

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

Students lend a helping hand to Haiti
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STUDENTS PUSH
FOR PEDESTRIAN
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UNIVERSITARIA
CON PADRES
BILINGUES



AN INDEPTH
REVIEW OF THE
FILM BEFORE
THE FLOOD

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### **November 2016**

### Note from the Editors

Dear Reader,

After a short but sweet Thanksgiving break, we at *The Westword* are excited to present our second issue.

First and foremost, our sincerest condolences go out to the family and friends of Karina Tinajero-Arreguin. She will be greatly missed and many will remember her for being a hardworking and loved member of the Stamford community.

The Editorial piece discusses the underlying current of racism within our own school, and how we propose to help fight this issue. It is our hope that the Westhill community participates in our initiative.

In News, you can learn about the effects of four-day weekends on students and the new Uconn Stamford dorms.

In Viewpoint, we examine the benefits of legalizing marijuana for both medical and recreational use, along with a student's push for implementing feminine products within school bathrooms.

Following Viewpoint, our Las Noticias section covers Thanksgiving traditions within Westhill's ELL community. In Special Report, you can read about the steps taken after the presidential election and predictions for the next four years.

Within Supplement, you can find an exposé on social equality and what factors into those issues.

On the Feature pages, we highlight the new restaurants in Stamford, as well as interviews with stand-out freshmen. In Limelight, upcoming novels and their release

dates are featured.

In Scatterbrain, you can do a winter themed word search. Our artist of the month is Kathryn Kopec, which can be found in Express.

In Sports, you can read about how athletes spend their off-season and results from the Homecoming game, as well as the annual Powderpuff game.

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

Sincerely. Dong Zhi Guo & Maddy Cohen Editor-in-Chief & Executive Editor

#### **Editorial Policy**

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

The Editorial Board consists of Dong Zhi Guo, Maddy Cohen, Josh Eimbiender, Noah Klein, Caroline Boccuzzi, Maeve Ronan, Nicholas Zarrilli, Michael Hernandez, Liz Yamron, Janet Manina, Melanie Gorski, Yacianca Taveras, Sarah Goldberg, William Evans, Dan Skigen, Mr. von Wahlde, and Mr. Wooley. The Edito-

rial can be found on page 3. **Announcements** 

Congratulations to...

The Westhill Varsity football team for their victory over Stamford High!

### **Corrections**

In the October issue we incorrectly wrote Noah Zussman instead of Max Zussman on page 7. On page 38, we spelled Mateusz Dzieman instead of Mateusz Dziemian. On page 5, Manaav Sunderaman is also a debate captain. On page 22, we spelled Sydney Lesser instead of Sydnie Lesser.

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

### What's inside

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News Discussing the need for greater pedestrian safety in Stamford

Viewpoint Debating the legalization of marijuana

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Special Report Predicting the after effects of a Trump presidency

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Front cover photo illustration by Ryan Murace / Media Manager Back cover photos by Ryan Murace, Marc DeLuca, & Kiley Watson / Media Manager, Distribution Manager, & Videographer

# EDITORIAL—

## A push for changes within the cafeteria

Society has evolved to become more socially inclusive, and with that, the way people discriminate against certain groups has also been altered. While in the past, the percentage of white people within Westhill was the majority number, in recent years, the majority population within our school has changed. In Westhill, there is a certain cycle that appears in the lunchrooms. The two cafeterias, formally known as the Finch and Raynor cafeterias, are more commonly referred to as the 'white caf' and the 'black caf,' respectively by students.

For the past few years, in an effort to break this cycle, administration had tried undertaking an initiative called "Mix It Up Day." Two years ago, Dean of Students Mr. Pereira led this movement. However, many students did not take this seriously and were seemingly uncomfortable with breaking away from their habitual tables.

It is important to point out that while this appears to be self segregation, "kids find people who they are friends with or in class with," said Mr. Pereira. This is not a matter of blatant discrimination. Students simply choose to sit with who they are friends with. The problem is where they sit. When *The Westword* asked students if they thought that the separation of the cafeterias was a matter of race discrimination, there were mixed responses. "Yes, why [else] is there a racial division between cafeterias," said

nature and the way people group themselves. "[Racism is] not really present," said Evan Lenz ('19). "People naturally congregate with people that are the most like them, it is human nature. It does not mean that one group in one cafeteria thinks they are superior."

"Maybe [there is] not blatant racism but prejudice and underly-

### The bottom line:

On December 22, *The Westword* encourages students to eat lunch in a different cafeteria throughout all three lunch waves. This change will help to break up subconscious decision to separate the cafeterias.

Kathryn Kopec ('19).

On the other hand, many students disagree. "Definitely not, no one is forced to sit in a certain cafeteria. Honestly I think it is just an easier name to remember" said Jeffrey Reyes ('17). This is the type of thing that civil rights activists were combating in the 1950s and 60s. While the cafeterias are viewed as segregation to some, others simply believe it is human

ing racism are 100 percent present [in Westhill]," said Samantha Hamilton ('18). The prejudice that many such as Hamilton see in Westhill is a problem that needs to be stopped. It is a problem bigger than the current students. This impacts future generations of students at Westhill and in Stamford. For that reason, *The Westword* is asking for the students' help to stop the segregation and make the

community integrated even further. The courtyard is a common place for everyone where students of all races and religions can mingle without the labels of a certain race, religion, or ethnicity following them. This is what we hope to see throughout all of Westhill, especially the cafeteria.

On December 22, throughout all the lunch waves, we propose a plan to remove the stigma surrounding each cafeteria. The weeks leading up to it, keep an eye and an ear out for fliers and announcements over the intercom. The day of, go sit in a cafeteria that you normally do not sit in. Take your friends and relocate to a different table or area, one that is outside of your comfort zone. This experiment relies on the voice of the students, not administration, to spread the word of this movement. By telling just five people to sit in the cafeteria they normally do not sit in can impact the community and break the cycle of segregation in Westhill.

Already, Westhill is "less segregated since [the "Mix It Up" days have] started. The cafeterias has a greater mix of ethnicity," said Mr.

Pereira. The only way to further this progress is to continue with changing up routines. What makes this initiative far more effective is the people who are pushing for it. This will be entirely student-run. The Editorial Board will be working together with the English and Communication classes in order to help guide students to new areas for lunch.

This push will be reiterated throughout the school year once a month. If the Westhill community starts small, it can make a large impact on the future. This is the generation that has to make the change, not the past ones and not the future ones. Sit in the opposite cafeteria in which you would normally sit in attempt to break away from your usual habits. Our hope is for this initiative will spark much more forward thinking conversations about how we can tackle the recurring problem of racism. More details will be released as this date approaches.

[Editor's Note: To ensure accuracy, The Westword will be conducting a demographics poll for each cafeteria. The results of these polls will be published on thewestwordonline.com.]

### ——— In memoriam **Karina Tinajero-Arreguin**

### October 30, 1998 - November 5, 2016



The Westword would like to offer our sincerest condolences to the Tinajero family for their loss. Karina was a very special young woman with such a promising future, and was described by many as a hard-working and kind student. She was loved by everyone around her including her family, teacher, and friends. If you are interested in donating money to the memorial fund in the form of a scholarship in Karina's honor, please visit gofundme.com/KarinaMemorialScholarship.

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# -News

### Stamford fights for pedestrian safety after tragedy



#### Stephanie Zachariadis

Staff Writer

While crossing Strawberry Hill Avenue to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) at Stamford High School, 18-year-old Karina Tinajero-Arreguin was fatally struck by a van driven by a 37-year-old man on November 5.

Tinajero, a Stamford High School student, immigrated to Stamford from Mexico several years prior to her death, and graduated from the English Language Learners (ELL) program. She occasionally returned to the ELL program to help mentor other students. Tinajero was rushed to Stamford Hospital following the accident and later died there due to sustained injuries.

"I found it incredibly upsetting. It almost felt unreal that something like this could happen so quickly. Karina was a very sweet girl and it breaks my heart it had to end this way. Hopefully better safety precautions are taken from now on," said Stamford High student Skylar Gibb ('17). Stamford Public Schools offered grief counseling and other relief services in their schools following

the accident.

The driver of the offending 2000 Chevrolet Express Van stayed behind after the accident and cooperated with police. The man is not facing charges, according to Sgt. Andrew Gallagher, who stated that the driver was not distracted, nor under the influence. However, the investigation is still ongoing.

"On behalf of the entire Stamford Public Schools community, we are deeply saddened to learn of this tragic loss of life," said Public Affairs Officer for the Stamford Public Schools Sharon Beadle. "Our hearts and prayers go out to our student's family and friends."

Despite the overwhelming tragedy of Tinajero's death, a prevalent underlying issue remains: a serious lack of driverpedestrian safety precautions on Strawberry Hill Avenue. This intersection has been brought to attention in the past, as evidenced by three fatal accidents that occurred at the intersection in the past 14 years, as well as a multitude of non-fatal accidents.

In December of last year, Stamford High guidance counselor, Andrena Forlenzo, was injured after crossing the street on her way to work. In 2011, two Stamford High students were hit while crossing the street on their way to school. Fortunately, they were not killed. Michael Montanaro, 44, was killed in 2002 while riding his motorcycle on the street heading to his son's baseball game at the school. In 2014, Carmine Passero, 65, was killed while crossing the street when he worked as a substitute teacher at Stamford High School.

Prior to Tinajero's passing, there were no indicators that the four-lane street was a school zone. Officials have since stated that a crosswalk will be painted in front of Stamford High, and crossing guards will be employed to help students and staff cross the street safely.

However, principal of Stamford High, Raymond Manka, suggests that the city of Stamford take a step further by implementing a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon (PHB). This device would not induce traffic and will alert drivers of the school zone ahead. The PHB suggestion was delivered before the fatal accident on November, but was not installed in time.

"Cost should not be the deciding factor when it comes to the safety of the general public. Instead of spending money on random projects around Stamford that are not really beneficial to anyone," said Theresa Persico ('17). "We should be spending money on improving our infrastructure and general community well-being."

Westhill and Stamford High students alike are deeply troubled by the passing of Tinajero, and many Stamford residents are extremely frustrated by the fact that there are no signs on a busy four-lane street in front of a public high school. Stamford High School's student publication, *The Round Table*, is pushing for immediate action to make the road safe for crossing.

"This is a tragic situation. No parent should ever have to bury their child. My thoughts and prayers, and those of the entire Stamford community, are with the family of this young woman during this incredibly difficult time," said Stamford Mayor David Martin in his statement following the death of Tinajero.

Back when Stamford High

School was built in the early to mid-1900s, the street was quiet and did not require much in regards to safety precautions. However, Stamford has since become a growing urban community, and over 2,000 students alone attend Stamford High School. Stamford High is located downtown in the busiest area in Stamford with frequent traffic and pedestrians on the roads. Stamford High students arrive at school at a time when most adults are on the road heading to work, and those who stay after school leave during rush hour. Since the accident, school zone signs have since been put in place on Strawberry Hill Avenue. Still, some wonder if it is enough to keep students and staff safe from oncoming vehicles.

Plans are being pushed for a traffic light to be installed in front of the school. The potential installation has the approval of Stamford residents. However, the plan has yet to be inspected for approval and financial capability to make the installation possible. Until then, Stamford residents hold their breath in anticipation to learn of the fate of the school's and students safety.

Agriscience prepares Thanksgiving Feast

The Agriscience Program hosted an annual feast during the week of Thanksgiving for AG members. Students and teachers use the AG kitchen and start cooking on Monday and continue through Tuesday during school hours. After the food has been cooked, the feast is held in the kitchen and eaten on Tuesday and Wednesday. Approximately 200 students and faculty members take part in this unorthodox class project, where food handling and safety issues are covered. "In class they teach a lot about cross contamination and cooking safety standards, like temperature. Specifically in our AG 1 and 2 classes, it is the first time they get to implement what they learn in class," said Jonathan Russo ('17). Students in the AG program are getting an education beyond the classroom in the form of an extravagant supper where thanks is given to fellow members of a closely knit group within Westhill.

### L.E.A.F.S. club does their part

L.E.A.F.S. club, also known as Leaders of Environmental Awareness and Future Sustainability, is an after school club focused on maintaining the environment. "Many of our members, myself included, really care about keeping our environment the way it is and try to get involved in the community so that we will be able to give back," said Gabby Napolitano ('18) the club's president for the 2016-17 school year. "If we do not do something about helping our earth now, nothing will ever get done." Napolitano also went on to explain what she feels are the best parts about L.E.A.F.S. "The best part about being involved in the club is being able to be involved in community service projects our club has to offer, like volunteering at the Stamford Nature Center or working in the school's greenhouse." The club also tries to make sure everything they do is environmentally friendly and helps give back to the earth and to their community. L.E.A.F.S. meets after school every Tuesday in room 310.

Briefs by Janet Manina & Molly Cannon / Supplement Editor & Reporter.

### **BRIEFS** School supplies donated to help Haiti

Alex Fischer

Staff Writer

Following the passing of catastrophic and deadly tropical storm, Hurricane Matthew, millions of people across the western hemisphere have been left distraught, with their homes in ruins. As the storm reached the coast, it quickly became the first Category 5 Atlantic hurricane since Hurricane Felix in 2007. In early October, Matthew reached the southwest coast of Haiti and left its mark on the terrain. Homes across Haiti have been obliterated, leaving 1.4

million people injured and in desperate need for medical assistance, and nearly 900 others dead. The United Nations is currently working to raise money for the damage done. However, much more is needed to provide complete relief and to sustain livelihood in Haiti, as well as contain a potential cholera outbreak. The lack of response to this culmination of disaster in Haiti is inexcusable, and the Westhill community is ready to lend a helping hand.

Ms. Claudia Obas, Westhill's Dean of students, has initiated a school supply drive in which Westhill students are encouraged to bring in spare school supplies which could be of use to those in Haiti. "I was in Haiti in July. They are not over Hurricane Sandy yet and are still living in tents in villages. When I heard that Matthew was coming, I was more worried than I have been in the past," said Ms. Obas.

In truth, Haiti has insufficient resources at the moment. as they have had for several years. The population continually struggles due to extreme poverty and lack of resources many take for granted in America. In such a calamitous natural disaster with massive flooding, their school supplies have likely been ruined. Obas feels that she should do something a little more practical in respect to the environment we are in at Westhill. Through a family member of Obas' in Haiti, the collected supplies are being distributed to those who need them at a local church. Any extra materials they can obtain will be able to help Haiti in some way. Many students have been bringing in supplies, and Obas hopes that more students will contribute to



HELP FOR HAITI Following the devastation of Hurricane Matthew, Haiti is in need of aid. Ms. Obas has started a donation box for school supplies which is located in the Raynor Office. The donations will be collected by Ms. Obas herself will later be distributed to children in Haiti

### Time conflictions with AP Saturday sessions

**Daniela Paredes** 

Staff Writer

For many, Advanced Placement (AP) classes study sessions offered on Saturdays are a conflicting matter. Some students have as many as three sessions taking place on the same day. Some students have to put aside predetermined plans in order to attend, which may include college visits or sports-related matters.

The primary issue for many students attending the sessions was time management and overlapping sessions. "There should be two sessions [for each class] on the same day. The reason is be-

between AP U.S. History and AP Literature and Composition.

However, other students found that having two simultaneously was not much of a problem, not even with distribution of time. "I do not mind having two in one day, but I do believe that many students are challenging themselves more and more, so there might be a growing population of those having three in one day," said Andre Salazar ('17).

A vast majority of participating students found AP sessions to be very helpful, but pointed out that there were some unfortunate downsides that impacted the overall purpose of the sessions. cause not all of us are taking only In order to create motivation, one AP class," said Andrea Vega multiple teachers offered extra ('17), who had to divide her time credit or points on assignments

partisans of the AP sessions. "I believe they are helpful if you are not just going for the extra credit. If the person is going in, wanting to learn the material, and actually studying the material at home, than they can enjoy the session more. It is getting a fuller experience out of it," said Salazar.

Useful techniques and strategies, along with practice tests and packets are provided for the AP students, who attend the sessions from 9 am to 12 p.m., and are met with light refreshments in order to get their morning going. "They were helpful, but I wish they were not at the same time so I could go to more than one," said Ray Deutsch ('18).

Instructors also dealt with

to students in exchange for being the resulting issues, an influx of new students entering after the mid-session break served as a disruption to the students who had attended the beginning of the lecture. Instructors had to distribute materials again to those who came half-way through the session, and revisit previous topics discussed. In some instances, these disruptions halted a current activity or exercise.

Despite some schedule hitches, AP Saturdays are a success among the students that attend. They provide preparation and resources often not available in classrooms or during class time, along with the experience and distinct approaches from instructors and teachers from neighboring schools in Connecticut.

### **UConn-Stamford builds new dorms**

**Marley Sklover** 

Reporter

People who live in the city of Stamford are lucky to live in such a diverse, hardworking, and progressive city. Not only is "The City That Works" home to a wide variety of public works projects, a strong public school system, and a hip and bustling restaurant scene, but the city is now also home to the newly constructed UConn-Stamford dorms and apartment complexes.

UConn-Stamford's expanding digital media and business pro-

more housing options. A beautiful apartment-style dorm located in a sea of hip restaurants, surrounded by employment and internship opportunities and proximity to New York City sounds amazing, but there is a catch.

The high expenses of these apartments have deterred students from living in them. The cost of a one-bedroom apartment is around \$2,000 per month while the cost of a two-bedroom apartment averages about \$2,700 a month. It is already tough juggling a college course load, a social life, extra-

extraneous. There are efforts for lower living costs in the works but until then, these residences will remain empty.

In order for the city of Stamford to progress in its effort to attract a younger demographic, the cost of living must decrease. "I feel like Stamford is a nice town slowly evolving into a tiny version of New York City. At least that is what I have read, and it attracts many college students simply because UConn is right there. they contribute to Stamford's rich I have not really given it much diversity and strong metrics.

grams have created the need for curricular, and work commit- thought because it hasn't affectments, but a high rent would be ed me yet" said Ashley Torres ('17). The majority of UConn-Stamford students live with their families and commute to campus for classes. However, aside from the fact that the prices of the new UConn-Stamford dorms are steep, Stamford strives to attract a younger generation. The nightlife scene, proximity to New York City, and corporate buildings most definitely put Stamford on the map. UConn-Stamford students lead by example in that



UCONN LIVE HERE UConn-Stamford has almost completed construction for new dorms on Washington Blvd. in downtown Stamford. UConn hopes the addition will attract more students to its Stamford campus.

### Think Positive...

Column by Micayla Roth

It has been one busy month, so busy that Thanksgiving seems to have passed faster than we ever thought was possible. So out of all of the crazy, and sometimes upsetting things that have happened recently, what should we be thankful for?

A few weeks ago, one of the most important events in American history occurred: the Presidential election. No matter what one's political views are, it was a big deal. Many Americans were too busy arguing to realize how important their vote truly was. New voters experienced something important on November 8. People across the entire nation coming together to make the give their people the chance to

vote. We have something special: a democracy. We are unique in the sense that the American people get a voice in making some of the most crucial choices. That is definitely something to be thankful for this holiday season.

On November 13, people all across the globe celebrated World Kindness Day. The purpose of this holiday is to encourage people to make small acts of kindness towards others. A man in Colorado Springs had elementary school children write short, inspiring poem. The poems had messages such as, "You have magic no matter what, share it and have fun."

country's most important deci- ticipated in World Kindness Day sion. Many other countries do not the following Monday. Students they would not normally get at they are what the season is really walked into lunch to find free home. Their talents get nurtured, all about.

by the Purple Pack. This warm gesture brightened the students' day, and provided a moment of sweetness in an otherwise usual, and dreary school day. With all of the stress that comes with being a teenager, small acts of kindness are always very welcome.

Fortunately, so many amazing things are happening at this wonderful time of the year. Following with the trend of kindness this holiday season are the Simpsons, a Washington D.C. family. Every Thanksgiving, the family gathers around the table with as many as twenty-five children, Westhill students also par- need. They are treated as family

hot chocolate being handed out and their education is encouraged. A warm and loving environment is created in the home for these kids, and they are provided with an evening of happiness. The Simpson family exemplifies true kindness and care for others, and most of all, the importance of family. Stories like these inspire us to help others in need.

There is so much to be thankful for. We have the freedom to make our own choices, to voice our own opinions. We have people in the world who just want to help others. If more people reach out and try to help others, then we will have a little more happiteenagers, and young adults in ness in the world. Keep in mind the freedom, kindness, family, members and served a hot meal and friends that we have, because

### **BRIEFS**

### Mock Trial team prepares for first competition

On December 2, the Mock Trial team will participate in their first competition of the 2016-17 school year. The competition will take place at the Stamford Court House and will transpire from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The team is organized into two groups: plantiff and defense. Each argue their side in order to receive points from the judges. "We have been practicing a lot for this competition. We practice every Thursday for four hours and are guided by [Alex Troyb], an actual lawyer, and Ms. Loesch, who help us prepare and strengthen our cases and strategies," said Maanav Sunderaraman ('17). Hopefully, the practice will pay off for the team in their first competition of the year.

### River Hill Cafe serves students

Some students feel that the food choices at Westhill are variety. However, The Riverhill Cafe, located in room 209, is another food option for students and teachers, where they can order a meal from the menu provided. Patty Nestor is the supervisor of the Riverhill Cafe along with the help of Westhill's special education classes. The special education students are involved in the program and get the chance to produce lunches, and even make food for school events. The cafe allows the special education students to get a feel for working in food services with hands-on experience and gives them a sense of business principles. The Riverhill Cafe provides a number of options that cater to a variety of tastes. This includes: salads, sandwiches, pasta, brownies, and several beverages. Westhill students and staff are encouraged to come try what River Hill Cafe has to offer. The cafe is open for business on 'B' Days.

Briefs by Nathan Salm & Hannah Nadelson / Reporter & Staff Writer.

### Good Month Bad Month

Column by Max Zussman & Matthew Greenbaum

### **Good Month For...**

Republicans In one of the most memorable elections to date, Donald Trump shocked the country by becoming the 45th President of the United States. Trump won many battleground states which led to his victory. The Republican party maintained control of the House of Representatives and Senate in a surprising election night. This will be the first time since 1928 that the Republican party has had complete control of all three branches.

### **Bad Month For...**

New Zealand Earthquakes Aseries of powerful earthquakes devastated the island of New Zealand on November 14. The earthquake peaked at a magnitude of 7.8, one of the highest recorded in New Zealand history. Thousands of people were left stranded without power. food, or water. The death toll has reached two people, but is not expected to rise any further. Officials estimate that the cleanup costs will reach over billions of dollars.





Mannequin Challenge challenge has swept the nation as the next internet sensation video. Essentially, people in the video remain frozen in action, as mannequins do, with the song "Black Beatles" by Rae Sreummurd serving as the background song. The trend is believed to have originated from Edward H. White High School in Jacksonville, Florida with a group of friends posted the first video.

Bob Dylan Bob Dylan was recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in Literature, however did not make any statements acceoting the award. His name has been removed from the Nobel Prize website. Many disagree with his decision to not show gratitude to the Nobel Prize selection committee. The Nobel Prize Committee was saddened by the news that he would not be attending the awards ceremony.





Andre Ward On November 19, boxer Andre Ward took on a heated fight with his fierce opponent Sergey Kovalev. When they first stepped in the boxing ring, Kovalev dominated, but after a few rounds, Ward woke up and started coming back. It was a very close fight but unanimously the judges decided to crown Ward the victor of the Light Heavyweight Title. With this win, Ward kept his perfect, undefeated record of 31 wins and 0 loses.

The Truth Over the past election, many Americans feel that false information has been spreading through postings on Facebook. Fake news was leaked all over the site, presenting readers with incorrect information. Facebook executives have to decide if they should censor news articles posted to make sure that they are factual, not misleading propaganda. They are looking into banning the traffic of fake news.

### Westhill students honor Stamford veterans

Maeve Ronan

Managing Editor

On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, we honor every veteran who has served our country. First established as Armistice Day following the end of World War I, November 11 was intended to dedicate a day to remind nations to seek peaceful relationships with one another. Following World War II and the Korean War, President Eisenhower and the 83rd Congress signed a legislation to change Armistice Day to Veterans Day, a day to commemorate and honor our nation's veterans.

On November 10, Westhill held a Veterans Day assembly where multiple veterans from Brighton Gardens and the Stamford area were invited to speak. Westhill students who entered in a writing competition that posed the question "Why should we honor our veterans?" also spoke and shared their winning entries.

Dr. Forbes, an economics teacher and head of the Social Studies department at Westhill, began the ceremony by introducing the veterans that were present at the assembly and veterans within the Westhill staff. Among the invited guests were Samuel G. Gilly, a Marine, Archie Elm, District Commander of Veterans of Foreign Affairs who served in the Persian Gulf War, and Westhill substitute teacher Richard Olson, who is the American Legions Commander Officer. Veterans among the Westhill staff include JROTC's Sergeant Major and security guards Nick Wright and Eddie Lane.

Will Gold ('18), a frequent volunteer at the Brighton Gardens senior living community, interviewed one of the veterans present at the assembly. He was a first Operational Cruise Missile Squadron in the Korean War. The veteran spent three years stationed in Germany after enlisting in the Air Force from 1954 to 1957, and received a Purple Heart for sustaining injuries. When asked what his most memorable experience was in the war, he responded with the Hungarian Revolution. He remembers being instructed to mobilize the nuclear missiles he was in charge of, and although they were never fired, it was the closest the U.S. had come to an all-out nuclear war. Since 1990, he and the other members of his squadron reunite every two years.

Alex Fischer ('17) read her entry from the Veterans Day writing competition. She spoke about the value of a veteran, and what they do for our country. Fischer spoke about how being a veteran redefines the meaning of the phrase "I'd take a bullet for you." It means something completely different when you are lying in a trench being shot at, risking your life for the rights of your friends and family back home. She posed the question "Would you risk taking a bullet for the ones you love?" Soldiers make huge sacrifices, no matter where they are stationed or what war they fight in. Fischer's grandfather is a veteran of the Vietnam War, and missed the birth of his first-born son when fighting

Veterans deserve every bit of gratitude and respect they get. In the wake of the election, Dr. Forbes mentioned that although we may not like the results, we should be thankful for the right to vote and the right to protest those in power. These elements of democracy are exactly what veterans fight to uphold, and what soldiers stationed in the Middle East and other locations are fighting for today. Veterans Day is a reminder to be thankful for all of our rights as American citizens, and to thank the people who have fought to protect these rights throughout the course of history.



HONORING OUR VETERANS Veterans tell their stories at Westhill's annual Veterans Day assembly. Students also spoke to honor the veterans and show their gratitude

# **VIEWPOINT** Rise and shine

### Students observe the benefits and trade-offs of a later starting time at Westhill

**Arianna Nguyen** 

Staff Writer

Recently Greenwich High school has changed their start time to 8 a.m. While other High Schools including Westhill start at 7 a.m. Starting school at a later time gives students an extra hour of sleep which has been statistically proven to create better performance in their studies. Some students stay up until 10 p.m. or later doing class work and assignments that are due and have to wake up at 6 a.m. This can affect the way they function at school and the quality of their work. In the morning, students cannot focus during first block as well as in the afternoon

because many students are still trying to wake up and focus.

Students, who also stay after school come home at a later time and then must do homework, eat and do their nightly routine. "I do think we should start school later because we are able to get more sleep and that way we'll be more productive," said Bria Pettiford ('17).

Starting at 8 a.m. will allow students to have time to eat a healthy breakfast

cannot, due buses arriving so early. Going to school at 7 a.m. prevents some from getting the eight and a half to nine hours of sleep that teens should get. Students are also more likely to be alert and remember things by getting more sleep. "Students are more awake later in the day, thus making their brain able to actually retain information and engaged rather than ignoring everything first period or falling asleep," said Mackenzie Vargas ('17).

The time difference of waking up at 8 a.m. also allows students to get up earlier by the sun's light. In the winter, it is harder to get up at 6 a.m. because the sun does not rise until later. "I do believe there should be a later starting time because teenagers enjoy going to sleep later and waking up later. When I wake up and it is dark outside, it makes me draggier and

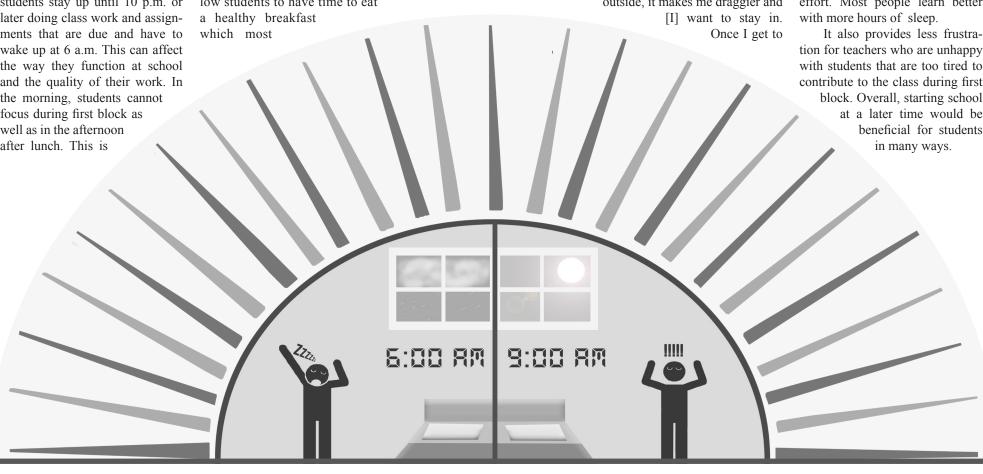
is put my head down and sleep," said Taj Barbier ('17). Students who arrive in the

school all I want to do first period

morning will not learn or remember anything if they are sleeping during school hours. If they can get those extra hours of sleep it would make a significant difference. Getting more hours of sleep also is proven to cause a positive change in attitude and increased effort. Most people learn better

It also provides less frustration for teachers who are unhappy with students that are too tired to contribute to the class during first

> at a later time would be beneficial for students in many ways.



Nicole Segal Staff Writer

While everyone may like the idea of getting up later for school, a delay in the start time may only cause more bad than good. Starting later only pushes extracurricular activities such as sports or clubs back about an hour, changes the whole schedule time for buses, which would then cause potential delay for other Stamford Public Schools. Students who do not take the bus to and from school may also have difficulty having their parent or guardian pick them up or drop them off depending on how early or late they work.

No student wants to get up at 5 or 6 a.m. for five days out of your seven day week. "There are no cons to changing the start time," said Stephanie Vargas ('17). However, having school start at its current time allows your day to run smoother in regards to what happens when school is over.

Extracurricular activities such as sports, tutoring, and other clubs typically start at 2:30 p.m. As winter slowly begins to creep around the corner, the sun sets quicker than you think, at around 4:30 p.m. every day. If other activities were delayed an hour due to the school time change, you would leave when it is about pitch black.

Outdoor sports teams can only practice when it is light out because Westhill does not have lights on its fields. Realistically, teams would only have about an hour of time to practice before it gets dark.

Getting out at a later time would also affect the amount of effort kids would put in on their school work. If a student has to work after school, has to watch younger siblings, or has school based activities, they would get home and eventually get their work done at around 10 p.m. The average student gets around one to two hours of work each night. With these nonstop ac-

tivities going on, a student at 8 p.m. is not in the right mindset to get their work done which then leads to the loss of credit for that assignment.

"Students have so many responsibilities that we can barely get done with the time we have now. Changing the start time would make it so much more difficult to complete everything efficiently," said Maria Chocho Cruz ('17). This is concerning because according to Nationwide Children's Hospital, every student should be getting around nine to ten hours of sleep per night. In reality, though, most teenagers get six to seven hours.

If Stamford Public Schools were to change its start time, it affects not only one group of students, but the whole student body. Students may not have a way to get to school, or be forced to stay up late finishing work which causes them to not be able to be alert in class. Sports teams will have shorter practices because of how late they start and how early they have to end. In addition, clubs or tutoring sessions may run until it is completely dark outside.

Starting late may help students get up easier in the morning, but will only make your day much longer and more stressful.

# Pot or not: Legalizing marijuana

**Paige Savitt** 

Social Media Manager

Prior to the recent election, a number of states have legalized marijuana. Colorado legalized marijuana in 2014 for medical and recreational usage and since then, marijuana has been legalized for medical use in 27 states. There are many benefits for legalizing marijuana, and it has become a state level decision.

Colorado was the first state to legalize marijuana. Since then, their revenue has increased monthly, and the crime rates have decreased. Since they are now selling marijuana legally, they have earned over 50 million dol-

In states such as Massachusetts, Nevada, and California, marijuana was legalized for recreational and medicinal use in early November. It is important to know the difference between the two reasons. Medical marijuana is used to treat muscle spasms caused by multiple sclerosis, weight loss due to chronic illnesses, Crohn's disease, seizure disorders, and much more. It has been proven to be very beneficial. A key positive aspect to legalizing marijuana is the safety that follows it. Marijuana is a drug many people may have bad reactions to. In addition when someone illegally buys marijuana on the street, there is no way to know what dangerous substances it could be laced with. However if it is sold legally, there can be implemented safety regulations.

In addition to a booming economy, there are other benefits to our country that could follow with the legalization of marijuana.

Right now the only danger marijuana poses to people is to those who smoke or traffic. They run the risk of being caught and sent to jail. The legalization of marijuana would reduce the population in prisons.

The Federal Bureau of Pris-

ons released that fifty percent of

inmates in federal prison are there convicted for drug offenses. "The legalization of marijuana would be beneficial. It would reduce the amount of people in prison for harmless crime, which would benefit the taxpayers and also would create more jobs at dispensaries and such, which would

help our economy," said an anonymous student.

If marijuana was legalized, people would still be arrested on drug offenses, but the rate would drastically decrease because most of these people are caught with marijuana. The facilities and living conditions in jail have not developed over time, so not only are the jails overcrowded and uncomfortable, but unsafe as well. It is vital to legalize marijuana, so that jails can become safer and used for people who have convicted more serious crimes.

Among these many benefits there is a downfall. Driving while under the influence has become a major issue in our country, not just in regards to alcohol. Under the influence refers to the effects of any substance that could alter your brain. Marijuana alters ones reaction time and judgment. If someone is driving while under the influence of marijuana, they have become a danger to themselves and everyone else on the roads. If legalized, there should be a strict rule implemented for driving while under the influence.

the legalization of marijuana as a great way for them to continue smoking without having to hide

take steps to legalize marijuana, there should be specific rules put in place. School is not an envidangerous illegal kingpin-based Many teenagers might see monopoly systems that are distributing laced and tainted mari-

ronment for any drugs including marijuana. With the legalization of marijuana, people who want to smoke can, without the fear of being caught. Another student said "It would be extremely beneficial not only to stop the [over]crowding in prisons but also to stimulate the economy, create jobs, and reduce the power of

anything. If the country does

and addictive. Looking at Colorado as a micro example of the positive impact it can have on our country. With proper education, means of distribution and regulations, it can be beneficial in many ways. In some respects it is even safer than alcohol and can be looked at in the same way alcohol is in terms of legality so long as society accepts it."

juana, making it more dangerous

Twenty-seven of the 50 states have already legalized the medical usage of marijuana. Seven of those 27 have legalized medical marijuana.

recreation usage as well. These seven states have flourished, economically and socially. Our country would experience many positive impacts from the legalization of both recreational and

Graphic designed by Sakshi Patel / Creative Director.

### **Announcements should reflect our diversity**

Caroline Boccuzzi

Managing Editor

One of the many appealing factors about Westhill High School is the diversity within our student body. It is evident that being exposed to such diversity and different cultures is a true representation of what it is like to navigate "the real world."

Over the years, the amount of Spanish speaking students at Westhill has greatly increased. These include English Language Learner (ELL) students, meaning either Spanish is their first language and English is the language which they are learning, or they come from Hispanic families but are more familiar

with the English language. Regardless of background, it is important that Westhill fairly represents this population of Spanish speakers, and a key way to do this would be having the daily announcements in Spanish in addition to English.

It was recently recorded that Westhill has 367 ELL students, out of 2132 total students. This means that at least 17 percent of the Westhill population speaks Spanish as a first language, and the daily announcements may have the possibility of being unclear to them. If a Spanish-speaking faculty member, teacher, or student could spare the time to deliver the announcements in Spanish,

perhaps more students would be aware of activities such as clubs, games, or other events. Who is to say that the ELL students would not want to be informed about when certain clubs such as Interact and LanD Crew meet? These students may care to know about the Homecoming dance, the Thanksgiving football game, or the upcoming yearbook deadlines for senior bios and senior dues.

"If we want to get Spanishspeaking students more involved in the community, it helps for them to know what is going on in and outside of school," said Spanish teacher Jessica Petrizzi.

One could argue that delivering the daily announcements in both Spanish and English every morning is time consuming, and would cut too much learning time from the lesson plan. On average, it would probably take ten minutes total, because the announcements are usually about five minutes long, when in English. A solution to this could be splitting the announcements, doing them in English in the morning and in Spanish in the afternoon. Another solution could be doing the Spanish announcements once or twice per week, which would still be more than what is being done now.

Although 17 percent does not sound like a large proportion of students who are primarily Spanish-speakers, there are 367

new people who can contribute to the Westhill community, whether it be through clubs, sports, community service events, and upcoming deadlines.

"I do think the announcements should be in Spanish everyday because the population of spanish-speaking students is growing, and the spanish-speaking community must feel more involved in the school community," said ELL teacher Mrs. Romanova. Bridging the gap between the Spanish and English speaking students at Westhill would overall create a much more connected and involved student body which would be only beneficial to the school as a whole.

### Inaccessible feminine hygiene products in Westhill

**Amelia Daube** 

Feature Editor

If you walk into almost any women's bathroom in public, there is a dispenser of feminine hygiene products. However, you will find none at Westhill. Only the staff bathrooms have dispensaries and even those are not filled. Westhill should supply feminine hygiene products in the girl's bathrooms.

If a girl gets her period and does not have a tampon on her, she is not going to make the trek to the nurse to get a pad or tampon in a box. The packaging is not discreet, and many girls may feel uncomfortable carrying these around. "I think we should have them in the bathrooms because what if you get it unexpectedly and then have to go to the nurse which makes you late to class. Also, they do not cater to everyone. Sometimes the pads are too small for the flow of some girl's periods. It would be more discreet than walking out of the nurses office with a plastic bag which is really uncomfortable,' said Britney Ramos ('17).

Schools are supposed to create a safe environment and provide for the children going to the school. "I think it is really inconvenient that they do not have dispensaries because periods are a part of every girl's life. I should not be stressed about getting my period at school because my friends or I might not have any tampons on us" said Leah Taylor ('17). With feminine hygiene dispensaries, girls who forget pads or tampons can feel comfortable as well as not be late to class.

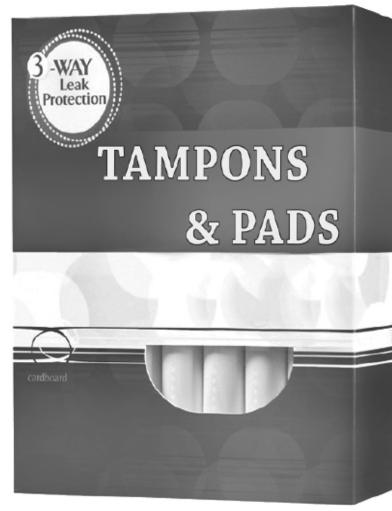
Additionally, they should install dispensaries so that girls who cannot afford hygiene products can have them. Because of the pink tax, feminine products are more expensive then necessary. The pink tax refers to the extra amount women are charged for certain products and services like dry cleaning and vehicle maintenance. This makes people from low-income families unable to afford tampons, pads, or birth control.

The cost of tampons and pads should not stop Westhill from pro-

viding them. Most dispensaries charge 25 cents for the products so the school could earn back some of the money originally spent. If the school is concerned that students will not purchase them, then they will not have to buy more. There is no downside to purchasing feminine hygiene products for the school.

Asking for a quarter to buy a tampon is a lot more comfortable for most girls then asking for a tampon. Periods are still very taboo and girls do not always feel comfortable talking about them. "Feminine hygiene is too often overlooked in society and the school systems should set an example that female biology is not shameful. Girls should always have easy access to products we need, especially at a young age," said Christina Gaia ('17).

Westhill should recognize the needs of its female population. Providing feminine hygiene product dispensaries would improve the quality of the high school experience for many girls, even if it is only by a little.



### Community service requirement: burden or benefit?



Sakshi Patel

Creative Director

Community service is a topic of discussion that has been heavily debated in high schools around the country. The main concern being whether or not it should be a requirement to graduate is a controversial topic that continues to cause conflict among students. Community service ultimately provides students with the opportunity to help those they surround themselves with while simultaneously preparing students for life after high school.

It should be required for students to do around 30 to 50 hours of community service over their four years at Westhill because it gives students the skills and qualities that stick with them throughout the course of their lives. For instance, volunteering within one's community can create a sense of responsibility and pride, and the idea of knowing that you are helping out the community you love is an incentive in itself.

Being given such tasks can prove to develop one's character and allow students to understand the importance of responsibility and how it ultimately plays a major factor in shaping ones character. "It exposes students to areas that they usually wouldn't engage in," said Shana Virtudes ('17). This exposure could provide individuals with the necessary qualities that they are known to carry with them for the rest of their lives.

Similarly, community service provides students with the opportunity to create team-building skills. By working together while volunteering, students at Westhill and other high schools around the country would be exposed to conditions where teamwork triumphs.

Not only is the idea of community service being required in high schools beneficial in establishing ones character, but is also beneficial for college in general. When filling out a college application, one of the major topics that always seems to pop up is "List all of your volunteering/work experience." That is definitely a challenging question to answer if you have not been exposed to any means of community service.

By having community service be a requirement in high schools, finding volunteering opportunities to include in one's application would be easier than ever. The four years of experience in aiding your local community definitely adds up and would surely make an impact on your application. Colleges recognize the students' commitment to helping out their community all thanks to making community service a requirement in High Schools.

Community service also proves to be important when it comes to understanding more about one's local area. "Community service should be a requirement for students in high school because it helps them understand that, as members of the community, they have responsibilities to help one another," said Jasmeen Lucero ('17). Volunteering opportunities provide individuals with more insight within their local area and give them an opportunity to expose themselves, in this case, to all things Stamford.

"I think its important because people should get interactive with the community here in Stamford," said Petra Ramirez ('18). Many students agree that community service can prove to be important when it comes to learning more about your local area and is also important in life down the road.

# The side effects of male birth control



A recent contraceptive study for males was discontinued due to side effects, and the media responded with sexism and mockery. When the story broke, the Internet became inundated with headlines

"Male birth control study nixed after men can't handle side effects women face daily," (USA Today).

"The Different Stakes of Male and Female Birth Control. 'A clinical trial of contraceptives for men was halted because of side effectsside effects that women have dealt with for decades," (The Atlantic).

"Men Ouit Male Birth Control Study Because It Was Giving Them Mood Swings. 'Welcome to the club, dudes." Also: WOMAN UP," (Cosmopolitan).

"That Male Birth Control Story? Women Are Laughing Because We're So Fed Up. 'Laughter is women's go-to, and socially palatable substitute, for something men might really not like: aggression and anger," (Huffington Post).

"Crybaby men abandoned a groundbreaking study on male birth control, citing 'mood changes." (Broadly).

The trials were not stopped because of some wimpy men, but because two independent committees monitoring the study deemed it too unsafe to continue, due to the high rates of side effects: rates supposedly far higher than the female equivalents.

"The side effect rate is pretty high with this new study of men when compared with contraception studies for women," said gynecologist Jen Gunter, M.D., on her blog "Wielding the lasso of truth."

"For example and perspective, a study [by Endocrine press] comparing the birth control patch with the pill found a serious adverse event rate of 2 percent. The pill reduces acne for 70 percent of women and in studies with the Mirena IUD, the rate of acne is 6.8 percent." For comparison, the study's 320 participants reported 1,491 adverse events, 900 of which were deemed to be directly related to the injection. Almost a fourth of participants experienced injection site pain, almost half got acne, more than 2 percent reported a mood disorder, 38 percent experienced an increased sexual drive, and 15 percent reported muscle pain.

Testicular pain, confusion, and night sweats were also reported. One participant died from suicide, though researchers do not feel it was directly related to the injections. According to the American Society for Suicide Prevention, men die by suicide 3.5 times more often than women, and white males accounted for seven of ten suicides in 2014. This makes any sort of depressive side effect all the more dangerous compared to the female equivalent.

Overall, the study was 96 percent effective, and only 20 men dropped out early due to the side effects. Most of the participants actually wanted to continue with the trial in spite of the side effects.

In short: no, it was not wimpy

men that killed the trial. And no, it was not the same rate of side effects women face, not by a long shot. Finding a male contraceptive such as an injection is important to equalizing the burden of pregnancy protection, and sexist media coverage, on both sides, does nothing to help

In a culture where mental health disorders are so stigmatized, it is disgusting to see otherwise reputable media coverage mock and belittle participants in a study wherein many became depressed, eight were left sterile, and one man killed himself. Thank you for telling them to WOMAN UP, Cosmo. I am sure it helped.

- James Hicks ('17)

## It's gettin' hot in here

Our U.S. president-elect, Donald Trump, has refused the scientific findings supporting climate change stating that it is an "expensive hoax" that "was created by and for the Chinese in order to make U.S. manufacturing non-competitive," as he tweeted in November of 2012.

Now more than ever, Republican politicians holding office are denying the existence of climate change making it an unusually divisive topic. This trend, rooted from misinformation and sometimes monetary motives, may potentially revert the push for climate change reform that many have so strongly fought for.

The Paris Agreement that was discussed at the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) last year, recently went into effect on November 4, making it the first time many global nations united to address the issue of climate change. With 195 countries that signed the agreement, 110 of which ratified it, this agreement is a monumental turning point for phasing out carbon dioxide emissions and global warming in the second half of the century.

Therefore, when Trump states, "The climate change deal is bad

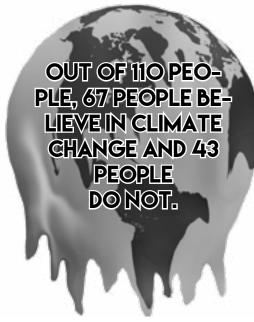
for U.S. business" and allows "foreign bureaucrats control over how much energy we use," this could potentially mean stepping backwards from the historic agreement the UNFCCC was able to achieve through years and years of work.

Climate change is, and will continue to be, one of the most serious issues our generation and future generations will have to face, and it is not something that can simply be ignored or denied.

The shift in our regional climate patterns, largely due to the increased levels of carbon dioxide produced by fossil fuels, can have catastrophic influences on the planet. This is evident

through the recent record-shattering

hurricane that swept through the Caribbean and parts of Florida, South Carolina, and Georgia. Occurring in October, Hurricane Matthew was a strong indicator that unusual and ex-



treme weather patterns may now be the norm as arctic ice caps continue to melt at a record rate, and rising sea levels threaten the very lives of many living along shorelines.

Although a one degree Fahrenheit increase in the weather over the course of a century may seem too insignificant to have any large

> impact, in reality it has already begun to influence everything from crops to creating extreme natural disasters that have wrecked havoc on homes and torn families apart.

> Furthermore, over 99.99 percent of published scientific studies on the earth's climate have concluded that global warming is, in fact, real according to the Bulletin of Science Technology Society. Climate scientists are virtually unanimous in their conclusion that climate change is a serious issue mainly caused by human involvement with

only 0.0058 percent actually denying it is a problem, yet political leaders are still standing behind their denial.

"I think it is a ridiculous amount of corruption that is leading these politicians to deny climate change. Most of the time, they are doing it because they are getting paid to say it, or they are combining their religious beliefs with government, but that should not be the case," said Rachel Fein ('17).

The inevitable fact that the United States has the largest number of climate change deniers in the world, according to The New York Times, in comparison to other nations such as Japan and China, is both frightening and alarming. As a nation that is associated with being the "world police," the U.S. is failing to invest in the future of the world, and is far behind other nations in the amount of money they are investing in clean energy. When our very politics are so divisive on an issue that is irrefutable, we are failing to protect one of the most important influences on our daily lives, the planet.

— Dong Zhi Guo ('17)

# -Las Noticias

### Celebrando el día de Acción de Gracias en América

Daniela Paredes
Escritora del Personal

En el América de hoy en día, la diversidad y fusión de culturas y costumbres han cambiado de manera sin precedente la forma en que muchos de nuestros días festivos se celebran alrededor de la nación.

Algunos celebran de forma tradicional y típica: una cena grande en compañía de la familia entera, con platillos clásicos como el pavo relleno, puré de patata dulce, y salsa de arándano. "En mi casa, preparamos pavo asado, elote, puré de patata, y pan de elote." Nos dice Arianna Ngyen ('17).

Muchos otros, en cambio, celebran el Día de Acción de Gracias, pero con variaciones culturales, especialmente en el aspecto culinario. Tal es el caso de Meghna Sarma ('17), quien se ha mudado de India junto con su familia hace apenas cinco años.

"En realidad no lo celebramos formalmente. Después de llegar a

Estados Unidos simplemente nos gustó la idea de hacerlo." Meghna, quien ya previamente había vivido en los Estados Unidos, nos dice que su madre prepara alimentos y platillos tanto clásicos de la festividad americana como de la cultura hindú. "Mi madre prepara puré de patatas, al igual que algunos platillos típicos del sur de India, como las dosas, el idly, y el sambar," De manera similar, en el suroeste de los Estados Unidos, es común encontrar platillos inspirados por tradiciones hispanas o de los nativos americanos, los cuales suelen incluir sabores picantes.

Tal como se presentan tanto las celebraciones típicas como las que son fusionadas con las costumbres culinarias y culturales de distintas regiones y países, también se observan quienes simplemente no celebran el día.

En el área, la Unión de los Nativos Americanos de Nueva Inglaterra (UAINE), toma el Día de Acción de Gracias como uno para protestar su celebración, ya que consideran que es un recuerdo del democidio y sufrimiento recibido por parte de los Nativos Americanos en la época colonial y los años posteriores.

Semejantemente, Fernando González ('18), nos dice que hay años en los que celebra la festividad y otros en los que no, ya que es impredecible para su familia. "A veces lo celebramos y a veces no. Por lo general, simplemente no solemos celebrar el Día de Acción de Gracias porque la mayoría de nosotros está fuera de casa o haciendo otras cosas," Para su familia, nos comenta que no es algo fuera de lo normal, y la fecha no es observada con tanta importancia, como lo es en el caso de muchos otros debido a razones parecidas.

En la celebración de esta festividad que es tan importante y representativa de la cultura norteamericana, es importante señalar la evolución tanto en la tradición misma como en el significado que tiene para cada familia y cada persona, el cual puede variar según su religión, su cultura y su país de origen.



**Donaciones de comida** Cada año el programa de la escuela, interact, cordinado por la profesora de la ciencia municipal, Sra. Berkley, collectan comida que no perecen para los más desforunados en el día de Acción de Gracias. Este año collectaron mas de quinienta comida que no perecen.

### Noche universitaria con padres bilingües

Andrea Vega

Reportera

La noche del lunes 7 de noviembre el colegio Westhill High School tuvo una charla informativa en español para los padres de los estudiantes bilingües. Los consejeros Sr. Agosto y Sra. Ochoa dieron una charla muy beneficial para los padres de los estudiantes bilingües en el colegio. La charla informativa se trataba sobre el proceso de los estudiante para ir a la universidad y que pasos seguir para atender las universidades.

Enseñaron sobre los requisitos que se requieren para ingresar a la universidades y que otros caminos uno puede tomar para ser un profesional exitoso. Los pasos eran tener buenas notas en el colegio, involucrarse en la comunidad como voluntario, tomar los exámenes SAT e ACT, realizar un ensayo donde narrará sobre las cualidades que un estudiante ofrece y se da a conocer como persona. Todos estos pasos son esenciales para poder ser aceptado en la universidad.

lambien ensenaron sobre las decisiones que deben tomar al elegir una universidad. Decidir qué cantidad de alumnos habrá en esa universidad, en que estado esta ubicada, el costo anual o mensual, que porcentaje de alumnos se gradúan de esa universidad, reglas de parqueo, etc. Todos estos factores son muy importantes para poder estar conformes y cómodos en la universidad que eligan.

En la charla había una invitada especial de la universidad comunitaria de Norwalk (NCC). Denice Daych es una profesora para los estudiantes que aprenden ingles como segundo lenguaje (ESL) en la universidad comunitaria de Norwalk. Estuvo presente para responder las dudas de los estudiantes, para enseñar el sistema educativo e informar sobre las grandes oportunidades que esta institución ofrece. Mencionó los nombres de las universidades que sus estudiantes se transfirieron en el segundo año. En la universidad de Norwalk dan la oportunidad de superar de nivel y

También enseñaron sobre subir el puntaje de GPA para decisiones que deben to- atender las universidades.

La Sra. Daych informó sobre una maravillosa beca de estudios para los estudiantes que se transfieren de la universidad de norwalk a otra universidad de cuatro años. Esta beca, dependiendo del trabajo realizado por los estudiantes, será una buena ayuda financiera para los es-

tudiantes con bajos recursos económicos. Todos estudiantes tienen la oportunidad de seguir esta estrategia para poder cumpli la meta de ingresar a la universidad.

En conclusión, nos recomendó tomar la universidad comunitaria de Norwalk como una herramienta para poder conseguir becas educativas para ser transferido a una universidad de cuatro años. Esta charla fue muy beneficial para los estudiantes y sus padres. Pudieron aprender mucho mas de como funciona el sistema educativo y a como ser un estudiante exitoso. Concluyeron de que la educación es esencial y que siempre hay que superarse cada día, cumplir sus sueños y nunca rendirse en sus metas



**Noche Universitaria** La Profesora en la universidad comunitaria de Norwalk, Denice Daych, y los consejeros de nuestra escula Sr. Agosto y Sra. Ochoa aconsejan los Padres biligües de cual es la mejor opción para sus hijos después de la primaria.

### Seguimiento electoral de la precidencia

que nadie pudo predecir. Por

ejemplo, el estado de la Florida

votó por Donald Trump a pesar

que una cantidad substancial

#### Micheal Hernández

Viewpoint Editador

La elección de Donald Trump ha sido recibida con mucho asombro y descontento. Anteriormente, las redes de comunicaciones aseguraban la victoria de la candidata demócrata Hillary Clinton. Sin embargo, el candidato republicano Donald Trump aseguró su victoria tras sus ganancias en los estados claves, como la Florida.

A pesar que Hillary Clinton ganó el voto popular con más de 63 millones de votos, no significa que es elegida como presidente. Para comprender el ámbito de aplicación del proceso electoral, es importante comprender como es elegido un candidato. Cada estado es otorgado un número de votos electorales, los cuales son los votos que eligen a un presidente.

Parte de la reacción al resultado de esta elección se debe a tal sistema de elección, el cual es visto por muchos como una barrera para los principios de la democracia.

Como resultado, muchas personas abogan por la abolición del colegio electoral por medio de una enmienda a la con-



ald Trump entonces ganó tras conseguir 290 votos electorales que superan los 270 votos electorales necesitados para ganar la presidencia.

Los científicos políticos de Estados Unidos confrontan una elección muy interesante; algo de Hillary Clinton. ¿Entonces, cómo se explica la victoria de Donald Trump?

La apelación de su retórica no estaba restringida a un grupo solitario racial sino a un consenso amplio y extravertido que ejerció su frustración con la política de Washington D.C. Este fenómeno está abierto a un rango de interpretaciones, pero la lección trasciende los

nófobo, homofóbico, racista, sexista e intolerante. Este retrato ha proporcionado miedo en diferentes minorías incluyendo la comunidad hispana.



ca: los votantes tienen el poder de moldear las elecciones.

Es importante también notar la inclinación de los medios de comunicación hacia Hillary Clinton, lo cual ha llevado a la caracterización de Donald Trump como un xePor lo tanto, es crucial permanecer informado sobre las pólizas del nuevo mandato y aceptar la legitimidad de esta elección por el bien de la democracia. Aunque surja mucha incertidumbre, sólo el tiempo revelará el porvenir.

Fotos Courtesia de flickr.com & en.wikipedia.org.

### El uso recreativo de la marihuana

acuerdo

públicos. De

con las ini-

Andrea Vega Reportera

Los estados de California, Massachusetts y Nevada en los Estados Unidos, legalizaron vía referéndum el uso recreativo de la marihuana. California aprobó el uso recreativo de la marihuana con un 55% de los votos, lo que significa que el uso recreativo de la marihuana será legal entre la frontera estadounidense con México. A continuación estudiaremos los factores de este hecho y la opinión de la población involucrada en esta situación.

El porcentaje de votos en Massachusetts es de 53,5%, mientras que en Nevada fue de un 54%. Además, otros cuatro estados (Florida, Arkansas, Montana y Dakota del Norte) llevaron a las urnas la legalización de la marihuana medic-

inal; la aprobaron. De acuerdo a un artículo de la CNN, en los estados en los que es legal el uso de la marihuana con fines recreativos, su aprobación parece haber generado un impulso para la economía.

La industria de la marihuana creó más de 18.000 puestos de trabajo de tiempo completo el año pasado y generó una actividad económica de 2.390 millones de dólares en Colorado, según un análisis del marijuana Policy Group.

El consumo de marihuana será restringido a las personas menores de 21 años de edad y quedará prohibido fumarla en la mayoría de los espacios puestos a su

tivas, la yerba quenorma- t i -

impondrán

algunos estados permitirían cultivarla a los usuarios.

Algunos se han quejado de que la legalización pondría en peligro a los niños y abriría la puerta a la creación de otra industria enorme, como la del tabaco, que estaría dedicada vender a los estadounidenses una droga perjudicial para la salud. "Por supuesto, decepcionados", dijo Ken Corney, presidente de la Asociación de Jefes de Policía de California. Su organización

tiene previsto trabajar con legisladores en una normativa sobre la conducción bajo los efectos de la mariguana.

Debemos ver las conse-

im-

cuencias de la legalización del uso de la marijuana. El uso de la marihuana aumentará el número de personas accediendo a los centros de salud o solicitando seguros de vida.

La industria de salud tendrá más éxito económico ya que el número de pacientes con enfermedades a causa del uso de la marihuana aumentará drásticamente. Otro factor sería la seguridad ciudadana, la policía tendrá que ser más cuidadosa y drástica con los conductores bajo la influencia de drogas.

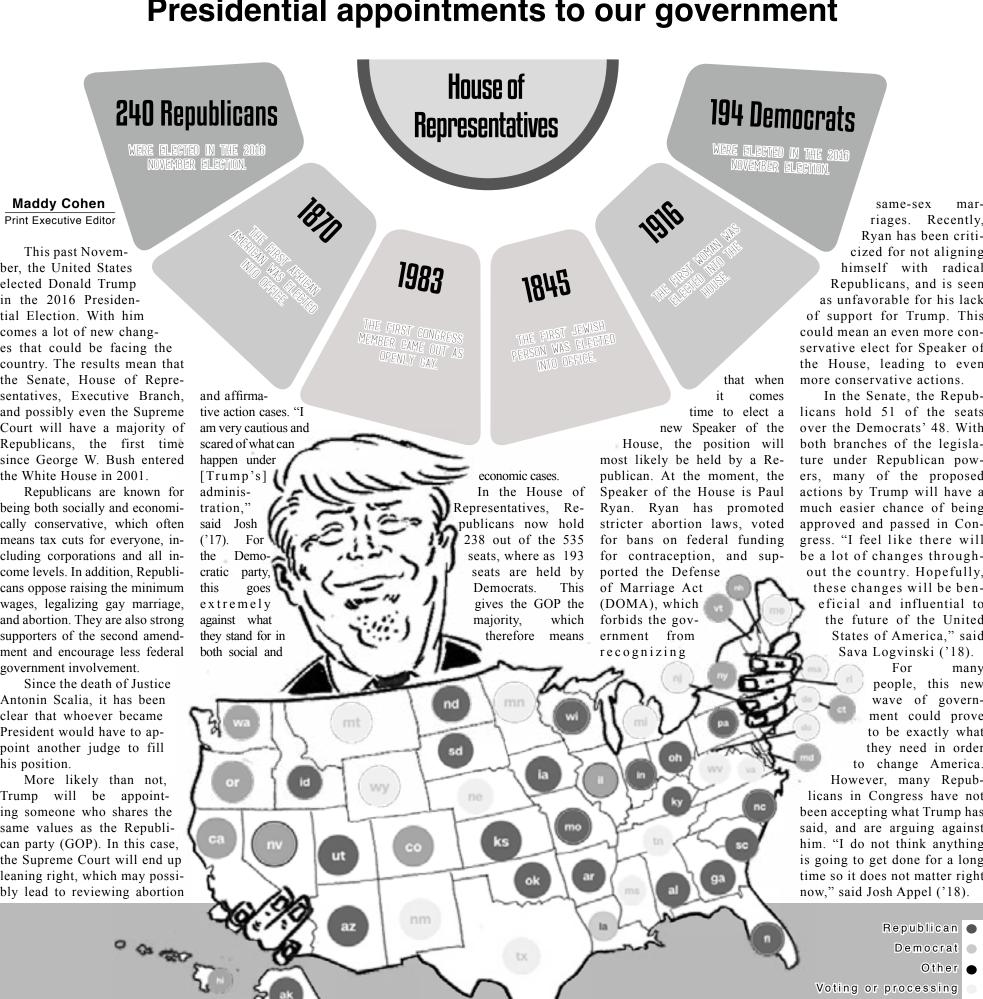
También parte de la población está satisfecha con los resultados a favor de la legalización de la marijuana en estos estados. Muchos ven la parte económica como otros la parte moral. Según sondeos nacionales, una amplia mayoría de los estadounidenses está a favor de la legalización.

Fotos Courtesia de publicdomainvectors.org.

# 14 ——SPECIAL REPORT:

# The steps after the election:

Presidential appointments to our government



Key Race O

Information by CNN.com

Illustration by Frantz Gabriel / Illustrator. Graphics designed by Sakshi Patel / Creative Director.

### **Predictions for a Trump presidency**

### Climate Change

It is very likely that Trump will use executive power to reverse the Obama administration's stances on "climate change, transgender rights, and clashes between religious beliefs and contraception coverage, again effectively pulling the plug on pending challenges in the courts," according to *The New York Times*. President-elect Trump has proposed Myron Ebell, the chairman of Cooler Heads Coalition, as head of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Ebell would help to "undo the EPA power plant regs and some of the other regs that are very harmful to our economy." This would likely include pulling the United States out of both the Paris Agreement and the Montreal Protocol, both established to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.





Trump's foreign policies consists of negotiating trade treaties and reevaluating the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliances. He plans to undo the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which are trade agreements that focus on breaking down trade barriers between Asia and the Americas respectively. Trump wants to implement deals that would be more beneficial to U.S. manufacturing. In terms of world leaders, Trump said he would speak with Kim Jong-un, the North Korean dictator, and has echoed Vladimir Putin's refutes that Russia's military is in Ukraine.







Immigration has been a hot topic, especially during the past few months. President-elect Donald Trump campaigned on the idea of an "impenetrable wall" along the Mexican border. While paying for that wall may be difficult, Trump does plan to intensify deportations across the country. By tripling the number of agents working in Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Trump plans to focus on "the most dangerous criminal illegal immigrants," which may lead to discrimination issues for those seeking refuge within the U.S. His extreme vetting of immigrants could have 6.5 million people at risk for deportation according to *The Washington Post*.



Donald Trump has proposed a seven-point plan for replacing Obamacare. He wishes to instead implement Health Savings Accounts (HSAs), which would create patient-centered health care systems. His plan would allow drugs to be imported from overseas and would most likely reduce access to abortions and contraceptive products. An important provider of healthcare for women, Planned Parenthood, currently partially funded by the government, could be defunded under Trump's healthcare plan, leaving almost three million women without the healthcare they need.



### **A BRIEF HISTORY**

#### Nabilla Harahap

Reporter

For the fifth time in history and the second time in over 16 years, a candidate won the presidency but lost the popular vote. Hillary Clinton is currently leading the popular vote with a two million vote lead even though Donald Trump won through the electoral college. The last time this happened was during the 2000 election between Demorcrat Al Gore and Republican George W. Bush. That year, the race was significantly close in comparison to this year's election: Bush had won the presidency with only five more electoral votes than Gore, despite Gore winning the popular vote. That election was so extremely tight that a recount was requested in the swing state of Florida, which was eventually halted by the Supreme Court, securing Bush the spot.

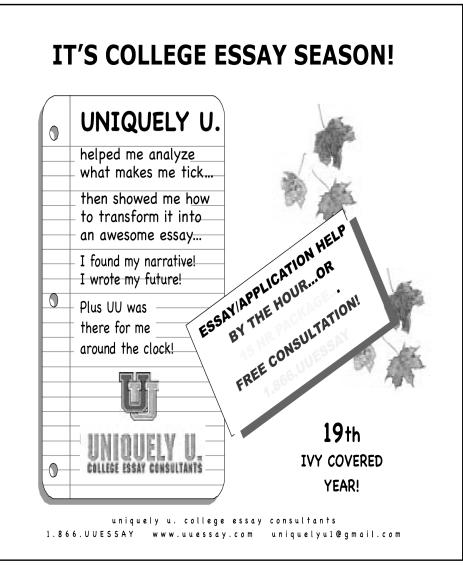
One of the bigger differences between the 2016 election and previous elections was that this one was far from honest. According to PolitiFact, in 2008, both President Obama and John McCain's "true ratings" were high. As years go by, the amount of false claims made by candidates continue to increase, specifically when comparing the last three elections. Hillary Clinton was the most truthful candidates among the Democrats, and for the Republican Party, it was Jeb Bush. Out of all the fact-checked claims, Donald Trump has actually been the most inaccurate candidate of them all with the most number of false statements; far more than his running opponent.

In the past decades, polling has become far more efficient and accurate in the United States. To name a few, people primarily used landlines and most of them were usually willing to participate. Today, the circumstances are different where as people are less motivated to vote.

Technology has greatly affected the result of this election poll. This generation has found new ways to express their views through different platforms and are not as interested in answering survey requests. Even though having technology may sound like an advantage, it has made things more difficult for pollsters because of changes in society's behavior. It is more challenging for them to make predictions in comparison to past elections as seen in the unexpected result of the 2016 election. The results of the election polls have been putting Hillary Clinton at the lead which threw many people off.

Swing states in every election can have a huge impact on the election results as they could potentially decide the winner. Candidates invest more in winning these battleground states as opposed to states where they may feel like there will be a clear win or loss. Although there is no guarantee for any state as things can always change, there are still states which have consistently voted Democratic or Republican for a consecutive amount of cycles. Since 1996, Democrats have controlled most of the 15 or so swing states. Donald Trump was able to barely win the key battleground states in this election. Trump was able to win Michigan, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania which was critical. The Battleground States cost Clinton the election, especially in states where President Obama in the past was able to more confidently secure with better results than her.







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# Supplement

# DIFFERENT LENSES OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY



# The gap between men and women A female perspective

Michael Hernandez

Viewpoint Editor

A clear disagreement exists in the political spectrum. The left demanding for an expansion of women's rights and the right exhibiting conformity with the current circumstances. However, this issue transcends the agenda of politicians as it is present in nearly every aspect of life. The history of the United States has not favored women, a reality that has resulted in wage gaps and jeopardized the rights granted to women. Does society still favor men over women? "Gender inequality is an issue and that all people should be treated the same," said Andres Guerra ('20).

Shortly after the end of World War I, women were granted the right to vote, through the 19th Amendment of the United States Constitution. The amendment states.

"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." This is known as suffrage, which grants the right to vote to a specific group of people without any special qualifications. Such victory was only made possible by the endless efforts of early feminists such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the convention at Seneca Falls in 1848. It was the first major event in the development of female assertion in American society. Its implications paved the way for the entrance of women in the workforce, which happened two decades later during World War II. This ended the Cult of Domesticity that women had followed for hundreds of years, which constricted a woman's influence to her home.

Therefore, the inexplicable wage

gap that still exists in the workforce, where men earn significantly more than women, may be explained by the translation of the "Cult of Domesticity" mentality in the workforce. The Institute for Women's Policy Research estimates that on average there is a twenty percent gap in the wages between men and women. "Women are not going to be equal outside the house until men are equal in it." said Naomi Julca ('18).

Perhaps a more concerning issue surrounding the rights of women perpetrates and violates the boundaries of privacy and personal morality. In recent years, women and the institution of Planned Parenthood have endured attacks, all regarding abortion. "If you feel like having an abortion, then you can go ahead... I am not pro-abortion, but it is a choice that is deeply personal and therefore

no one should stop you from doing so," said Valerie Neyra ('18). The debate about abortion still prevails, despite being settled in the Supreme Court case of Roe v. Wade in 1973 that ruled that a woman's right to decide an abortion was protected by the constitution. In fact, many laws have already restrained the decision of Roe v. Wade to a notable extent. The opposition of abortion may coincide with some people's preoccupation with the expansion of gender equality as it is resulting in the crumbling of outdated societal norms.

Popular culture exhibits an indifferent attitude towards gender inequality, neither endorsing it nor condemning it. The publicity of Hollywood is more concerned with satisfying the desires of the most lucrative audience; heterosexual white males. In most big

blockbusters, women are sexually objectified and are rarely praised for their intellectual capacity, but more often celebrated if they are physically attractive. This theme has existed for decades and has not adapted even though society has done so.

These enduring aspects of American society question the veracity of gender equality as established in legal documents. The fundamental principles articulated throughout the history of the United States are not accurately used to protect women and are merely enforced in the workplace. Title IX states that a person shall not be discriminated on the basis of sex, but laws protecting women appear to be neglected in vain, much to the disgrace of women. Therefore, the equality of women is not yet a reality.

### A male perspective

**Maeve Ronan** Managing Editor

Women's rights is an issue that has been at the forefront of society for decades, and rightly so. Unequal pay, lack of proper healthcare, and abortion rights are major concerns concerning women and their position in society. However, a common misconception about the fight for gender equality is that it only concerns the female sex. Emma Watson, who helped launch the UN Women campaign HeFor-She, addressed the issue appropriately when she spoke to a both male and female audience, saying

"Gender equality is your issue too."

Double standards exist for both men and women. There is the idea that in order for men to be "real men," they must not show emotion or sensitivity. Men who are more passionate about arts, fashion, or theater as opposed to more "manly" interests like sports are judged by society. The HeFor-She campaign encourages men to be real and embrace who they are. Masculinity does not mean ignoring your feelings. It takes great strength and will to live as you are in the face of judgement and hate. The idea of masculinity is developed at a young age, when young boys develop a gender schema. If a child wishes to dress up as a Disney princess or paint his nails instead of play with trucks, it is seen as weird or unnatural, and is often frowned upon. Allowing children to express themselves without being told what fits their gender schema is one way to end double standards that oppress both males and females.

Men are also frequent victims of sexual assault or rape. Many male victims are afraid to come forward because they feel no one will believe them. It is much less common for men to be the victims, as they are usually accused of being the assaulter. 1 out of ev-

ery 10 rape victims is male. As of 1998, 2.78 million men in the U.S. had been victims of attempted or completed rape. Transgender males are at higher risk for sexual assault, yet they are still afraid to come forward. Male rape is one of the most underreported crimes. Survivors often encounter unsupportive or even hostile reactions from the criminal justice system or even friends and family. As a result, victims suffer the trauma from their assault in silence or isolation, which puts them at risk for mental health issues. Many men may feel ashamed or embarrassed as a result of assault, as if being a victim diminishes their masculinity if they could not fight off their attacker. If they are not able to protect themselves, then they are considered weak.

There is a common misconception that feminism is only the fight for women's rights, and it is meant to oppress men. This is false. Feminism is the advocacy for the political, social, and economic equality of the genders. It does not favor one gender. You are a feminist if you believe everyone should have equal opportunities, and not be discriminated against based on gender. The only way to fight gender inequality is if all genders come together and advocate for rights for all.

## Female to male ratio throughout the work torce



There is only one female CEO in business for every twenty-one male CEOs. This shows the clear male dominance in business.



One female to five males have statewide elective executive office positions. Even Afghanistan has a higher percentage of women in their government.



For every one woman in Hollywood, there are five men. This includes actors, directors, and videographers. Even in the media field, the workforce skews male.



The music industry has welcomed women artists such as Adele, Rihanna, Lady Gaga, and many others. There is now one female for every five males.

## Religious persecution over time

**Dong Zhi Guo** Editor-in-Chief

Social equality of a religion or belief serves to protect individuals from any discrimination and provide them with equal opportunities, conditions, and income.

Historically, religious discrimination has served as a foundation behind extreme acts of horror with catastrophic death tolls. For example, the persecution of individuals of Jewish origins in World War II also known as "The Holocaust." Anti-Semitic Nazi Leader, Adolf Hitler, ordered the mass murder of six million European Jews in the years spanning across 1933 to 1945. Using concentration camps, the Nazi Regime murdered as many as 12,000 Jewish people a day during World War II.

Dating back to the earliest ages of human civilization during the Roman Empire, religious inequality was prevalent. During 300 AD, early Christianity arose, threatening the polytheistic views of the Roman Empire. This caused Romans to begin persecuting those who believed Jesus was the messiah.

In fact, religious discrimination can be seen all throughout history whether it be the Muslims' persecution of Hindus in 1000 AD, numerous persecutions of Jews from ancient Greeks, ancient Romans, and Catholics, or the persecution of atheists in ancient Greece, ancient Israel, Christian countries, and Muslim countries during the 18th century. Religious social inequality is rooted in the history of mankind.

In contrast with today, over 120 national constitutions believe in the freedom of religion. In 2010, The Equality Act 2010 was passed

by the United Kingdom's parliament which formed in order to combat discrimination against characteristics such as age, disability, gender reassignment, race, and religion or belief.

Even though many nations enforce equality, evidence of prejudice and discrimination still exists. This is exemplified in the aftermath of 9/11, when Islamic terrorist group, al-Qaeda, coordinated four attacks using American airlines that resulted in the death of 2,977 people and injured 6,000 according to CNN. Following 9/11, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) announced a 1,700 percent increase of hate crimes against Muslim Americans.

"It is evident that many Americans were greatly affected by 9/11 as seen by how their perceptions of Muslim[s] have changed. "People immediately associate Muslims with terrorism and it is very discriminatory," said Robin Lopez ('17). The negative rhetoric against Muslims seems to only be increasing due to many recent attacks perpetrated by the Islamic terrorist group, ISIS. These events are being used to stereotype all people of the Muslim faith.

"This is America. And our commitment to religious freedom must be unshakable. The principle that people of all faiths are welcome in this country and that they will not be treated differently by their government is essential to who we are," said President Obama.

Religious social equality is something that many nations and individuals are inching towards, and though it may take some time and more open-mindedness, it should definitely be a goal that is attainable.

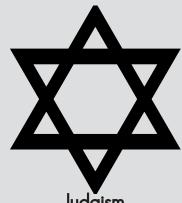
### Christianity

Practiced by 2.2 billion people There is one God who can be known in a personal way Monotheistic Book: Bible Founder: Jesus Christ



### Jainism

Practiced by 6 million people Believe in a god, but anyone who is perfect can be a god. Transtheistic Book: Agam Sutras Founder: Rishabhanatha

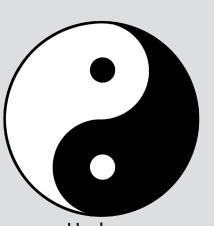


Practiced by 13 million people One God created Earth & can have relationships with individuals

> Monotheistic Book: Torah Founder: Abraham

#### Islam

Practiced by 1.6 billion people Devoted to one almighty God, called Allah Monotheistic Book: Quran Founder: Muhammad



### Hinduism

Practiced by 1 billion people There are infinite manifestations of gods and goddesses **Polytheistic** Book: The Vedas Founder: Not applicable



### Buddhism

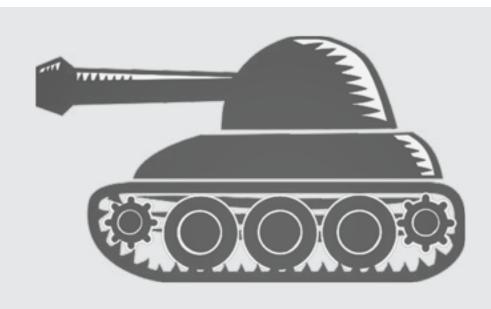
Practiced by 500 million people No gods or goddesses exist Nontheistic Book: Tipitaka Founder: Siddhartha Guatama

Graphics courtesy of wikimedia.org.
Graphic created by Emily Savitt & Patrik Sokowloski / Photo Manager & Creative Director.

### DRINKING

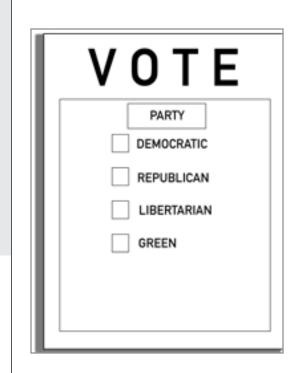
Once you turn 18, you can legally work at a bar, and enter certain parts of establishments such as restaurants that serve alcohol. Laws about alcohol consumption have a complicated history in America. In 1919, the 18th Amendment, which prohibited the consumption of alcohol, was passed. However, in 1933, the 21st Amendment was passed, which repealed the 18th Amendment, making drinking legal for those over the age of 21.





### ARMY ENROLLMENT

With parental consent, 17-year-olds can enroll in the U.S. military. Once you turn 18, you are able to join the military without parental consent since 18 is the age of legal adulthood in the United States. It is required by the Selective Service Act of 1917 that every able male living in the U.S. between the ages of 18 to 25 is registered in the military in case of the need for a draft.



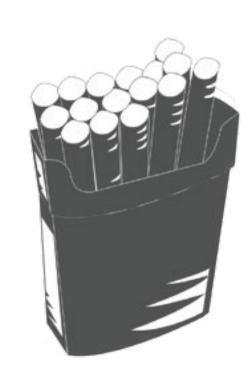
### VOTING

Thanks to the 26th Amendment, you are allowed to vote in the presidential election or any other political election at the age of 18. Before the 26th Amendment, the voting age was 21. During the Vietnam War, young men below the voting age put pressure on the government to pass this amendment; they felt it was unfair that they had no say in the draft, despite the fact that it affected young men the most.

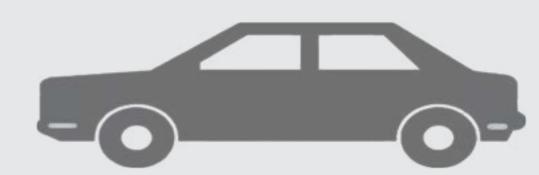
# Kids these days

#### CIGARETTE SMOKING

You are able to legally buy cigarettes at 18-years-old. However, many public officials are attempting to change the age limit to 21 because the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or the CDC, have conducted studies that show that when someone 18-years-old or younger starts smoking, the risk of premature death increases. Smoking also contributes to lung cancer, tooth decay, and premature aging. These other side effects are factors in the push to get the age changed to 21.



At 16, you are given the right to apply for a learner's permit. After six months without drivers education, a teenager can take the test to get their driver's license. A driver's license shows that one is responsible enough to drive without parental supervision. However, there are some restrictions placed on teen drivers. For example, for the first year after a teen receives their license they can not drive past 11 at night. Since distractions are a common causes of teen car accidents, there are passenger restrictions. For the first six months after a new driver under 18-years-old in the state of Connecticut gets their license, no one can be in the car unless they are above the age of 21 and have had their license for five consecutive years. After six months, teens can drive any family member and after a year, a teen can drive anyone.



### AGE OF CONSENT

At the age of 16, you are able to give legal consent to sexual intercourse in many states including Connecticut. Across the nation, the age of consent ranges from 16-years-old to 18-yearsold. If a person is younger than their state's age of consent, they can not legally engage in sexual intercourse with anyone who is more than three years their senior. If this law is broken, the older of the two in the relationship can be charged with statutory rape, even is both parties claim the relationship was consensual. However, once a person reaches the age of consent, there is no longer an age range that a person must follow.

### Somewhere over the rainbow: LGBTQ rights dividing America

**Melanie Gorski** 

News Editor

On June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court ruled that marriage was a basic right that was extended to everyone, including same-sex couples. Gay rights activists rejoiced. Those who protested the ruling did the opposite and held up signs saying, "Kids do best with a mom and dad!"

Overall, gay rights is a divisive social issue among Americans. A poll conducted by Pew Research in 2016 concluded that 55 percent of Americans support gay marriage. This split between American beliefs causes wide spread discrimination amongst the LGBTQ community, and the fight against this discrimination spans across decades.

The Supreme Court ruling that made gay marriage legal in America began with Jim Obergefell and his partner John Arthur. The couple had been married in Maryland, however their marriage was unrecognized in their home state of Ohio. What made matters even more urgent for the couple was the fact that Arthur was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), a

disease that weakens muscles and does not have a cure, and was not expected to live for more than a few months. The goal of Obergefell and Arthur was to have their marriage recognized on Arthur's death certificate. This and six other cases of similar requests were presented to the Supreme Court. The Court ruled in favor of Obergefell by one vote. The vote came down to Associate Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, a moderate on the Supreme Court who said, "A first premise of the Court's relevant precedents is that the right to personal choice regarding marriage is inherent in the concept in individual autonomy."

LGBTQ rights are not only debated in the United States. Just a year before the Supreme Court ruling in the United States, England legalized same-sex marriage. The debate in England centered mainly on the fact that the country has an established religion, the Church of England or Anglican. Under the Church of England, the monarch is the supreme governor. This brought some conflict to the matter, as the Queen of England had been reported to be against lifting the ban on same-sex marriage. Although

leaders of The Church of England was against the cause, the Same-Sex Marriage Act was proposed and passed. However, this act also includes points that ban Anglican churches from conducting same-sex marriage, even when a specific church may support it.

Although it is legal for people of the LGBTQ community to marry whomever they please, the United States is not rid of LGBTQ discrimination. 29 states have not implemented anti-discrimination laws in terms of employment. This means that an employer can refuse to hire someone or that person can be fired for their sexual orientation. According to UCLA School of Law, those who identify as transgender are twice as likely to be unemployed than the average American. This fact causes a substantial amount of poverty among the LGBTQ community.

Stances on LGBTQ rights tend to vary based on geographical location. States in the south such as Texas, Oklahoma, Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, Florida and Georgia tend to be more conservative. In this case, these states only prohibit job discrimination against public employees for their sexual orientation. This excludes discrim-

ination against their gender identity. "I am very lucky in that I live here, in the northeast, where there is a very liberal climate socially and politically. If I were to move to the Deep South, I would have to put my economic prosperity first. If my gayness was precluding me from having a prosperous life, then I would have to fight that," said Will Bruno ('17), an openly gay student at Westhill.

Healthcare is another barrier, specifically for the transgender population. Going through complete gender transformation is a medical process; it requires therapy, doses of hormones, and surgery. However, because these procedures are not brought to most physicians on a regular basis, many doctors lack experience and knowledge of these medical practices. In a poll from the American Medical Student Association, 29 percent of transgender people reported having to teach their health care provider about transgender health issues. A problem also arises when doctors choose not to treat transgender patients. A National Transgender Discrimination Survey conducted reported that 19 percent of transgender people had been denied care. This fact, along with the

findings that transgender people have a very high rate of depression as well as the HIV infection, make for several medical hurdles for those who choose to undergo gender transformation.

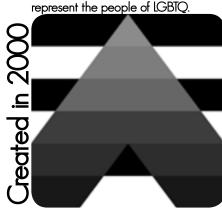
The United States stays consistently divided on their views of LGBTQ rights. However, Westhill takes steps in favor of transgender students with new gender neutral bathrooms put in place. The bathrooms can be used by anyone, but they are meant to give those who identify as a different gender than the sex on their birth certificate a safe space.

Roughly half of Americans do not believe that same-sex marriage should be legal. 72 countries have outlawed homosexual activity. There are approximately nine million people in the United States who identify as part of the LGBTQ community, nine million people who could be out of work tomorrow, nine million people who could be refused service at a hotel because of their sexual-orientation. Regardless of personal belief, the LGBTQ community face specific hurdles, hurdles that the significant majority of the United States' population will never have to endure.

The flag below is the human rights campaig flag. It is blue with a yellow equal sign to represent equal rights for the LGBTQ community.



The flag below is the allies' pride flag. It is black and white for straight people, then the rainbow 'A' frame represent the people of LGBTQ.



The flag below is the transgender pride flag. It is pastel blue and pastel pink for traditional genders, and white in the middle to represent others.



The flag below is the agender pide flag. It has black for no gender, grey is partial gender, and green in the middle is for nonbinary.



### Love knows no race

**Maddy Cohen** 

Print Executive Editor

There is a minority within the minority. While white gay men and women may face challenges, it seems that these challenges nowhere near echo the suffering that minority LGBT communities feel. For the most part, white gay men seem to elevated to higher status, being featured on television and seemingly more accepted by the rest of the community. Starting in the 1960s, the civil rights movement and mainstream gay rights movement went handin-hand.

In 2015, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigations, 59.2 percent of the 7,121 victims of hate crimes were targeted because of racial bias. 48.4 percent of the known offenders were white. This is a clear example

of how discrimination and hate already exists towards people of color. According to the Pew Research Center, black people have a household income about \$43,300 to the white \$71,300. This gap is furthered by those in the LGBT community who identify as transgender. Hormonal supplement therapy can cost upwards of \$1,500 per year, while gender reassignment surgery can cost anywhere from \$7,000 to \$50,000. When people of color are making significantly less than white people, the division of income is further expanded when they need to pay for expensive treatments such as these.

Essentially, people of color are already being targeted. When factoring in the discrimination facing the LGBT community, people of color seem to be facing a double-edged sword.

# A look at contemporary racism

**Stefanie Ruiz** 

Staff Writer

Although the country is no longer segregated by race and slavery is no longer permitted, prejudice still exists among different races. In actuality, the criminal justice system and American culture exhibits the mistreatment of racial minorities on a daily basis. Racial inequality is a significant issue in America.

Police brutality in America has had a long history. The Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s dealt with the matter head-on. Protests and violence over racial mistreatment dominated head-lines and lifestyle of the period. Since then, protests that advocate for black rights have died down.

This lull existed until 2013, when 17-year-old Trayvon Martin was shot and killed in Florida by George Zimmerman, former neighborhood watch captain, after an altercation took place. The case was covered extensively by news outlets and taken to court. When Zimmerman was acquitted of the crime, the outcome of the case ignited Black Lives Matter, a national organization that promotes racial equality. The movement was created by Alicia Garza, Opal Tometi, and Patrisse Cullors.

The outcry for equality continued in 2014, when Mike Brown, an 18-year-old from St. Louis, Missouri, was shot and killed by police officer Darren Wilson, who received no punishment. The Black Lives Matter

movement brought attention to this issue and sought justice.

Soon after, videos and photos arose of misconduct of police taking place nationwide using the hashtag, #BlackLivesMatter. It spread like wildfire on Twitter. With the help of social media and Black Lives Matter, the deaths of Tamir Rice, Eric Harris, Freddie Gray, Sandra Bland, Alton Sterling, Philando Castile, and many others were brought to light. Black Lives Matter also organized and inspired a string of protests in America, the most notable ones being the protests that took place in Ferguson, Missouri in August 2014.

Social media also brought attention to these incidents by providing evidence of the crimes

and raising awareness to an issue that was thought to have ended years ago.

Another facet of modern racism that was brought to light recently was the inequality in the criminal justice system. Along with the staggering amount of police brutality, the past four decades have shown that the rate of wrongful incarceration has skyrocketed. This topic was covered in the 2016 documentary, 13th, by Ava DuVernay, named after the 13th Amendment, which gave citizenship to all slaves. The documentary provides a realistic and uncensored take on the criminal justice system in America and exposes the racial bias and prejudice that wrongfully convicts thousands of black Americans

and condemns them for minor offenses where their white equivalent might have been released.

While segregation and slavery no longer exist in America today, modern society has other forms of racial prejudice that spurs discrimination of many racial groups and ethnicities.

However dark this period may be for the black community, Ava DuVernay encourages a more positive outlook. "Black trauma is not our life. We are survivors," said DuVernay. Perhaps, the optimism and hope that DuVernay and other activists provide for African-Americans like her will help keep the fire burning that has been ignited by the prejudice and inequality in what is known as modern-day America.



Slavery was abolished with the addition of the 13th amendment. (1865)

OJ Simpson is found innocent of double murder. (1995)

Bush administration implements 'No Child Left Behind' Policy. (2001)

University of Michigan Affirmative Action Policy reaches the Supreme Court. (2003)

Sonia Sotomayor becomes the first Latina U.S. Supreme Court Justice. (2009)

Trayvon Martin was killed, sparking civil unrest in parts of the United States. (2012)

## The history of racism in America

Tyrell Robinson

Staff Writer

Racism has been around for hundreds of years. In America, one of the biggest examples of racism is slavery. In the early 1600s, African women, children, and men were stripped from their identities and names. They were forced to do intensive labor for their masters. Slaves were beaten, whipped, and lynched in many cases. Numerous African families were separated through the buying and selling process.

In 1808, Congress stopped the importation of more slaves, but did not outlaw slavery itself. Abolitionists like William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglas worked tirelessly to abolish slavery. Both

men published newspapers that voiced their opinion on the matter.

When Abraham Lincoln was elected president in 1860, abolitionists felt there was hope, although this angered many southerners, leading to the Civil War. At first, Lincoln's only goal was to keep the Union together. However, as time went on and more people fought against slavery, the Emancipation Proclamation was created. This document stated that all slaves in the Confederate states would be freed if the war was won by the Union. This shifted many slaves from the south in support of the Union. In 1865 the Civil War ended, and the Union was victorious.

Following the Civil War, slavery was abolished with the 13th

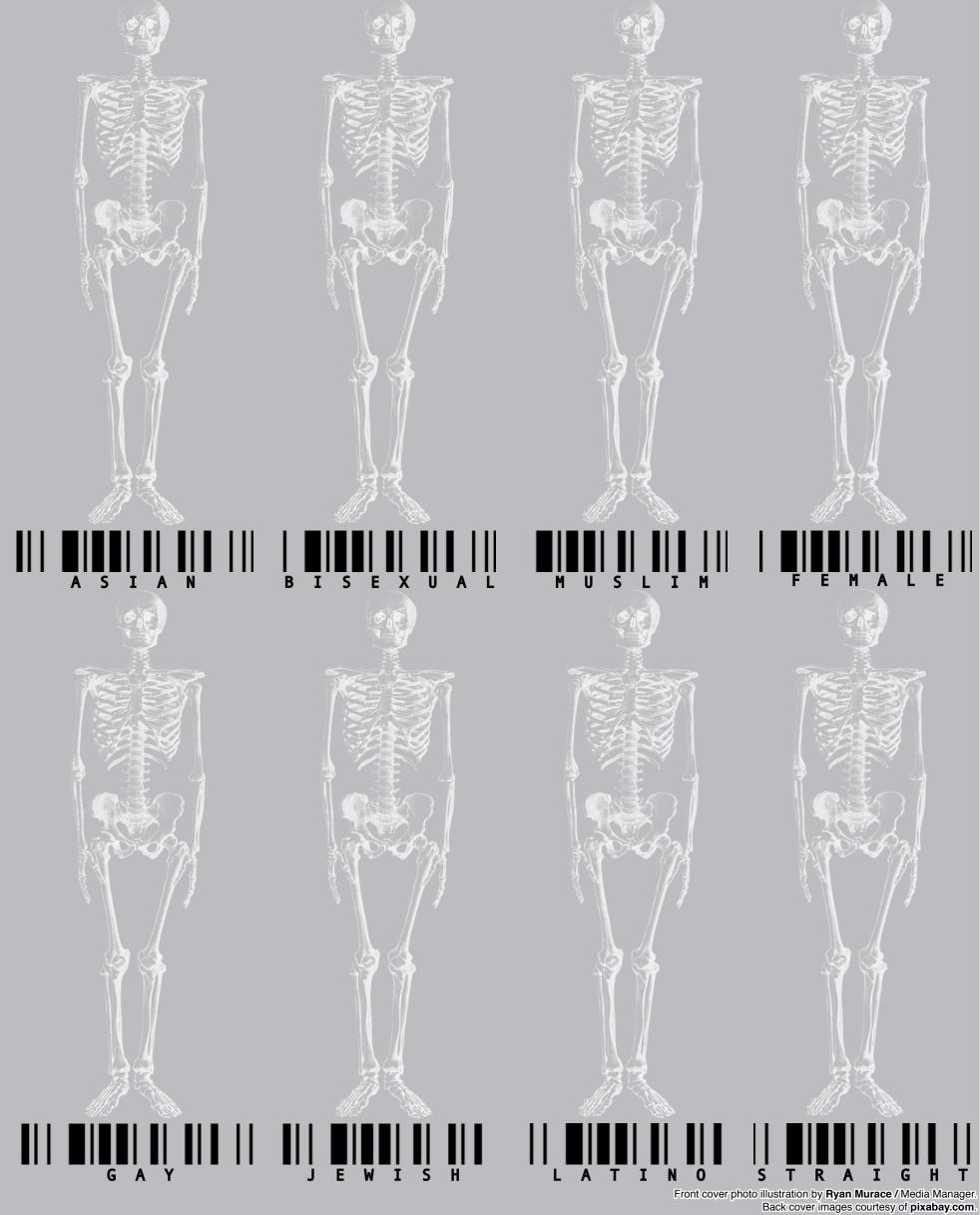
Amendment. The 14th and 15th Amendments granted citizenship to former slaves and gave men of color the right to vote, respectively. Despite these strides, racism remained present in American culture.

The first of the segregation laws appeared in Tennessee in 1881. After the Plessey v. Ferguson case, which stated whites and blacks were "separate, but equal," Jim Crow laws started to spread nation-wide. These laws restricted. African-Americans from receiving the same access to public facilities that whites had. However, they were struck down in 1954 with the Brown v. Board of Education case. This decision stated that schools cannot be segregated and therefore no public facilities or spaces

should be segregated.

In the 1960s, the Civil Rights Movement, a protest against Jim Crow laws and racial segregation, was gaining momentum. African-American people like MLK Jr. and Rosa Parks, led the black community towards desegregation. MLK Jr. led nonviolent protests in the Deep South and is famous for his perseverance and articulate speeches. Rosa Parks stood up for herself when refusing to move from the "whites only" seating on a bus, which later resulted in the Montgomery bus boycott. This was a protest where African-Americans in Montgomery refused to ride city buses to stand up against segregated seating. Another figure, Malcolm X proposed a new idea, separation, not segregation. He influenced African-Americans in the U.S. to take action and advocate for fair and equal treatment for the African-American community. Unlike MLK Jr., Malcolm X is known for his violent protests. He encouraged his followers to achieve equality "by any means necessary." In 1964, the Civil Rights Act was passed, which banned any and all kinds of discrimination. A year later, the Voting Rights Act followed, which outlawed states from making it difficult for African-American people to vote in an election.

In 2008, Barack Obama was elected as the country's first black president. While this shows progress, there is still plenty of work to be done to overcome the racism that still remains in facets of American culture.



# -FEATURE-

# BAND CHANNELS BEETHOVEN AT METLIFE

#### Maeve Ronan & James Hicks

Managing Editor & Head Illustrator

The 2016 band season drew to a close on November 12 as the Westhill Marching Band and Color Guard, under the direction of Michael Wyatt, competed at the National Championship competition at MetLife Stadium in East Rutherford.

Their show, entitled "Immortal Beloved," featured the music of Ludwig von Beethoven. The inspiration for this show came from multiple love letters that Beethoven wrote to a mysterious lover who was never identified. The performance was made up of multiple movements of his music, encompassing romantic themes inspired by these letters.

"It was an indescribable ex-

perience. Playing in a stadium as big as MetLife was an honor, and a memory I will cherish for the rest of my life," said Jacob Stockman ('17), captain of the Westhill Drumline.

The Marching Band prepared for this competition with long practices during the fall. During the regular season, the band starts practicing two weeks prior to the start of school. During the school year, Percussion and Color Guard rehearse Monday nights. Full band rehearsals were every Tuesday and Thursday from 4-7 p.m.. Long Saturday rehearsals are frequent as well. Before Nationals, the entire band had two six-hour rehearsals on a Saturday and on the Tuesday of Election Day.

Theresa Persico ('17), woodwind captain of the band, described the journey to Nationals as a long and grueling, yet

enjoyable process. "You have to be very committed to the sport and some people are more than others," said Persico. Such commitment cannot be overstated. Marching Band requires immense devotion and skill, but many students enjoy the experience and the tight friendships formed during the season.

"We are always looking for improvement. We strive to improve and get better so that we can be the best we can be," said Persico, when asked what she considers the greatest strength of the Westhill team to be. Working tirelessly throughout the fall, the team's nine performance days landed them a spot in the Nationals. All of those hours of training and practicing certainly were put to good use.

Over 50 schools competed at MetLife on November 12. Westhill competed at the Class 3

level, placing 8th. The team of 58 students scored a 90.73, the best score in Westhill history for a Class 3 Open. "Although we placed last in the competition, I am hopeful for the future of marching band with this record breaking score," said clarinetist Lily Jackson ('17).

"All the scores were really close, but everyone put their best footwork and musical ability on the field that day, and I could not be happier," said Persico, who was overall very happy with her team's performance.

Many team members believed that this was their best show of the season. "Every show has flaws, but I think our last show showed how far we have come as a band to make ourselves great," said Persico.

Nationals was a very emotional competition for the team, especially for graduating seniors as it was their last performance with the team. They will always remember the feeling of adrenaline pumping through their veins as they performed for the judges, surrounded by friends and team members.

"I am incredibly proud and happy with our outcome, it was the best we could have performed it to our ability. We had such a strong year, with so many talented students. I will miss them and the marching band program when I go to college," said Stockman, reflecting on his four years with the Westhill program.

Now that the season is over many members of the team plan on taking a break and then joining Winter Percussion. After such a successful season, the Marching Band will be back next fall ready to work even harder and become even better.









WESTHILL MARCHING BAND LIVING THE METLIFE (From top left.) Lily Jackson ('17) and Theresa Persico ('17), both clarinetists, pose for a photo before entering the stadium; the band and Color Guard of 58 members along with director Michael Wyatt pose for a team photo; the team performs their Beethoven-themed show for the judges inside MetLife, performers move in choreographed patterns during the show.

# **Bova bound for Navy**

**Paige Savitt** 

Social Media Manager

Senior Julia Bova has decided to enlist in the Navy after graduation in May. The Westword sat down to find out why she is enlisting, what she is going to do, and what she sees for her future.

The Westword: What drew you to enlist in the Navy? Do you have any family connections?

Julia Bova: Yes, my brother, who is currently 22, enlisted when he was 18. Both of my great grandfathers, my uncle, and both of my grandfathers all served in the military.

#### TW: Which branches did your relatives serve in?

**JB**: One great grandfather served in the Navy, and the other served in the Army. One of my grandfathers was in both the Army and the Navy, and the other was in the Army. My uncle was in the Marines.

TW: What was your initial reaction when your brother enlisted? **JB**: He did not like school very much, so it did not come as a surprise. He comes home this year and is actually looking at traditional colleges to go to.

#### TW: What made you want to enlist in the Navy?

JB: I do not want to go to a traditional college because I know exactly what I want to do. I want to go straight into the Navy so that I can travel the world, and serve my country while I am still young. The experience of visiting my brother on his ship only made me want to enlist more. This has almost been a family tradition so I want to keep it going.

#### TW: What position will you be in the Navy?

**JB**: I am going to be a corpsman for five years.

#### TW: What is a corpsman, and what do they do?

**JB**: There are two types of corpsmen. The first is a hospital corpsman (HM). They can be stationed on ships or bases around the world. They provide care for Navy and Marines as well as their families. The other is a FMF (Fleet Marine Force). They work as 'devil docs.' This requires an extra eight weeks of training because they are basically training to be a Marine. They risk their lives while trying to save others because when a Marine is down in combat

they go in and try to save them. TW: What is the enlisting

**JB**: First, you have to meet with a recruiter. I went to MEPS (Military Entrance Processing Station). There, you take a test called ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery). It is ten sections, and four of them simply determine if you are qualified to enter the Navy. The ten total sections determine what job would be best fit for you. Then, there is a physical test which consists of eyesight, hearing, etc. Once you pass all of cool, but I would not choose those, there is a computer gen- a branch other than the Navy. erator that tells what positions Honestly the Navy seems to be are open and what you qualify the best fit for me for a number for. This is when I found out I of reasons. I know that I want could be a corpsman, which was to be a doctor. I want to help the job I wanted.

#### TW: What do you do now?

JB: I go to my recruiting office twice a month for training, plus mental and physical preparation. TW: Why do you want to enlist instead of enrolling into the Naval Academy?

**JB**: If you go into the Naval Academy, and become an officer, it takes a lot more time although it is higher pay. It would take four years at the Naval Academy, five

years in the Navy, and then four years in medical school to be a doctor. If I enlist now I will take classes online while enlisted to get my bachelor's degree.

#### TW: Would you go to medical school after the Navy?

**JB**: I would have my bachelors and medical degree right out of the Navy, which is enough to be a nurse. If I wanted to be a doctor I would have to go to medical school for four years.

#### TW: If you could serve in another branch, which would it be?

JB: The Air Force would be those who have been wounded, and that is what the Navy, the best medical branch of the military, has to offer for me. If I go FMF, I would be serving as a Marine as well.

### TW: Is there any other profession you would want to pursue? JB: I have been interning

at the police station for two years so I would strongly consider being in the FBI, which I would be able to do with my bachelor's degree.

#### TW: When do you start?

JB: I leave July 19, 2017 for Illinois for boot camp, which is seven to nine weeks. After that I go to "A-School" at Fort Sam Houston in Texas. This will be medical school for 19 weeks. After that I decide if I want to go to a Naval hospital or into FMF. This all depends how I do in the boot camp and school.

#### TW: How does your family feel about you enlisting?

JB: I have been wanting to do this for two years or so. When I first brought it up to my parents they tried to talk me out of it. My although it is higher pay is old school and is pretty scarred from the war. The fact that I could see what he saw makes him nervous. When I was sworn into the Navy a couple weeks ago, he called to congratulate me. Everyone has accepted it and they are all happy that I am happy. Not only family, but everyone I have ever told have tried to talk me out of it, which only made me want to do it more.

#### TW: Any final comments?

**JB**: If anyone is interested in enlisting please contact me in school or on social media!









CRIMINAL MINDS Julia Bova, an intern at the Stamford Police Station for the past two years, working in the Forensics Department.

## Downtown dining spots in Stamford



**Amalia Skoparantzos** 

Staff Writer

Within the past few months, Stamford has seen the opening of three new restaurants, Wayne's Steakhouse, Bronx Pizza, and The Cheesecake Factory.

As you enter Wayne's Steakhouse, tinted windows lead you into a dimmed dining area. The restaurant is divided into three parts. First is the main entry with many tables and chairs. To the right, secluded by long, burgundy curtains, a large square table is used for big parties. The last section can be seen when you walk inside; it is a bar that can be approached from any side. The decor is very rustic and stays within the theme of a big time steakhouse.

Around the perimeter are large portraits of cows, cowboys (specifically John Wayne), and bowls of fruit.

The menu at Wayne's is red meat-oriented. There is a variety of side dishes from mashed potatoes to steamed vegetables. "I would like to go because I like steak and I would like to give a chance to a new place to see how it is. I would love to try it out one day. One thing I find tough is parking. The restaurants before them failed and it could possibly be due to the lack of parking areas," said Spanish teacher Joseph Franchina.

Bronx House Pizza, located in Springdale on the corner of Camp Avenue, offers classic New York pizza and traditional Italian dishes. The owner Bruno DiFabio is also the owner of Amore Restaurant, another restaurant also located in Stamford. He has plenty of experience in the business as he has opened 11 restaurants. Bronx House Pizza itself is small, with red booth seating. The decor is mostly street-deco with brick walls and painted portraits of a pin up girl endorsing Bertolli products. In the corner is a flatscreen TV which shows news reports.

Above the customer's head is the menu with 50s vintage figures to keep up the street vibe. "On opening day they ran out of dough," said Simon Uka ('17), who works as a delivery boy. He also talked about the success of the delivery business,

"I get a lot of orders all the way from Summer Street to Long Ridge. The food is really good so I expect nothing less." So far the new restaurant is doing very well and students should definitely stop by.

The Cheesecake Factory, which has been under construction in the Stamford Town Center food plaza, has finally arrived. This new establishment, took the place of the old P.F Chang's and many students are very excited for the first Stamford location. "I went on a Friday night and I was given a buzzer to wait in a long line of people. It was definitely worth the wait and I would go again, although the food was a little expensive," said Maria Swayne ('17).

Their menu consists of seafood, red meat, poultry, and vegetables. They provide a variety of sauces, dips, and soups with avocado, cheese and basil flavors. As for dessert, of course they serve cheesecake varying from chocolate, vanilla, strawberry, fudge and many more. They also serve different kinds of cakes such as tiramisu, truffle, and carrot cake.

The atmosphere is somewhat formal but family friendly. "Our restaurant has been open for three weeks and has definitely been busy everyday, always. Although, in the morning it does get slow. Typically our big parties are family get-togethers or birthdays," said the management



that I know I'll remember for

what is to come in the rest of

my high school experience. I

know I am going to face some

obstacles along the way but

also to come is very fun things

such as prom. I am very ex-

cited for prom.

### A fresh start: A look into the class of 2020

Kelsey Kopec & Paige Sottosanti

Staff Writers

The Westword (TW): Was high school what you expected it to be? Claire Anderson (CA): Yes, it was. I had heard a lot about Westhill coming in, so there were no surprises.

Cole Cooper (CC): Sort of. Westhill is full of more surprises than I thought, but the workload is what I expected.

Stella Buckey (SB): No! It is a lot more work, but way more enjoyable than I expected.

Aalicia Green (AG): Not at all. I expected a lot more drama but I have had none so far which I am extremely happy about but there is so much freedom I love it!

Michaela DePreta (MD): High school was how I expected it to be. I think this is because I have two older brothers and I saw them go through high school and learned the right things to do.

TW: Do you like your teachers? CA: Some of them. Very few kids say they truly like them all. CC: Some of them. It is hard to get along great with all of them. SB: A few. There is always cer-

tain teachers that really care about the students who are understanding and want to help. Others... not so much.

**AG:** I like my teachers but they can be very annoying at times, with the workload, but I understand their need for it.

MD: It goes both ways. I like some teachers but I also dislike some as well. I have three teachers in mind right now that I dread going to their classes but the rest are fine.

TW: How does it differ from middle school?

CA: High school is definitely



COLE COOPER

Cole Cooper is a lover of the outdoors. He cares for his dog and enjoys fishing with his family. He also is passionate for snowboarding, which his favorite sport. a lot harder, academically. But you really get a lot more freedom than middle school, which I appreciate.

CC: My middle school was pretty small. High school is just too big! I see new faces every day.

SB: High school is so much harder than middle school! But, it is worth the price of being ten times the fun.

AG: High school, you have so much freedom and there is much more people. Middle school, you are very sheltered and protected. Teachers are not hard on you.

**MD:** High school is very differ-

STELLA BUCKEY

Stella Buckey is a student-athlete at Westhill. She is a field hockey player in the fall, but also loves to dance, year-round. She enjoys hanging out with friends in her free time but works hard in school to earn good grades. ent from middle school because in high school you get a lot more freedom. Phones are allowed in classes, and teachers are not on you as much as they were in middle school. Overall, high school is mostly on you and it is your business with what you do with it. Teachers are not going to hold you hand through it.

experience?

**CA:** Yes, super excited!

many fun experiences to come

CLAIRE ANDERSON

Claire Anderson is a dual-sport

student-athlete at Westhill. She is

on both the volleyball and basket-

ball team, and is learning how to

balance her challenging course

load with her demanding athletics.

TW: Are you excited about the rest of your high school

CC: Heck yeah!

SB: Absolutely. There are so

the rest of my life. AG: Yes I am extremely excited to what high school has in store for me, I want the full high school experience, good and bad, to prepare me for the real world! MD: Yes, I am very excited for



MICHAELA DEPRETA

Michaela is an exceptional student on and off of the field. Michaela works hard to balance field hockey, lacrosse, and school work, while still having time to hang out with friends and family. Photos by **Emily Savitt** / Photo Manager.

### et's tech about it... Column by Sasha Ostrovsky

Solar panels have been around for a very long time. Some of you may have seen them on your neighbor's roofs or on top of industrial buildings. There are many reasons why homeowners go solar, they are proven to improve the environment and significantly cut energy costs.

Many people are aware that solar panels are a great home efficiency upgrade and are eager to reduce their carbon footprint while also improving property value. However, they are not flawless.

Solar panels suffer from two fundamental problems that have continued to persist even after decades of research. They are not very efficient and they cost a lot to produce. These problems have to be solved before solar power can overtake cheap energy sources like fossil fuels, which is why scientist have started to research spray on solar paint.

Can spray-on solar panels

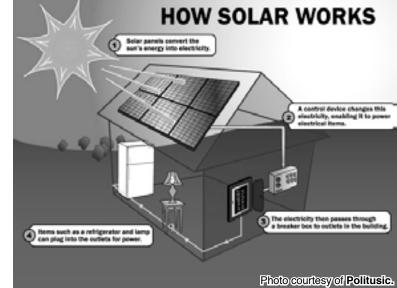
actually work? Theoretically, yes. This is all due to a mineral called perovskite. Perovskite is a crystalline organometal composed of calcium titanate, found in deposits all over the world. Ideally, silicon would be used for this paint because silicon is a semiconductor material.

When it is doped with the impurities gallium and arsenic, its ability to capture the sun's energy and convert it into electricity is improved considerably. However, using silicon has had many drawbacks, which is why scientists are investigating perovskite as a solar panel semiconductor replacement for silicon. Perovskite is cheaper, easier to obtain and much thinner than silicon, making it the better option out of the two.

Now I am sure you are all wondering how this process works. Although the method has not been perfected yet, the process works like this; solar-powered photovoltaic (PV) panels convert the sun's rays into electricity by exciting electrons in cells using the photons of light from the sun.

Sunlight produces energy that normally converts into thermal energy, which is why you get so hot at the beach. So when the the sunlight hits the solar paint, instead of turning into heat, the energy for the sunlight excites electrons. That is why perovskite has to be a semiconductor like silicon; it can use the energy to excite electrons without losing it to heat. Then these electrons get converted to alternating current (AC), which is suitable for use in homes.

As of right now the efficiency of solar paint isn't as great as the solar panel, however in the future efficiency levels are expected to increase. Regular solar panels have reached as high as 20 percent efficiency, which is a lot. Solar paint has



only managed to reach 11 percent efficiency, which is still impressive for a thin layer of perovskite, but not where researchers want it to be. Other materials have tested higher in efficiency, but are not nearly ready for use.

Perovskite is nearing the

point that it could actually replace silicon as the standard for solar panel tech. In just a few years, these panels have gone from low single -digit efficiencies to nearly matching silicon. This might finally be the breakthrough we have been waiting for to move renewable energy forward.

# LIMELIGHT



## FILM REVIEW: BEFORE THE FLOOD

Melanie & Jenny Gorski

News & Supplement Editors

National Geographic's new documentary, Before the Flood, follows Academy Award-winning actor and environmental activist Leonardo DiCaprio, accompanied by a team of experts. DiCaprio and the team traveled around the world to discover the extent of the damage caused by climate change as well as how we can limit our carbon footprint in order to reduce its effects.

Before the Flood covers information that is supported by 97 percent of climate scientists, but is still denied by large oil companies and politicians funded by them. The movie undeniably states that humans are causing climate change, and we do not have time to debate about whether or not that is true. We need to do something now. The movie portrays the destruction of human intervention in our environment and is even accompanied by a website that goes through every topic discussed in the movie. However, this message is not an original one. Countless documentaries, articles, and statistics previously published covered the same information and try to move people to hold the government accountable, all of which have not greatly impacted the individual behavior of politicians. This issue means we need to try something new in order to get people to listen.

When discussing climate change both scientific and political aspects can be complicated, and often times, specifics are ignored. Before the Flood does the complete opposite. Instead of running away from complex theories, National Geographic chose to explain, in detail, what causes climate change and why politicians are not doing anything to solve it. The movie gets these points across with vibrant and fast-paced sequences accompanied by well thought-out graphics and maps.

The documentary explains why we do not call climate change "global warming" anymore, an argument coming from climate deniers. The movie makes it clear that climate change will cause different changes in different areas. For example, Europe should have a decrease in their temperature due to potential changes in current flow, whereas countries near the equator will see signifi-

cant warming. This warming will cause droughts in places as far north as Oklahoma and central California. However, the overall average temperature of Earth is expected to slowly decrease.

The film also goes into detail about the impacts climate change could have on modern civilization and interaction between the world's inhabitants. The Breadbasket region of America accounts for a large majority of the food eaten by Americans. If this area were to experience an extreme drought, the consequences would be horrific. The drought would cause the soil to dry up. This means crops would be unable to grow and the government would have to outsource food products while further increasing the United States debt. There would be a scarcity of food and wars for resources would start to break out. The movie goes through these scenarios in grave detail.

Another concern addressed is melting ice. The world is cooled by two masses of glacial land ice: Greenland and Antarctica. Currently, the higher average temperature of Earth is melting these ice caps, and the process is faster

than you would think. In the time between 1979 and 2006, 30 percent of these ice sheets melted. It is expected that soon, there will be no glacial land ice in the summer. The ice sheets that function as Earth's air conditioner. The absence of them would mean a huge spike in the average temperature of Earth.

Another crisis that would result from the melting ice is rising sea levels. These two massive ice sheets hold 99 percent of Earth's fresh water. If this water were to melt and be transported out to sea, it would increase sea level by 70 meters. This means that all coastal cities such as Miami, Boston, New York City, San Francisco, and even Stamford would have extreme flooding problems, eventually submerged wider water. This issue of flooding would cause a major migration of people. All around the globe, citizens of coastal cities would have to relocate to places further away from the coast. Our planet already houses seven billion people, and experts believe that the Earth cannot sustain more than eleven billion.

With the influx of people moving away from water, the

population density in middle America would spike. With the decrease in livable space and the major increase in population density, relocation would be one of the largest consequences as a result of climate change.

While the documentary makes sure to touch upon every way in which our planet is suffering, it also allows for optimism and hope. Throughout the film there are proposed ideas on how to solve this crisis. Some experts say a tax on carbon is the only way to motivate businesses to stop using fossil fuels, others says we should invest in clean energy, and others propose building huge, clean power sources. The movie does imply the damage the human race has done to the planet, it does not sugarcoat the truth. However, it does say, with reality in mind, that there are ways to prevent tragedy and repair some of the damage that has been done.

Before the Flood is a documentary that will inform you, make you panic, and make you hopeful, but most of all, it will make you think. Before the Flood manages to make climatology entertaining while simultaneously addressing the most potent threat to modern day America.

Image courtesy of National Geographic.

# Hitting the shelf soon

Release Date: November 29, 2016

I Let You Go is a book by Clare Mackintosh about a five-year-old boy who was killed in a hit-and-run incident in Bristol, England. The police are stumped by the lack of witnesses and the mother who has disappeared. Jenna Gray, the mother, escapes to the Welsh Coast and tries to put her life back together after the death of her son. She believes that the incident is out of the police radar, but two detectives can not seem to let it go. Mackintosh easily shifts from one point of view to the next to keep her readers in suspense.

I Let You Go

### Release Date: November 22, 2016

Gap Life, written by John Coy, follows the story of Cray, a high schooler who got into the same college his father went to and is expected to go. His parents are eager to send him off to study pre-med and have the tuition covered. Though it might seem like the perfect situation, Cray is not excited to go. Cray meets Rayne, a girl who decided to take a gap year, and she begins to teach him things that he had never been exposed to. This coming-of-age story about a boy who learns more about himself and the world around him is something that any teen can understand.

GAP LIFE

### Release Date: November 29, 2016

This adventure novel titled *Stranded* by Melinda Braun is about a young girl named Emma who is riddled with guilt after her sister died in a car accident that she survived. She travels into the wilderness of the Boundary Waters in hopes of finding some form of inner peace. While on a trip, her guide is killed by a storm that hits the forest, leaving her and a group of other campers to fend for themselves as they try to find a way to survive.

STRANDED

### Release Date: November 22, 2016

Of Fire and Stars is by Audrey Coulthurst and illustrated by Jordan Saia. Princess Dennaleia has been groomed to marry Prince Thandilimon to strengthen the relationship between their two kingdoms. She fully embraces her destiny and upon her arrival to the prince's kingdom, she meets Princess Amaranthine (Mare). The two become close as royal murders and terrorist attacks plague the kingdom. Soon, a love develops between Denna and Mare as they work to solve the mysteries in the kingdom. The two princesses begin to question their predestined roles as they dig deeper into the attacks. The book may not be satisfying for many sci-fi fantasy readers, but he LGBTQ romance may attract a few teens.

Of Fire and Stars

### Release Date: November 22, 2016

By the historian Douglas Smith, *Rasputin:* Faith, Power and the Twilight of the Romanovs grapples about the one-hundred-year-old murder that recounts Rasputin's rise to power for the Russian throne. Separating fact from fiction the book reveal what has remained a myth for too long. Smith writes about the life of Grigory Rasputin, the renown behind-thescenes operator of the Romanov throne. The book brilliantly shows a comprehensive analysis of Rasputin and his significant influence on the Romanovs.

RASPUTIN: FAITH, POWER, AND THE TWILIGHT OF THE ROMANOVS

Briefs by Stefanie Ruiz & Theresa Persico / Staff Writers

## Record review of the month



Bookends by Simon & Garfunkel

by Zach Radin





Bookends is Simon & Garfunkel's fourth studio album. It was released on April 3, 1968 by Columbia Records. The duo's popularity grew to fame two years prior with hit albums, radio singles, and touring college campuses.

Bookends is a concept album with subtle progressive rock and psychedelic tendencies. The first half of the album, originally the first side of a vinyl record, explores the journey from childhood through old age with the theme accompanying the album as 'bookends' to the life cy-

cle. The second half consists of various singles released throughout the preceding two years.

Simon's lyrics are sharp with metaphor and social observation in "Mrs. Robinson," "Punky's Dilemma," and "At the Zoo." At some points in these songs, his lyrical sense even extends to common speech as heard on "Save the Life of My Child," which is easily more relevant today than when it was released

Simon's themes primarily focus on youth, disillusionment, relationships, old age, and mortality. "America," one of several standout tracks, introduces two skeptical and optimistic lovers searching to find the heart of America. In doing so, they discovered the heart in the search itself. "America" was released as a single in 1972 to promote Simon and Garfunkel's *Greatest Hits*.

Bookends reached number one in both the United States and the United Kingdom and is considered a breakthrough for the group. The album's popularity placed them at the forefront of the counter cultural movement in the 1960s, along with

The Beatles, Bob Dylan, and The Rolling Stones.

Simon & Garfunkel had noted their fascination with The Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band* and how it set a new creative standard for modern music. With this in mind, *Bookends* presents its audience with an early form of sampling on tracks like "Save the Life of My Child," the introduction to "Overs," "Voices of Old People," and "Fakin' it."

"Mrs. Robinson," one of the group's most popular songs, won two

Grammys in 1969. It became the first rock song to win Record of the Year and Best Contemporary-Pop Performance-Vocal Duo or Group.

Bookends stayed at number one for seven weeks and remained on the Billboard Pop Album Chart for sixty-six weeks.

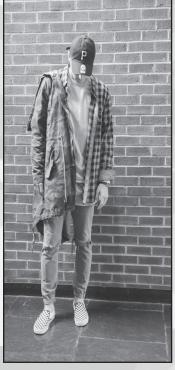
If you enjoy *Bookends*, you might also enjoy Simon & Garfunkel's *Bridge Over Troubled Water and Concert in Central Park*, Paul Simon's self-titled solo debut, and The Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club Band*.

# SCATTERBRAIN—

# FROM RUNWAY TO HALLWAY: MATEUSZ DZIEMIAN

Three words I would describe my style is comfortable, unique, and detailed. I only buy clothes or shoes that I find comfortable to wear, so I will not get aches or pains trying to look good. [I like] wearing jeans with oversized tops. I do not go out of my way to wear designer clothes or expensive shoes that will be stiff and give me blisters. Besides, who does not like to feel relaxed and look great at the same time. I would say my style is unique because it is a little different from what the typical male wears. I like to try new things and I love to experiment. Trying new clothes and new styles is an awesome way to explore what you like. It is all about the details for me. This includes bracelets, necklaces, and watches. Matching the style with a watch or jewelry adds a lot of taste to the style. It is the right accessories is the "icing on the cake."







I am influenced by numerous Instagram pages. Some of my favorite pages include @urkoolwear, @profoundco, and @supremenewyork. I often visit stores to see the clothes in person and how they fit. I am big on trying on the clothes before I buy them but a lot of the higher end textiles are only available online. If I had to choose someone that influence [my style] I would definitely pick Kanye West and Justin Bieber. Although I do not agree with all of their fashion choices, I do believe that they have [good] styles

> I do not really favor stores to shop at, but ones I find myself frequently attending are PacSun, Zara, Forever 21, and Vans. I enjoy PacSun because it brings a "Cali" style to the East Coast along with a lot more styles. I enjoy Zara because they seem to keep up with the fashion at the time & Forever 21 is great because of the price.

> > Photos by **Devon Ostheimer** / Photographer.

# to ho hext month heceml

Make a Gift Day What is better than receiving a homemade gift? Making one! Head over to

the crafts store and make omething for a loved one

> 24 Łggnog Day Grab some eggnog from the store, get on the couch and binge-watch movies for as long as you can!

Sock Dav

Socks, they always get lost and can be frustrating but there is still a day for them! So when getting eady choose your favorite pair of socks.

> 26 Thank You Note Day

We all have someone to be thankful for, so go ahead and write them a note to let them know how thankful

Gingerbread House Day

Cuddle up in your pajamas with your family and make a gingerbread house together!

27 No Interruptions Day

We all need some time to ourselves. Whether you have work that needs to be done or simply need to relax, go ahead and do s

Chocolate Covered Anything Day What is not to like about chocolate? Melt up some chocolate and gather up some friends or family to make some delicious chocolate covered

31 Make Up Your Mind Da

It is hard to make decisions, big or little. Today is the day to look at your choices and choose

Prairie dogs say hello with kisses. The medical term for ice cream headaches is sphenopalatine ganglioneuralgia. Crayola means "oily chalk."

# WINTER WORD SEARCH

CHECK OFF EACH WINTER THEMED WORD AS YOU FIND IT!

FROZEN	5	5	G	5	B	L	4	5	4	H	C	I	N	I	7
HOLIDAYS	U	M	K	G	T	N	H	V	7	4	P	C	A	B	7
	F	M	E	I	M	R	M	J	T	L	A	M	M	B	P
LIGHT	N	M	D	A	I	Q	T	D	M	N	C	Q	M	G	W
SKIING	I	0	0	N	T	N	B	M	D	4	5	H	0	E	0
CANDY CANES	M	4	E	0	A	E	G	4	R	T	E	U	N	R	N
Sod Market Market	X	P	U	D	C	M	C	D	L	N	N	0	S	C	5
HOT CHOCOLATE	F	I	R	E	5	A	M	5	W	E	A	T	E	R	5
FAMILY	5	4	A	D	N	L	0	H	U	5	C	W	5	5	5
FIRES	Q	E	R	E	D	G	N	I	D	D	E	L	5	T	G
SLEDDING	M	J	S	A	P	K	X	D	D	I	R	P	U	H	J
SU DELIS	U	T	4	J	P	H	0	L	I	D	A	4	S	G	R
SNOW	N	E	2	0	R	F	X	H	0	L	Y	M	0	I	F
SNOWMAN	E	T	A	L	0	C	0	H	C	T	0	H	V	L	R
SWEATERS	X	T	N	J	V	F	A	M	I	L	4	B	M	E	T



# The Hungry Vikings

Column by Jake Dardis, Ryan Hart, & Naresh Kumanduri

The dreary November skies continued to rain down as the three Vikings met up after a month of hard work. With their stomachs roaring in agreement, they settled on a tavern of Mexican descent, deciding to see what all the hype was about. Upon entering the restaurant, the Vikings were greeted with warm service and delicious guacamole as they settled into their seats at Ole Mole.

Our first Viking's eyes settled immediately on the burrito section of the menu. When the waitress came over, our Viking ordered a coke and his burrito.

The food arrived extremely fast, showcasing the great service by the staff of the humble restaurant. Our Viking tore into the fresh burrito, which had tender steak, delicious guacamole, and fresh vegetables. The tasty Mexican delicacy was rapidly consumed by the Viking, but did not leave more to be desired as the portion size was just right for our grown Viking. The hearty atmosphere of the restaurant with Spanish music playing quietly in the background made for a great ambiance with the fellow Vikings and left our first Viking satisfied with the meal he just destroyed.

The second Viking, enraged that the third Viking decided to show up an eternity late to the monthly feast, was more than ready to devour some of the best Mexican food on High Ridge Road. After asking the waitress what she recommended, the Viking decided on beef empanadas and a chicken quesadilla. The empanadas were the perfect appetizer, with tender meat and a soft outside served at the perfect ration. The chicken quesadilla was also to the Viking's satisfaction, especially when

dipped in the homemade salsa. The Viking enjoyed the atmosphere of the restaurant, as the staff were much more informative than the Nordic children used as waiters and waitresses back home.

The third Viking was delighted by the aroma of fresh cilantro. He promptly grabbed a menu and knew what he would order. The Viking selected a few shrimp tacos with an old fashioned soda in a glass bottle to compliment it. As the meal was delivered, the Viking was overjoyed at the sight of the taco's fix-ins. Served on warm soft tortillas, the tacos included sea-

Price: Service: \*\*\*

Food: \*\*\*

soned and grilled shrimp, salsa,

soned and grilled shrimp, salsa, lettuce, and a delectable queso fresco to top it off. The Viking left nothing on the plate as he devoured his meal, appreciating the unique blend of flavors incorporated into the modest-sized tacos. At the conclusion of his feast, the Viking was sure he would come back again.

The three Vikings left the restaurant with burps of agreeance that the meal they just ate was just right for the Norsemen. They would be back in a month for another reunion in the harsh winter month of December to recount another month of hard work.

In 1986, Apple launched a clothing line. Between 1900 and 1920, Tug of War was an Olympic event. Pigs cannot look up at the sky.



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

# "I'm in the Wrong Driving School"

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

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

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

**DRIVER EDUCATION.** 

### THE HIGH RIDGE DRIVING SCHOOL ADVANTAGE

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

We think you'll agree that the advantage of

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

Makes High Ridge Driving School The Logical & Best Value!



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

for your
FREE BOOK
to help you pass the
Permit
test.
A \$10
Value
FREE,
No Expiration,
when you enroll
in High Ridge
Driving School

Keep this ad

in only the 8-Hour Drug & Alcohol Class?

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

(EXCEPT MAJOR HOLIDAYS)

Always separate classes for teens and adults.

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

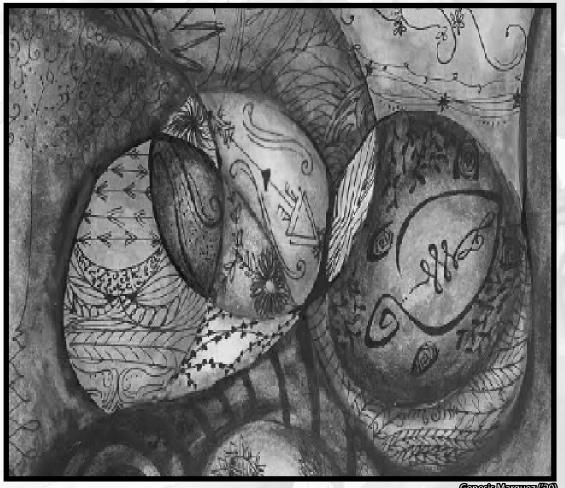


Samantha Ripegno (\*17)



Kevin Alvarado (\*19) 





**Genesis Marquez (20)** 







# ARTISTOF THE MONTH Kathryn Kopec

Sophomore Kathryn Kopec sat down with The Westword to speak about the influence art has had on her life, and where she sees her art going in the future

#### The Westword: How did you become interested in art?

**Kathryn Kopec**: I became interested in art through my mothers love and skill in it. She, like myself, became heavily involved with art in her teen years and progressed through college. Seeing her artwork hanging around our house made me feel as if I could follow up on her passion and make it my own.

#### TW: How would you describe your style?

**KK**: My style of art is closest to expressionism but I'm not restricted or bound to that structure of style. I feel as [though] my work withholds a lot of indirect emotions but can only be noticed as the person viewing perceives it.

#### TW: What has influenced your style?

**KK**: I feel what has influenced my style is the experiences I've gone through and emotions I have felt. My art is a way for [me] to express and define unexplainable emotions.

#### TW: What medium do you like to work in?

**KK**: I like to work with graphite pencils and gauche paints.

#### TW: Did you teach yourself art?

**KK**: I taught myself mainly everything I know in art but have taken art courses at Westhill.

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

**KK**: My advice is to never stop working at your art, continuously practice because your skills will never advance from doing absolutely nothing. I believe no person is born with artistic talent, it's a matter of challenging and advancing [your] skills; practice is key.

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

**KK**: My goals for my art is to help me get my career in interior design or art directory thus go to design school. I also hope my art will one day inspire others and have people view and connect to it.

TW: If you could be featured in any museum in the world, what museum would it be? KK: If I could be featured in any museum it would probably be the Museum of Modern art because it's one of the first art museums I went to as a kid therefore [I have] emotional ties with it. It's also a prestigious museum to have your work in.



# -SPORTS

# SKI TEAM ON THE SEPES

#### Nabilla Harahap

Reporter

Seniors Devon and Ian Ostheimer gave The Westword insight on the ski team. The two also share about their experiences on the team as twins, as well as their relationship off the team.

The Westword (TW): How did the ski team get started?

**Devon Ostheimer (DO):** Natalie Olshan started the club when I was a freshman and a few of us worked together to make it an official sport this year.

Ian Ostheimer (IO): It was originally just a ski club. We work with a league called the CISL in which most teams from Western Connecticut compete in. There is a big difference between ski racing and regular skiing.

TW: When did you first start skiing? How often would you go?

**DO**: I first started skiing when I was three. My family used to go almost every weekend but now we are usually too busy on

the weekends.

IO: The first time I was on skis was at 3 years old, and after that I went skiing at Stratton Mountain Vermont around six to ten times a year. It was not until freshman year when my interest started for ski racing. Before that, I had plenty of exposure to Alpine Racing because of its large presence at Stratton Mountain.

TW: Do you play any other sports? Why did you decide to play the same one?

**DO**: I have been doing ballet since I was four.

IO: I keep myself busy with other sports because there is nothing better than an active lifestyle. When I am not skiing, I play lacrosse and out of school, I surf in Long Island and Rhode Island.

TW: What is the most memorable experience you have had in general and with each other on the time?

**DO**: We all hang out on the mountain while we are waiting for our races to start. My freshman year we had a lot of fun in the car rides

to and from the mountain.

TW: How has your relationship contributed to the team? What are challenges you have faced? IO: My sister and I are twins and that comes with benefits while running the ski team. For me, it adds to a more competitive atmosphere. We do not always get along, but it is amazing to share an interest and team with your sibling.

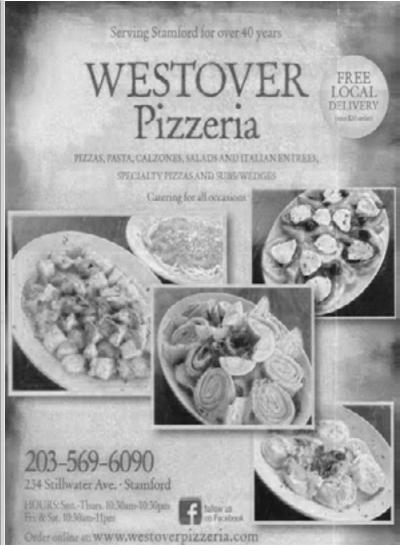
TW: How has being on the same time affected your relationship? DO: Our relationship was what really brought the team together. We all love doing the sport together and have even taken team trips to Killington Mountain together, which we hope to do this year too.

IO: I am excited for this winter season because this is the first year that the city had recognized us as a team, and that has helped us a lot, especially with funding. A lot of people have worked hard to make this team happen including last year's seniors and Mr. Deangelo and I can not wait to see the program continue.



**Graphic courtesy of pixabay.com. Photos contributed by Natalie Olshan.** 





### Vikings in the off-season

#### Nabilla Harahap

Reporter

It is a given that athletes need to work and train hard during the season. However, the work does not end there. It is just as important for athletes keep up off-season for them to maintain their physique. Nick Rich ('17), a member of Westhill's hockey team is only one of the many athletes who work equally hard throughout the whole year.

During the season, practice becomes quite demanding although when it is paired with passion, practicing at 5:20 a.m. three to four times a week before school is something that he has

gotten used to. Generally, most of the conditioning athletes do during the season is primarily with the team. "In the off-season, my daily schedule usually consists of going to the gym, training at Bluestreak, or getting on the ice whenever it is available. During the season, I am on the ice nearly everyday and time spent outside of practice or games mainly consists of naps," said Rich. With a sport like hockey, "my season is defined in the off-season. My offseason consists of a lot of conditioning and time spent in the gym. I train all year round for hockey, however when the season comes up this routine becomes lighter." While athletes get more time to

relax, that does not mean they do not have to train. They still need to be active daily, and should still go to the gym, or do any other form of exercise. It prepares the athletes for later on when the season comes as well.

"Staying in shape and getting on the ice for the season is very important. The fast pace of hockey and the ability to keep my legs moving gives me an advantage over other teams. My endurance built in the off season is an important factor to my success in hockey," said Rich. Therefore, staying active and practicing all year round is extremely important for an athletes overall game time performance.



**NICE ON THE ICE** Rich is practicing to be ready for the upcoming Ice Hockey season. He has high hopes that he and his team will make it back to states.

#### Lexi Boccuzzi

Reporter

There is no stopping the girls swim and dive. The off-season does not mean a break but a time to prepare and shape up for the following season. Amanda

Conte ('18) swims for the Westhill/Stamford High girls swim and dive team, and practices, prepares, and stays busy continuously throughout her seasons. "I have been doing [swimming] since I was six, and I just absolutely love it," said Conte. Her



**CHAMPION OF SWIMMING** Amanda Conte testing the waters in her strides to victory. Her school record-breaking performances are what she is striving to repeat again during her next season.

specialty is the butterfly stroke, which she religiously practices and perfects. All of that practice paid off in this past year's season and state meets.

Conte and the entire Westhill team performed very well. In state finals, Amanda came in 17th overall in the 500 freestyle, 9th overall in the 100m butterfly, and 7th overall in the 200m medley relay. Conte qualified for state opens on November 19 Coming in 18th overall in the 100 butterfly with a time of 59.86 seconds. Though Conte was the only individual swimmer to make opens, three of the team's relays qualified.

However, Conte's swimming for this year does not end there; she swims during the school offseason with the Caimans, the New Canaan YMCA club team. This is competitive swimming for the national team. She trains vigorously with them, two hours a day throughout the year. Conte also has dry land practices three times a week with the Caimans. This includes any workouts that can be done on land, such as sprints and jumping jacks.

"I do not train specifically for high school season; I just train for upcoming meets," said Conte. This is especially important since Conte is swimming competitively all year round. There are more meets during the school season than during her club season, but she trains for each one as they come for a significant amount of time to prepare for states.

Luckily for Conte, her training regimen does not include following a specific diet, since she and her teammates burn a up to 5,000 calories at each practice. Conte's rigorous workout and practice schedule is necessary for

her to maintain her great scores and times at all of her competitions. With so many great swimmers competing against one another, hard work is necessary in order to stay in the running for high rankings.

The upcoming Westhill swim season, which begins next fall, should be an exciting one for the girls team. "I am definitely excited; I will be a senior and it is my last year on the team and I am just really looking forward to having fun," said Conte.

She explains that the high school environment is very different from her club team because meets take place so frequently and team members have to rely so much on each other in order to do well. This leads to so much camaraderie amongst teammates really making each season an enjoyable one.

### Vikings defeat the Knights 29-6

Max Zussman

Reporter

Excitement was buzzing throughout the halls of Westhill for the homecoming game that took place on Thanksgiving morning. An annual tradition, Westhill will took city rival Stamford High. This game was by far the biggest of the year. Last year, the Vikings were able to defeat the Black Knights in the homecoming game despite going into the game with just one win under their belt. Both teams entered the game with a record of three wins and six loses. Not only

was this a huge rival game but it also determined which school finished with a better record. The Vikings and team captains prepared and put in hard work with the hopes of securing a final season victory, in which they succeeded defeating Stamford High 29 to 6. "There are a lot of players that this game means everything to them...there is plenty of emotion and focus in the locker room," said starting varsity captain and outside-linebacker Anthony Dastoli ('17) when describing the team's preparation and the mood in the locker room prior to their final game. Players from all grades realized the intensity this

game will have and are preparing to leave everything out on the field. For the seniors on the team, this was be the final game of their high school careers and they went out with a statement. "Though I have been in the Thanksgiving game before, it's different now because this is my last one. These are the last memories I am going to make on a football field with teammates I have been with for four years. It is crazy [for me] to think about," said starting Varsity quarterback, Blake Newcomer ('17). The Purple Pack showed up strongly at



the homecoming game and saw CAN'T KILL THE HILL The Westhill Vikings celebrate the triumphant victory over the team lift the Robotti trophy. their rivals at Stamford High School. They were thankful for their win on Thanksgiving.

### Haley Blau sticks to it, on the ice and the field



IN IT TO WIN IT Blau has been playing both lacrosse and ice hockey since 8th grade.

### Nicholas Zarrilli

Managing Editor

Senior Haley Blau, one of Westhill's most versatile athletes, looks forward to her final seasons at Westhill, playing both ice hockey in the winter and lacrosse in the spring. This year, she serves as the cocaptain of the ice hockey team.

The Westword (TW): How long have you been playing these two sports?

**Haley Blau (HB):** I have been play both lacrosse and hockey since 8th grade.

TW: What do you enjoy most about the seasons?

HB: I love hockey season because I love the people on my team. We are combined with Staples and Stamford High which has given me the opportunity to make amazing friends who go to other schools. Lacrosse season is super fun as well because our

team is really close knit and full of Viking pride.

TW: How do you serve your role as a captain of ice hockey? Do you feel pressured by the position?

HB: I serve my role as a captain by encouraging everyone to always try their hardest and leading by example. I have my cocaptain Casey Watson and we always work well together!

TW: What do you do in the off-season?

**HB**: During the offseason I do camps and clinics for both lacrosse and ice hockey.

TW: Do you hope to play one of these sports in college? If so, which sport? Which college?

**HB**: I am not sure yet. I want to play club lacrosse wherever I end up going to college!

TW: Which sport do you enjoy playing the most, and why?

**HB**: I love playing both sports equally for the same and different reasons so it is hard to choose.

TW: Do you ever feel overwhelmed by school and sports expectations? If so, how do you cope with them?

**HB**: It gets overwhelming at times but it is worth it!

TW: Are there any schools you are looking forward to facing in the upcoming hockey season?

**HB**: Definitely Greenwich and New Canaan.

TW: Do you have a song or playlist that pumps you up for a game or practice?

**HB**: WHS glax mixtape bumps.

TW: What are some of your strengths as an athlete? Any weaknesses you would like to improve upon?

**HB**: I am a hard worker and I love playing the game! It is always good to improve on conditioning and stick skills.

TW: What do you like the most about playing Westhill sports? HB: I love how close you get with your team. It makes the victories so much better.

### Marc DeLuca is on a higher level



**REACH FOR THE BARS** Marc DeLuca is an extremely skilled pole vaulter for Westhill High School. He is going to miss competing for Westhill and has decided to compete in college.

### Charlotte Kriftcher Reporter

Senior Marc DeLuca agreed to talk to The Westword about his past successes and struggles as well as his upcoming plans for further progressing his athletics.

The Westword (TW): What sports do you play and how long have you played them? Mark DeLuca (MD): I started track and field at Westhill my freshman year.

TW: Will you continue to play in college? If so, where? MD: I will continue to vault in college, but I have not committed anywhere yet.

TW: Will you miss playing for Westhill?

**MD**: Of course. Over the past 3 years I bonded with and

became good friends with the team and all of the track coaches, especially Mr. Perry, the pole vault coach; it is going to feel a little weird not to jump for them any more.

### TW: What is your favorite memory from playing at Westhill?

MD: The outdoor LL state meetthat was when I set my PR at 14'8" after an incredibly bad outdoor season. Also that was the meet that qualified me for outdoor new balance nationals, where I was the only pole vaulter from our state to compete.

TW: How do you feel about it being your last year at Westhill?

MD: I feel pretty good coming into my last season. I have been training since July in order to put up some big hightail this year.

TW: What is something you've learned as a Westhill athlete that you will take with you?

MD: I have learned that you get out only as much as you put in. I came in as a freshman with almost no athletic ability and spent my entire first year relying on pure strength, which is not the right way to pole vault. It was not until my junior year that I began to excel because I would spend a few hours a day watching pole vault videos to understand the parts of a jump, and I started spending a lot less time on the actual runway and a lot more time training to become a good vaulter, such as sprinting, plyometrics, and gymnastics. I would be nearly the vaulter I am now if I had not put in all those countless hours.

### SENIOR VICTORY AT ANNUAL POWDERPUFF GAME

Nick Rich & Nathan Salm

Staff Writer and Reporter

It could not have been a better day to have Westhill's annual powderpuff tournament. A powderpuff game is a competitive female football tournament between the four grades in high school. As school finished on November 18, students flocked towards the stadium field. Last year, the championship game ended controversially, as the juniors unfairly won. "Last year's game ended controversially, but we know we won. This year, we are going to go out and show the rest of the school that we run powderpuff," said senior coach Blake Newcomer ('17).

The freshmen, sophomores, and juniors were determined to take the title away from the seniors. The games did get very competitive, but luckily there was a great group of referees present, led by Jake Dardis. "I am going to be looking for clean play and want the girls to have

fun. We have to call the game like normal and make sure it stays fair," said Dardis. In the past, seniority had prevailed and the championship game commonly poses the juniors against the seniors.

For the first round of games the field was split and it presented the seniors against the freshmen and the juniors against the sophomores. The senior game started out with a bang, as Kaira Ramon ('17) made a diving, one-handed catch across the majority of the field. It was evident from that point on that the seniors would dominate the freshmen. Even when the freshmen gave their all, they could not score touchdowns. One standout play came from Brook Conte, who intercepted a pass and ran it all the way back for a touchdown. The seniors were led by Jordan Benzaken, Kaira Ramon, and Gabby Lacona, but the coaches made sure everyone got substantial playing time. The other end of the field showcased a poor performance from the junior class. They lacked players and sophomore Madi Cortell was able to take over and lead the sophomores to the championship game with an interception, stellar defense, while driving a dominant running game.

With bragging rights on the line and a Powderpuff Football title up for grabs, the senior and sophomore girls took the field for the championship game. A huge stop on the first drive, allowed the senior girls to take possession. Jordan Benzaken connected with Charlotte Kriftcher for a gain of 20 yards to set up the first touchdown.

As the seniors marched down the field, unable to be stopped while holding their ground on defense, it was evident who would come out on top. As the game progressed and the seniors led 2-1, Taylor Vanderpool made her way onto the field. Benzaken handed the ball



ALL HAIL SENIORS! Senior powderpuff players are filled with joy as they excitedly accept their victory.

off to Vanderpool and with her dashing speed, she carried the football the entire distance of the field into the endzone, putting away the sophomore girls.

"We did not have enough practices and had insufficient involvement," said sophomore quarterback Madi Cortell ('19). 'We are going to win next year," said Olivia Butler ('19). This year, the seniors dominated in

both games they played and made sure there was no question to who the winner was. At the end of the day, the Class of 2017 girls remain on top as Powderpuff champions. "The team effort from all the girls, both on defense and offense, and our three years of experience and our previous powder puff championship," said senior captain, Gabby Laccona ('17).

### DECEMBER SPORTS CALENDAR

Week 1 (3-9)

DATE: 7

**EVENT:** Varsity Girls Ice Hockey **OPPONENT:** Farmington

**LOCATION:** Terry Conners

**TIME:** 7:00 P.M.

DATE: 9

**EVENT:** Varsity Boys Basketball

**OPPONENT:** Weston LOCATION: Weston High

TIME: 5:00 P.M.

DATE: 9

**EVENT:** Varsity Girls Basketball

**OPPONENT:** St. Lukes LOCATION: Home

TIME: 5:30 PM.

Week 2 (10-16)

**DATE: 12** 

**OPPONENT:** Career Magnet

**LOCATION:** Home

TIME: 5:00 PM.

**DATE: 14** 

**EVENT:** Varsity Wrestling

**OPPONENT:** Stamford high

LOCATION: Home TIME: 5:00 P.M.

**DATE: 16** 

**EVENT:** Varsity Girls Basketball

**OPPONENT:** Stamford High

LOCATION: Home TIME: 7:00 P.M.

Weeks 3 (17-23)

**DATE: 20** 

EVENT: Varsity Boys Basketball EVENT: Varsity Boys Swim+Dive

**OPPONENT:** Ridgefield LOCATION: Home

**TIME:** 4:00 PM.

**DATE:** 21

EVENT: Varsity Boys Ice Hockey

**OPPONENT:** Branford

LOCATION: Terry Connors TIME: 4:00 PM.

**DATE: 22** 

**EVENT:** Varsity Girls Ice Hockey

**OPPONENT:** Greenwich LOCATION: Terry Connors

**TIME: 6:50 PM.** 

Week 4 (24-31)

**DATE: 28** 

**EVENT:** Varsity Boys Ice Hockey

**OPPONENT:** WatertownPomperaug

**LOCATION:** Terry Conners

**TIME: 620 PM** 

**DATE: 29** 

**EVENT:** Varsity Wrestling

OPPONENT: Staples, Darien, Ridgefield-

**LOCATION:** Staples

TIME: 12:00 P.M

**DATE: 30** 

**EVENT:** Varsity Wrestling

**OPPONENT:** Trumbull

LOCATION: Trumbull High School

TIME: 8:00 A.M.

QUARTET



Varsity football celebrates after a Homecoming touchdown

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