

The

# Westword

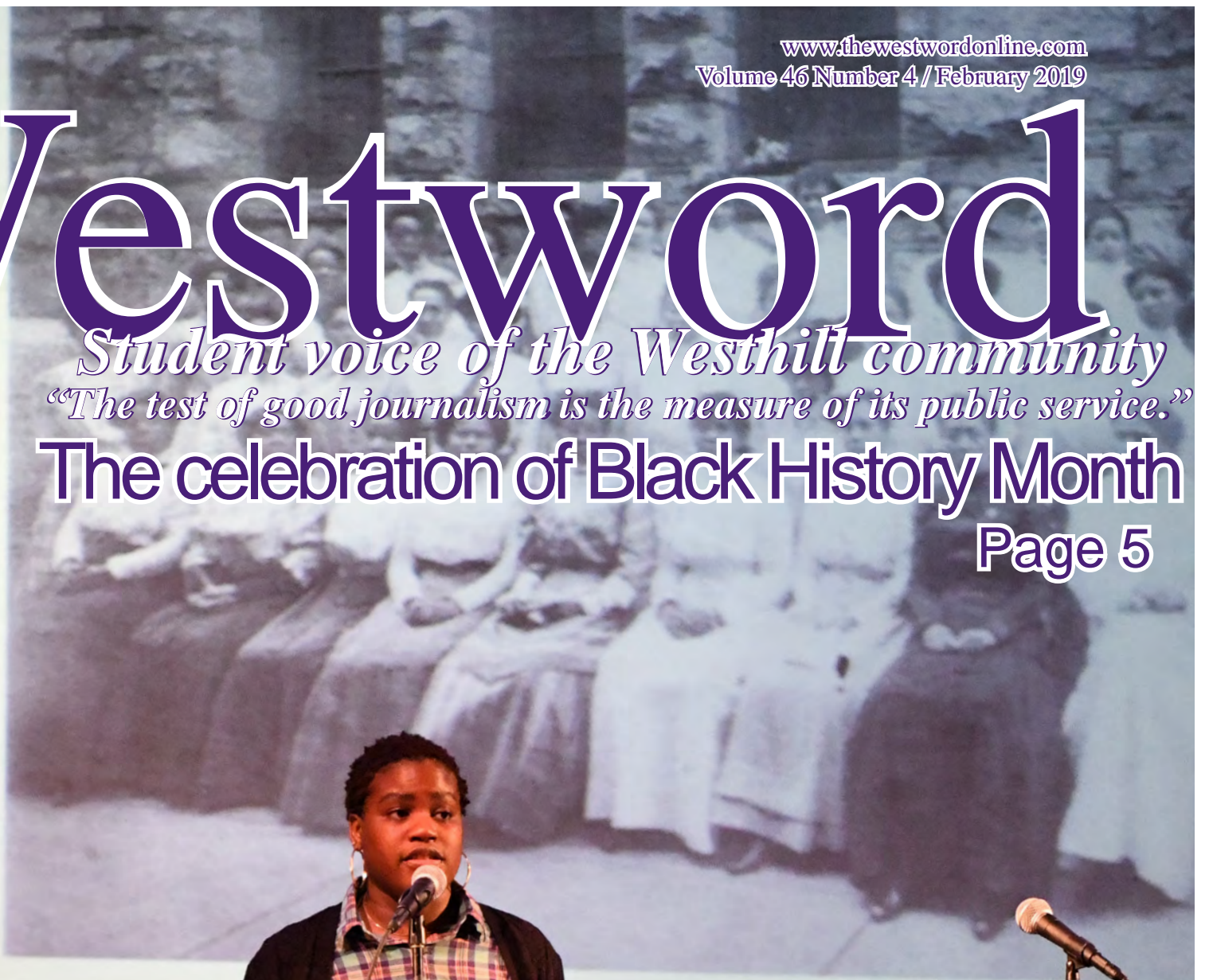
*Student voice of the Westhill community*

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

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THE LEAP FROM  
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TO VARSITY



# The Westword

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February 2019

## Note from the Editors

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the fourth issue of the year, we are very excited to continue serving as the student voice of the Westhill community and bring you updates about the school.

Our Editorial this month discusses why students believe we should have an open campus.

News highlights the addition of spring fling to our school events and the change of a formal junior prom to a semi-formal. In Viewpoint, we debate if teachers should get paid to stay afterschool and if club or athletic flags should be raised.

This issue, Special Report delves into the history

of U.S. government shutdowns and the recent government shutdown.

This Supplement insert spotlights places within 20 minutes of Westhill.

Continuando con Las Noticias, discutimos el impacto del cierre del gobierno.

Feature this issue highlights Jordon Jang being accepted in the U.S. Military Academy and Deanna Crevecoeur's interest in design. It also contains this issue's Artist of the Month, Emma Ostrovsky.

Limelight reviews how album covers impacts listeners and why artists release singles before their whole album. Find the discussion of the hype around AirPods in Scatterbrain.

In Sports, we provide insight on why the girls and boys swim teams have different seasons. We also highlight our athlete's of the month, Kevin Zyskowski and Jaedyn Carty.

For more, visit [thewestwordonline.com](http://thewestwordonline.com). Be sure to check out our Instagram account for updates @thewestword.

We encourage any and all readers with comments, questions, or concerns to contact us by either dropping a letter into Addison Magrath's mailbox in room 224 or emailing us at [westwordwhs@gmail.com](mailto:westwordwhs@gmail.com).

Sincerely,

Addison Magrath & Rachel Plotzky  
Editor-in-Chief & Executive Editor

### Editorial Policy

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

The Editorial Board consists of Addison Magrath, Rachel Plotzky, Alexandra Watkinson, Bailee Esposito, Katie Gaia, Chloe Giulini, Tamar Bellele, Quinn McHale, Kate Williams, Alliyah Rivera, Camila Miranda, Jason Zarrilli, Kayla Mendiola, Mr. von Wahlde, and Mr. Wooley. The Editorial can be found on page 3.

### Announcements

*The Westword* has no announcements at this time.

### Corrections

The Op-Ed of the December issue was written by Addison Magrath.

## What's inside

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

Front cover photo by **Harrison Travaglini**  
/ Photo Manager.  
Back cover photos by **Jayden Lesser** (top)  
& **Harrison Travaglini** (bottom left & right)  
/ Photographer & Photo Manager.



## Obstacles of trust in open campus

During the 2017-2018 school year, Westhill instituted a new limited open campus policy that allows seniors who meet a certain set of requirements to miss first block study hall and to leave school early in the case of last block study hall.

Eligible seniors must have at least a 2.0 GPA, no grades lower than a D in any class, less than ten unexcused absences, and a positive discipline record free from serious infractions such as suspensions or noncompliance with other school regulations. This policy does not allow students to leave school during the long block, which is the second to last period of the day and two hours long.

Other schools in Stamford have taken different approaches to open campus.

For example, Stamford High School has developed an open campus policy in which seniors can leave school any period that they have a study hall as long as they present a student ID. Stamford High students feel that the policy is beneficial.

"It is nice to know that I can leave school during a free period and not get in trouble for it," Sam Diamond ('19), a student at Stamford High, said.

Seniors at AITE are able to leave during any period of the day after signing out. However, administration has not released a written policy.

"Grades 9-11 must stay at school from 7:25 a.m. to 2:05 p.m. but seniors are allowed to leave during lunch waves and any free periods as well," Joseph DiSalvo ('19), a student at AITE, said.

Delving into how private schools operate with open campus policies, King School allows seniors and fourth quarter juniors to leave during any free period throughout the day.

"It gives you more freedom and teaches you time management, especially if you are leaving for a free, you need to know if you have the time to do that. It also teaches you a small part of what college life will be like, I think that is

why King has [open campus]," Charlotte Freund ('19), a student at King School, said.

During school hours, Westhill is liable for its students and their safety. However, this only applies to students when they are on Westhill property, not just when school is in session. As of now, with a limited open campus policy, Westhill is not liable for any student who manages to sneak out during any block other than one and six.

In 2020, Westhill will be changing the existing rotating A-G day schedule to a block schedule consisting of only A and B days, decreasing from six periods a day to only four. This will increase class time to the equivalent of four "long blocks" a day with each class being about 80 minutes.

Also, considering there will be eight periods instead of seven, there is more potential for students in all grades to receive study halls, not just juniors and seniors.

Open campus with the new block scheduling would be ideal so that students are able to

may need to be enforced to keep track of students checking in and out of the building, as is in place at the other schools mentioned earlier.

"The biggest issue is the logistics of how students are able to come and go... There is concern of young drivers on the road as well. There is a large potential for accidents... [Westhill] does not have anything in close enough proximity to be able to walk there rather than drive," Mr. Wax, school administrator, said.

According to magicard.com, certain card systems can be utilized to ensure students' safety and attendance. Using school ID cards, that Westhill students already have, to swipe in and out of the campus can alert school officials to students not honoring the attendance code which goes along with open campus privileges.

With an electronic record of students' coming and going, administrators can monitor not only their proof of attendance, but students' safety as well.

Knowing that administrators can tell the exact time stu-

dents are leaving and returning discourages them from taking extra time away from school. Less time away from school can mitigate certain issues like skipping classes after a designated study hall and rushing back to school and causing car accidents. This system will in turn make students more responsible and safe.

Open campus is a privilege which can help students learn to utilize their time effectively. They will be able to complete tasks they are unable to do at school or pick up something they left at home, for instance.

With this freedom, students would be able to learn how to be more responsible and productive throughout their day. This will give them a glimpse of the freedoms of college and adulthood, develop their independence so it is not as much of a shock once they leave high school.

"I am for [open campus]. It could be a chance to teach kids to value their time and manage it well," Rebecca Bailey ('21) said.

a massive obstacle to the policy's establishment.

Without a mutual trust and respect in the relationship, the system of open campus will be constantly abused and eventually, stripped away.

"It is not as much about trusting students but trusting other drivers on the road. There are many variables in this situation. The students that would use the open campus protocols would do so appropriately, I do not believe that it would be abused," Mr. Wax said.

However, many students believe that such a policy would be abused. For example, students may leave and not come back to school or students that are not seniors will try to abuse the privilege by leaving as well. Due to the great volume of students at Westhill, it is difficult for administrators to keep track of who can leave and who cannot.

Creating a trust relationship with administrators will eliminate this abuse of the privilege. With strict limitations on students leaving the building as is in place now, they become sneaky and create trouble for themselves, becoming disruptive to administrators' busy schedules. In order to form this trust, students must be able to prove that they are reliable and deserve the ability to leave and come back when they have a class to attend to.

"Open campus will allow there to be a relationship of trust and not sneaking around," Yael Roll ('20) said.

A mutual trust and respect relationship is extremely important to refrain from the major conflict of students skipping their class or multiple classes.

Without the complete cooperation of the students and faculty as a whole, open campus will never come to fruition.

**Bottom Line:** Open campus should be in Westhill's future, but can only thrive with a trusting relationship between students and faculty.



leave during their long period (third block), which is about two hours long with lunch.

With the upcoming block scheduling change-over for Westhill in 2020, the long duration class period opens up opportunities for students to leave campus. However, a specific system

How- ever, the privilege of open campus brings the issue of the weak trust relationship between administration and security with students. Understanding that a number of students can abuse this privilege is

Photo Illustration by Bailee Esposito / Ombudsman.

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



# In Loving Memory ... Mark Neysmith 1968-2019



“He was a good person. A really good person. He loved his job, he loved his coworkers. He was very well loved and will surely be so missed. He was a good worker and a good man and a good friend, a really good friend. He was easy-going, loved the kids, he loved his job. And I am going to miss him terribly. It is a big hurt for all of us because we loved Mark and we had hope that he was going to beat this thing and he did too, but we lost. He is in a better place now.”

—Ms. Birch

“I walk in and I miss him because you get used to seeing someone. He was a good man and he loved this school. He had a grace about him, he was one in a million.”

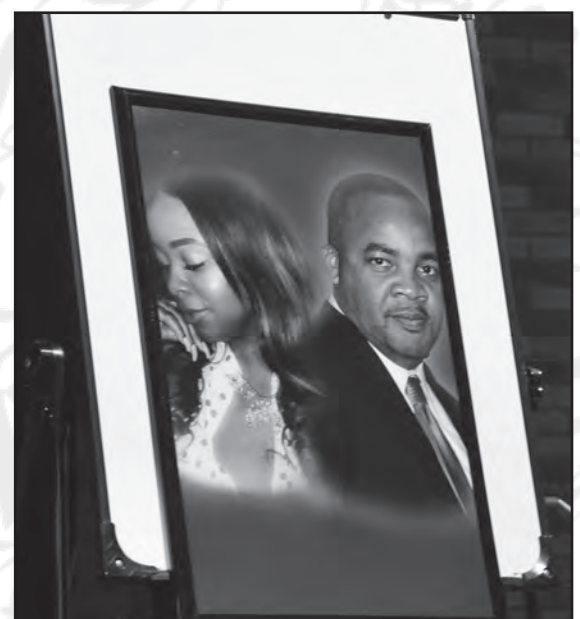
—Ms. Dukes

“Mark was the type of person anyone would love to have as a friend. He viewed things in a positive way and no matter how tough things were, he made you see the positive in any situation. He enjoyed talking to students and helping them at many different levels. I will forever remember his kindness and his determination to fight his illness. I am grateful to have called him a friend and will always remember his smile.”

—Mrs. Corbo

On Sunday January 27, Mark Neysmith, a security guard here at Westhill, passed away due to cancer complications. Mark was extremely beloved by the Westhill community and will forever be missed. Students and faculty knew that Mark loved his job and everyone here.

On Saturday February 9, Westhill held a memorial service open to Mark's friends and family.





## BRIEFS

### Morning “ice” cart fundraiser

Starting at the beginning of February, the Class of 2021 began selling ice in the morning before the first bell rings. This cup of ice costs two dollars and it comes with a complimentary medium sized cup of coffee.

When walking into the main lobby in the morning, many students have come to notice the significant line coming from the ice cart.

“It makes buying coffee more simple and efficient. With the [ice] being sold in the morning, I do not have to worry about driving down to Donut Delight or Dunkin’ Donuts in order to get the beverages I want on a daily basis,” Precious Thomas (’19) said.

Sophomore Class President Lilah Steinberg (’21) explained that the class plans to continue selling ice until they graduate.

“I do not have an exact goal, but my main campaign goal was to make our prom free,” Steinberg said.

Class officers also come early every morning to help with organizing and cleaning up of ice sales.



### Debate finishes off the year

Members of the Westhill Debate team have just finished their 2018-2019 season. After reflecting on the season the team feels they were incredibly successful after putting in hours of practice for every competition.

The team typically held workshops on Thursdays so their new debaters could get more practice public speaking. They also worked to ensure that everyone on the team knew their role before they got to the tournaments.

Approximately 20-25 students showed up to their meetings held in room 417 on Thursdays, and most of them went to their monthly debate tournaments.

Additionally, Mr. Petrone is the adviser, and he helped to train all debaters.

“The team practiced on Thursdays and discussed current issues on Tuesdays, so I am sure that helped the team become more confident and knowledgeable when it comes to tournament resolves,” Ashley Choi (’19) said.

They typically have three or four novice places in the top five for speakers and one or two teams place in the top five for teams at tournaments.



Briefs by **Danielle Gleaton** / Staff Writer.  
Photos by **Anastasiia Vladymyrenko** (top) & **Harrison Travaglini** (bottom) / Photographer & Photo Manager.

# The celebration of Black History Month at Westhill

**Sabrina Boyd**  
Staff Writer

Dr. Mae Jemison, the first African American astronaut, once said, “Never be limited by other people’s limited imaginations.” Black History Month is meant to be a time to recognize the progression and history of African Americans throughout America.

African American people have influenced many groups and individuals through literature, fashion, science, politics, and music over time and this month was labelled to celebrate that.

Black History Month first started out as Negro History week in 1926 by President Carter Woodson; however, the idea of Black History Month was first introduced by Black United Students at Kent State University in February 1969.

Six years later, it started to be recognized nationwide and eventually kicked off worldwide.

Dr. Forbes, the Social Studies Department Head, took the lead on activities throughout the school this year to celebrate Black History Month.

Westhill specifically is a very diverse institution, with a relatively large black demographic: 16 percent of the school’s population which makes the recognition of Black History Month prominent.

Black History Month shows students and other individuals the importance of valuing everyone’s culture and history.

“Black History Month creates a moment when we can dig a little deeper and be a bit more reflective about the events that have characterized the black experience in our country,” Mr. Wooley, English teacher, said.

In February, Mr. Wooley incorpo-

rated documentaries and texts that focused on Black History in his classes.

Announcements were read almost every morning in February about prominent African American figures and events that occurred shaping the Civil Rights Movement.

On February 28, there were assemblies held for social studies classes showcasing African American heroines.

Many students feel that the presence of Black History Month in Westhill is not prominent. There are fewer activities happening this year.

“I am not hearing the announcements in the morning, and there should be posters and in Connection Time videos,” Najoy Houser (’19) said.

“Black History Month in Westhill is underrated because there are no activities or posters; I do not think it is really recognized [enough],” Tatiana Taheri (’19) said.

Many teachers, such as Mr. Wooley, Mr. Celcis, and Ms. Walden who have helped to coordinate Black History Month activities, had to step back from planning events for this year’s program since they were out of school for extended amounts of time due to mold related issues.

February is when African American people are supposed to be recognized for their contributions to culture and students can help themselves and others by becoming more educated about African American culture and history.



**LOUD VOICES** Speakers such as Alexis Chisolm (pictured), came to Westhill on February 28 to present information about Black History Month.

Photos by **Harrison Travaglini** / Photo Manager.



# Fashion show comes back this Spring

**Yulia Lozynska**  
Staff Writer

After taking a break from hosting last year, Westhill Classes of 2019 and 2020 are holding a Fashion Show on Friday, March 8. The admission price for the event will be five dollars for students and ten dollars for adults.

The Fashion Show has been an event that gets the school together for students and faculty to watch upperclassmen show off their outfits while walking down the runway.

All of the pieces in the Fashion Show are provided by local businesses. Some of these businesses include Lord & Taylor and A Step Head on High Ridge Road.

There will be a total of 40 dresses and 20 tuxedos modeled in this year's show.

The Class of 2019 has been planning and preparing for this event since last year. Organization and preparation needed to begin

months in advance in order to ensure everything runs smoothly.

In the past, the Westhill Parent Teacher Student Organization (WPTSO) ran the show as a fundraiser but they were not profitable in doing so.

The planning for this year's event was changed to being between juniors and seniors.

"Last year the planning for the fashion show started too late," Mrs. Grant, senior class adviser, said.

Nikki Newcomer ('19) is in charge of organizing the students participating in the show.

According to Mrs. Grant, the last time the show ran in 2017, it had not been a success since it required sponsors and money to be put into the event the class simply did not have.

On top of that, the admission tickets and raffle proceeds did not surpass the costs.

Now with the local businesses donating outfits, close to no money

will be spent on holding the event.

This year, the Fashion Show is trying to raise funds in other ways as well. The organizers are increasing the ticket price because they added other acts such as the Westhill band and step team.

The outfits in the show will be casual attire for juniors and formal attire for seniors. Many of the outfits modeled will be ideas for prom and the semi-formal.

The idea behind a multi-class fashion show is that if the senior class involves the junior class, the show could become an annual event with a momentum of its own. The senior class and its advisors are hoping to continue this tradition for years to come.

"I am very excited because we have not had one since our sophomore year. This will be something new for us," Sophia Font ('19) said.

The organizers also hope it will be a profitable fundraiser for the two classes right before prom season.



**PLANNING IT OUT** Fashion show participants gathered together to discuss the fashion show on March 8.

Photo by **Chloe Giulini** / Managing Editor.

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## BRIEFS

### *AgriScience Rose Sale*

Every year as Valentine's Day approaches, the students from the AgriScience program (Ag) run a Valentine's Day rose sale.

The rose sale is a way for students to send a message to their significant other, friend, or anyone they want to show their love for in the Valentine's day season.

The roses were bought from a wholesaler and were put together by the Ag students and teachers. They also cut and packaged them for students to buy.

"[The Ag program] uses [the rose sale] as a way to raise money for the program and scholarships for the students in the program," Chloe Segal ('19), the student in charge of the rose sale this year, said.

The roses were sold for three dollars for one rose, five dollars for three, and seven dollars for a bouquet. They were sold in the Finch main lobby for the majority of the day, and during all three lunch waves.

When someone purchased a rose, all they needed to do was identify one class that the recipient had so it could get delivered to them on Valentine's Day.

Principal Rinaldi also purchased roses as a gift for each staff member, totaling in 273 roses.

Many students used this as a way to celebrate the season of love in school.



### *Junior Class Semi-Formal*

Junior Prom has officially been changed to a semi-formal dance. Similar to past years, the dance will take place at the Italian Center in Stamford.

"Administration wanted to cancel the Junior Prom completely. However, the student council was able to save the prom by making a few minor changes to get administration on our side," Justin Kipness ('20), Junior Class President, said.

This is why the full dinner is replaced by desserts as well as an ice cream bar, and students in attendance will be encouraged to wear slightly less formal clothing.

Tickets will be 40 dollars, which is over 30 dollars lower than last year.

Due to the cut of a full meal, organizers were able to make this change in hopes of creating a more welcoming dance. Students are able to wear anything they want as long as it remains appropriate.

"I believe the only major change from prom to semi-formal is the name on the flyers. When talking to my friends I am still going to refer to the event as a prom," Kipness said.

So, despite the name change, the Junior Semi-Formal is meant to be similar to Junior Prom in past years.

Juniors can head over to the Cinderella Project on March 20 to look for a dress to wear to the semi-formal.

Briefs by **Sara Gatz** / Staff Writer.  
Photo by **Harrison Travaglino** / Photo Manager.



## Good Month Bad Month

Column by  
Sanjana Nayak  
& Jessica Matloub



### Good Month for...

**New England Patriots** Fans were overjoyed after the team's sixth win in the Super Bowl Championship against the Los Angeles Rams. The game began relatively relaxed and by halftime, only one field goal had been scored by the Patriots. The team picked up the pace in the second half and won with a final score of 13-3. Fans were in high spirits flooding out onto the streets of Boston for the Patriots' celebratory parade. Quarterback Tom Brady hopes to continue his successful career and hopes to lead the team to another victory next season.



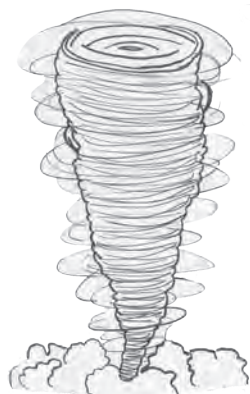
**Police Officers** At ten years old, Tyler Carach was at a convenience store when he saw four off-duty police officers and decided to use his allowance to buy them donuts. This was his way of expressing appreciation for all these officers do to protect the neighborhood. Since then, Carach has devoted his vacations from school to delivering donuts to officers around the country. Two years later, Carach has delivered more than 75,000 donuts to officers in 41 states.



**Instagram** Instagram announced on February 7 that it would no longer allow graphic images of self-harm on its platform. The change may have been influenced by public attention towards social networking and how it might influence viewers. Distinguishing between graphic and nongraphic content requires plenty of moderation, and for this reason, it has been decided that artificial intelligence will not be involved in this process. This process will be conducted entirely by humans in order to help create a more safe and accepting cyber community for teenagers.

### Bad Month for...

**Cuba** On January 27, disastrous flash tornadoes hit the Cuban capital, Havana, leaving many homes in ruins. These alarming tornadoes left four people dead and 195 injured. There were strong winds of 125 miles per hour that led to flooding, trees being ripped from the ground, and excessive damage. People were forced to evacuate their homes due to intense winds and destruction. Most of the city was left without electricity or running water. Meteorologists say this was the strongest tornado in 80 years.



**Pacific Northwest** This region has been getting hit by an unusual series of winter storms starting in early February. Regions surrounding Seattle received about 5 inches of snow in a span of one week. Meteorologists predict even more snow throughout the remainder of the next few months. This area does not usually receive this much snowfall, so they were only moderately equipped to deal with it. For this reason, more than 200 flights at the Seattle International Airport were cancelled in a single day.



**Hospital Mergers** Many hospitals are merging together in order to encompass a larger amount of people, and ultimately make more profit through their service. This can lead to drastic effects in customer and health service for all patients, according to the *Washington Journal*. Studies also show that mortality rates grow when competition decreases. Competition has proven to be a valuable tool that can increase the quality of health care. The fewer the number of hospitals, the less competition there is.

# Spring fling coming to Westhill

**Shaira Sunbeam**  
Staff Writer

Prom season is approaching for Westhill students. While seniors prepare for their upcoming prom and juniors for their new semi-formal, a new event is being introduced to Westhill: a Spring Fling.

Prom season can be a time when freshmen and sophomores feel left out. The student council had a new plan to add a Spring Fling to make all grades feel welcome during this season.

Now Westhill will be having a Spring Fling on March 29 for all grades.

"I do not feel strongly about [having a Spring Fling]. I feel like most schools have other events [such as a Spring Fling] and it would be fun to go. But I probably will not go unless people I know go," Anna Martelli ('20) said.

There has been talk about an additional dance at Westhill for the past couple of years and it is finally occurring.

"It is just like Homecoming, so you can dress up if you want and go all out or you can wear jeans and a nice shirt. There is no dress code really; just show up in what makes you comfortable," Kaitlynn Henderson ('20), Junior Class Historian, said.

Similar to Homecoming, it is an event

where all classes are encouraged to join.

At first, the Spring Fling was going to be just for the junior and senior class to raise money, but the underclassmen quickly showed interest. Now profits will be split between all four grades.

Ticket prices will be 10 dollars if bought beforehand, and 15 dollars at the door. The attire will be similar to that of Homecoming as well. This dance will not only allow students to hang out with their friends, but also to raise money for future events.

As this is still in the planning process, many students do not know about it yet. However, most responses were optimistic about this addition to annual Westhill events.

"I only know about it because my friend is on student council, but I would probably go. It sounds like a fun time with friends, but I think the only problem is most people do not know about the Spring Fling yet," Lisa Jagodzinski ('20) said.

However, the addition of a Spring Fling is not appealing to many seniors as it is only two months before prom and they do not want to focus on both.

The Spring Fling dance is coming to Westhill on March 29 and will be open to all grades.



Illustration by **Tamar Frydman** / Head Illustrator.



# New York fulfills *Roe v. Wade* abortion legislation

**Alyssa Goldberg**  
Reporter

New York finally amended its abortion laws to provide the protections granted by *Roe v. Wade*, which guarded a woman's right to choose under the constitutional right to privacy, with the passing of the Reproductive Health Act.

New York previously had measures in place to deter abortion providers from actually providing care, as it did not allow for abortion care after the first trimester in cases of a non-viable fetus or endangerment of a woman's life.

Forcing a woman in unstable physical condition to give birth puts her life in danger. Likewise, forcing the birth of a non-viable fetus can have drastic impacts on

the mother's mental health.

Although they are rare, serious complications can arise during the second and third trimesters of pregnancy.

With abortion in New York's criminal code, many health care professionals feared criminal prosecution in these situations. Now, New York is aligned with federal law, and abortion has been removed from the state's criminal code.

The Reproductive Health Act ensures that a New York woman has the right to access necessary care throughout her pregnancy.

These laws were passed just days after the march held by Women's March Alliance.

"It is great seeing new laws passed only a few days after

the march because it makes me feel that as women our voices are being heard. [With recent appointments] I was worried about what the state of abortion laws would be. It is amazing to see progress being made," Olivia Wenke ('20) said.

With pro-choice activists celebrating recent victories, the anti-abortion advocates have intensified their campaign.

The March for Life, an anti-abortion event, was held on the same day as the Women's March. Though President Trump spoke via webcam at the rally, the right-wing has had little impact on limiting this fundamental women's right.

Again, in the State of the Union address on February 5,

Trump took the opportunity to bash new abortion laws, and used aggressive terms to distort the truth behind the laws themselves.

"We had the case of the Governor of Virginia where he stated he would execute a baby after birth," President Trump said.

In actuality, the governor's comment was only in regards to a situation in which a woman with a non-viable pregnancy went into labor.

"The infant would be delivered, the infant would be kept comfortable, the infant would be resuscitated if that is what the mother and the family desired," Virginia Governor Ralph Northam said to wtop.com.

The Virginia law was not as extreme as the media portrayed

it. The law proposed that Virginia remove the need for two additional doctors to approve a woman's late term abortion, and leave that decision solely to a woman and her physician.

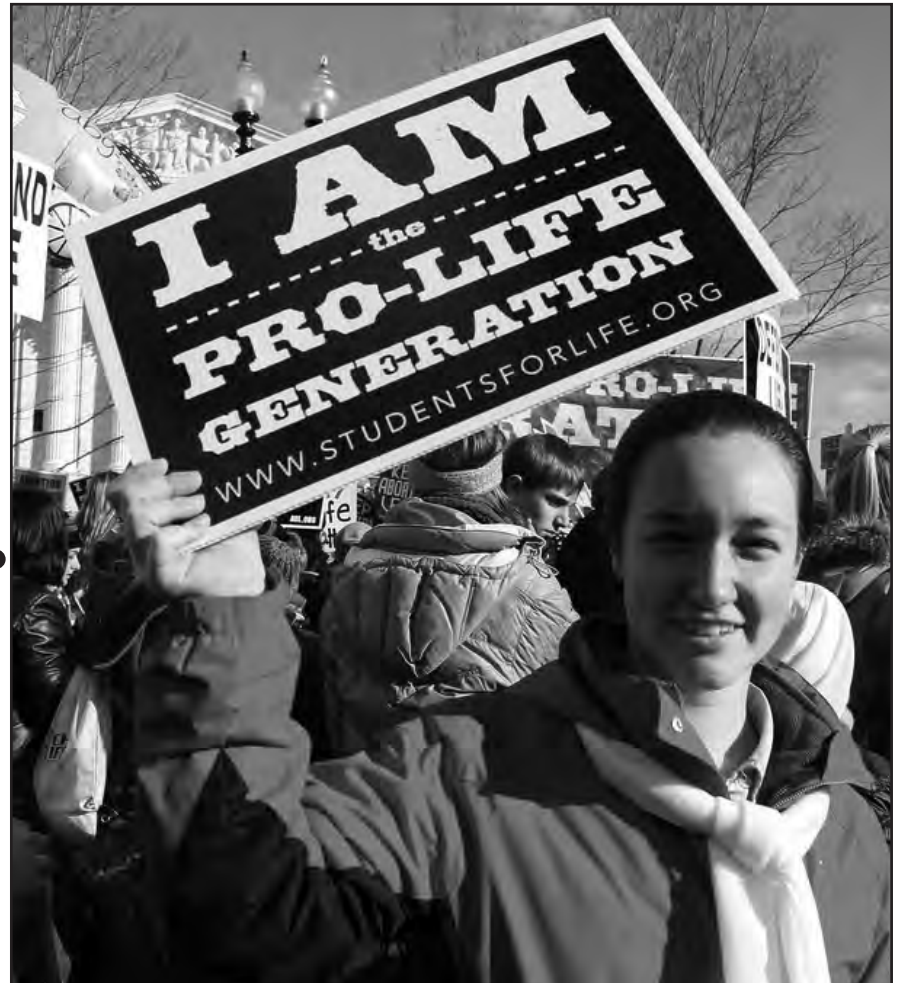
A woman's right to choose is necessary to ensure the freedom and well-being of all women.

"It is a woman's body and they should be in charge of what they want to do with it," said a student who wished to remain anonymous.

Pro-choice advocates are simply trying to amend the current laws so that all women have fair access to their constitutional rights, and so that existing laws cannot act as a barricade to a woman's right to choose, or as a threat to their life.



VS.



**Timothy McKeithen**  
Reporter

The ongoing fight for abortion rights in New York came to a ceasefire when the state passed an act called the Reproductive Health Act verified by Governor Cuomo.

This piece of legislation allows abortions to be administered after 24 weeks of pregnancy if the woman's health is in grave danger or the baby is no longer considered viable.

This decision angered the pro-life group, but praised by the pro-choice activists because it fulfills the laws established by *Roe v. Wade*. This law is outright immoral and unethical.

The law allows for late term

abortions as long as the mother or child are in danger, but the main concern is pro-life activists are afraid that the term "health in danger" is too broad to be stipulated in the law.

"I was shocked and greatly disheartened when the New York abortion legislation passed. I think this is a new, unprecedented and frankly sickening extreme that never should have been passed; There is a difference between first and third trimester abortions and there is absolutely no justification to be able to legally have an abortion in the third trimester," Anissa Jahaj ('20) said.

"Health" could be referring to physical or mental health which could both be affected by pregnancy, but not fatal to the

mother's life.

"The law gives too much power to the mother and does not think about the life at stake," Tejas Juware ('20) said.

"If our governor, senate, and assembly has their way, abortion will be legal up to the moment of birth and a baby who survives the scalpel, saline, or suction, and is still alive, can be left to die without any care," Tim Dolan, a Cardinal in New York, said to the National Catholic Reporter.

Another person who shares this view is Rebecca Hagelin, a *Washington Times* columnist who calls the passing of this law "The Great American Holocaust."

This law and what it entails is morally wrong.

If this is what the passing of

abortion laws is leading to, then no more legislation should be allowed to pass.

"Abortions should no longer be accessible after the second trimester because the mother should have made up her mind before then," said a student who wished to remain anonymous.

Ever since the confirmation of Justice Brett Kavanaugh onto the Supreme Court, pro-choice activists have feared what the right side leaning court could do to *Roe v. Wade*.

Many have expressed their fear that this case could be edited or overturned, something that would be amazing for pro-life advocates.

The law also got quite the reaction out of some very famous stars who disagreed with

the controversial legislation.

Brooke Fraser, a Christian worship singer, posted a photo of her pregnant belly and said, "Rooney was in here. She could hear everything. She knew my voice, my heartbeat... what happened in New York this week is something different. Do not call it an expansion of rights and freedoms. It is a horror."

The law that was passed is meant to help expand women's rights but it is actually doing more damage than good.

The act of aborting babies should not be considered controversial but instead killing a child should be recognized as wrong and immoral.

The fact that some individuals are still convinced this is acceptable is sickening.



# Teachers should have required after school hours

**Olivia Butler**  
Staff Writer

At Westhill, there are many opportunities for students to study and complete their work, but not always with the teachers. Students can ask their teachers to stay after school to help, but teachers would have to do that on their own willing behalf.

If staff was paid for one day a week to stay after school and aid students, it could help improve struggling grades.

By having teachers give these individuals extra help and not have them rely on a tutor outside of school, a better relationship could be established between the student and teacher.

However, Westhill would have to deal with the issue of funding money for the after school help, or move existing money from different programs.

"The idea sounds good, but I feel as if it would have more negatives than positives," Gabby Lovishuk ('19) said.

There are many factors that go into making this decision. Some teachers have other things to do after school, and students could not make

it to every afterschool day the teachers assign.

Additionally, the teachers are not always going to want to stay after school if students are not showing up. Many students also forget that teachers are people with lives outside of school.

to [stay after to help students], they should not be given money for doing their job. It would be dangerous to say no to any student seeking help to succeed in your class, expecting money would only alter this school to pay for something that would be

they would gladly do it on their own free will," Mr. Lukas, English teacher, said.

Students find it easier to gain help from their specific teacher rather than a tutor who may demonstrate the subject differently. Also, the teacher has

and they are not paid for their extra service. Not all teachers are able to dedicate their time to these kids, so the opportunity to receive more income could help the teachers put more effort into teaching our students after 2:05 p.m.

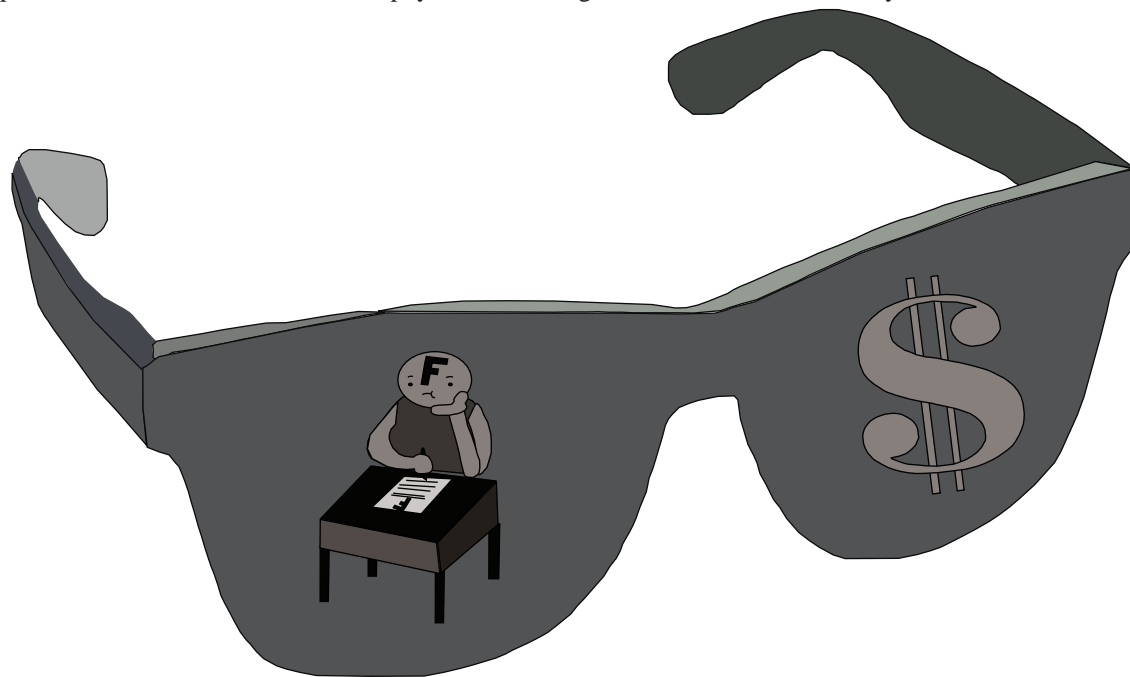
"Teachers have been doing this for years and have not received any money from it," Samantha Page ('19) said.

However, initiating one day after school would give students the opportunity to understand more about what they are learning in class and not the subject itself.

If a student was out one day or did not understand the material in class, this allows them to seek extra help and catch up on work they do not understand. This idea helps both students and teachers and encourages kids to pursue a more productive work ethic.

The idea provides multiple pros and cons, but keeps the students education as its main priority.

The end goal is for students to be able to interact with teachers easily and develop a further understanding of the criteria.



Everyone has a life outside of Westhill, and that one day a week could affect many teachers' personal lives.

"Teachers should be willing

done for free. Teachers' lives do form around the well being of their students... The idea is not a negative, but why make school pay for teachers to stay when

a much better idea of what the curriculum consists of rather than an outside tutor.

Most teachers have days they stay after school already,

Graphic by Jason Zarrilli / Viewpoint Editor.

# Athletes still run despite having no indoor track

**Bella Vaccaro**  
Staff Writer

Throughout the winter season, the Westhill track team faced the harsh temperatures as they continued conditioning and practicing. Due to the fact that Westhill does not have an indoor track, they were forced to either run outside or find room within the school to train.

Coaches Mr. Page and Mr. Kubick made the executive de-

cision each day on whether the students should run in or outside. Their decision was based on how cold it was outside and if the athletes would be able to sufficiently train.

According to the team and coaches, sub-freezing weather is tough to train in due to the harsh winds affecting breathing and running. However, road training is essential for the development of distance runners.

"I do not particularly enjoy running in the cold but

honestly it is easy to get used to," Sophia Thagouras ('20) said.

When the temperature drops under 40, the team will normally warm up inside, then depending on needed training and safe conditions, they will head outside or stay inside adjusting the workouts.

When inside, they do ten laps around the 400s which is equal to one mile. The team also trains in the weight room three times a week.

"Running is always beneficial and we do not run when conditions are dangerous, so training methods sometimes need to be adjusted daily based

on weather," Page said.

The upside to indoor track is meets will never be held outside. Despite the outdoor training, this better prepares the athletes for their indoor meetings. However, this meant that every weekend, meets were away. Although some may think not having an indoor track is a problem, it causes excess stress on athletes and the coaches.

"It would be nice to have an indoor track, but it is not really a necessity," Eamon Mahoney ('19) said.

Due to the drop in temperature in Fairfield County, some may say that running in the cold may be dangerous.

According to active.com, "cold dry air and increases in minute ventilation are both stimuli for bronchoconstriction, which manifests with shortness of breath, chest tightness and a cough."

Studies have shown that even the healthiest runners experience breathing difficulties while running in the cold.

According to livestrong.com, wearing a thin ski mask when running reduces aggravating effects of cold, with the inside of the mask being warmed with the runner's ex-

hales. Also, wearing a scarf can protect athletes from the harsh wind chill.

Remembering to breathe through the nose rather than the mouth will also lessen potential breathing difficulties. Although running in the cold can have some implications and difficulties, these tips can help enhance the running experience as a whole.

Westhill runners keep these tips in mind when they are informed they will be training outside. Although it is harder to run in the layers of clothing, it is necessary in order to keep warm.

"Running can definitely hurt if you are not wearing the enough layers because you can get sick, but it can build up real motivation, because if you can do it in freezing cold, you can do it anytime," Josh Gordon ('19) said.

Westhill will not be building an indoor track anytime soon, so it is up to the coaches and athletes to buckle down and prepare to excel every season.

Despite the chilly temperature, their running will still improve every practice and meet.

Image courtesy of wikipedia.org.





# Students prohibited from the Ag building

**Evelyn Vasquez**  
Staff Writer

The additional building on the edge of the Westhill property is called the AgriScience (Ag) Building housing Ag students and their exclusive programs.

Since it is a national program and also state funded, there is a controversy about whether or not non-Ag students should be allowed inside.

The program has its own separate courses that students take in addition to the courses Westhill provides.

Students who wish to join can apply in 8th grade or following freshman year.

In order to be accepted into the program, students must complete an application, get a teacher recommendation, provide their transcripts, and schedule an interview with the program.

"As a whole, our program wants integration into Westhill in terms of knowledge of what we do, what we teach, and what urban agriculture is like. So even though we cannot have people come into our building on a day-to-day basis, we are planning other ways to educate the Westhill community about what we

teach," Stewart Sbordone ('19) said.

A majority of students at Westhill are not aware of everything Ag entails and why their building is off limits to every non-Ag student.

"I never knew about the program, I thought the building was used for a different school," Kelvin Recinos ('19) said.

Students have a desire to go in and explore this unseen building. Many seniors who have been here all four years have never stepped foot inside.

Because it is state funded, having non-Ag students "explore" the building creates a problem for both Westhill and the program due to liability issues.

For example, if a non-Ag student happens to go inside the building and gets hurt from the equipment, the school becomes responsible for letting unauthorized students wander around.

Also, letting random unknown students walk around creates a risk for not only the students, but also the teachers in the building because they cannot always tell who is or is not a member.

"It is a valid argument to not

let non-Ag students go inside the Ag building because they do not really have any business being in there," Kaden Roome ('19) said.

Luckily, Westhill has special days set in place for students and parents to learn more about what the program has to offer, and in turn, get to finally step inside the building.

"The Ag program has open

house days just like Westhill so students can come in and look around instead of doing it when they are not supposed to during the day," Mr. Fraser, Head of Security, said.

Another key issue with allowing students to walk in and out freely is the Ag building has no security.

No Westhill security staff

is assigned to guarding the Ag building, and specifically its very expensive equipment.

Although many students may be upset they are not allowed to walk in and out of this building, the program is not willing to risk having their equipment lost or stolen, or a student hurt in return for your desire to explore.



**AERIAL VIEW** The AgriScience building is located on the edge of the Westhill property, housing many unique programs.

Photo by **Harrison Travaglino** / Photo Manager.

# All clubs deserve an equal spotlight

**Tamar Bellete**  
Assistant Managing Editor

Whether they are experiencing it themselves or keeping up with Principal Rinaldi's Instagram, most students have become aware that Westhill programs get to have their respective flags risen the morning after a win.

The idea is that, "any team that competes, if they want, can come out and raise the flag," Mr. Rinaldi said.

The idea of raising flags is a fairly new tradition at Westhill. According to Rinaldi, during his interview process for becoming principal, there was a question of whether or not Westhill had enough school spirit.

The Westhill community, including students, teachers, and parents, wanted to see more Westhill pride throughout the school. As a result, Mrs. Cohen gave Principal Rinaldi the idea of a victory flag pole, and thus started this exciting tradition.

The majority of the sports teams have been able to raise their flag after a triumph, such as both the girls and boys basketball teams, the field hockey team, the girls volleyball team, and the wrestling team.

Although the athletic teams

are guaranteed this honor, other Westhill programs and clubs that do not require as much physical activity have not been able to raise their flag.

"It is unfair that Debate does not have a flag to raise, seeing as we are a big team with 40 kids. We represent an extremely intelligent group of

club (LOL) at Westhill has won many competitions, however, they have not been seen raising their flag.

"This is the first year for

other less talked about clubs have gotten their flag raised.

"Last year, our competitive Java team also got to raise its flag. Administration is doing a good job on flag raising for non-athletic events," Sarkar said.

Moreover, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), has had their flag risen. FBLA has one major competition during the school year, and their flag was raised last school year, right after the first place winners from Westhill were announced.

All school programs and organizations should have their flag risen at some point. They compete against other schools, just like all of the other sports teams.

Although this competition may not require a physical aspect, the students are still representing the same school and are putting in just as much effort as their peers.

These clubs work hard to represent their school in the best manner possible, and they deserve to be treated with the same respect as the sports teams.

Graphic by **Jason Zarrilli** / Viewpoint Editor.



Some school programs, such as Mock Trial and Debate, do not have their own flags to raise. The one time that the Debate Team was able to have a flag risen, they had to use the Viking pride flag.

students which, in turn, positively represents Westhill. We deserve a flag just as much as any other team," Anissa Jahaj ('20), Debate Team Captain, said.

The League of Legends

the (LOL) club and we do not currently have a flag. Also, our LOL came in third in states in the ESports League recently," Mr. Sarkar, computer science teacher and LOL adviser, said.

On the other hand, many



## Media bias creating unnecessary confusion

Watching, reading, or listening to the morning news at the breakfast table or on the way to work has become a staple in many people's routines.

Every morning, at 8 a.m., I tune out of class for five minutes to read *The New York Times* morning briefing.

However, I can no longer solely rely on certain news outlets because the information I am being fed is distorted to fit the company's image.

So much of the content being administered is telling viewers how we should feel about a topic rather than giving us facts to form our own opinions.

The public is now well aware as to which networks and publications favor left or right sided politics, yet viewers still refuse to watch both or change their static routines.

"Do not trust everything you listen to because people still feed you false information," Vinny Balaj ('19) said.

It is important to understand that media bias and fake news are not the same thing.

Media bias is defined as the bias of journalists and news producers when covering select stories and events. It is a legitimate issue that the audience is forced to overcome daily.

Fake news is a form of

yellow journalism in which reporters deliberately misinform the audience and lead them to believe their side.

However, this motto has gained mass popularity by President Trump to disgrace liberals and their "supporting" news networks.

News outlets exist to transmit objective and factual information, but it has become increasingly difficult to find completely neutral facts and statistics. This does not go to say the news is untrustworthy, but it is heavily altered from what actually happened.

The most common form of media bias today is bias by omission. Key parts of the story are being left out in order to get a point across.

In late January, a story broke about a Native American man, Nathan Phillips, being confronted by high school students wearing Make America Great Again hats.

In a video posted by *The New York Times*, Phillips is made out to be the hero and that he was not intentionally joining the argument.

Phillips broke up the fight between the students and Israelites who were saying offensive terms to one another by singing with his drum.

However, soon after, *Fox*

*News* released a much longer video revealing the truth, Phillips brought himself into the argument.

*The New York Times* then released an article within the hour explaining that more had been revealed about the story and they had not been made aware of the true circumstances.

My first question is: Why are news sources publishing an article without knowing the facts and why was I so quick to believe the *The New York Times* without hesitation?

I catch myself sticking to *CNN* and *The New York Times* too often and have had to force myself to venture outwards.

"I do sometimes just focus on one network so I should branch out more," Noah Fuchs ('19) said.

Remaining static with my reading and viewing choices leads to bigger problems than just being biased, but it leads me to being uneducated.

Today, it is difficult to find an individual that despite their political party, are willing to respect the opposite side and hold a civil discussion.

I believe that the main cause of that is the false or distorted information being fed to all of us through what we deem "reliable" news sources.

There is nothing more ex-

hausting than attempting to hold a respectful discussion on a topic but having it go nowhere because our perspectives are so biased.

"It is something that affects us all, and it is leading to bigger issues" Divya Gada ('20) said.

However, when discussing media bias, it is important to make it clear that both parties are at fault.

President Trump has attempted to disgrace major networks such as the *The New York Times*, *CNN*, and the *Washington Post* because their supposed liberal viewpoints directly oppose his.

It is not that they oppose Trump's Republican views, but instead he does not appreciate them calling him out on his blatant lies.

Trump has made it clear that he deems *Fox News* as the ultimate news source, and this is the common consensus of most Republicans. I still watch a few minutes of *Fox News* but it is their eventual sexism and unnecessary criticism that makes me turn off the channel.

My problem with sources like *Fox News* and *CNN* is not just how they portray their information, but how they have become very comfortable with

their labels.

They are not trying to convince their audience that they are neutral, but have instead accepted their left or right leaning stereotypes.

The sources are perfectly comfortable with their bias and have no desire to change it for the better. For the most part, they are no longer delivering the trustworthy journalism individuals, such as myself, are constantly seeking.

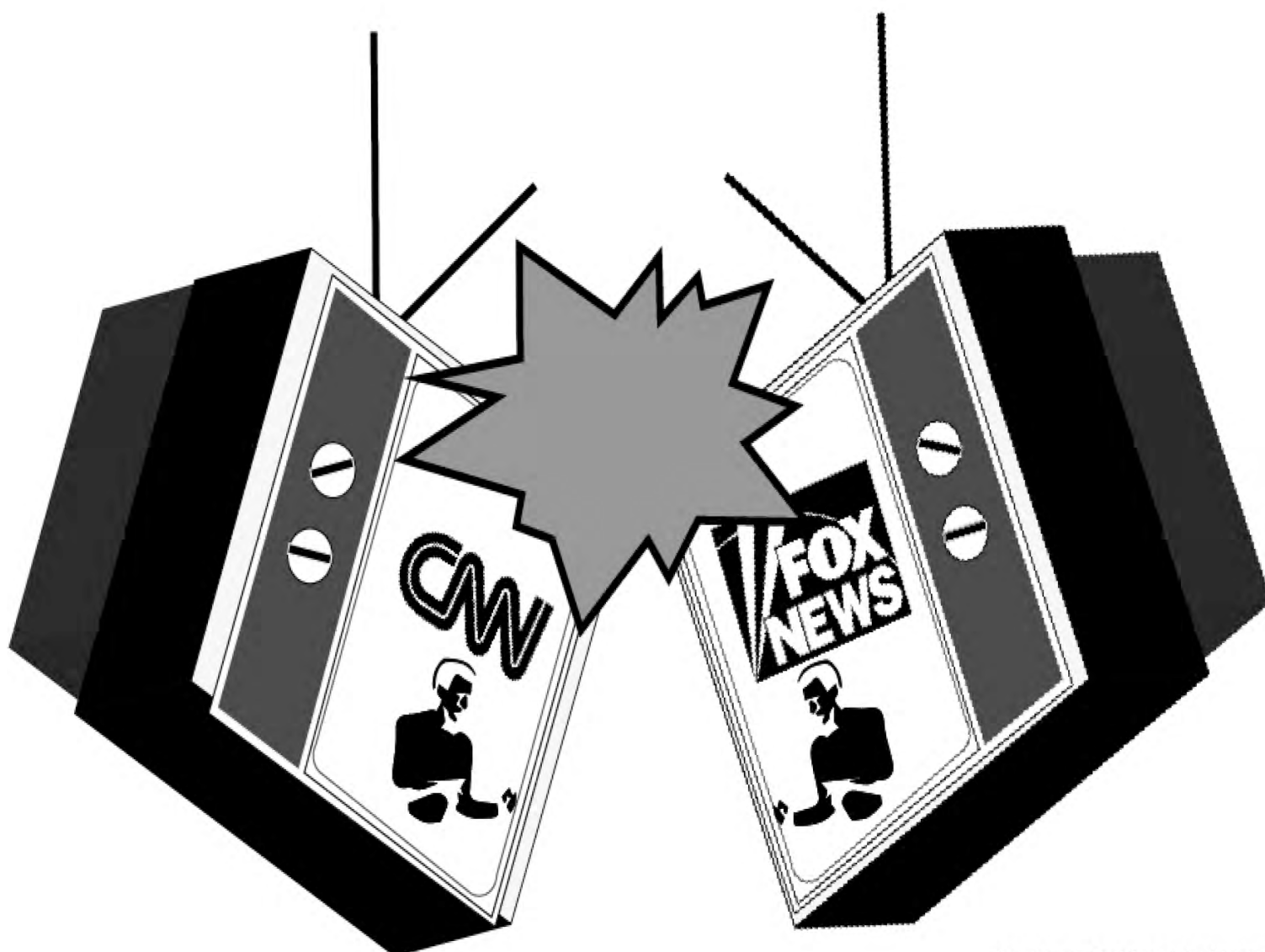
The larger problem with media bias, especially with teenagers, is that we do not have enough real world experience to have fully formed our views.

Our opinions and thought processes are constantly changing and we should not base these decisions upon untrustworthy news sources.

I personally have a long way to go before I can consider myself fully informed on both sides of current day controversial issues. It is something I have to continue working on everyday.

However, instead of sitting around and complaining about how left leaning my views may be, I can go out there and research, read, and listen to more information from all sides.

—Chloe Giuliani ('20)



Graphic by Zac Kitay / Contributor.

Please submit

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and

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to Addison  
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# SPECIAL REPORT

## Shutting down the government

**Hailey Baloutch**  
Reporter

Discussion over President Trump's desired border wall has dominated American politics since it became the center of his 2016 presidential campaign.

This discussion turned into an ongoing fight between the Republican and Democratic parties, resulting in the longest shutdown in American history, lasting from December 22, 2018 to January 25, 2019, a total of 35 days.

Though it was temporarily reopened for three weeks, the government was expected to shutdown once more on February 15. However, it did not because President Trump signed a spending and border security plan that would keep the government running through September 30, according to [cnbc.com](#).

The cause of a shutdown is when Congress and the president are unable to sign 12 appropriations bills due to disagreement on ideal government expenditure and the budget release is then delayed.

Federal agencies will then not receive funding, as no budget

is in place.

The disagreement that caused this past shutdown was on whether or not 5.7 billion dollars should be spent on a border security wall.

"[Trump] is playing an immature little game," Laurence Argueta ('22) said.

According to *The New York Times*, during a shutdown, each cabinet department's budget is affected by this delay in different ways.

The majority of National Park workers are furloughed, or temporarily put on leave, which is a concern for ecosystems often damaged when unsupervised.

Another major affectee was NASA. With 96 percent of its staff on leave, NASA essentially functioned only to maintain present missions.

Loans and land transactions also experience procedure delays due to the furlough of 95 percent of those working in the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

According to [theguardian.com](#), this furlough has caused over 1,000 contracts for the renewal of low-income housing

to be delayed, opening many up to homelessness.

Similarly, the Treasury Department experiences a 90 percent furlough rate, resulting in more monetary obstacles.

The Commerce Department had criminal prosecution and investigative development come to a near cessation after an 80 percent furlough.

Many cabinet departments have workers whose jobs were deemed too urgent to be paused. In this case, employees of these departments temporarily worked without pay.

Most members of the Transportation Department worked through the shutdown, and only 37 percent were placed on leave.

Additionally, those in charge of traffic and safety monitoring had to continue to ensure that there were no fatal accidents.

"It is unfair to compromise the jobs and safety of Americans to force the government to comply with [Trump's] demands," Jove Luna ('22) said.

Furthermore, according to [govexec.com](#), the Justice Department needed to remain open for the sake of human safety, with a

furlough rate of only 16 percent.

Sociologically, the shutdown's impact on work ethic can only be theorized.

NBC reported that there was a two percent increase in the amount of Transportation Security Administration (TSA) workers taking sick days during the shutdown. The lack of enthusiasm resulting from delayed paychecks resulted in jobs being done without the necessary vigor for safety.

TSA is essential in keeping planes safe from attacks, so any shortcomings could be deadly.

The number of federal workers who went without paychecks during this past shutdown was 800,000. They were reimbursed for the money they did not receive and there was also backpay, when the shutdown came to a cessation, but this put a drain on the economy in two major ways.

First, as 70 percent of the United States economy is dependent on consuming, 800,000 people not having the funds to buy products and services affects many businesses, reports [theconversation.com](#).

On average, spending de-

clines by about ten percent from household to household during shutdowns.

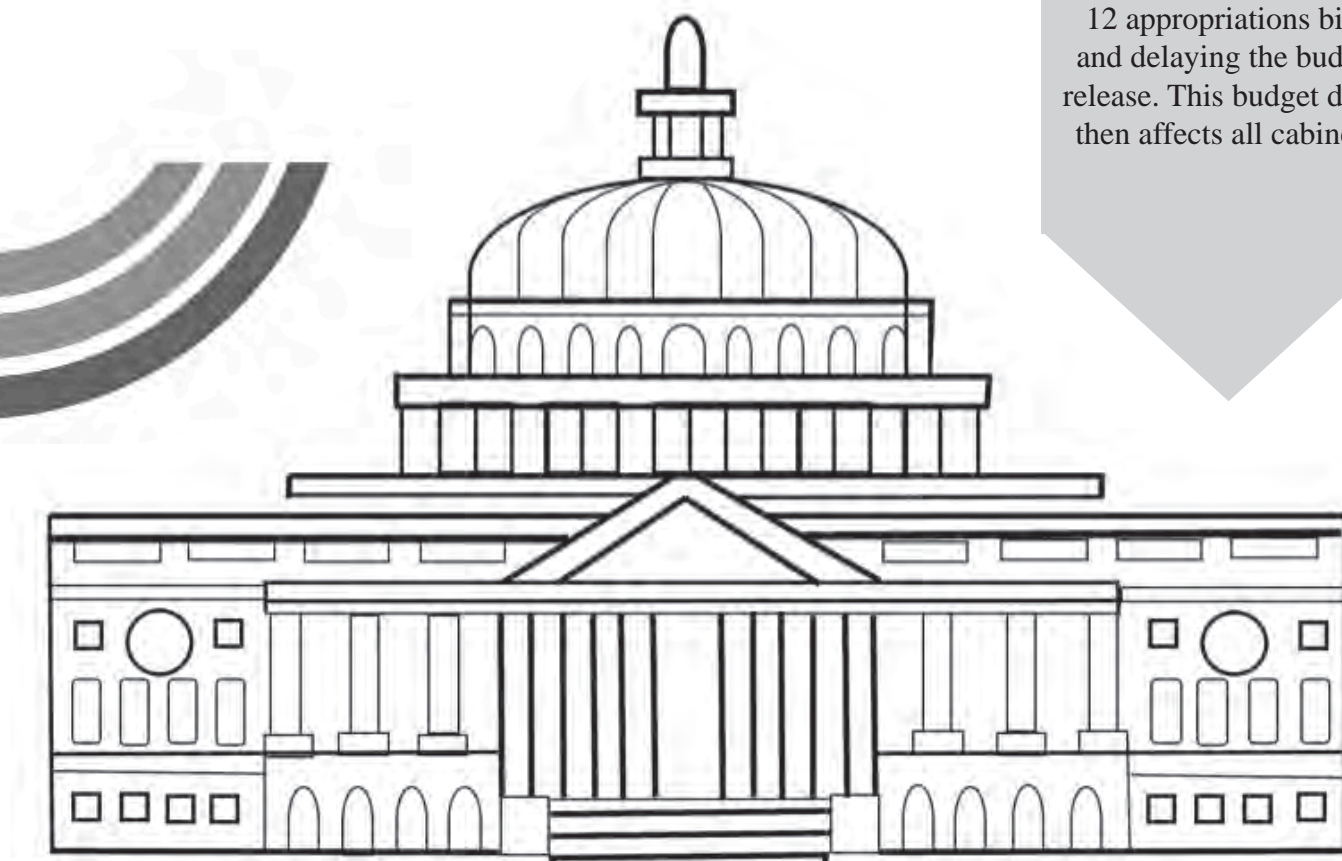
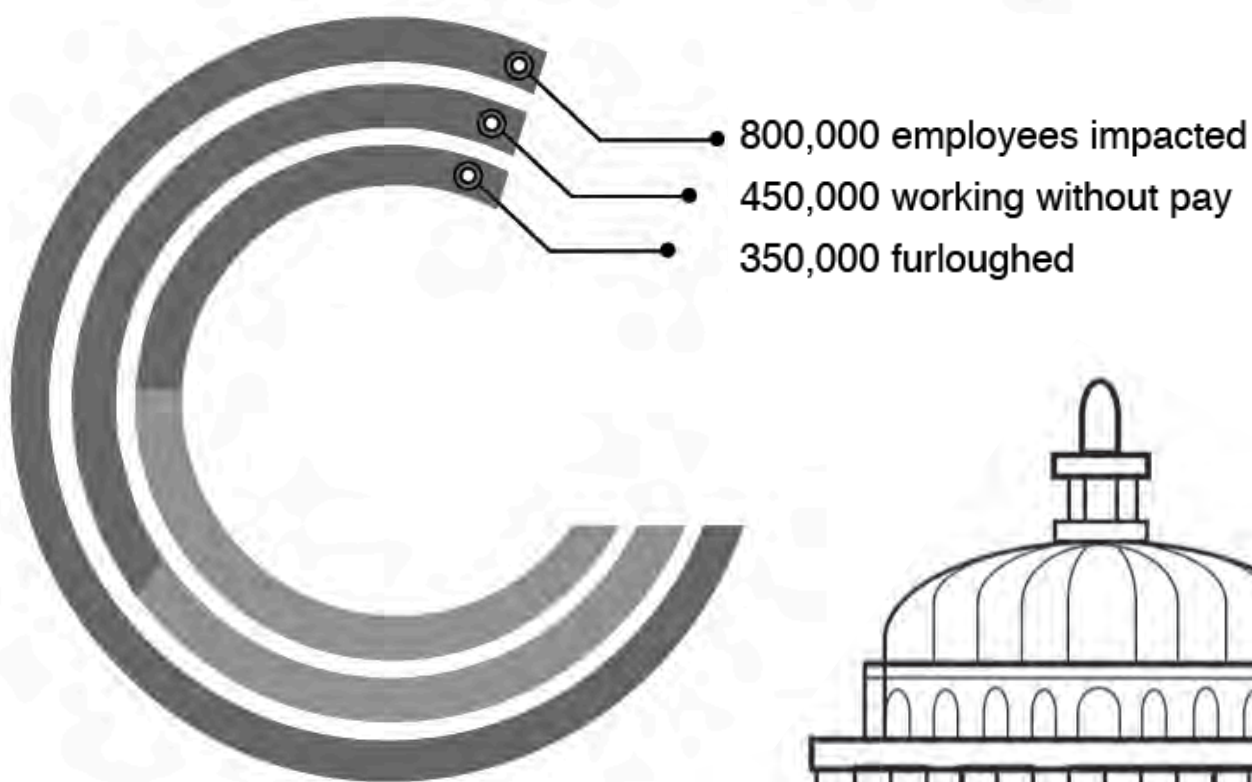
"I did not realize how soon the effect [of the shutdown] was going to be on [the workers'] personal lives. A lot of people had to find part-time jobs as fast food workers," Kara McLaughlin ('19) said.

According to *The New York Times*, this most recent shutdown cost the U.S. economy approximately 11 billion dollars

Comparably, according to *Fox News*, a shorter shutdown that occurred in 2013 cost the government 24 billion dollars, largely due to lack of production.

Although this is an economic loss, many would dissent that this is justified, considering the amount of people who are without work by no fault of their own.

If this crisis restarts again soon, citizens can only hope that either House Republicans or Democrats are willing to compromise for the sake of American security.



### Cause

Disagreement on ideal government expenditure making Congress and the president unable to sign 12 appropriations bills and delaying the budget release. This budget delay then affects all cabinets.



# Big government shutdowns over time

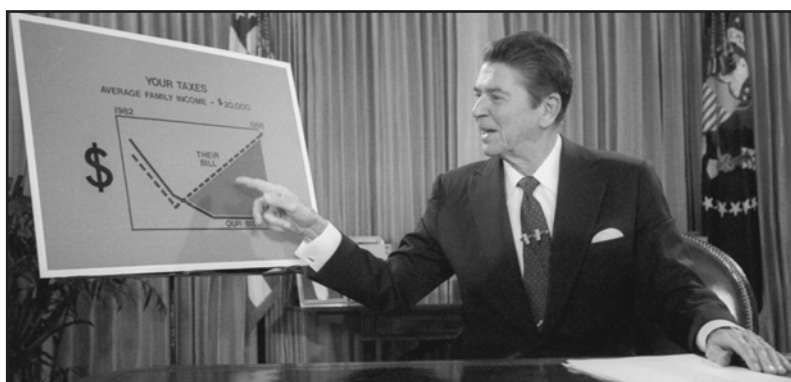


## September 30, 1977

Under Gerald Ford's presidency, the United States government shut down for 12 days from September 30 to October 12, 1977. The heated disagreement over abortion in the House of Representatives and the Senate, both of which held a Democratic majority, resulted in a large funding gap in the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the Department of Labor.

The House of Representatives wanted to continue with the ban on using medicaid dollars to pay for abortions, while the Senate wanted to extend exceptions to include rape or incest.

A temporary agreement was made so that Congress could continue the discussion on the issue while bringing an end to the shutdown.



## November 20, 1981

This was the first government shutdown in the modern sense of the term—federal government operations were so severely halted that federal workers did not receive their paychecks. At this time, there was a Democratic majority in the House of Representatives and Republican majority in the Senate.

President Ronald Reagan demanded 8.4 billion dollars in cuts on domestic spending. He swore to veto any bill that did not include at least half of his proposed budget. Congress was eventually able to come up with a bill, but Reagan vetoed it, despite it only falling two billion dollars short of his requested plan. He shut down the government for two days, furloughing 241,000 federal employees.

A temporary bill was later agreed on so the government could reopen while allowing a concession to be reached with the president.



## November 13, 1995

The Republican-controlled Congress proposed a continuing resolution, a temporary funding measure that could be used to fund the federal government for a short amount of time. It included an increase to Medicare premiums, a decrease in environmental regulations, and a requirement for the president to balance the budget within seven years, among other things.

President Bill Clinton vetoed the continuing resolution, triggering a shutdown. President Clinton, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, and Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich agreed to partially fund the government for four weeks, allowing for further discussion.

The shutdown officially ended when Clinton agreed to the seven-year budget balance plan. Roughly 800,000 federal employees were furloughed during this time.



## September 30, 1979

Two years after the first government shutdown related to qualms regarding abortion, the United States government shut down for the eighth time for the same reason under President Jimmy Carter. Though there was a Democratic majority in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, there was still hostile disagreement. The House wanted to only allow federal funding for abortion if the mother's life was seriously at risk.

The Senate, however, wanted funding to include rape and incest as well as dangers to the mother's health. The Senate also proposed a bill for higher pay to civil service and Congressional staff, which the House inevitably disagreed with.

The conflict lasted 12 days and eventually ended on October 12 when the House accepted funding for abortion including rape and incest, as well as its up in pay for civil service staff.



## December 18, 1987

President Ronald Reagan entered the seventh government shutdown of his presidential career. Reagan and Congressional Democrats could not agree on a funding plan for the Contra militants in Nicaragua. The Contras were a right-wing terrorist group opposing the socialist regime in Nicaragua. Both the House of Representatives and Senate had a Democratic majority at the time.

Democrats resisted any further funding and insisted on reinstating the Fairness Doctrine, which required broadcasters to give equal, balanced perspectives on political issues.

Congress eventually loosened their grasp on the Fairness Doctrine and agreed to fund non-lethal aid to the Contras. The shutdown ended two days later on December 20, 1987.



## October 1, 2013

The government shut down for 16 days as Congress failed to agree on a continuing resolution. This failure is mostly due to a standoff among Republicans over the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare). Multiple continuing resolutions were proposed by conservative Senator Ted Cruz and the conservative group Heritage Action, all of which contained subtext that delayed or defund Obamacare.

The Democratic Senate proposed many amending continuing resolutions in response to conservatives. There was growing anxiety and pressure regarding the impending debt ceiling deadline on October 17.

On the night of October 16, Congress approved a funding bill that lasted until January 15 of the upcoming year, and extended the debt limit to that February. This bill brought an end to a 16 day government shutdown and put the breaks on the infamous Republican dispute with President Obama regarding the Obamacare. This was the only government shutdown during Obama's two-term presidency.



# Reviving the milkman for the environment

**Molly Cannon**  
Reporter

According to *National Geographic*, an estimated 91 percent of the world's plastic is never recycled. Considering that plastic takes about 400 years to break down, most of the 8.3 billion metric tons that have been produced in the last six decades are still around in our landfills and oceans.

Loop, an emerging shopping service, is attempting to alleviate and control this problem.

Tom Szaky, Chief Executive Officer of the waste management company TerraCycle, who is launching Loop, wants companies to be aware of what happens to the packaging of their products when they are thrown out.

If companies were able to collect and reuse their packaging after the product has been finished by consumers, the everyday reliance on single-use plastics could be eliminated.

Loop allows for products with reusable plastic to be delivered to customers' doors and

collected when they are finished, later to be replenished.

According to *National Geographic*, by designing a product made of a more durable, stronger plastic that could be sanitized and reused, the new packaging, "can survive at least 100 reuses."

The newly designed packages may also be made with new materials, such as stainless steel and glass. The reusable flexibility of Loop would allow for more expensive materials to be available at a lower price because of the high turnover rate of recycling.

One brand that has already signed on to work with Loop is Nestlé. They are producing 20,000 ice cream containers under their brand Häagen-Dazs that are environmentally friendly for this trial run with Loop.

Loop is beginning its service this May in New York City and Paris, and has plans to expand to London later this year. They plan to expand to Toronto, Tokyo, and San Francisco in 2020.

When consumers are finished

with the product, they leave the empty packaging in a tote bag that will be collected for reuse by Loop.

This could be the future of buying and recycling throughout our country and our world.

"It is a great way to start making a positive change for the environment, and it is more likely to be widely accepted because consumers do not have to give up anything they are used to. They are still afforded the plastics they have grown to love, but the reusable packaging will make a big step toward reducing our plastic footprint as an entire society," Bintou Bane ('20) said.

If Loop is successful, not only does it have the potential to stop the growing problem of plastic pollution, but it will allow brands to be held accountable for their contributions to global waste. Additionally, partnering companies will save money by not having to produce new plastic.

Although very promising, Loop can prove to be expensive for the participating brands. Companies have to pay to be a part of Loop, as well as pay the

cost of having to redesign their packaging to meet the new design requirements of Loop.

Another expense is the cost of shipping and collecting the products. Additionally, the added fuel use and transportation may outweigh the environmental benefits of the service over time.

"Even though the original cost of this system may be expensive, the reusing of containers will be a greater benefit to the environment in the long run," Ava Mastrone ('20) said.

Other potential problems may arise for Loop as it is put into practice. For instance, Loop products will be more expensive initially than single-use packaged options.

Although the products will cost about the same as their single-use containers, customers will have to pay a container deposit between one and ten dollars, which decreases with every item added, as well as shipping costs starting at 20 dollars.

Consumers may also not like that they have to wait for their everyday products to be shipped to their house. However,

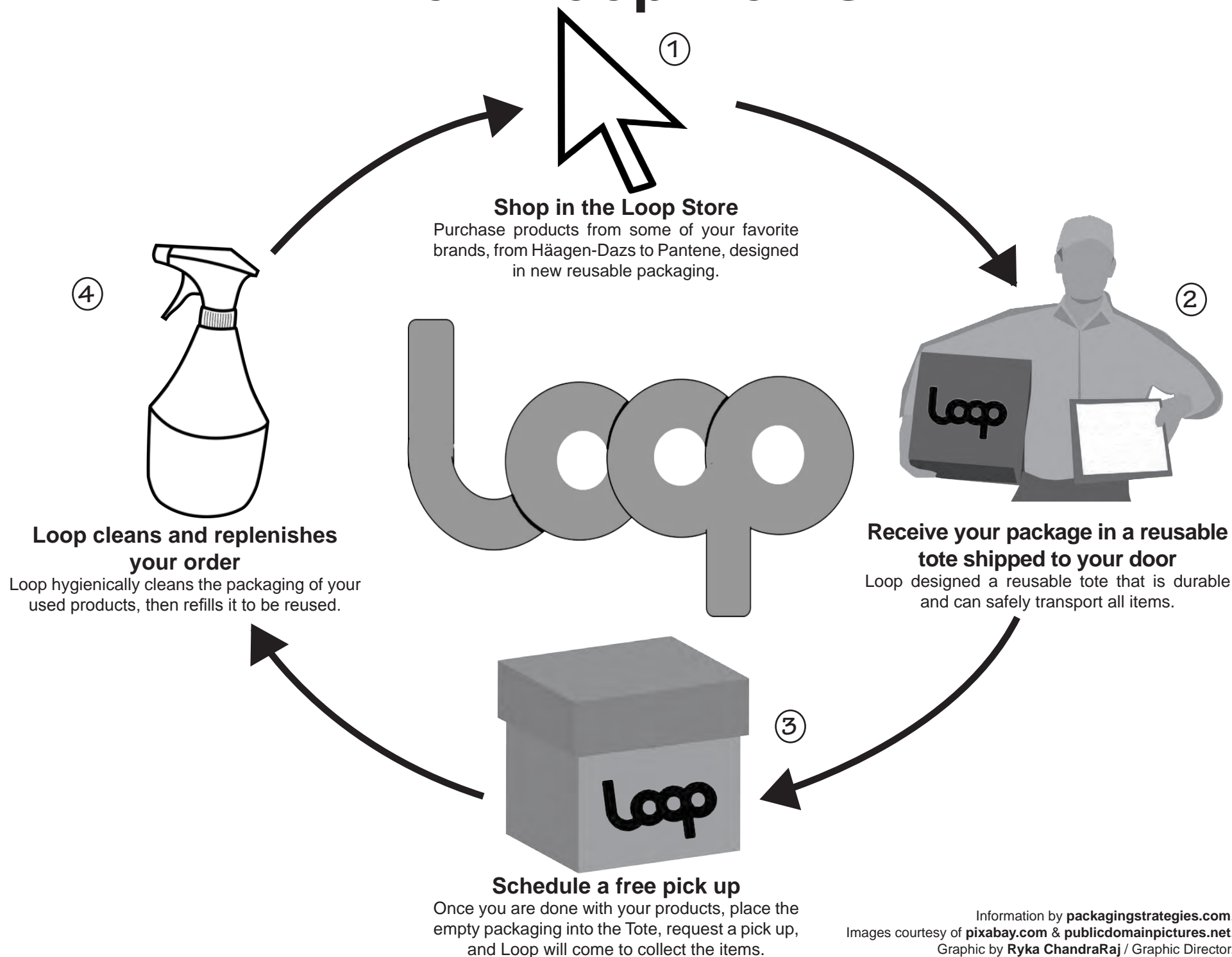
the environmental benefits may cause people to overcome this slight inconvenience.

"Loop has the potential to be a very exciting way to deal with our plastic pollution issue. It could be an interesting new look at how companies choose to combat their own contributions to this ever-growing problem. In this technological age, this could prove to be the beginning of a solution," Ximena Vega ('20) said.

The effects that global plastic pollution has had on the earth are undeniably prevalent. By taking a step to reduce plastic use, our society can stop contributing to the growing problem and focus on the plastic that already exists.

While Loop has the potential to help the future of packaging and single-use plastic in the United States, it will have to overcome the loyalty that customers generally hold to products that are slightly more expensive and can just be thrown away more easily accessible.

## How Loop works





# Loop makes their way into town

In October 2018, Loop and PepsiCo announced a multi-year supply agreement in which PepsiCo will incorporate Loop PET plastic, which is made of 100 percent recycled material, into the product packaging by 2020.

In January 2019, Nestle announced its partnership with Loop through its brand Häagen-Dazs. To transport the products, Häagen-Dazs debuted a reusable double-walled steel ice cream container.

Mars Petcare is one of Loop's initial partners, although the company has not released their zero-waste product packaging yet.

The Proctor & Gamble Company (P&G) announced in January 2019 their introduction of refillable packaging on some of its most popular products. Many of P&G's largest global brands, including Pantene and Tide, will join the initiative later this year.





# Don't Enroll In The Wrong Driving School

## Don't Be Fooled by PART-TIME SCHOOLS Operating in Stamford.

Since 2005, the **High Ridge Driving School** has been the driving school of choice for Stamford-area teens and their parents because of our commitment **to always put the student FIRST!** In fact, as a result of our student-centric philosophy, we have taught more Stamford teens to drive than all of the other driving schools... *combined*.

The fact is, **we are not a driver education factory.** From day one, we have strived to offer the best possible driver education experience for each student. When it comes to driver education, just like shoes, one size does not fit all. And there is only one way we can offer this level of

attention – by being local business-people who are actively engaged with our instructors, students, parents and the community. We don't own numerous driving schools around the state or operate part-time, **our focus is here on the driving students of Stamford and the surrounding communities, all day – every day.**

The purpose of this ad is to provide you with a fair and accurate comparison of your driving school options in Stamford, so you can make an educated decision. In the end, you will have to decide which driving school option is best for you and your family.

### THE HIGH RIDGE DRIVING SCHOOL ADVANTAGE

	Other Driving School Options	High Ridge Driving School	<b>FREE TEST DRIVE!</b> Any student accompanied by a parent can sit in on one of our weekday classes absolutely <b>FREE</b> so you can get a feel for our school, our curriculum, and our teaching methods.  <b>INTERESTED IN ONLY THE 8-HOUR DRUG &amp; ALCOHOL CLASS?</b> We offer 16 & 17 year old students the chance to take just this class every weekend. (EXCEPT MAJOR HOLIDAYS) Always separate classes for teens and adults.
Flexible Schedule	No, they schedule sessions that begin and end. So, if you miss a class, you might need to go to another town, or wait quite awhile to finish your training.	Our classes <b>NEVER</b> end. We teach in the classroom 52-weeks a year. In the summer we offer up to 3 classes a day!	
Driving Hours	We know of students from other driving schools that have needed to go to other towns to finish their driving hours. Some schools do not even offer in-car sessions on a regular basis!	We drive 7-days a week, all year long. You're assigned an instructor who's dedicated to providing you with the best driver education experience possible. <b>Plus, we pick-up and drop off ANYWHERE locally.</b>	
Off-site Testing at the School	Possibly.	Always available in Stamford multiple times a month since 2005 - <b>And always will be!</b>	
Customer Service	Questions, phone calls, and DMV paperwork usually handled by a corporate office or a branch office in another town, generally only by phone. Some schools do not generate DMV CS-1 certificates in Stamford. VERY limited office hours in Stamford, if at all.	We're almost <b>ALWAYS</b> open – in person or by phone. All phone calls, certificates, and paperwork handled in Stamford. No phone queues or customer service reps, we deliver <b>REAL</b> customer care with our dedicated Stamford staff. We invite parents into our facility, and offer training and support to ensure the time spent driving with your teen is productive.	
The Oldest Driving School in Stamford	No.	Yes, High Ridge Driving School has been locally owned and operated since 2005!	

*We think you'll agree that the advantage of*

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

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

**High Ridge  
Driving School**

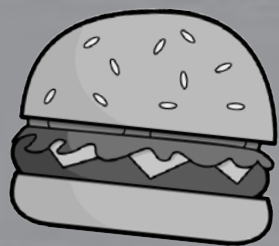
992 High Ridge Road, Stamford  
**(203) 329-3030**  
HighRidgeDrivingSchool.com

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



# <sup>The</sup>Westword Supplement

**OH THE PLACES YOU'LL GO  
WITHIN 20 MINUTES OF WESTHILL**

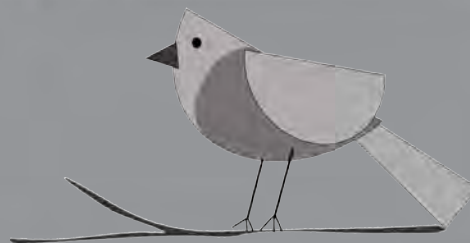


**FOOD**

**P. 18**

**P. 19**

**NATURE**



**RECREATION**

**P. 22**



**DESSERT**

**P. 23**

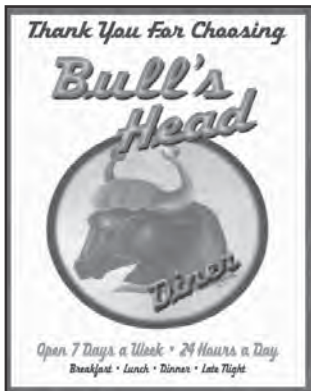


# PLACES TO EAT

**BULL'S HEAD DINER**  
43 HIGH RIDGE ROAD, STAMFORD CT 06905



**Directions**  
4 min drive



Open 24 hours a day every day, Bull's Head Diner is the ideal restaurant for those wanting a bite to eat for breakfast, lunch, dinner, or anything in between. Though many people are aware of its presence in Stamford since its opening in 1993, there are still some that have yet to frequent this long-standing establishment designed in the style of a 1950s diner.

When it opened, Bull's Head was a favorite for numerous celebrities, such as director Ron Howard.

Fitting to the stereotypical assumptions of a diner, customers can choose from meals of varying cultures, from eggplant parmesan to gyro strips.

Upon entering, customers can choose to sit in one of the restaurant's comfortable red and brown booths or on a stool facing the kitchen. The diner is frequently highly populated, contributing to a lively atmosphere.

As there are over 400 menu options, there are always options for people of varying palates. The vast variety of meals are offered at moderate prices, with a hamburger costing \$6.95 and roast chicken costing \$17.50. People can also opt to have their food delivered, though there is a minimum order amount of \$30.

**THE WIENERY**  
17 BRIDGE STREET, STAMFORD CT 06905



**Directions**  
6 min drive



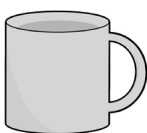
The Wienery is the perfect place to fill your hot dog or burger craving. It offers an assortment of classic American meals, including steaks, chicken, and specialty hot dogs and burgers.

Founded by two brothers in 2012, who used their homemade chili recipe as the basis of their restaurant, the Wienery has become a favorite amongst many in Stamford since its opening. It is ideal as a lunch or dinner location, as it is open from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. most days.

Though quaint, the antique signs on the red walls and chalkboard signs featuring homemade soups and specials make the customers feel transported in time. If customers choose to dine in, they can sit at the counter, watching the staff make the food, or by the windows. The friendly staff that greets customers make every visit pleasant and worthwhile.

The Wienery offers cheap eats, with a plain burger costing only \$3.62 and the most expensive items, like steak sandwiches, costing \$8. The Wienery is an optimal location for the ultimate cheat day.

**CAFE OO LA LA**  
232 SUMMER STREET, STAMFORD CT 06905



**Directions**  
5 min drive



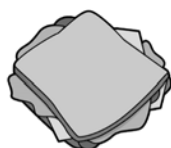
This cafe is the perfect place to get quality food at a moderate price. With an assortment of baked goods, like croissants and scones, offered daily alongside pressed sandwiches or drinks, Cafe Oo La La is perfect for breakfast, lunch, or early dinner, as it is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. most days with varying hours on the weekends.

The vast majority of customers leave rave reviews for the high-quality food for only around \$10 (the most expensive option being \$14.95). This explains its reception of the 2014 Best of Stamford Award in the restaurants category by the Stamford Award Program. Customers can accompany their meals with one of the large assortment of drinks, including teas and espresso.

Since its 2011 founding in Stamford, the cafe has expanded, with two additional locations being added in Stamford.

Located in the Ridgeway Shopping Center, customers feel transported once they enter due to the modern and clean atmosphere.

**WEDGE INN**  
885 SUMMER STREET, STAMFORD CT 06905



**Directions**  
7 min drive



Located behind Dairy Queen on Summer Street, Wedge Inn is a family owned and operated business that has fed customers in Stamford for over 40 years. Open Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m. (7 a.m. on Saturday) to 8 p.m., Wedge Inn is ideal for any meal.

Each time of day is accompanied by its own specific menu with a variety of options for each.

Though known for "the best chili in Stamford," Wedge Inn also offers meals like pancake platters for only \$5.29, as well as jalapeno popper platters for \$7.95.

To further entice customers, all dinners are served with french fries and homemade coleslaw. Though relatively small in size, customers can choose to sit at one of the tables and watch the news or a sports game on the TV. For those heading downtown but wanting a variety of options to choose from for a cheap price, Wedge Inn is a good option.



# ALL NATURAL FUN

## STAMFORD MUSEUM AND NATURE CENTER

39 SCOFIELDTOWN ROAD, STAMFORD, CT 06903



Directions  
10 min drive



The Stamford Museum and Nature Center, located at the base of Scofieldtown Road, provides an expanse of natural elements to explore. The campus is split into many different sections, including a farm, hiking trails, and a playground, among others. Visitors can explore the hiking trails, some of which are handicap accessible and child-friendly, which lapse 80 acres. On the farm side, visitors can interact with animals ranging from horses to tarantulas, which the Nature Center houses in Heckscher Wild. Some other aspects of the Stamford Museum and Nature Center are the museum, which holds changing exhibits that vary from environmental studies to displaying classical art. While visitors have to pay admission if they are not members, there are a plethora of fascinating aspects of the Nature Center. The Nature Center is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays. Admission is \$6 for visitors under 18 and \$8 for everyone else. Their membership package starts as low as \$55 a year. No matter the age, there is something for everyone at the Stamford Museum and Nature Center.

## BARTLETT ARBORETUM

151 BROOKDALE ROAD, STAMFORD, CT 06903



Directions  
10 min drive



The Bartlett Arboretum hosts walking trails and a variety of natural life to view year-round. The 93-acre sanctuary aspires to conserve nature and to preserve a diverse collection of plants, trees, and gardens that emulate the ecology of southwestern New England. The gardens are free to visit, and the campus hosts a variety of different activities year-round. On Sundays in the summertime, local bands play concerts. The Arboretum also hosts various family-friendly events, such as an upcoming celebration of Arbor Day and Earth Day on April 27. In the educational building, environmental scientists and horticulturalists visit and offer talks about the environment. Currently, the Arboretum is hosting a property-wide scavenger hunt that ends on March 8. The staff has hidden the heads of statues across the trails, with clues posted on their website. The park is also open every day from sunrise to sunset and proves to be a wonderful escape for people looking to get away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

## MIANUS RIVER PARK

MERRIBROOK LANE, STAMFORD, CT 06902



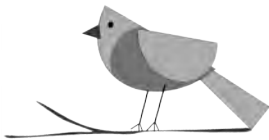
Directions  
10 min drive



Mianus River Park is located on the border of Stamford and Greenwich, spanning 389 acres. The Mianus River, the namesake of the park, runs through the property. This park is a frequent destination for dog owners to walk their pets, as the park has walking trails fit for all visitors. The park is also a good spot for avid mountain bikers, as the park has areas for the adventurers. Visitors can fish in the river, as well as walk along trails near the river. The property includes wetlands and tributary streams that branch out from the river, making this a unique ecological environment. The park is government property, meaning it is free to all who would like to visit. While the park does not have programs like other parks in Stamford, it is a wonderful destination for nature lovers who are committed to adventuring on their own. The land also houses a cave, rock formations, and a wildflower garden. The property also includes bike and horse trails for the avid outdoorsman. On top of this, visitors can park for free. The park's entrance is right off of Westover Road and is open to visitors from sunrise to sunset every day year round.

## COVE ISLAND WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

1125 COVE ROAD, STAMFORD, CT 06902



Directions  
20 min drive



Cove Island Wildlife Sanctuary, located on the Long Island Sound, is quite unique. The park includes a beach and open sandy sitting areas, with open swimming areas for visitors to utilize. The park has a walking and running path, as well as a path for biking and rollerblading. Visitors can fish in the waters and observe birds. Visitors can also visit the Sound-Waters facilities, which are dedicated to preserving the Long Island Sound. The sanctuary also includes remnants of factories that used to exist on the island, and those with a keen eye can spot the historic buildings. The park has a food concession stand open during the summer, which is a plus of visiting this Stamford park. While the park does not often have events for the public, parts of the park are available for use for parties and group gatherings. While visitors need a beach sticker or daily passes to park on Cove Island, the unique combination of beach and environmental sanctuary makes this park worth the trip. The park is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. Beach stickers for parking cost \$25 for Stamford residents, and daily parking costs \$20 for CT residents.



# MAPPING THE WAY TO FUN





# ACTIVITIES ALL OVER

## RPM RACEWAY

600 WEST MAIN AVENUE, STAMFORD CT 06902



**Directions**  
9 min drive



Only about nine minutes from Westhill, RPM Raceway attracts people of all ages. In June of 2018, the Stamford location had its grand opening. The RPM facility is expansive, holding a go-karting track, several bowling lanes, a full bar and kitchen, and an overwhelming amount of arcade games.

According to rpmraceway.com, all go-karts are completely electric, and the track itself has no lanes, no stoplights, and no speed limit so drivers can truly get the feel of being a real race car driver. All karts are made in Italy and are capable of going 45 miles per hour and up. People can choose to become members or simply come and race, bowl, or play whenever they want.

RPM sells races in package deals as well as stand alone races. One race costs \$20 per person, or \$38 for two, \$54 for three, \$80 for five, and \$150 for ten. However, memberships cost \$55 per year, offering benefits such as a free t-shirt, discounted races, and two free races. Prices differ for children, with each race being \$18, following the same pattern as adult prices for several races.

With one location in New Jersey and four in New York, the company continues to expand. RPM is partnered with companies such as Coca-Cola, Watkins Glen, Formula One, and Monster who all contribute to donating over \$400,000 through their giveback charter CAREs. This charter supports causes such as Cancer, Alzheimer's research, Recovery, and those in need.

## GET AIR - STAMFORD

11 RIVERBEND DR S, STAMFORD CT 06907



**Directions**  
9 min drive



Open every day of the week, Get Air is a great place for kids and adults to have fun. Just off of Hope street, Get Air is about nine minutes away from Westhill.

The majority of the space is dominated by in-ground trampolines, but also houses a foam pit, slackline, ninja course, fidget ladder, and massage chairs. Get Air opens every day at 10 a.m. closing at 10 p.m. on weekdays, midnight on Friday and Saturday, and 8 p.m. on Sunday. Tuesdays and Thursdays have toddler jump time from 10 a.m. until noon, then open jump from noon until close. However, Fridays and Saturdays have open jump time for everyone until 9 p.m. then Club Air opens.

Club Air is a special period from nine until midnight these two days where colored lights are turned on and music plays. Although, all jumpers must be at least nine years old and 46 inches tall for Club Air. Get Air also offers a special time on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. dedicated to people with special needs.

Prices are separated into Big Jump and Little Jump, the former being anyone under 46 inches tall. Big Jump prices range from \$15 for one hour, \$24 for two hours, and \$27 for three hours. For Little Jump, one hour is \$10, two hours is \$15, and three hours is \$19. All jumpers must buy special jump socks when they buy jump time which have grip bottoms and cost \$3. However, during the hours of Club Air, the price drops to two hours for \$15 and \$20 for three hours.

## TRAP'T ESCAPE ROOM ADVENTURES

76 PROGRESS DR #262, STAMFORD, CT 06902



**Directions**  
6 min drive



As CT's first escape room destination, Trap't strives to keep their number one ranking in the state. The family that created and owns Trap't experienced several escape rooms before opening the chain. Trap't has grown to include several other locations around CT, such as Greenwich, Westport, Norwalk, and Bridgeport.

The Stamford location's hours vary throughout the week, opening Tuesday through Thursday at 4:45 p.m. Friday at 3 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays at 9:45 a.m. Trap't closes at 11 p.m. everyday except Sunday, when they close at 10 p.m.

A variety of escape rooms are offered, such as Time Chasers: A Race for the Cure, Museum Mayhem, and virtual reality (VR) escape room adventures. VR rooms have an age minimum of 12 years old.

The rooms vary in difficulty, with Time Chasers being the most difficult and largest room, and VR rooms being the least difficult. Players (ranging from two or four to ten per room) have one hour to solve their way out of the room with clues available, but not given unless requested. The goal is to get out in the least time possible with the least clues taken.

Trap't allows groups to be family, friends, or even strangers. Their Time Chasers room won the Golden Lock-in Award of 2017 from Room Escape Artist. Room prices start at \$30 per person with a ten percent CT tax addition. VR Rooms begin at \$40, also with the added ten percent tax. While rooms can be booked for people of all ages, Trap't notes that their rooms are designed for people 12 years and older.



# GRUBBIN HARD ON SWEETS

**SUNNY DAES**  
633 SHIPPAN AVENUE, STAMFORD, CT 06902



**Directions**  
16 min drive



Sunny Daes is a family-owned operation that is decorated with a hot pink and mint green storefront. Inside, they have hand-painted tiles with banana splits and colorful ice cream cones. Trademark of their establishment is their iconic cow statue in front of the store for children to climb on, along with a large ice cream cone.

Sunny Daes makes their own homemade ice cream, gelato, sorbet, and frozen yogurt in store. They have five locations in CT: Stamford, Westport, Trumbull, and two in Fairfield. Their first store was opened in Stamford in 1999 by owner Sergio Keskin. He was looking for a business to invest in when he saw a former Carvel open for sale. He took the opportunity and now uses the building to serve more than 70 flavors of frozen treats. This includes seasonal flavors such as eggnog and pumpkin.

They also serve eight different sorbet selections, which have fresh fruit mixed into them. Some of these flavors include pomegranate and mixed berries. Sunny Daes also has ice cream cakes and pies available for purchase. When inquiring about cakes, customers can choose from themed cakes, including photo cakes. Any flavors can be ordered for the two-layer confection.

Sunny Daes is open year-round, seven days a week. They were also named best ice cream by Hearst Connecticut Media Group's Best of Stamford in 2018.

**DONUT CRAZY**  
1 FERRY LANE, WESTPORT, CT 06880



**Directions**  
19 min drive



Donut Crazy is family owned and operated cafe serving specialty donuts around Southern CT. Their slogan is "Crafted with love • Covered in crazy." They have four locations in Shelton, Stratford, New Haven, and Westport, and a fifth opening in November 2019 in West Hartford. The store has a rustic vibe with metal chairs, wooden tables, and a modern feel.

They have over 45 varieties of donuts in-store each day. Their menu sections include "Dailies," "Crazies," Eats, Patisserie, and Beverages. "Dailies" include 21 options of normal donuts such as PB&J, and french toast, that sell at \$1.95 each. Their "Crazies" sell at \$3.25 each and are more intricate than "Dailies." Some of their flavors include nutterbutter and Kookie Monster.

Keeping to their cafe roots, Donut Crazy offers "Eats," which are brunch-type meals, until 3 p.m. Beyond food, the cafe offers beverages ranging from coffee and hot chocolate to smoothies and iced tea.

They offer catering for occasions such as weddings, business meetings, or slumber parties. All you need to do is fill out a form on their website. Also, their truck carries Donut Crazy confections and coffee on the go. The Food Network also named Donut Crazy's Cannoli Donut the Best Donut in CT.

**DIMARE'S PASTRY SHOP**  
12 LARGO DRIVE, STAMFORD, CT 06907



**Directions**  
13 min drive



DiMare's Pastry Shop was established in 1976 and stands by their slogan, "Baked by our family for your family." To ensure high quality products with their original recipes, employees continue to bake in small batches at these stores.

The pastry shop has an overwhelming display of treats and a quaint area where customers can choose to enjoy their desserts. Their main selections are divided into bread, cakes, cupcakes, gluten-free options, pies and tarts, vegan options, and cookies. They have over 30 dessert options, including biscotti, elephant ears, and strudels. In addition to the over 30 cake flavors offered, including hazelnut and funfetti, custom flavors are available upon request.

Additionally, DiMare's holds bi-annual cake tastings open to the public in January and June on the last Wednesday of the month. The next cake tasting is from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on June 26.

DiMare's has also received numerous awards since their inception. They won the Best of Gold Coast for best wedding cakes, best bakery, and best dessert, for nine years running (totaling 13 years-worth of awards).

**DAIRY QUEEN**  
885 SUMMER STREET, STAMFORD, CT 06905



**Directions**  
7 min drive



The first Dairy Queen was established in 1940 in Joliet, Illinois. 19 years later, the current owner Frank Lucherini Jr.'s father and a partner opened the Stamford Dairy Queen.

The franchise is a red roof barn of roughly 850 square feet. They also have red benches outside for customers to sit and eat their treats. The Stamford Dairy Queen is open from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. except during the winter, when they are closed.

Dairy Queen has been in operation for 75 years and stands by the slogan "fan food, not fast food." There are many options to choose from, such as blizzards, hot desserts, cones, sundaes, royal treats, and novelties. They also sell DQ cakes of all flavors and shapes, which are available in some locations and online.

Their most iconic item is the blizzard, which the company prides itself on being able to flip upside down without it falling out due to their thick, creamy soft serve. Blizzards come in over 30 flavors along with a make-your-own option. The company also picks a blizzard of the month each month.

There is also the option to download their Dairy Queen app and join their Blizzard Fan Club. By getting their app, you can earn reward points and view promotions. There is also an option to order ahead on the app at some locations.





Front cover graphics by **Angela Ramirez & Ryka ChandraRaj** / Graphic Designer & Graphic Director.  
Back cover photo illustration by **Harrison Travaglino** / Photo Manager.



## El gobierno de Estados Unidos paralizado por un muro

**Fatima Santos**  
Las Noticias Editor

La orden del cierre del gobierno por Donald Trump, inició el 22 de diciembre del 2018 y finalizó el 25 de enero del 2019. Según *CNN*, fue el cierre más largo en la historia de los Estados Unidos, duró 35 días. “Trump firmó una medida para reabrir el gobierno,” de acuerdo a *CNN*. Encontrando una solución al problema el 15 de Febrero del 2019.

Donald Trump firmó el proyecto de cierre en privado y no permitió reporteros. El Senado y la Cámara de Representantes permitieron que el gobierno federal pudiera abrir temporalmente. El cierre del gobierno terminó oficialmente cuando se firmó el acuerdo. Según *CNN*, “el primer paso sería aperturar el gobierno y después llevar a cabo una negociación.” Trump quería que el cierre terminará a cambio de una negociación con el Congreso.

“Si el gobierno no aprueba un paquete de siete facturas de gastos hasta la medianoche de este viernes (15 de febrero), el gobierno podría entrar en su segundo cierre parcial del año,” según *voxxnews.com*. Trump todavía quiere crear el muro, pero los demócratas no quieren aprobarlo.

“El cierre del gobierno fue muy manolo y innecesario,” Behanka Adonis (’22) dijo.

Trump quiere construir un muro de 1,150 millas de largo, 40 pies de alto, 10 pies de profundo y 1 pie de ancho. Los

materiales que se necesitan para construir el muro de concreto y acero; el concreto tendrá un valor de aproximadamente 8.7 billones de dólares que representan el 97 por ciento del material, el acero que corresponde al 3 por ciento del muro costará aproximadamente 3.6 mil millones de dólares. Trump también planea gastar 12.3 billones de dólares en la mano de obra para construir el muro.

En total, planea gastar 25 billion de dólares en todo el muro. Él planea hacer que los contribuyentes estadounidenses paguen por el muro.

Fox News dice, “pero, ¿cuál es la mejor manera de asegurar nuestras fronteras y reducir las actividades ilegales como el tráfico de personas y de drogas, al mismo tiempo que promueve el sueño americano y ayuda a quienes huyen de sus vidas?”

El presidente Trump ha estado tratando de construir el muro, pero se le han presentado muchos problemas para poder construirlo. Uno de ellos es que el 60 por ciento de la tierra necesaria para construir el muro es propiedad privada. Este es un gran problema para ellos porque algunos de ellos no venderán su propiedad.

“Creo que el cierre del gobierno fue malo y pudo haber hecho algo diferente para tratar de conseguir dinero para eso,” Zoe Curry (’22) dijo.

La Cámara de Representantes y el Comité de los Senadores han estado tratando de encontrar formas para asegurar la frontera, pero se han topado con algunos prob-

lemas relacionados con el ICE.

Firmaron un compromiso para garantizar las medidas de seguridad fronteriza, al declarar una emergencia nacional, donde podrían gastar 8 billones de dólares, esto para evitar otro cierre y para obtener dinero para el muro.

Según *CNN*, “También obtendrán 1.375 billion de dólares de la cuenta de asignaciones de Seguridad Nacional, pero este dinero no se puede usar para construir el muro, pero se puede usar para construir otros tipos de barreras fronterizas debido a la fecha en que se redactó la factura, 600 millones de dólares del fondo de decomiso de drogas del Depar-

tamento del Tesoro, que provendría de una acción ejecutiva. 2.5 billion de dólares del programa de interdicción de drogas del Departamento de Defensa, que provendría de una acción ejecutiva. 3.5 billion de dólares del presupuesto de construcción militar del Departamento de Defensa, que requeriría una emergencia nacional.”

Incluso después de declarar una emergencia nacional y obtener el dinero, no tendrán suficiente para construir el muro deseado. El cierre del gobierno no fue útil para los Estados Unidos porque afectó a muchas familias y el presidente Trump no resolvió su idea del muro.



Foto cortesía de [commons.wikimedia.org](https://commons.wikimedia.org/).

## OPINION: Recursos para estudiantes de habla español

**Alessandra Pinto**  
Las Noticias Editor

Durante muchos años, Westhill High School ha tenido muchos estudiantes nuevos en el país y, como resultado, no están familiarizados con el idioma inglés. Aunque hay mucha ayuda para estudiantes como estos, muchos se preguntan si es suficiente.

A estos estudiantes se les suele enseñar inglés en la escuela de su país natal. Sin embargo, el problema es que son solo palabras y frases básicas. Se necesita una comprensión más profunda de las costumbres y el idioma de los Estados Unidos.

ESL es uno de los programas más conocidos que se usan para estudiantes con un idioma nativo diferente, ya que significa inglés como segundo idioma. En este entorno, todos los estudiantes hablan la misma lengua nativa, incluido el profesor. Esto es más eficiente que una clase en la que los estudiantes hablan diferentes idiomas con un profesor en la clase que solo habla inglés. En este caso, es difícil para el maestro transmitir instrucciones a los alumnos, por lo que las clases de ESL son tan valiosas, ya que se enfoca en enseñar inglés a los alumnos.

Un problema que ocupa mucho es qué harán estos estudiantes en otras clases sin la ayuda del maestro bilingüe de ESL. Estos estudiantes pueden confiar en la ayuda de otros compañeros bilingüe, sin

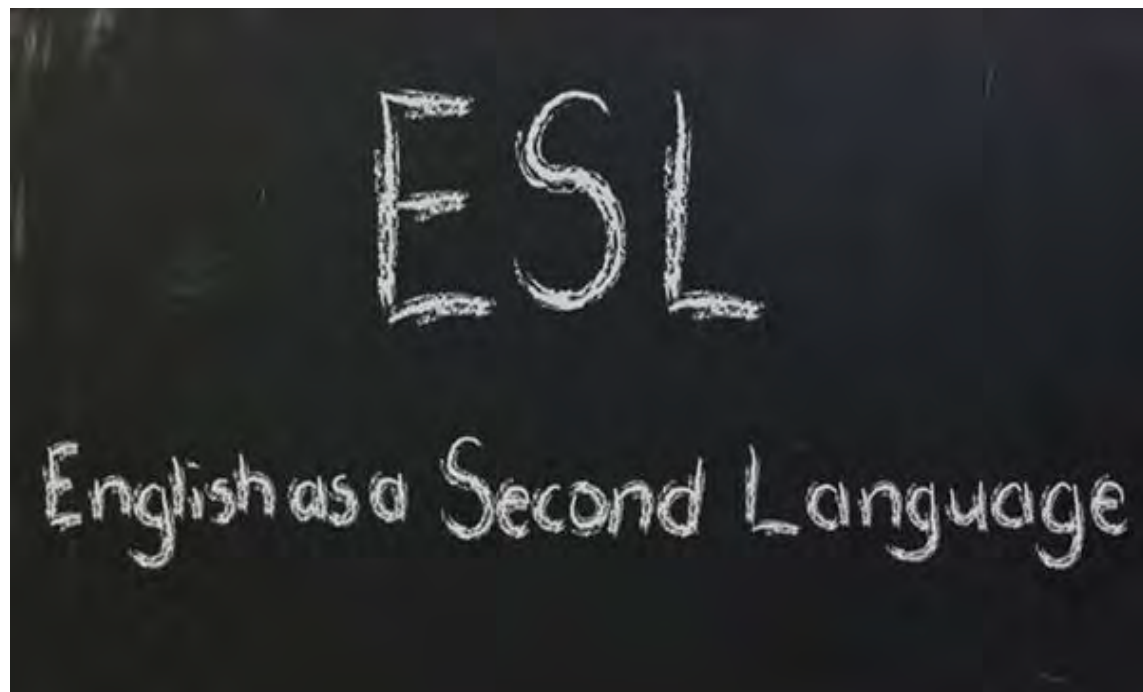
el aprendizaje del idioma inglés en los Estados Unidos. Ese mismo año escolar incluyó 4.85 millones de aprendices del idioma inglés en las escuelas de los Estados Unidos. Lo más sorprendente es que menos del

español no cuentan con recursos suficientes para tener éxito en la educación, también hay muchos programas que apoyan a estos estudiantes, no solo ESL sino también sitios web interactivos y clases adicionales.

eden practicar inglés en casa con sus familiares, haciéndolos sentir más cómodos con el idioma. Los maestros han tenido muchas experiencias en las que se les han dado estudiantes que, “no han podido leer ni escribir en su primer idioma”, lo que les produce frustración al intentar aprender una nueva habilidad en un idioma extranjero. Además, aprender a leer y escribir en inglés puede variar en dificultad, dependiendo de la gramática y las reglas de escritura de su primer idioma. Según un maestro de ELL, “tanto las familias como los maestros del estudiante que hablan español deben estar informados del nivel de conocimiento que este estudiante tiene sobre el idioma inglés.” Esto generalmente se refleja en las boletas de calificaciones y los comentarios de los maestros.

Westhill High School ha ayudado a estos alumnos porque, durante anuncios importantes, usualmente recibe un maestro bilingüe para traducir esto. También hay una sección del periódico escolar en español, dedicada específicamente a estos estudiantes. Por último, aunque a los estudiantes que hablan español se les dan muchos recursos para trabajar en la escuela, depende de ellos mismos averiguar si es suficiente.

Foto cortesía de [ecisd.net](https://ecisd.net/).



embargo, si no son lo suficientemente afortunados, los estudiantes lucharán en clase debido a la poca comprensión que tienen del idioma inglés.

Las estadísticas también son impactantes, ya que a partir de 2013, el 71 por ciento de los hispanohablantes compuso

uno por ciento de todos los maestros de escuelas públicas son elegibles para enseñar ESL, por lo que la proporción de alumnos por maestro es de 150:1.

Aunque esta información convence a muchas personas que los estudiantes que hablan

les. Es difícil para un estudiante obtener buenos resultados en una materia cuando no está familiarizado con el idioma en el que se enseña, por lo tanto, se recomienda que estos estudiantes tomen clases de tutoría en su idioma principal.

Además, los estudiantes pu-



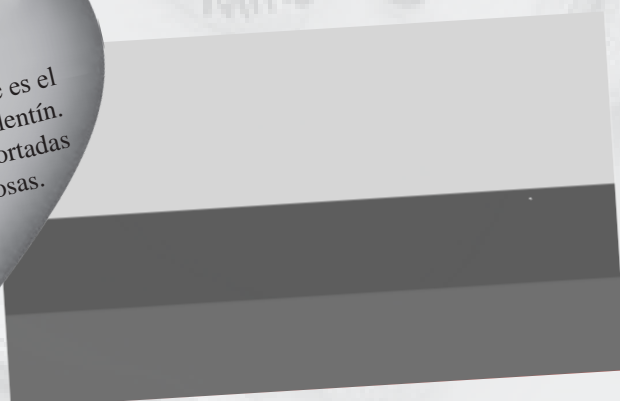
# El Día de San Valentín celebrado en otros países

El día de San Valentín es el día en que los enamorados se compran cosas bonitas como rosas, chocolates y ositos de peluche. En lo general estos son los productos más vendidos en cualquier país, especialmente los países Latinos para el día de San Valentín. Este día es un día Importante para la comunidad latina porque no se celebra solo entre parejas, pero también entre amigos, padres, y hermanos o hermanas. Básicamente, el día de San Valentín es un día para que la gente aprecie a sus familiares, parejas, o amigos un poquito más.

Aunque hay algunas similitudes entre cómo diferentes países latinos celebran el día de San Valentín, cada país tiene diferentes productos que son más populares en algunos que en otros.

## COLOMBIA

En Colombia las rosas definitivamente es el obsequio más regalado en el día de San Valentín. ¡Cada año 450 millones de rosas son exportadas para esta fecha! Esas si son muchas rosas.



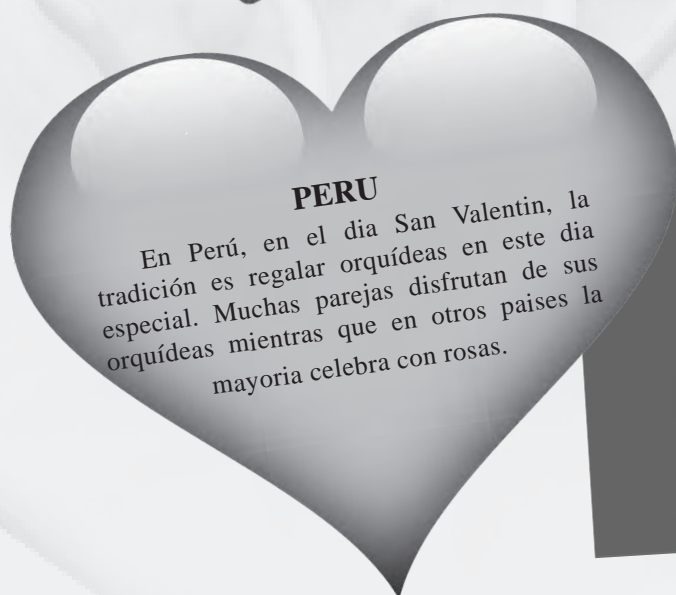
## BOLIVIA

En Bolivia, los productos más populares para celebrar este día son las galletas y los dulces. Aunque las flores también forman una parte de los obsequios regalados en este día, la mayoría celebra con dando galletas y dulces.



## PERU

En Perú, en el día San Valentin, la tradición es regalar orquídeas en este día especial. Muchas parejas disfrutan de sus orquídeas mientras que en otros países la mayoría celebra con rosas.





## Westhill's Improv Troupe takes the stage

**Evelyn Vasquez**  
Staff Writer

Over the years, Westhill has continuously widened their variety of clubs. Students can either join a club that already exists or start a club of their own as long as they have an adviser and a couple of students who want to join.

Whether the clubs are made by students or faculty, the Westhill community has seen unique groups come together to enjoy different activities over time.

Last year, students formed the Westhill Improv Troupe (WIT). Westhill has seen this specific club brought back or discontinued based on its popularity amongst students each year.

WIT meets every Thursday evening from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. to improve improv skills by practicing and playing improv games. Members of this club can expect to play improv games such

as Party Quirks.

Party Quirks is a game that involves four or more people. In the game, there is a host and the rest of the participants are guests. The guests are given pieces of paper with characters for them to act out. The host is supposed to guess what each guest is pretending to be as fast as they can.

"Improv keeps you on your toes, so it is a great way to improve your critical thinking skills and therefore help in the classroom," Mrs. Grant, science teacher, said.

The whole year does not only consist of games once a week. WIT also holds a couple of shows throughout the year, which they put on the announcements and can be checked on Westhill Northstar Playmakers' Instagram page, @northstarplaymakers, for any upcoming shows.

Shows are held in the little theatre and are free to attend. WIT invites ev-



**IN ACTION** WIT gathers in the little theater (room 118) to practice their improv skills.

Photos by **Harrison Travaglini** / Photo Manager.

everyone to join or watch because they believe anyone can learn improv. The shows are interactive and sometimes rely on audience participation to dictate their scenes.

Some of the performances, including the "Gettin Jiggy WIT it" show on March 23, 2018, were accompanied by the Westhill Jazz Club, allowing students with various talents to be showcased.

"It is nice that we have WIT because it allows people to meet others with the same interest. WIT should be somehow advertised to try and gain appeal," Kaitlynn Henderson ('20) said.

The group is lead by co-captains Sam Essensfeld ('19) and Ethan Essensfeld ('19) and supervised by Mr. Pavia.

The club consists of a mix of students from both Westhill and AITE. Aside from the captains, Isabella Adamo ('20), Brooke Boccuzzi ('20),

Kevin Fleischer ('22, AITE), Patrick Fleischer ('19, AITE), Kelly Fox ('20), Drew Leferman ('22, AITE), Josh Leferman ('19, AITE), Anna Litchenberg ('22, AITE), Victoria Rodriguez ('20), Lilah Steiner ('21), Sydney Steinberg ('19), Olivia Wenke ('20), and Rachel Duffy ('21) are all of the current members of the WIT club.

"I had never heard of WIT before, but it sounds like a great place for people who are interested in the same things to come together and have fun. They should hold more shows throughout the year to get more people involved and informed of this club," Ajha Austrie ('19) said.

Though the newly revived WIT is only in its second year, it has already produced numerous shows, and will likely continue to grow as the number of members and its popularity increase.



## Jordon Jang accepted to the U.S. Military Academy

**Olivia Berni**  
Staff Writer

*The United States Military Academy at West Point is one of the top public universities in America. Located in Highlands, New York, the school prepares students for army service and success in any of the 35 majors offered. Though there is an extensive application process, admitted students receive a free, high-quality college education, with classes having an average of a seven-to-one student-to-faculty ratio. Jordon Jang ('19) was recently accepted to the university. The Westword sat down to ask him about his application process and acceptance.*

**The Westword (TW):** What first got you interested in West Point?

**Jordon Jang (JJ):** I went up for a visit since it was close by. The campus was nice. I did not

take a tour but my mom and I went to the historical museum on campus. Just learning about the integration of military and academics through American history was intriguing enough for me to go home and research it more.

**TW: What is the application process?**

**JJ:** The application process begins during the second semester of your junior year. Basically, you need a congressional nomination, and if you get that, then you need to be physically, academically, and medically qualified. I had to write ten essays and had to get everything verified. I needed four subject evaluations, letters of recommendation, my transcript, and three other essays. Once I sent all that in, I had to be medically qualified. I had to take an eye exam and a military physical exam. On top of the medical exam, I had to take my physical test. When I

was at West Point for a summer seminar, I took the physical test. It was push ups, sits up, pullups, a basketball throw, a shuttle run, and a mile.

**TW: How did you get nominated?**

**JJ:** In order to get the nomination, I had to apply for a nomination from our two Senators and district congressmen. Each application for those three people was longer than a normal college application. Once you submit the application, they process it. Once your application passes, you get an interview. Once you go and complete the interview, they hand out very few nominations and there are several hundred kids getting the interview. I got interviews with all three, but I only got nominated by Congressman Jim Himes. Once I had my nomination from Himes, I was then able to proceed with my regular application to West Point, which was longer than a normal college application.

**TW: What do you plan on studying at West Point?**

**JJ:** I chose West Point for engineering. It is the best public school for engineering.

**TW: What are your plans for after college?**

**JJ:** I will graduate as a Second Lieutenant Officer in the army

and I will be deployed, hopefully, in the branch of army engineering. After that, there are only five years of required service, but I plan to stay in as a career army, which is 20 years. After that, I will go into civilian life and civil engineering in state side.



Photo by **Harrison Travaglini** / Photo Manager.



# Teacher Talk: Mr. Kubick

*"Teacher Talk" is a monthly column in which The Westword asks teachers to write about themselves so that students have a chance to get to know the staff. Mr. Kubick, Social Studies teacher was chosen for the February issue.*

I teach sheltered, college prep (CP), and Advanced Placement (AP) United States History, as well as AP Psychology.

While still in undergraduate school at Western CT State University, I began a job at Four Seasons Racquet Club in Wilton, Connecticut, where I worked my way up from the desk position, answering the phones, to a managerial position. I will always remember this as a very fun time in my life, as I made some long lasting friendships.

I spent my winters going to New York Knicks games—when they were actually good—and UConn Huskies basketball games, and my summers golfing a few times a week with friends. In fact, one of my first dates with my future wife was to a Knicks game!

During this time, I also explored a career in cinematography, enrolling in Brooklyn College film school for a semester. However, the commute and other constraints made this a difficult road to follow.

A few years after graduat-

ing college, I decided to become a teacher and earn my Master's Degree in Secondary Education at Sacred Heart University.

A major reason for me becoming a teacher were three very influential teachers of my own: one in high school and the other two in college. I will always think back on these important figures in my life with fondness and admiration for the positive impact they had on me.

Choosing to become a teacher was one of the best decisions of my life. While teaching can at times be exhausting and frustrating, it has afforded me the opportunity to work creatively and challenge myself to explore different methods and styles.

I chose history education for a couple of key reasons. First, I love history as an investigation of the past. My favorite reading remains non-fiction books about historical time periods.

Second, my undergraduate major was

American Studies, which is a combination of United States History and Literature.

One thing I discovered about myself from previous jobs is that I get complacent when the work becomes too repetitive. For that reason, I am always incorporating new strate-

gies and lessons, trying out new grading formats, and exploring new methods in the classroom.

The biggest constant in my teaching style is designing my lessons to be inquiry based and working backwards from there. What that essentially means is that I like to start a lesson or unit with one or a few essential questions, some of which may be student generated, and then use that initial curiosity to explore primary sources in history, sharpening our historical thinking skills in the process.

Outside the classroom, I am happily married to my wife Randi, who is a social worker at another high school, and I am a father to two great girls, Camryn and Kendall, who will turn six and

three this April.

My hobbies range from playing leisure jazz and blues guitar to being a repair and home improvement guy for my family. My most recent projects were installing a paver patio and refinishing my basement as a playroom for my kids.

I am also an avid distance runner, having run in high school. I regularly do half marathons as my favorite race and have considered trying a full marathon this or next year.

This has all led me to a wonderful second job coaching the Westhill Cross Country and Track teams. If you like running, stop by room 420 for information on cross country and track!

Photo by of Justin Gonzalez / Photographer.



If you wish to nominate a teacher or wish to write for Teacher Talk, email us at: [westwordwhs@gmail.com](mailto:westwordwhs@gmail.com)



## The Hungry Vikings

Column by Maura Johnston, Mary Leydon & Alexandra Lazo

### Judy's Bar + Kitchen

Service: ★★★★★  
Taste: ★★★★★  
Ambiance: ★★★★★

The three Vikings ventured to the long road of High Ridge. After passing numerous locations with inviting signs, they saw a colorful sign illuminating the words, "Judy's Bar + Kitchen."

They wandered into the restaurant and immediately felt welcomed.

The Hangry Viking charged through the parking lot and busted down the entrance door, only to be halted by a friendly hostess. The three Vikings explained that they were starving and needed a seat immediately. The servers were attentive and seated the Vikings quickly.

Once seated, the Hangry Viking was eternally grateful for the cornbread and butter that was set down at their table right away. Servers frequently tended to their needs and made it seem as if they were sitting at their own dining room table with a private chef.

The atmosphere was very modern and welcoming.

Careful not to fill up on the

cornbread, the Hangry Viking ordered the Southern Skinny Salad and tried her hardest to wait patiently.

This salad was loaded with spinach, romaine, apples, blue cheese, and pecans, and was topped with a Tupelo honey vinaigrette. However, she ordered it without the blue cheese and added grilled chicken to have protein in her dish.

Judy's did not disappoint—the Hangry Viking ranked this dish within her top five favorite salads. The greens were chopped to the perfect size, the chicken was tender, and the dressing matched the salad impeccably.

THE Viking had been looking for something to fill her stomach all day. She followed closely and carefully behind the raging Hangry Viking.

THE Viking ordered one of the Low Country Suppers, a Southern staple of chicken and waffles. This dish was prepared with thick waffles that were smothered in dark maple syrup

and honey butter.

On top of the waffles laid the crispy chicken tenders. THE Viking devoured her chicken and waffles, as it was the perfect combination of sweet and savory. On her way out, she was so stuffed.

The Picky Viking was overwhelmed by the various smells in the restaurant. She could pick up the scent of spicy chicken wings, sweet ribs, and the delicious brisket as she waited in her seat.

After looking at the menu for hours, she finally decided on the BBQ Melt with brisket, cheddar, caramelized onions, and sour-dough bread.

It was an amazing choice; the brisket was juicy and flavorful, the bun was per-

fectly toasted, and the cheese melted perfectly with the onions and brisket. The barbecue sauce had the perfect sweetness, with just enough tang too.

The Picky Viking surprisingly made no changes to the sandwich, and devoured it in minutes.

All three Vikings left Judy's feeling stuffed, satisfied, and no longer starving. The three dish-

es were so perfectly cooked that they left the Vikings wanting to try all of the delicious options listed on the menu.

Not only was the food tasty, but the Vikings felt as if they were eating a homemade meal cooked personally for them by their mothers. They left chanting "Judy's! Judy's!" encouraging others to try this restaurant!



Photo By Harrison Travaglinio / Photo manager.



# PoliTalk helps inform students on politics

**Madison Thibodeau**  
Staff Writer

A group of 13 high school seniors are coming together this May to create their own app that will act as a center for students to have reliable information on voting, current policy, and other political concepts and ideas, called PoliTalk.

Among these students are Katie Gaia, Molly Herckis, Rishi Jaaswal, Jordon Jang, Christopher Matrullo, Julien Matrullo, Rachel Plotzky, Zach Rubin, Cristian Smina, Jordan Soifer, Neev Suryawanshi, Kate Williams, and Kevin Zyskowski.

Political apps have been on the rise since President Trump took office. Social Media platforms, such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook, are constantly becoming filled with more political content.

“Conceptually, it is an awesome idea to help the average citizen understand who they are voting for... It can only create a stronger democracy,” Ms. Berkley, social studies teacher, said.

Jang and Rubin gathered early this school year with an idea to create their own business. Their idea began to grow even more and they added a few other students to the group.

However, as they added more people, the idea transformed into an app to develop during the Senior Internship period.

“After a couple weeks of brain-

storming and consulting other people we knew that were creative and insightful, we came to the idea for PoliTalk,” Jaaswal said.

In order to get approval for such a unique type of internship, the students put together a presentation for Principal Rinaldi that explained the app’s purpose, each student’s responsibilities throughout the course of the project, and even a skeleton for the app design.

When Rinaldi saw their work, he approved it, so the group devised a contract and are now set for their internship.

“I am going to program it in the programming language Swift using Apple’s integrated development environment Xcode,” Zyskowski said.

The Senior Internship Experience (SIE) allows seniors to have their grades frozen after AP exams and, for three weeks, explore an area of interest in an environment out of the usual high school setting through an internship.

These students are straying away from the normal internship experience and are working under the supervision of their adviser, Mrs. Khetan, and Principal Rinaldi to allow them to collaboratively work together unconformed by the SIE’s structure.

“I am very excited to be working with my peers on a project that will not only help individuals learn about politics, but one that will inform them well enough to choose a proper candidate,”

Soifer said.

Although members did not work out funding for the project, they are working hard to put out something meaningful to them.

“Since nowadays politics [are] so polarized, I am excited to work collaboratively with people from different [sides] of the political spectrum on a project that will consist of lots of political information. Our biggest challenge will be finding the most non-bias infor-

mation considering the fact that most sources swing one way or another politically nowadays,” Herckis said.

The group wants the end result of PoliTalk to be a source recognized nationwide for its unbiased nature. They plan to launch the first version of PoliTalk before the end of the school year. If this group’s project is successful, it could create new opportunities for future students and their own projects and internships.



**POLITALK** This group of seniors will be working to create a non bias political app.  
Photo contributed by PoliTalk.

# Deanna Crevecoeur creates her own clothing

**Addison Magrath**  
Editor-in-Chief

*Deanna Crevecoeur ('19) has begun taking fashion into her own hands and creating clothes for sale. The Westword sat down with her to discuss the business and her interest in fashion.*

**The Westword (TW):** You were selected for Slay of the Month two years ago, what has changed for you in the sense of fashion since then?

**Deanna Crevecoeur (DC):** I have been more motivated to sew and I realized I wanted to go into the business side of fashion instead of design.

**TW:** So you do not want to necessarily be a fashion designer?

**DC:** I do sew, so I consider myself a fashion designer because I create designs. However, I would enjoy finding a career in business more. I feel like it would be more practical.

**TW:** What inspired you to start taking an interest in clothes and start making your own?

**DC:** I just love being outside of the box. I have so many different ideas that I cannot necessarily find in stores, so I

make them.

**TW:** If your clothes could be in any store what store would you want to see them in?

**DC:** Free People, definitely.

**TW:** Do you shop at Free People a lot?

**DC:** I have a lot of Free People clothes, but I do not buy them at

the store. I go to Lord & Taylor and buy them on sale because they are really expensive

**TW:** So you see the business side of fashion in your future. Do you plan on going to college for that?

**DC:** Yes, I have to wait until April to hear back from schools.

**TW:** Since you have started selling clothes, have you made any sales?

**DC:** Yes, I have sold four.

**TW:** Are you selling the same shirt?

**DC:** Yes it is just one shirt. I want to start off small. I did not want to start off with so many different

designs. The shirt I am selling is just a basic black tube top with a chain strap. You can adjust the strap and remove it too (photo in bottom left).

**TW:** How would you categorize your style?

**DC:** Every day it is different. I would say it is a mix between street style and Bohemian.

**TW:** What was the first article of clothing you ever made?

**DC:** A very basic tube top. I made it when I was just learning how to use a sewing machine.

**TW:** Is there anything else you want to point out about your journey with making clothes and with fashion?

**DC:** I do not like to buy expensive fabric. If I buy fabrics, I like to go to Walmart and buy it for a very cheap price. Other than that, I like to use what I have at home. I have a shirt that I used a pillowcase to make the sleeves and black fabric I found in my house. Sometimes I use blankets and bed sheets to make clothes.

**TW:** Do you ever go thrifting and remake clothes you get?

**DC:** Yeah I like to buy clothes for cheap and revamp them. I also take my mom’s old clothes and crop or retouch them.

Photos contributed by Deanna Crevecoeur.





# SLAY OF THE MONTH: ZACH RUBIN



I would say that my style is unique and I never consistently wear the same outfit.

I get my inspiration from my favorite clothing brands: John Varvatos, Roots Canada, Theory, Abercrombie & Fitch, Nike, Vans, Kith, and Calvin Klein.

The clothes in my wardrobe are high-quality and assorted in color, texture, and other elements.

I employ a down-to-earth look, wearing a variety of flannels, thermals, multi-colored khaki pants, and my all-time favorite: sweatpants.

Sweatpants in particular are my choice article of clothing, as I can always be comfortable while rocking a stylish look.

My favorite brand of sweatpants is Roots Canada, a Canadian clothing brand that I first discovered on a summer trip in seventh grade. Their intrinsic designs and rural apparel are my favorite, as I love to be comfortable yet fresh at all times.

My unique style and design stems from always wanting to stand out. Ever since I was little, I would never wear the same outfit as anyone in the room. I always want to dress differently, as I love to do my own thing.

One day, when walking through the mall wearing a grey waffle henley long sleeve shirt, navy blue Roots Canada joggers, and a black coat with a fur-lined hood and sherpa collar, I was approached by the manager of Abercrombie & Fitch, who asked me if I was interested in modeling for their brand.

Abercrombie & Fitch has always been a favorite of mine since I was very young, and I am always sporting their flannels and classic khaki pants. I accepted their offer and in the summer I will be going to New Albany, Ohio—their headquarters—for a shoot.

Abercrombie & Fitch and their models in particular have always been a sense of inspiration for my style and wardrobe.

Having a rustic and laid-back look at all times is important to me and makes me feel good. I love the clothing that I wear and always am sure to match it with the right shoes or boots.

The L.L. Bean boot is a favor-

ite of mine for many outfits. It goes very well with any combination of waffle long sleeves and khakis or a t-shirt and flannel combination with joggers.

Furthermore, I am a huge proponent of Vans, Yeezys, and some Nike shoes that are very subtle in color and design.

My favorite color is white and wearing white shoes of any kind is my go-to. Any black, grey, blue, or white shoes that are two colors or less are particularly my favorite, as they are more muted and can go with almost any outfit.

Someone always told me to emulate the successful and dress like the high status. I could not think of anyone who employs more of a high status style than Zac Efron himself.

Efron and I have a brief history, as I have met him three times in my life.

My mother used to work for a popular cosmetics company, Estée Lauder, where she was the Vice President of advertising.

Through this occupation, she received a lot of benefits, including tickets to movie screenings, sports venues, and popular shows.

One of these benefits was access to a screening for Efron's movie *17 Again* in New York City, which included a hangout with Efron.

His classy style of clean and charming clothing prompted my mother and I to ask him a few questions about where he got his clothing.

In the backstage waiting room, where we hung out with Efron, we asked him where he got his clothing, and where he gets his style inspiration. He said that his personal stylist gives him the "granola" look, a style combining fashion and functionalism.

Some of my favorite tops include grey or black henley shirts, washed jean jackets or shirts, and soft blue thermals.

For pants, I love joggers, washed dark jeans, khaki pants, and grey, navy blue, or black sweatpants.

Nevertheless, I always make sure to wear high-quality, clean, and soft clothing that makes me feel great.





# ARTIST OF THE MONTH: EMMA OSTROVSKY

**Addison Magrath**  
Editor-in-Chief

**The Westword (TW):** What first made you interested in art?

**Emma Ostrovsky ('20) (EO):** In middle school, I had to take art classes and I became really passionate about it. It has been a hobby of mine. I have always been kind of good at art and especially design.

**TW:** What is your preferred medium?

**EO:** I prefer to use thin sharpies and I like to blend colors with colored pencils.

**TW:** Is there a piece of work you are most proud of? If so, which one and why?

**EO:** Yeah, it was actually a photograph. I do not usually do them, but I take AP Studio Art now and it was a light project I had to do. I took a photo of my friend Becca (bottom left image).

**TW:** How has Westhill shaped

your experience with art?

**EO:** I have been taking art for three years. I started with Drawing and Painting 1 my freshman year. During sophomore year, my teacher moved me from Drawing and Painting 2 to 3, and then I moved to AP Studio Art this year. I have had Mrs. Moncure for all three years, so she knows my style. I do not really have any friends in my art class, so it is my time to just sit and work alone. It is really peaceful.

**TW:** How would you describe your artistic style?

**EO:** I like patterns and designs and am very into technique. It is not a lot of painting and blending, but it is more so sitting there and really focusing on the fine details and taking my time. I can sit there for three hours working.

**TW:** Are there any messages you want to convey with your art?

**EO:** It depends. It is mostly because I like to make art.

**TW:** Is there a specific time that you remember that you thought you conveyed a powerful message?

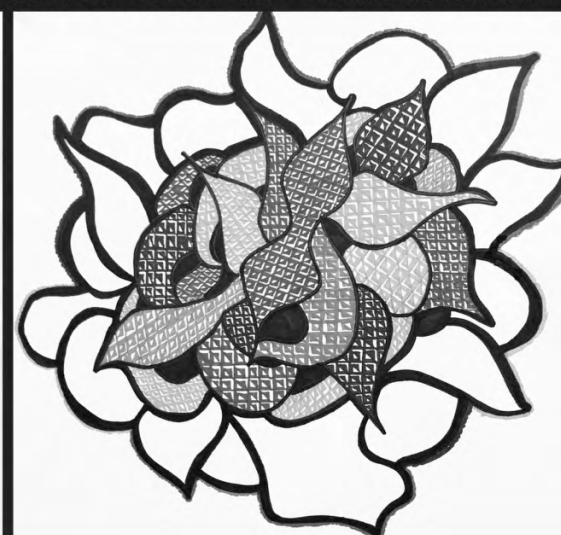
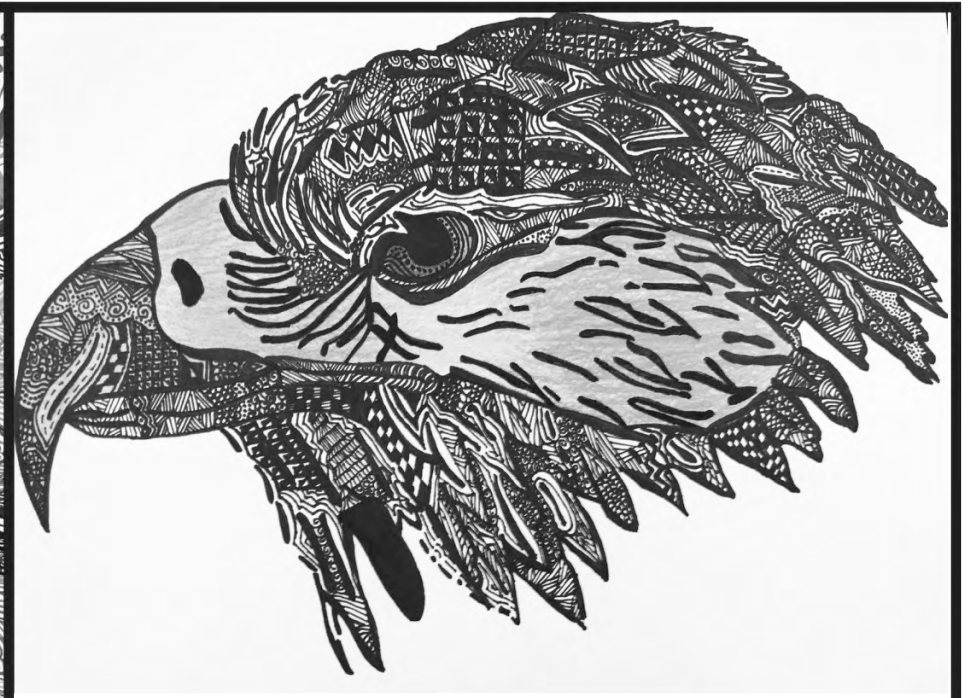
**EO:** There was one piece I did that was a collage of CT made out of hundreds of magazine pieces. There is a "203" in the center of it. It represents where I am from and where I have been all my life.

**TW:** Are you thinking about pursuing a career in art?

**EO:** I am actually not, but I might. Art kind of goes into everything you do. There is always some kind of artistic aspect in all fields, so I am not looking into art schools, but I might minor in it.

**TW:** Is there anything else that you want to highlight about your journey with art or anything that stands out to you?

**EO:** Honestly, for some people, art helps them calm down and just have a moment to do something that they can enjoy. Studio Art is a peaceful class for me.





## Artists using singles to promote their album

**Hailey Baloutch**  
Reporter

Justin Timberlake, Taylor Swift, Camila Cabello, Ariana Grande, and Jason Derulo have two things in common: they are popular artists, and they have released single tracks before dropping entire albums. Releasing singles before an album has become an increasingly common habit of mainstream artists, prompting curiosity for the reasons behind it.

According to qz.com, this new approach for sales has coincided with another trend, the rise in popularity of streaming sites such as Spotify.

"[Spotify] is quicker to get new music and have new songs...I do not have to wait to download certain songs," Leonie Colegrave ('22) said.

These popular streaming sites often pay artists less than 0.01 cents for a single stream of a song, whereas artists make 0.70 dollars on average for song downloads. With a decrease in music downloads in exchange for streaming, artists risk losing revenue.

Due to this, many have taken to a more efficient method of sales.

Singles individually cost more than the package deal offered by album sales, so many artists have turned to releasing songs one at a time before the album drops, causing more people to buy single tracks. They hope fans will download the album when it drops later on.

In offering a continuous flow of new material, an artist is also less likely to become irrelevant during a long break between albums. With modern social media throwing content at consumers faster than ever before, it is easy to slip out of the limelight in favor of more relevant artists.

This strategy also provides newer artists with a way to build a following prior to album releases, so a creator's sound is less likely to be drowned out by other music.

*Billboard* claims that staggering a song release gives creators the chance to review and respond to audience reactions. They can improve the other songs in their album according to the feedback they receive on their singles.

However, if this feedback is highly negative, many listeners may ignore the album altogether because the single was not ideal.

"If you end up not liking the song that they release, then why buy the album or even bother listening to it," Katherine Abbott ('22) said.

Additionally, *heatonthetreet.com* reports that many new music providers place emphasis on overall tones of music. It is harder to convey a mood through single tracks than with curated collections of songs.

Artists also may risk losing revenue if they release their songs that are projected to be the most popular before the rest of the album. This is because fans may choose to download these songs alone.

If listeners have access to the hits in an album on their own, they may neglect the less popular songs, and not download the album at all.

"By the time the album drops, that one single would have been so overplayed... I am less likely to download it and more likely to skip it," Manal Amrani ('22) said.

After pouring months of hard work into an album, artists should not have to stress about marketing strategies. Instead, they should be happy to release their music to the public.

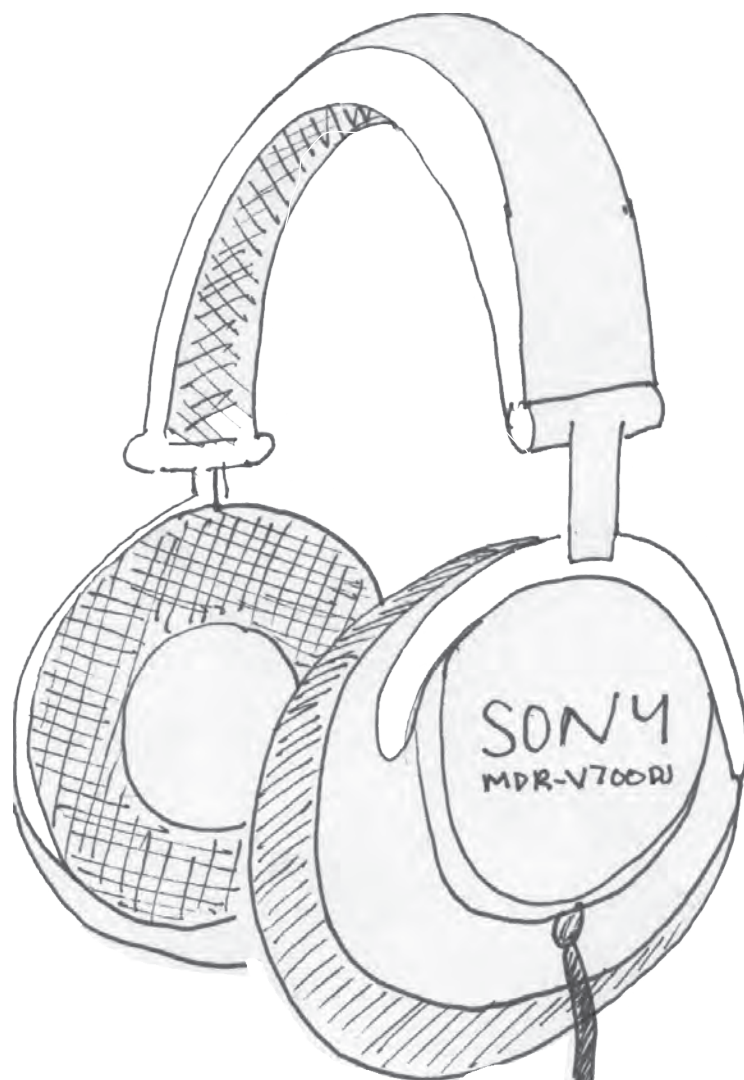


Illustration by Mr. von Wahlde / Adviser.

## Going backstage at the Oscars

**Leiny Otero**  
Staff Writer

On February 24, the Academy Awards, also known as the Oscars, completed their 91st Awards show at the Dolby Theater in Los Angeles, CA.

The Oscars recognize outstanding actors, actresses, directors, and many others for the films they have come together to create.

It is an annual event meant to shine light on exceptional film developed and released throughout the year.

According to the Oscars official website, "the Oscar statue is the most recognized trophy in the world."

Each category winner is awarded this statue, weighing close to 8.5 pounds and they are made up of gold-plated solid bronze. This trophy has been awarded nearly 3,140 times.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is made up of around 8,000 filmmakers and film professionals, and these are the people that vote for each award category.

From the members that have been confirmed, 94 percent are Caucasian, 77 percent are male and 54 percent are over the age of 60.

"There should be a little bit more diversity in the nominees for the categories," Sandra McKeown ('21) said.

The membership is divided into different groups representing different branches in film production.

Every spring, new members are considered and accepted, but the Academy does not publicly announce these members.

The voters for the Academy have been certified

from an accounting firm called PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) which have been working with the Oscars for the past 86 award ceremonies. PwC is responsible for counting every vote.

"It is a good thing to know that the votes are not rigged, because many people have that misconception that [they are]," Danasha Gross ('19) said.

PwC also mails out the ballots of the eligible nominees to the voting members so they can cast their vote on the top five of each category.

All of their decisions have to be returned within a month so that the nominees can be released to the public mid-January.

For the first time in over 30 years the Oscars were aired without a host.

The Academy had asked Kevin Hart to host, but after a furor resulting from his own homophobic tweets from 2009 and 2010, he stepped down.

"It is crazy how we [did not] have a host this year for the Oscars. It makes me a little sad because Kevin Hart would have been great, but after the homophobic tweets and all the hate he was receiving, I wondered how they [would] do the award ceremony," Yeimy Gonzalez ('19) said.

Since then, with such little time left, the organization accepted the show would go on without a main speaker. With no host, the show opened with a performance by Queen with Adam Lambert and a presentation by Maya Rudolph, Amy Poehler, and Tina Fey.

There are multiple moving parts that go into hosting the Oscars. However, after 91 years, the committee has mastered what it takes to put on this extravagant awards show.



Illustration by Neeka Baclayon / Illustrator.



# Album cover art inspires listeners

**Myra Perez**  
Reporter

Since 1938, when Columbia Records hired its first art director, Alex Steinweiss, artists have used album art to draw fans into their newly released music. Artists use various techniques to give fans a visual representation of their music.

According to 99designs.com, “[to] catch the attention of a potential listener, using an image of a face—along with choosing the right colors and fonts—can help ensure that your cover gets noticed.”

If the artist creates a cover that ultimately shocks the audience, the unreleased album may gain more popularity and rack in more profit.

Another common theme is using a minimal design approach for the art, so that the main focus is the music.

According to 99designs.com, “minimalism can also make a statement in album cover design. Minimalistic album covers have been done by artists like The XX, Russ, and Arctic Monkeys. Other artists take different attempts at grabbing the listener’s attention with their album art.”

“I love the simplicity of Russ’ album. (Pictured: top right) it definitely draws me in more,” Christian DeSimone (’20) said.

On the other hand, some artists be-

lieve that the louder the art, the more attention and listens it will receive.

In his recent album *Astroworld*, Travis Scott features a giant golden statue of his head surrounded by children, popcorn and carnival rides. He did this to match the entrance made at the Texas Cyclone ride at the former Six Flags Astroworld in Houston, Texas where he grew up (pictured: bottom right).

“Travis Scott’s album was very appealing to me because of the bright artwork. The unique design made me more excited,” Antonia Fry (’20) said.

Although it was a shock to most people to see such a different approach for the album art by him, it got many listeners talking.

*Vibe* Magazine called the cover “colorful and eccentric,” and rap artists chimed in with words of praise on Instagram.

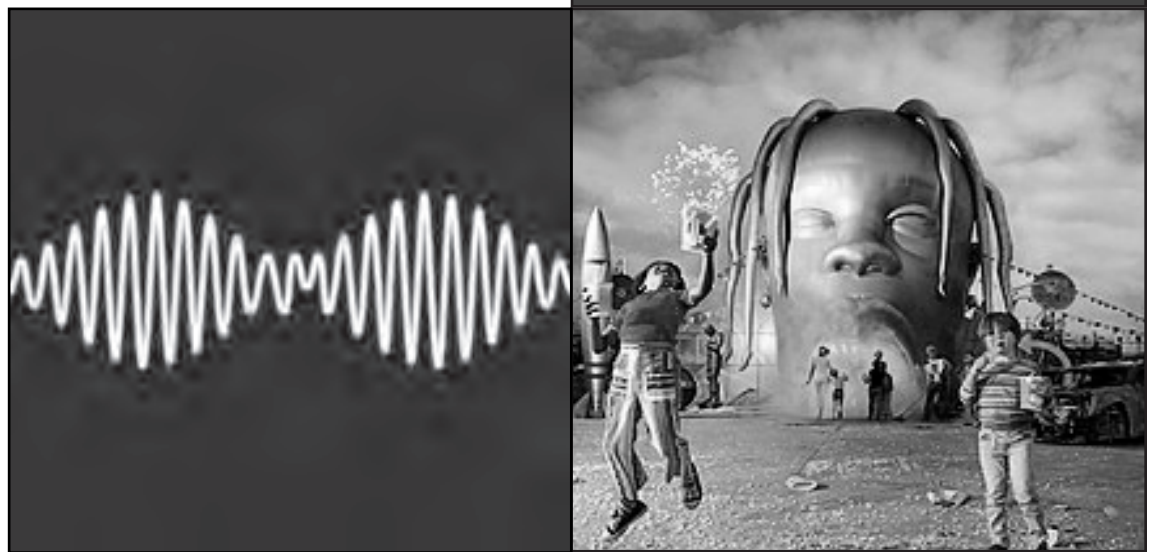
If the listeners are surprised by what they see on the cover of the album, they will most likely be pleasantly surprised with the music as well, because the art represents the music as a visual.

On Kanye’s *Life of Pablo* album, the title of

the album is repeatedly written followed by a picture at the bottom. Although it was a simple design, upon its release it had many people talking.

The artwork serves as a portal into what listeners can expect from an album, and even what kind of musician lies behind the creativity.

Strong album covers make a statement. After all, the imagery is an opportunity to make the right first impression on potential listeners.



**MAKING A STATEMENT** From *A.M.* by Arctic Monkeys, to *Back to Life* by Russ, to *Astroworld* by Travis Scott, artist’s choice of cover art heavily influences what the audience will think of the music.

Images courtesy of pixabay.com.

## TV Review: *The Assassination of Gianni Versace*

**Lexi Bocuzzi**  
Reporter

“The Assassination of Gianni Versace” is the thrilling second installment of the series, *American Crime Story*. The first mini season was a reenactment of the controversial events which took place regarding O.J. Simpson’s trial.

This realistic portrayal of the trial was a ten episode powerhouse that took the media by storm back in 2016. Since then, FX and the show’s directors knew they had to return with a second season just as great.

“I saw that the second season had come out and I was really excited to watch it. It was very well advertised and it looked like it was going to be amazing,” Betsy Sachs (’20) said.

The new season did not disappoint. *The Assassination of Gianni Versace* follows the story of the 1997 murder of world renowned fashion designer Gianni Versace outside his Miami Beach villa.

The show offers a very intimate insight on the relationship between Gianni Versace and his murderer Andrew Cunanan.

It gives a gripping perspective on the classic “making of a murderer” to explain the com-

plexity of what turns a seemingly regular man into a serial killer while also telling the fascinating saga of how Versace came to be the brand it is today.

“The show was very hyped up because of the designers name. Not a lot of people are familiar with the story behind the Versace brand, and this was a perfect excuse to inform people who created the brand and why it is as successful as it is today,” Marcello Staiano (’19) said.

The season is divided in nine episodes, each following a different aspect of Cunanan’s story in becoming the murderer who killed Versace. Each episode includes flashbacks to Versace’s life prior to his death as well as flashforwards that depict how his family and business coped afterwards.

The flashback/flashforward formatting of the show is at first slightly difficult to follow but then develops into an insightful perspective on the impacts of death as well as how Versace himself lived.

“I absolutely loved *The Assassination of Gianni Versace* because it was so multi-faceted. Not only was it the story of a serial killer but also of the time period which is fascinating,” Ms. Miraballes, social studies teacher, said.

The season also addresses many other themes centered in Versace’s life. The storyline centered around a gay man whose life was very much impacted by his sexuality.

*The Assassination of Gianni Versace* contains a gay theme within the show that is very overshadowed by other events within the show, and for that reason gives somewhat of a refreshing view on a gay man’s life, rather than another overblown, gay story,” Staiano said.

The show attempts to depict this and does an effective job of presenting the complexities of being a gay man in the 1980s and 1990s without undermining or oversexualizing his story. The show fairly depicts the impact Cunanan’s sexuality had on his life and the making of him becoming a serial killer.

The show promotes an interesting discourse about the complexity of family life as well, by highlighting the intimate relationship between Versace and his sister Donatella.

Their relationship shed light on how valuable Donatella was to Versace, as well as the role she played in helping create the Versace brand.

The show was extremely

well received and praised for its realistic portrayal as well as its deep exploration of the themes of murder, family and homosexuality.

It swept throughout award season with star Darren Criss playing Cunanan at the center of the praise.

Both Penélope Cruz (Donatella Versace) and Édgar Ramírez (Gianni Versace) received Emmy and Golden

Globe recognition for their portrayals. The show was awarded with the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) award for Outstanding TV Movie or Limited Series in recognition of its portrayal of LGBTQ+ themes.

*The Assassination of Gianni Versace* certainly deserved these accolades. It is a fantastic and thrilling show currently available to stream on Netflix.



**IN CHARACTER** Darren Criss played Versace’s murderer, Andrew Cunanan, in the TV series.

Image courtesy @gageskidmore10 on flickr.com.



# AirPods are the new status signifier

**Ashley Shapiro**

Staff Writer

AirPods have recently taken social media by storm. Everywhere one looks, at least a handful of individuals can be seen enjoying their music with AirPods.

When they first came out in December 2016, AirPods were seen as the tech of the future. Now, many believe they are a necessity in today's world.

Being sold at 159 dollars, the high price is because customers are paying for convenience, style, and arguably status.

People were skeptical when the small white earbuds came on the market, but AirPods have quickly grown in popularity over the last two years.

According to *Business Insider*, Apple has sold 14 to 16 million pairs of AirPods in the past year and that number is expected to grow in 2019.

"AirPods are better than other headphones I have had. I really like the wireless aspect and they are very easy to connect to my phone," Reynold Rene ('20) said.

AirPods can connect with iPhones, iPads, and iPod touch models with iOS ten or later. With all of these innovative features, many people believe AirPods are well worth their price tag.

*Business Insider* compared AirPods to the biggest competitor, Jaybird Run wireless headphones. They were compared in five categories: audio quality, design, connectivity, battery life and fit. AirPods beat Jaybird Runs in audio quality, battery life and tied for connectivity.

"When I work out they stay in my ears comfortably and they have amazing sound quality," Robert

Okun ('22) said.

Many students however have difficulty with the function and the price. Many argue there are plenty of other earphones available.

"I do not use AirPods because I know I would probably lose them. I have not had any problem with regular headphones," Audrey Molina ('19) said.

There is additional hype surrounding AirPods due to the internet's fascination with its appearance and exorbitant price tag.

Following the holiday season, there was a sudden increase in AirPod ownership especially within the student population.

"Why spend 159 dollars when you could spend 30 for the same [type of] thing?" Kameika Gomez ('20) asked.

The internet took notice and tweets about AirPods flooded every social media platform.

"I can't hear you, you're broke," has become the notorious tweet regarding AirPods.

These tweets sarcastically suggest that people who do not have AirPods are "broke." These tweets mock the excessive price of the headphones and the pride some users feel when wearing them.

In response, many tweets surfaced about the disadvantages of the AirPods—specifically the lack of a cord which does not protect the user's phone from falling if dropped.

These tweets have created a sense of pressure to purchase the AirPods in order to follow the trend. Following a huge boom of sales around the holidays many students are still aspiring to own AirPods. This trend is creating an association between AirPods and luxury, although many people do not see the reason behind such an elevated price on a common item.



**TUNING OUT** Students put in their AirPods and tune out of class when listening to music.

Photo illustration by **Harrison Travaglino** / Photo Manager.

## Do you have AirPods?

64 %



YES

Poll conducted by **Bella Vaccaro** / Pollster.  
\*Poll out of 350 students.  
Image courtesy of **pixabay.com**.

## RECIPE

A few years ago, my family renovated our kitchen which left us without an oven for three months. Of course, we had to find a way to keep baking, and came across this recipe for egg-free no-bake cookie dough bites.

Even though our kitchen is long completed now and we have an oven again, we continue to make these cookie dough bites because they are both delicious and addictive! These bites are my favorite to make and eat and are my go-to recipe when preparing something to share with friends and family.

—Micayla Roth ('20)

### Ingredients

- ⅔ cup brown sugar
- 6 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 cup chocolate chips (mini semi sweet chips works best)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup semi sweet or bittersweet chocolate chips for melting



**PICTURE PERFECT** Roth made a fresh batch of cookie dough bites to share with her friends and family.

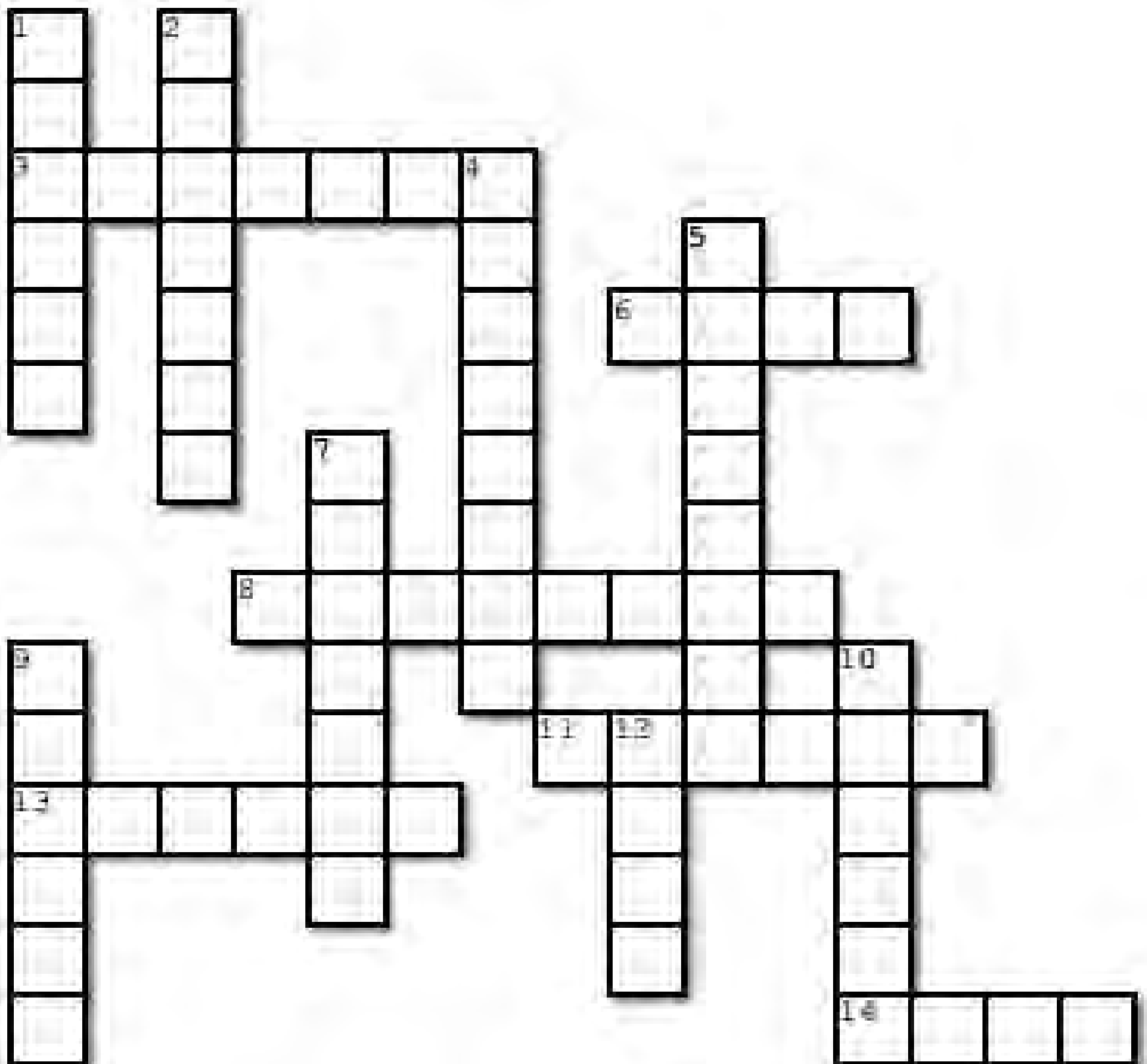
### Directions

- In a large bowl, cream together butter and brown sugar for 2-3 minutes, or until smooth. Beat in flour, milk, mini chocolate chips, vanilla extract, and salt, and mix until incorporated.
- Using a spoon or a melon baller, scoop out cookie dough balls, roll them in your hands to smooth them out, and place them on a parchment paper-lined baking sheet.
- Freeze the bites for 15 minutes, or until firm.
- Place remaining chocolate chips in a microwaveable bowl and microwave until the chocolate is completely melted.
- Dip each cookie dough bite into the bowl of melted chocolate until the top of the cookie dough is uncovered.
- Return the bite to the lined baking sheet and repeat.
- Once all the bites have been dipped, return the baking sheet to the freezer for 15-20 minutes so the chocolate can set, or chill them in the refrigerator for 2-3 hours.
- Serve the bites immediately or keep refrigerated until ready to serve.

Photo by **Sydney Eben** / Photographer.



# CROSSWORD: TEACHERS OF WESTHILL



## ACROSS:

- 3. HAS AN IMDB PAGE
- 6. SPANISH TEACHER THAT LIKES TO SALSA
- 8. BEST BATHROOM MONITOR
- 11. TEACHES MULTIVARIABLE
- 13. ART TEACHER IN CHARGE OF BOXING CLUB
- 14. TEACHES ESL

## DOWN:

- 1. GIVES OUT PENCILS FOR BEST TEST GRADE
- 2. WRITES ON THE WALLS
- 4. ONE OF THE BASEBALL COACHES
- 5. HAS A FOLDING BIKE
- 7. HEAD OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
- 9. PLAYS MUSIC BEFORE A QUIZ
- 10. HEAD OF DOGGY DAY CARE
- 12. HAS TAUGHT MORE THAN ONE LANGUAGE



## A look at the gymnastics season

**Madison Thibodeau**

Staff Writer

The Westhill girls gymnastics team worked hard this past season to improve their skills and make their way to FCIACs.

The team practiced two hours every day. On Mondays and Fridays, the girls practiced in the gym, while on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, they made their way to Chelsea Piers. There is more equipment in their facility and it is in better shape.

Captains Samantha Page ('19) and Lexi Schultz ('20) guided the team at practices and trained them to focus on their strength and skill so they could excel at meets.

During their practices, the team worked on perfecting their pre-made routines.

The girls also learned new skills to add to their routines increasing in difficulty and start value.

"The girls and I really value our practice time...those two hours everyday is spent with us using our time wisely because we do not practice as much as other sports," Page said.

If the meets are at home, they are typically held in the freshman gym. The custodians help set up the equipment and lay the mats down before every meet and practice.

The team's most popular meet is typically the Junior Varsity meet at the end of every season. This allows the girls who were not able to compete during the regular season to show off their skills.

"My favorite meet this year was the Gymnastics and Cheerleading Academy meet. I felt the team dynamic was at an all time high and our scores were much better than previous meets," Shayna Finkel ('21) said.

The fan turnout to the gymnastics meets are low compared to other athletic events. The only people that tend to show up are parents and friends of the girls on the team.

"Gymnastics does not get a lot of attention because it is a very different sport than what people are used to watching. The meets tend to be very long since it is an individual sport, and this causes many people to not want to come," Page said.

A commonly asked question is wheth-

er or not there will be a boys gymnastics team in the future.

As of now, there is no boys gymnastics team because Westhill does not have the proper equipment suitable for boys gymnastics. The coaches are also not trained in conditioning boys so they would

not be able to compete or even practice.

"Everyone would welcome boys who would want to join the team," Shultz said.

The girls are looking forward to next year to continue competing and representing Westhill. In the meantime, they will train on their own.



**KEEPING IT BALANCED** The gymnastics team practicing at Chelsea Piers in preparation for a competition.

Photo by **Harrison Travaglino** / Photo Manager.

## Striving for Varsity at Westhill

**Marta Zach**

Staff Writer

For a high school athlete, the anticipated Varsity letter represents the practice, dedication, and commitment required to make a Varsity team. Athletes and coaches alike can agree it is not easily attainable.

"Varsity sports take a lot of commitment and hard work," Samuel Spingola ('19) said.

Due to FCIAC requirements being so high, Varsity must be subsequently demanding.

"If you can hit FCIAC standards, that is Varsity," Mr. Kubick, cross country and track coach, said.

According to many players, Varsity is a large step up from Junior Varsity (JV). When asked about the difference between JV and Varsity, athletes reported that not only is the game itself more intense, but also the level of dedication required.

"We have to do a lot of conditioning [such as] lifting weights and running to make sure we are stronger," Spingola said.

Pre-season workouts are common when it comes to varsity sports; the weight room is packed during the winter, as spring teams prepare for the upcoming season.

"The jump from a JV team to a Varsity team is a huge change, as everything about the game increases. The speed and intensity of the game skyrockets, and an athlete's effort must reach or

exceed that level of play to play for a varsity team," Cole Cooper ('20) said.

Another vital step in making Varsity is the ability to work as a team with the other players. Skill plays a major role when it comes to being chosen for Varsity, but coaches look for good leadership skills and a strong team ethic.

"I would rather have ten athletes that want to try and work really hard, than those who I cannot get to come to practice, who are good," Kubick said.

Additionally, commitment to a Varsity sport means having to sacrifice a lot of time for practices, off-season workouts, and games. This is time that could be used studying or hanging out with friends.

"Since we do not have set times for practice during the [softball] season, we have to always be available in case practice starts early or runs late," Betsy Sachs ('20) said.

The skill and passion that one has for a sport often times stems from early involvement as many Varsity athletes started playing their sport before high school.

"Usually, you get asked to play Varsity if you are experienced in the sport. This might be because you have played the sport years prior to high school," Sophia Thagouras ('20) said.

An early start allows an athlete to develop their skills from a young age, and further refine them as they get older.

However, some athletes can

start their sport late and become skilled overtime.

According to nola.com, Jimmy Graham attended the University of Miami on a basketball scholarship, until he decided to switch to football during his senior year. Now, he plays in the NFL for the New Orleans Saints.

Another case is Michael Jordan, the former professional basketball player. He did not make

his school's Varsity team when he first tried out.

"You might get asked to play Varsity because of [previously] playing on the freshman or JV team. You have acquired the skill and experience necessary to finally make Varsity," Thagouras said.

While starting late might seem like a setback, plenty of athletes are able to make up for it by

training, practicing year-round, and giving it their all on the field or the court.

Being on a Varsity team is not an easy feat. Athletes must reach high standards, dedicate time and effort, and work as a team player.

Regardless of whether or not an athlete started young or once they got to high school, the hard work they put in will determine their varsity status.



**SHOWING OFF** Students who reach Varsity status are rewarded a Varsity letter to be put on their clothing.

Photo illustration by **Harrison Travaglino** / Photo Manager.



# Discussing the different swim seasons

**Rachel Plotzky & Katie Gaia**  
Print Executive Editor & Managing Editor

Swimming, like most sports at Westhill, has a boys and girls team. The two teams are made up of over 30 girls and 20 boys from Westhill, Stamford High, and AITE.

However, unlike most sports, the two teams have different seasons, with girls swim occurring in the fall and boys swim occurring in the winter.

"I did not know that the boys and girls swim in different seasons. It is a good idea because they both get enough time in the pool and do not have to share or fight for space. This probably makes our teams better," Trevor Perkins ('22) said.

Due to the limited pool space in many schools, of which Westhill was no exception, the decision was made to make the boys and girls swim team occur in different seasons.

"We are a co-op team, and we are not a particularly large team, but you can imagine that for schools with large swim programs, trying to swim both the boys and girls in the same pool at the same time would be fairly ineffective. So, it is for the same reason that boys play volleyball in the spring and girls play in the fall since you only have one gym. I think it is just to maximize the facilities," Mr. Cerone, Athletic Director, said.

Just like any other sport, practices can be long and having the whole pool to a single team is helpful for coaching and optimizing practice.

"It is just a logistical aspect because [Westhill] only [has] one pool and the practices are 2.5 hours long. [Also] there are limited pools in Fairfield Coun-

ty that do not only cater to high school needs so there are other programs involved... it just seems to be the most efficient plan," Owen Pollard ('19) said.

Having separate seasons also allows the boys and girls swim teams to cheer the other on without meets and tournaments getting in the way.

In other sports, such as soccer, the girls soccer team sometimes have the issue of not being able to cheer on their counterpart team if they have an away game on the same day, as they both play in the fall.

On the other hand, some students feel that if the teams swam in the same season, it could boost spirit and morale between them.

"It would be fun to have our swim season together because it encourages the team as a whole to swim faster overall and set goals.

For people who swim on club teams and are continuing to swim in college, the boys and girls season are together," Dariana Gonzales ('19) said.

Although colleges take advantage of the boosted morale by running the boys and girls swim seasons concurrently, since Westhill only has one swimming pool, practices would not be nearly as effective if we followed the same strategy.

Additionally, other schools have water polo teams and, in order to have enough equipment for the teams, hold boys water polo practices in the fall with girls swim and vice versa in the winter.

All in all, boys and girls swim practice in different seasons in order to maximize the school's limited resources and allow the teams to have longer practices.



**SWIM TO VICTORY** The boys swim team practices at Westhill's pool for FCIACs. They have practice everyday for up to three hours.

Photos by **Jayden Lesser** / Photographer.

## Fluctuating team reputations at Westhill

**Bella Vaccaro**  
Staff Writer

Since Westhill's opening in 1972, the school has facilitated many different sports teams. Each year, students come and go and the success of each team varies.

The reputation of certain teams constantly fluctuates. Some years, a team may go undefeated, and the next not even make it to the city championship.

Westhill athletics are constantly changing, and there is no way to be sure what the turnout will be next year.

The Westhill girls volley-

ball team is a prime example. In previous years, the team had not made it to the state tournament or FCIAC championships.

However, during the 2018 season, the team made it and excelled in both. It has been almost 20 years since the team proceeded that far.

This year, the team ended with an almost perfect record of 18-2 in their regular season. The reputation of the girl's volleyball team completely flipped for the better this year.

"We have gotten a better reputation over the years. The history of Westhill Athletics has constantly gone up and down

and up and down. In the 1990s and early 2000s we were not a competitive school but now our teams have slowly grown into strong competitive groups," Mr. Pereira, Varsity Boys Wrestling Coach and Dean of Students, said.

The main aspect that throws a team out of their winning streak each year is when senior students graduate. The team loses their leaders and often times, their strongest players. This can send a team spiraling, but the key is to stay strong despite these losses.

Coaches are tasked with keeping their teams strong

throughout a new season each year.

"The reputation of each team can fluctuate each year. However, if you get the right group of kids the team can do anything. Programs in the past have struggled and then flipped themselves around. A team's greatness can go around in circles, but the most important thing is that there is gel between the different players," Mr. Cerone, Athletic Director, said.

It is hard to maintain consistency when players and coaches are changing every season. However, teams must put in the same amount of hard work and

perseverance.

"Being consistent is perhaps one of the biggest challenges that the team faces each year because of the turnover in players. The Freshman and Junior Varsity programs do a great job in preparing our players for the next level so that by the time they make the Varsity team they have a good understanding of what is expected of them," Mr. Andrews, Varsity Boys Soccer Coach, said.

The teams try their best to keep a good record each year, and they are working together to continue raising Westhill's athletic reputation with each season.



# Zyskowski swims to the end



**JUST KEEP SWIMMING** Zyskowski has been swimming for Westhill for the past four years.

Photo contributed by Kevin Zyskowski.

**Kate Williams**  
Staff Writer

*Kevin Zyskowski ('19) has been swimming for the team since his freshman year. Not only is Zyskowski an extraordinary student, but he has proved to be an exceptional swimmer. His dedication to and excellence in swimming has landed Zyskowski this issue's Male Athlete of the Month. After hours of hard work and training, it is clear he excels in the sport. The Westword sat down with him to talk about how swimming has played a significant role in his life.*

**The Westword (TW):** When did you first start swimming?

**Kevin Zyskowski (KZ):** I started swimming when I was five years old. So, I have been swimming for almost 13 years now.

**TW:** How did you get into swimming?

**KZ:** My parents made me take swimming lessons, so it was not necessarily something I chose to do at first. But, soon after, I started to fall in love with it.

**TW:** What teams do you swim for?

**KZ:** I swim for the Westhill Swim and Dive team. I also swim outside of school at Chelsea Piers.

**TW:** What is your favorite part about swimming?

**KZ:** My favorite part about swimming is definitely the people. I have made so many friends through it, and it has become such a great support network. I also am extremely competitive, so swimming also satisfies that desire to compete. The thrill of winning is one of the greatest feelings.

**TW:** How does your future in swimming look?

**KZ:** I plan to swim for whatever college I go to for a division three team. In middle school I had dreams of going to the Olympics, but dreams change.

**TW:** Who would you say is your swimming role model?

**KZ:** Michael Phelps is definitely my role model. He is easily the best swimmer ever.

**TW:** Who has been the most influential person in your swimming career?

**KZ:** My coach, Jamie Brone, has had a great impact on me. He is the most important person I have encountered throughout my swimming endeavors.

**TW:** Which races do you compete in?

**KZ:** I compete in the 50 meter freestyle, 100 meter freestyle, and a number of relay races as well.

**TW:** What has been your biggest accomplishment in swimming thus far?

**KZ:** My biggest achievement in my swimming career has been swimming at the open championship.

**TW:** What is your weekly schedule like for swimming?

**KZ:** I swim almost every day. Monday through Saturday and I swim at least two hours every day.

**TW:** What are three words you would use to describe yourself?

**KZ:** I would say I am friendly, competitive, and dedicated. Each of these attributes have helped me in different ways for swimming.

**TW:** What has been the biggest challenge you faced in your career?

**KZ:** The biggest challenge I have faced in swimming was suffering a double shoulder injury. Both of my shoulders were injured at the same time which is definitely not ideal for

# Carty bringing the party to the court



**SHE SHOOTS, SHE SCORES** Jaedyn Carty has been playing basketball for almost ten years, and her love for the game will never change.

Photo contributed by Jaedyn Carty.

**Madison Thibodeau**  
Staff Writer

*Jaedyn Carty ('20) kicked off her first year at Westhill by joining the Girls Varsity Basketball team after just moving to Stamford from Gainesville, Georgia. Prior to moving to Stamford, Carty lived in Georgia and South Dakota, where she completed her freshman and sophomore years of high school playing basketball. Although her career at Westhill just started, she is already looking forward to next season, hoping to help the team.*

**The Westword (TW):** What is your favorite thing about Westhill?

**Jaedyn Carty (JC):** I really like the diversity in Westhill, which my schools in Georgia also had, but it is different here. I loved meeting everyone here, I found a home in my team, and they made me feel like family right away. I love all my coaches.

**TW:** How old were you when you started playing basketball?

**JC:** I have been playing since I was in second grade.

**TW:** Do you have any pre-game rituals?

**JC:** Not really, I try not to think too much before a game and just play basketball because if I think too much, I know I will play aw-

fully.

**TW:** What is your main goal this season?

**JC:** We came into the season working hard to improve everyday as a team and as individuals. My main goal as of now is to finish off the season better than we started.

**TW:** What are your goals for the oncoming seasons?

**JC:** I hope to be a great captain and work with the returning and new coming players for next years season, starting from now and through the rest of the season next year.

**TW:** Who is a player that you look up to and why?

**JC:** LeBron James because he is a leader in his community on and off the courts.

**TW:** How does basketball compare in the different places you have lived?

**JC:** There is definitely a lot more competition in Georgia, nothing like I have seen in South Dakota or in Stamford yet. I used to play on a travel team back in Georgia in middle school which is probably some of the hardest competition I have had yet. I made varsity my first year at Westhill which was nice.

**TW:** What position do you play?

**JC:** I play shooting guard and small forward.

**TW:** Do you plan on going to college for sports?

**JC:** Yes, I have always wanted to go to Duke. I am definitely looking down south for school, close to my home in Georgia. My goal is to go D1, of course, and I think I have a lot of potential. Either way I will still play club basketball.

**TW:** What is your favorite thing to do outside of basketball?

**JC:** I value family time a lot, especially since we have moved all over the country in the past few years. Other than that I hang out with my teammates a lot, they are my best friends and they have shown me a lot about Stamford. I also work at a store called Six:02, a womens clothing/sneaker store in the Stamford Mall, and I enjoy trying out all the restaurants around the city.

**TW:** What advice can you give to aspiring basketball players?

**JC:** Be competitive and give it your all, and do not take any game for granted. Also, becoming successful or good at a skill does not come easy for everyone, it takes continued repetition and hard work and I wish I would have taken it more seriously because now I have one more year before my senior year, which means one more year to give it my all.



## WINTER SPORT'S FINAL RESULTS

### BOYS BASKETBALL

9-16

### GIRLS BASKETBALL

4-16

### BOYS ICE HOCKEY

11-9

### GIRLS ICE HOCKEY

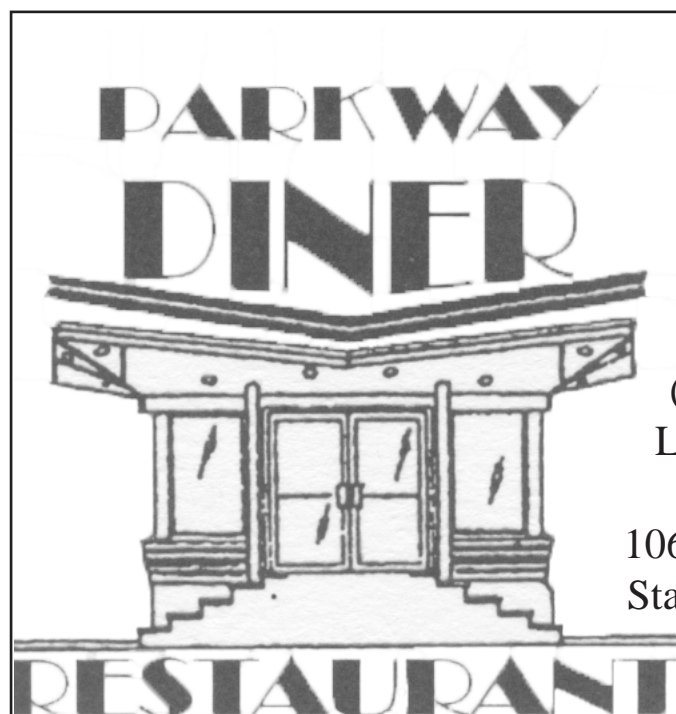
3-17

### WRESTLING

1-5

### BOYS SWIM

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**Westhill students with their ID**  
*will get \$3 milkshakes*  
*with the purchase of a meal*  
*every Monday through*  
*Friday from 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.*

## MARCH SPORTS CALENDAR

**Congratulations**  
to our winter  
teams on a  
great season!

### Week 3 (11-14)

**DATE:** 11  
**EVENT:** V Boys Swimming and Diving  
CIAC Class LL Championship  
**LOCATION:** Away - Southern CT  
State University  
**TIME:** 1:30 p.m.

**Date:** 12  
**Event:** V Boys Swimming and Diving  
CIAC Open Diving Championship  
**Location:** Away - Bulkeley HS/  
Hartford  
**Time:** 5:30 p.m.

**Date:** 14  
**Event:** V Boys Swimming and Diving  
CIAC Open Championship  
**Location:** Away - Yale University  
**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

### Week 4 (23-30)

**Date:** 23  
**Event:** V Boys Lacrosse Jam-  
boree  
**Opponent:** Bunnell, Stratford,  
Jonathon Law  
**Location:** Home - J. Walter  
Kennedy Stadium  
**Time:** 9:00 a.m.

**Date:** 30  
**Event:** V Baseball  
**Opponent:** Weston  
**Location:** Away - Revson Field,  
Weston  
**Time:** 12:00 p.m.

**DATE:** 30  
**EVENT:** Varsity Girls Lacrosse  
**OPPONENT:** Avon  
**LOCATION:** Home  
**TIME:** 11:00 a.m.





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**A look into the gymnastics team p. 36 / Westhill's improv team hits the stage p. 27**



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