a huge honor for both educators and was even more special as it was their second time. "It's the second time I have received tenure ever in my career and it's a very important thing to me," said Mein. "It's a milestone that shows I've demonstrated the skills that are necessary to work here in this district." Mein thoroughly loves being an educator and stated that everything she does is to benefit the students. "My mantra is student-

centered; every decision I make and everything I do in this building is related to the students."

Due to the global pandemic, students are faced with many new challenges, but according to Mein, safety is the number



one priority. Mein and the rest of the staff here at Averill Park High School put in a lot of effort over the summer to prepare for having students in the building. Mein wants to continue to offer students every opportunity possible to have the richest experience they can here at the high school. However, trying to make that happen with the circumstances we are currently faced with is a challenge, although it is one Mein is willing to tackle in order to reach her goal of meeting the needs of every student, every day.

Brooks was also very honored and appreciative that the Board of Edu-

cation formally recognized tenure at their recent meeting. Getting tenured at Averill Park High School was very important to Brooks, as he is both a teacher as well as a former student here and a class graduate of 2003. He decided to go to college for physical education, and his main goal was to potentially come back to the district and get the opportunity to teach in Averill Park. Originally he taught at Hoosic Valley High School for nine years, and he is very thankful for those relationships he made there. Once an opportunity came up for an interview and to potentially come back to Averill Park,



Brooks jumped right on it. Now, he has been teaching at Averill Park High School for three years and couldn't be happier.

"I have been very fortunate to work with some great people and grow in the process," he said. Brooks believes that the best part about being an educator is working with the students. Education poses opportunities to meet people and build new relation-

ships each and every year. Not only does Brooks teach physical education, but he is also the varsity baseball coach.

"Ultimately, being an educator and a coach, allows you to make a difference in people's lives," he stated. "In physical education, we have a unique balance of electives which allows us to meet and develop new relationships with all different types of people."

Brooks, along with Mein, wanted to thank the Board of edu-

cation for recognizing this special achievement. Brooks also wanted to congratulate his fellow educators on receiving tenure; he also congratulated Mein by saying, "I appreciate the leadership and guidance she provides to both students and faculty."

Tenure is a great achievement and is one that must be earned after three or more years of service. This year's recipients have worked hard to achieve their tenure, and their efforts and hard work never go unnoticed. In the Averill Park School District, we are very fortunate to have educators who put the needs of the students first.

CHECKING OUT THE NEW RECRUIT APHS HAS A NEW ENGLISH TEACHER

by Sophia Maddalone

Brandon Porter is the newest addition to the Averill Park High School's ELA department. Porter grew up in Guilderland, New York, and went to Guilderland High School. He said that attending school in Guilderland "made me at least a little bit familiar with the Averill Park School District even before I started working here."

In high school, Porter played two sports, soccer as a freshman and cross country in his sophomore, junior, and senior year. "Guilderland and Averill Park were always pretty evenly matched from what I can remember," he said.

After high school, Porter attended Binghamton University. In college, Porter developed a passion for English. He stated that what he enjoyed the most about English classes was to analyze and discuss literature. "It made me realize how much I valued the concept of

education," he said, "and I soon started going down the road of becoming a teacher."



Porter majored in English Literature and minored in Cinema Studies and Education. He then continued his studies at Binghamton to earn a graduate degree.

Aside from teaching,

music plays a big role in his life. He has been playing the guitar for 10 years, as well as the

bass and the drums. Porter would like Averill Park students to know, "If anyone needs a recommendation, or wants to even just talk about music, I am always up for it!"

On the topic of admi-

ration, Porter's favorite book is *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley. "It's such a great story, and there is so much meaning and significance in the plot...it even relates to Shelley's life." Porter's favorite author is H.G. Wells. "He wrote so many amazing books that contained such revolutionary ideas. Many are ones that are still adapted into movies to this day!"

One piece of advice that Porter would like to give to Averill Park High School students is to "be true to yourself. It sounds a bit cheesy or cliché, but it is really the most important thing. Once you leave high school and move on to different times in your life, all that is left is who you are as a person."

"This is my very first year as an official teacher," said Porter. "It has been super exciting so far, and I am really glad to be starting out at a great district like Averill Park!" We welcome him to the Averill Park family and wish him the best of luck.

YOU'RE BACK! WELCOME BACK TO RETURNING STAFF MEMBERS

by Dani LaPier

This school year, Averill Park welcomed back many familiar faces. Teachers from a range of subjects returned to continue teaching at our school. The list of staff members who have come back includes Joanne Richardson (Special Education), Deb Beck (Science), Laura DiGrigoli (English), and Ashley Emmons (Math). Each of these staff members had at some point worked in the high

school, left, and now have returned.



Richardson worked at AP for years before retiring in 2018. Currently, she re-

turns to the school as a substitute teacher. "Although I love

retirement, it's great to be able to return to a place and profession I love!" she said.

Similarly, Beck returned from retirement to substitute for science teacher Mrs. Oldendorf, who went on maternity leave. However, this ended in September and she is no longer present in the building. However short, Beck enjoyed her time back at APHS and teaching her students.

DiGrigoli, who now teaches a variety of English

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MEET DR. HARRELSON

NEW DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

by Sydney Davey

I am new to Averill Park this year, so I thought it would be interesting to get to know someone else who is also new to Averill Park, Dr. Harrelson. Harrelson is Averill Park Central School's new Director of Special Education. I especially wanted to know where she came from, and what helped her choose her career path of Special Education, which can be very challenging at times for both adults and students.

Harrelson grew up just a school district away, in East Greenbush, and is a graduate of Columbia High School. She is the youngest child of five. One of her favorite childhood memories was going camping every summer with her family.

After high school, Harrelson decided to leave the area and travel to Charleston, South Carolina, and attend The College of Charleston, where she earned her Bachelor's Degree. After obtaining her Bachelor's degree, she con-

tinued her education at Coastal Carolina University in Conway, South Caroli-

Sage College.

What made Dr. Harrelson choose Special



na. When it came time to work towards a Doctorate, she chose a local college,

Education? She stated it was because of substitute teaching in Special Educa-

tion classes, where instantly, she knew she wanted to do that for her profession.

Her previous employment included the Niskayuna Central School District and Granville Central School District, where she was also the 7-12 principal.

Now that Dr. Harrelson is a part of the Averill Park family, she is looking forward to collaborating with families and staff.

We've all had to face challenges this year due to the pandemic, though not all of us are simultaneously starting a new job. According to Harrelson, the challenges she has faced during the COVID-19 pandemic are no more than anybody else. It didn't really impact her, she said, except for the fact that she has to remember to wear a mask.

When asked what was one thing that people would be surprised to learn about her, she stated that she took sailing in college.

I hope that everyone gets a chance to meet her in the hallways, classrooms, or just passing by.

WELCOME BACK (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

classes, is also excited to be back. She states, "The time away has given me a renewed appreciation for the work I get to do with students, and what I love about teaching English." She also revealed that teaching now is very different from when she left. These unprecedented circumstances and her time away have brought about new and unexpected challenges in the classroom. Luckily, she believes, "Change tends to be a very good

thing!"

Emmons left school for maternity leave in March of 2018. For the past two and a half years, she has been spending time with her son Matthew and her daughter Maisie. She enjoyed her time off of work, which allowed her to schedule play dates, go on field trips, and spend more time with her family - all things she would not have been able to do if she had been in school. However, she

missed her time teaching. "But at the end of the day, teaching is what I love to do and I think it is one of the best professions you can have as a mother. When my kids have breaks from school, I have a break from school as well." Nowadays, she is able to spend time doing what she loves during the day, and spending time with the people she loves at night. She describes it as "The best of both worlds!"

Although many things are different this school year, it's comforting to see recognizable faces throughout the high school. Whether they were your teacher, or you just saw them in the halls, the returning staff members help bring Averill Park a little closer, and make the school feel more familiar in times where it seems everything is new and changing.

A QUARANTINE HALLOWEEN

TRICK OR TREATING IN A TIME OF COVID

by Zareena Ansari

Old Hallow's Eve (a.k.a Halloween) is a time for exciting, eerie, and rather amusing festivities on a crisp autumn evening. With wind whispering sounds of crackling leaves and doorbells being rung with glowing jack-o-lanterns crafted by the same friends you're surrounded by under the illuminating moon, it seems impossible to not participate in trick-or-treating. Although broad participation holidays aren't exactly well known for keeping loved ones at a distance and staying at home, it seems many families are still set on celebrating Halloween.



Observing recent online polls, 80% of all millennial moms surveyed stated going trick-or-treating is on the top of this year's bucket list. From a health point of view, this is an atrocious idea if precautions aren't used correctly. Consequently, there should be some guidelines for this world-renowned festivity to give little ones a "spooktacular" Halloween.

Bringing out the old "Take one" bowl to prevent unnecessarily close interaction and calling it a day won't cut it for safety. This year it

might be normal to see costumes that feature gloves or other subliminal protective wear, making some believe that trick-or-treating should be safe.

Health officials at the Centers for Disease control and Prevention (CDC) highlight risk factors that impede Halloween festivities even outside, stating that it would be unwise to go out.

The very process of trick-or-treating involves many risks. For example, crowding children on the same narrow road and having kids touching the same doorbell that tens of other children have touched can't be wise.

Trusting young ones to wear a mask, believing that they'll keep the built-up cold moisture inside their mask and won't give up on it after their third time saying "trick-or-treat" is going out on a limb. Relying on children to be safe isn't the answer, but maybe the way houses distribute candy is.

One option to keeping a happy Halloween is for the homeowner to wear gloves and a mask when distributing candy instead of kids shuffling around the bowl for their favorite type of M&Ms. Another way (approved by CDC) is for homeowners to premake goodie bags with gloves on, leave them on a porch while sitting nearby, keeping a bottle of sanitizer handy.

Other activities that don't involve trick-or-treating

like haunted houses, costume competitions, and viewing the wicked decorations at each house also have their cautions. Although haunted houses cannot happen as it involves screaming, chasing and a set up, people might be able to get their annual hauntings through various online games and movies that are haunted house-based.

An activity that combines trick-or-treating and viewing decorations is a Halloween scavenger-hunt. Setting up a scavenger hunt all around houses leading to candy is the perfect alternative to traditional trick or treating. Participating in costume competitions can be done quite easily on social media, or online. Costume competitions can be entered via Twitter polls, Facebook photos, or simply a picture sent in a group chat.

As you can see, there are many ways to have a fun, memorable Halloween this year, all while staying safe!

OBP (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 18)

for a lot of creativity and requires getting the word out in a unique way. So here's where this year's OBP officers step in.

Junior Emily Walsh is this year's production manager and is excited to dig deep through inventory to find the most creative and fun costumes and props. Walsh also adds that "the club going virtual has opened up a huge opportunity for students to learn film and editing skills!"

As promotions director, Junior Julia Skiba carries the load of getting the word out, a task not so easily done

this fall. Skiba explained, "It is definitely more difficult for students to be interested in shows if they are virtual performances. I have to be very creative with my advertising to get students as excited as possible for upcoming performances." You can follow OBP on Twitter and Instagram @apobp.

As for future performances, the club will also be getting creative with the annual One Acts performances this winter. OBP will be announcing these plans soon. As for a Spring Show, things are a little uncertain but we can all

hope that we can return to the live theatre performances we all love.

Club vice-president Abby Garrison said, "As a senior, I really hope we can have one last Spring Show. Who knows what the world will look like 6-7 months from now; it

might be better or it might be worse, but I hope the graduating seniors this year will at least get something!"

While we can't be fortune tellers, we can remain hopeful. And for now, we should all focus on keeping an eye out for Miss Nelson.

Mr. Strich and the APHS Journalism Club wish Mrs. Hale great success at her new job. Thank you for all the generous help you've given over the years helping get our school paper published!

CARE TO ARGUE?

DEBATE TEAM PRACTICES SKILLS

by Lilly Vrsalovic

Averill Park High School's Debate Club, founded in 2018 by Nicholas Youngstein and advised by Lawrence Quinn, provides an opportunity for students to expand their horizons. This club helps students turn their dysfunctional speech into excellent oral and written communication. Meetings are held virtually every Wednesday at 5 pm. There club members discuss and decide topics for the weekly debates. Debate topics are endless, spanning anywhere from animal testing to health care and beyond. The Debate Club ensures its topics are relevant and interesting.

Every meeting before a debate, club members will choose either the pro or con side of the issue being discussed. From then until the next meeting, they will

spend time doing research on their side of the topic. Club members will come prepared to give facts and logical arguments for their side. The day of the debate,

ments are read and key points are shared. While the opposing side is speaking, the other side gathers their rebuttals and fact checks. While the moderator is pre-

ask each side to wrap up their arguments and give a final statement. By this time, all club members will have given their view of the topic question.

These debates are important for students because they serve as a great outlet. Debate Club gives many kids a place for their voices to be heard. The club is a welcoming space to become educated on topics that you might not be familiar talking about. Club members also have the option to listen to the debate, if they are not quite comfortable participating. The club teaches kids to be confident in their speaking and to respectfully disagree with others. Debate club is an after school source of sharing knowledge and opinions while exchanging those views with others. Build yourself to be stronger and smarter by joining Averill Park's Debate Club.



each side will be given a few minutes to discuss their leading arguments. Then the club will gather together and begin.

A moderator will begin by giving each side 2 uninterrupted minutes, during which the opening state-

ment in the debate, they will stand as a neutral participant. The moderator will also have the responsibility of keeping club members from going off topic. Debates usually last around 20-30 minutes. Concluding a debate, the moderator will

TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 21)

Another teacher greatly affected by having 100% virtual students is Mr. Blostein, who teaches band. He stated that, "Music is designed to be performed together, and technology creates a false sense of that community...and when there are issues they're usually significant, but thankfully there haven't been as many as we anticipated."

Many might question how well teachers are incorporating their teaching with each student, but in reali-

ty, the teachers are also questioning it. Most teachers are still trying to get used to having kids in person one out of four days, but some don't tend to think of the schedule as $\frac{1}{4}$, because they have virtual students everyday. Nevertheless, things have been going as positively as could be expected.

Are you worried about the expectations your teachers have for you? Relax! They're worrying about the same thing! As for improvements, teachers hope and still

expect students to be able to improve as they have in other years, but perhaps at a different pace. All they ask is that you give them time and patience as well.

If expectations alone don't get people anxious and stressed, how about planning? This year, teachers were definitely stressed from having to come up with so many different plans only for them not to be accepted or implemented, and to be given strict new teaching requirements. Even the accepted

plans had to be modified so drastically this year that lessons were cut. This inevitably affects students and teachers as a whole, as to how we learn, and how they teach. We both miss out on many things we could've learned from each other. However, Gaboury supports the positive outlook of the plans that they are able to teach. "I think what I am teaching is valuable and relevant," she said. "Teaching exactly what I taught last year

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WINNERS OF *THE CHRONICLE'S* HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST

(MORE ON THE NEXT TWO PAGES)



TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24)

would not be as useful this year in some regards.”

Of course this year and the experience is new to everyone, but they have been trying their best to “keep up with the times.” Sometimes quite literally, because some teachers like Mouzakes are, “still getting used to the way the schedule works. It can get very confusing. I often find myself feeling as if I’m repeating material or maybe forgetting to cover something.”

Some teachers, like Gaboury, explained how having three different ways of having to teach can get confusing, but also makes you not able to waste any time. She said, “I have to make

sure I don’t have any of those times where I forget something and add on ‘Oh, we have to talk about such-and-such, I almost forgot!’ at the end of the block, because my remote students would miss that instruction.” Having many bases to cover obviously makes it harder to stay organized, but because teachers do have them, they’re forced to think of every and any possibility that might come up.

In fact, it might be the baselines to make things go smoother. Teachers have had to go through many different assignment designs, but now they know and have the best aspects

of teaching for the following years.

Based on how teachers feel about this year’s teaching strategies, there’s a basis for their opinions on the future. Unfortunately however, the future is forever changing in this hectic new world, making flexibility key. Thank you all for your amazing efforts, and stay warrior strong!



Look for issues of *The Chronicle* on-line!

Go to the APHS webpage on the APHS District website at averillpark.k12.ny.us/aphs and click on “Student Parent Resources.” Then click on “Newsletters.”

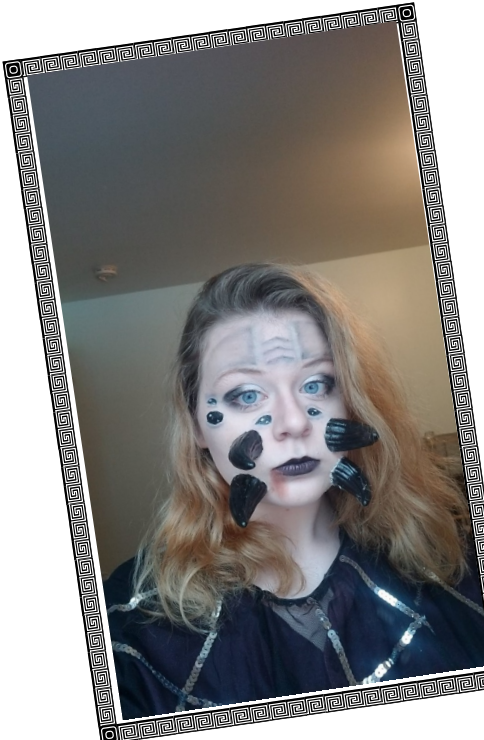


WINNERS OF *THE CHRONICLE'S* HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST





WINNERS OF *THE CHRONICLE'S* HALLOWEEN COSTUME CONTEST



SCHOOL BENEFITS FROM SPORTS RENOVATIONS

MOST IMPROVEMENTS COMPLETED OVER THE SUMMER

by Mackenzie Rockwell

This school year looks a lot different due to COVID-19; unfortunately, things like Pep Rally and Homecoming are not set to happen this fall, and some students are only attending school virtually. However, some projects continued on as normal. Over the summer, numerous sports-related renovations were done at Averill Park.

At the high school, the four lockers rooms were given a fresh coat of blue

and gold paint, and a new scoreboard for the football field was installed. The old scoreboard was over 20 years old, making it extremely hard to find replacement parts, hence the need for a new one.

Another necessary purchase was a wrestling mat. As years passed, laws have changed and the thickness of the Averill Park mat was no longer legal.

Additionally, the tennis courts were able to receive some long overdue repairs which included pow-

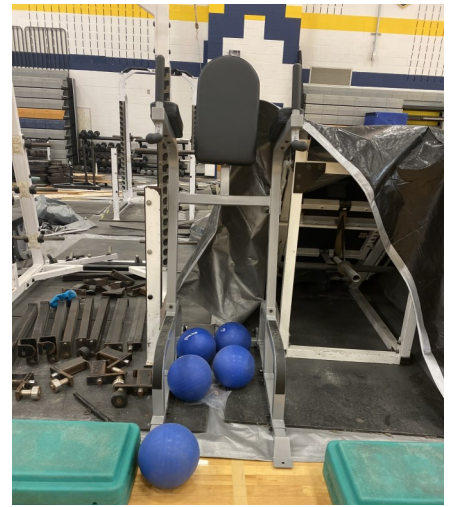
er washing, crack filling, and painting.

You may have noticed the new Athletic Hall of Fame cases that were installed in the gym foyer. These new cases can hold a total of 96 plaques, and range from athletes from the class of 1948 to the present.

Finally, the biggest renovation Averill Park High School received this year is to the weight room. When you step foot inside the new weight room area, the old hallway between the weight room and the gym has been

torn down, greatly expanding the weight room. In addition, new lights, doors, windows, and flooring were all installed. The weight room even received new ventilation, heating, and air conditioning in addition to a fresh coat of paint.

As of now, the sports department is hoping to have this last project completely done by Thanksgiving in order to prepare for what is hoped will be another great athletic season this winter and spring.



NON-CONTACT FALL SPORTS UNDER WAY

STUDENTS TRYING TO STAY SAFE WHILE COMPETING

by Wyatt Thorsen

One global pandemic, one year, thousands of schools closed, millions of cases, and 208 whole days without sports. After all of that, Averill Park is ready to get back and take the field once again, and take it by storm. Fall athletics such as cross country, soccer, golf, tennis and swimming were back in action as of September 21.

Unfortunately, things are looking and sounding a little different this year. Instead of full sidelines, teams are limited to two spectators per player and they must wear a face covering as well as remain socially distant. This does not just apply to spectators; the players are required to wear a mask, too.

"We have to run with a mask on, so that makes it very difficult while trying to breathe," said sophomore Matt DeJulio, a part of the cross country team.

Having to wear a mask is an inconvenience, but it has to be a hump that all of the athletes get over. They have to adapt and face the challenges that the mask itself brings

to the table. Winners win, mask or no mask.

That being said, there is a lot to be excited for this year. Athletes are finally able to go out and play their



sport for the first time in months, an excitement like no other. But for most, there's another reason for excitement: camaraderie.

"I am looking forward to being a part of a team and learning what dedication really means," said Sophia Carey, a freshman on the girls tennis team. That's the beauty of sports; you learn things about life without even thinking about it.

Another beautiful thing about sports? Winning. And that's exactly what the Warriors are looking to do.

"We are a young team this year but we expect to play at a high level," said sophomore Rory Iwaneczko when asked about expectations for this year. "With no athletics in the spring or summer seasons and a short preseason, we will have to shake off the rust quickly, but I have no doubt that we're

but head coach Mr. Luskin is determined to not let that affect him and his team. Saying that adapting is all a part of the game, he said, "You have to, you just have to," and he's exactly right. In a time like this where anything can happen at any time, you have to be able to change or else the season is in jeopardy.

Not much about this year seems right. Spring and summer seasons cancelled. Chances of even going to school this year were shaky. On top of that, sports were up in the air. But, when the dust



up to the challenge." Iwaneczko, who is starting on the boys varsity soccer team, has high hopes for his team this year. That's all it takes; a little bit of hope to light that fire.

The girls varsity soccer team lost several seniors last year,

settled, the only things different for athletes this year was a mask on their face and less fans in the stands. So much could have gone wrong this year, yet here are these athletes with the chance to get back to doing what they love, and with a chance to make history.

SWIM TEAM (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30)

the season finishes on November 28th. Head coach Jeff Maxwell says that he was very excited to begin coaching this

group. He has an impressive forty-two years of coaching experience, and he has been very successful in coaching

and conditioning this group of girls. When asked what his favorite part of the season so far has been, he replies,

"Watching this group of twenty-four swimmers turn into a team!"

The Averill Park Chronicle

New Girl's Swimming Team Hits The Pool

Averill Park And Troy Merge Swim Teams

by Carly Antolick

There is a new addition to this year's fall sports choices: girls' swimming. After an agreement was reached between Averill Park and Troy, the proposed team was announced to the school community in late August. Between the two schools, there are twenty-four girls that make up the team. "It's been really fun getting to know the girls from Troy," says Raegan O'Brien, an Averill Park freshman. "That's been one of my favorite things about the new team."

Due to COVID-19, there have been many safety protocols in place since the season's start on September 21. It would be

difficult and dangerous to swim with a mask on, so they cannot be worn in the water.



Swimmers still remain socially distant however, whether in the water or out.

"Coaching has been a little different with the COVID procedures, but the swimming

has been the same," says assistant coach Emily Caboot. She has only been a

swim coach for around three years, but has been a wonderful and enthusiastic leader to the girls whom she coaches.

This season, the Troy-AP team will compete in one in-person swim meet, and five virtual meets. At the time of writing this article, the girls have competed in three of these meets, winning one of them against Shaker High School. The team is currently ranked sixth out of all teams in its Section 2 division, which is rather impressive for a first-year team.

This group of twenty-four girls have had an amazing season so far, and hope to continue until

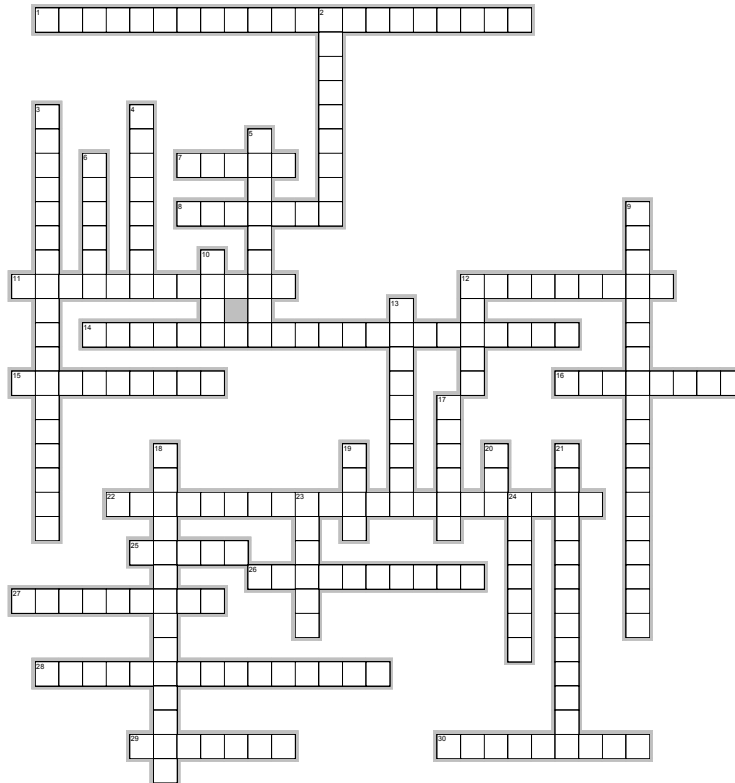
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FAVORITE STORE CROSSWORD

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| TRUEVALUE | TRADER JOES |
| TRULY RHE | WOODCRAFT |
| WHITE HOUSE BLACK MARKET | |



Down

2. Malenfant
3. Sorrieto
4. Kimberling, Pauly, Shupe
5. Galcik
6. Dutcher M, Freeman
9. Fairchild
10. Daviero
12. Ashline, Heilmann, Marrufo, Schmidt
13. Blostein
17. Rohl
18. Miller
19. Strich
20. Stone
21. Hale
23. Agnew, Gregory, McKeough
24. Gildersleeve

Across

1. Mein
7. Rees
8. Gibbins
11. Minkler
12. Hotaling, Quesnel
14. Caruso, Gierthy
15. Clark-Apelanz, Medici, Perry
16. Klepsch
22. Mackey
25. Engel B, Fox
26. Oldendorf
27. Ford
28. Church
29. Otty
30. Engel S