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BLOT GRAPHIC BY JULIE ALTER

# the inkblot

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## Advanced Java wins Congress App Challenge

By COURTNEY KUSHNIR

Four students from CHS were awarded with first place in the Congressional App Challenge for the fourth district of New Jersey on Wednesday, Dec. 7. Technology companies including Amazon, Microsoft and Intel sponsored the challenge, and over 123 districts nationwide participate. Started by Congress, the challenge works to encourage science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) in high school students, said Jo Smith Schloeder, the district director for Congressman Chris Smith.

For Smith, this year marked the first time he participated in the competition, making seniors Connor Bruneau of Wall, Kevin Dixson of Wall, Armando LaMastra of Holmdel and Steven Topper of Ocean the first winners in the district. Smith and a group of judges went through the applications and picked the app from CHS as the winner. These students had been learning Android app coding since September with technology teacher Laura Gesin. They created an app, called RecoLecture, that would help teachers record and upload lectures from their classes while protecting their intellectual property, Gesin said.

Schloeder visited CHS to give students their official first-place certificates. Parents and Intro to Programming students were also invited to the event, where Bruneau, Dixson, Topper and LaMastra previewed the app and explained how they worked together to create RecoLecture. Bruneau explained to the audience how the four students created the app as a team.

"We as developers... work on the app separately on different parts and then merge it together for the final product," Bruneau said.

Dixson mentioned that he had started learning the coding language that Apple apps use, called Swift. That way, the group could create an iOS version of the program and market their app for iPhones.

[See APP CHALLENGE, Page 2]



BLOT PHOTO BY GRACE MALONEY

Coffeehouse hosts juniors Marcos Guevara of Cliffwood, left, and Jonathan Slovak of Spring Lake Heights sang "Guy Love" as a part of their hosting bit.

## Students 'expresso' talents at Coffeehouse

By CAILEY RUDERMAN

The Class of 2018 hosted the annual Coffeehouse, at which poetry and music of all kinds took center stage. Students of every grade were able to showcase their talents to their friends, family and peers on Dec. 9.

This year's set list was comprised of 34 acts, including singers, dancers, poets, musicians and one magician.

Junior class President Samara Ghali of Colts Neck said that preparing for Coffeehouse began over a month in advance.

"The junior class council and a good portion of the class worked hard to meet deadlines and make difficult decisions," Ghali said.

The Class of 2018 adviser and Spanish teacher Karen Britto worked closely with the juniors to prepare for the event.

"We held auditions, created a set list, planned decorations, food and advertising," Britto said.

Coffeehouse is crucial to the class' budget this year as they prepare to fund big events in the upcoming years.

Last year, *The Inkblot* reported the Class of 2017 raised \$1,400 through Coffee-



BLOT PHOTO BY GRACE MALONEY

Sisters, senior Rebecca Madeira and freshman Emily Madeira of Howell perform a duet to the song "One Perfect Moment."

house. Ghali said this year's Coffeehouse raised \$2,400.

"Most of our profits [will go] toward prom and our senior trip," Ghali said.

In the hours before the event, students decorated the cafeteria in string lights, Polaroid pictures and paper hearts.

Juniors Jonathan Slovak of Spring Lake Heights and Marcos Guevara of Cliffwood emceed the event and encouraged the audience to share their thoughts and

opinions on social media with the hashtag #CHSCoffeehouse and the handle @CoffeeHouseCHS.

Sophomore Vivian DeRosa of Ocean read and performed an original poem titled "Physics 1" at Coffeehouse.

DeRosa is a returning performer and chose to audition this year because she appreciates the uniqueness of the event.

"It's a really supportive environment filled with kind people sharing their talents with others," she said.

When asked if she plans on returning next year, DeRosa responded without hesitation.

"Of course! Chemistry 1?"

Ghali expressed her satisfaction with the execution of Coffeehouse.

"I think Coffeehouse went smoothly. Everything was prepared beautifully and on time, and the tech was handled very efficiently," Ghali said. "I'm genuinely really proud and grateful for our classmates who helped make the night such a success."

Britto agreed.

"I thought the event was amazing and I am very proud of not only the class council but all of the juniors who helped out."

## NAHS ventures to the Metropolitan Museum of Art

By ANDREW WANG

The National Art Honors Society (NAHS) took 40 of its members to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City on Dec. 15.

NAHS adviser and art teacher Shelley Ortner said a field trip to an art museum trip is an annual tradition for the club.

Last year, NAHS members visited the Cooper Hewitt/Smithsonian Design Museum.

The attendees were chosen on a first-come, first-served basis while a predetermined schedule designated this year's destination of the Metropolitan, said NAHS President and senior Sydney Foo Siam of Millstone.

"Last year, the museum was chosen by Ortner. But every two years, NAHS goes to the Met, and that is this year," Foo Siam said.



BLOT PHOTO BY SYDNEY FOO SIAM

Senior and NAHS member Allie Kuo of Tinton Falls examines an oil painting by Patrick Henry Bryce in the Modern and Contemporary Art department.

Ortner said NAHS alters the destination every other year so that every NAHS member can experience a trip to the Met during their time at CHS.

"The Met offers something for everyone whether your interest lies in the classics, modern art, sculpture or historical artifacts," Ortner said.

During the visit, students got the opportunity to explore the museum on their own and were then taken on a guided tour in groups.

In his time at the Met, junior Matt Avena of Middletown said a taxidermed deer covered in clear crystal balls stood out the most.

"It was very unique, and I've never seen anything like it," Avena said.

[See NAHS, Page 2]

# Career Day features alumni, family and diverse jobs

By GRACE BADGER

At the annual Communications High School Career Day on Dec. 2, an actor, golfer, politician, lawyer and more shared their experiences with students.

Career Day was organized by SkillsUSA under adviser and math teacher Debbie Maher and the club council, headed by senior and club President Sarah Lynch of Interlaken.

"It had been a long process and the club worked so hard to bring this event to fruition. We had to find speakers, assign a SkillsUSA member to every speaker and organize everything from t-shirts to gift bags to desserts," Lynch said.

Career Day started after four condensed periods and a regular lunch period.

Students had six 20-minute sessions available to see the speakers of their choosing, Lynch said.

Junior Kathleen Gibson of Wall thought that the diversity of speakers was a great part of Career Day.

"My experience at Career Day was great because there were so many different careers that I was interested in like graphic design and advertising. It fit very well with the theme of the school," Gibson said.

After the six sessions, all students gathered in the cafeteria to hear the keynote speaker, Rachel Belli.

Belli is an alumna of CHS, graduating in 2012, and currently works at News 12, according to her bio.

"In my presentation, I talked about the path I took to land a position at News 12 immediately after graduation and the obstacles I encountered along the way," Belli said.

"I really wanted students to understand that there is a way to 'do it all' and get a dream job right after college. I also wanted to explain what it takes to make it in the industry and how students can set themselves apart as they begin the job search."

Sophomore Vivian DeRosa of Ocean liked the inclusion of a CHS alumna as the keynote speaker.

"I loved that our speaker was from CHS. I thought it was great to see what we could become in the future," DeRosa said.

Maher said that many of the other speakers were also affiliated with the school in one way or another.

"I loved that there were seven alumni and six family members of our students



BLOT PHOTO BY DELIA NOONE

CHS alumna Rachel Belli, the keynote speaker, spoke to students about playing to their strengths.

and faculty," Maher said.

This year's speakers also included software engineer and alumnus Nick Bobryk of Vydia.

"It was really fun to be back at my high school, get the chance to share my experiences with the students, and catch up with my old teachers," Bobryk said.

# NHS/NTHS induct 55 new members during ceremony

By SARAH McNEY

Fifty-five new members of both National Honor Society (NHS) and National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) were honored at the annual induction ceremony on Dec. 7.

Both Principal James Gleason and MCVSD Superintendent Timothy McCorkell gave speeches during the ceremony highlighting the accomplishments of the new inductees.

The NTHS induction was first and began with explanations of the society by NTHS adviser Debbie Maher and NTHS President and senior Sarah Lynch of Interlaken.

"Each NTHS member is required to maintain a minimum grade point average of 90 percent and excel in a theme-based area," Lynch said.

The returning NTHS members lit candles for each of the values of NTHS: skill, development, honesty, responsibility, service, scholarship, citizenship and leadership. The focus of the event then transitioned to NHS. Attendees watched a student-made video featuring the compiled responses of new inductees to the question "What motivates you?"



BLOT PHOTO BY NICOLE SESTITO

Juniors Matt Avena of Middletown and Emily Brzozowski of Brielle pass the flame, which symbolizes their induction into National Honors Society.

The induction continued with the candle lighting ceremony. NHS President and senior Sarah Lang of Monmouth Beach stressed the significance of this tradition.

"The lighting of the candles represents each pillar of NHS," Lang said. "These four pillars, character, service, leadership and scholarship, are four qualities every member has exhibited in order to be a member of the club."

In order for junior and senior applicants to be inducted, they must meet certain criteria which includes a 92.00 GPA or higher and a minimum of 100 hours of community service and 50 hours of leadership.

NHS inductee and junior Kyra Lally of Freehold always knew that she wanted to join NHS.

"When I first came to Communications, I saw [NHS] did a lot of cool things," Lally said. "I knew I wanted to be a part of it instantly."

Senior Allie Kuo of Tinton Falls was excited to be inducted as a new member of NHS.

"Being in NTHS means that the skills I picked up here at CHS like photography or art can be recognized and it's something that I'm really proud of and to be a part of it is fabulous," Kuo said.

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- The Sammarco Family
- The Sasso Family
- The Savage Family
- The Silva Family
- The Spezia Family
- The Stanislawski Family
- The Strafaci-Maroko Family
- Ted and Jennifer Slovak
- The Toman Family
- The Toohey Family
- The Topper Family
- The Wang Family
- The Ward Family
- The Weitzman Family
- The Wren Family
- The Yaron Family

[APP CHALLENGE, from Page 1]

During the presentation, Dixon briefly explained the challenges of learning Swift.

"There's hard feelings for Swift out there because it takes everything that is a common thread throughout programming languages and throws it out the window," Dixon said. "It's just really different."

Another challenge of using iPhone technology to sell the app is that Apple charges a developer fee of \$100 a year to have an app featured on their store, Gesin said. But during the presentation, LaMastra said that moving forward with the iPhone version of the app was a step he wanted to take.

"If we go further with this app... we definitely would have to make an iOS version, but for this semester we're aiming for just the Android version," LaMastra said.

[NAHS, from Page 1]

For junior Carly Drabek of Oceanport, the trip was an opportunity to experience new types of art and expression.

"I wanted to open myself up to new forms of art and ways of thinking and I wanted to experience that," Drabek said.

But Drabek said she would not want to attend a trip to the Met again.

for just the Android version," LaMastra said.

Gesin said she hopes the app will release on the Google Play store once the students finish programming completely. The decision whether to charge for the app is up to the students. After their presentation, Schloeder read a statement to the four students from Congressman Smith regarding the importance of the challenge, "apps like yours are crucial to society and the world." Schloeder also touched upon the importance of STEM workers, especially coders, in the future job market. Gesin also took a moment to express her feelings about her students' success during the presentation.

"I find it very impressive what they've been able to do in the last three months," Gesin said.

"I would not go back only because I am more focused on modern art and the use of different media, whereas this was more history based and more classical," Drabek said.

Ortner considers this year's trip to be an overall success.

"I believe a trip has been successful when a student sees a famous work of art they've only seen in books before."

## Mulshine's passion is journalism

By EVAN KUO

The job description of a journalist is simple: find the facts and report the truth. But the varied experiences, both positive and negative – some downright frightening – make the job a constant thrill, said Mass Media teacher and journalist of 20 years Andi Mulshine.

Mulshine's journalistic career started in an all-girls Catholic high school in suburban Philadelphia. She applied but wasn't chosen to write for the school paper.

"I was from the wrong side of the tracks," she said with a laugh.

Her parish was part of a declining city so she and her friends stood in contrast to the girls from suburban parishes. The committee members who chose the staff were from the 'burbs.

So she and her friends created an underground paper called "Junior Jazz." It consisted of news about the junior class, including events, classes and people. Bits of gossip were sprinkled in, "but it was mainly trying to be journalistic," she said.

Mulshine went on to attend Temple University, where she majored in journalism and wrote for "The Temple News." She got her first job at the Quakertown Free Press, then moved on to the Delaware County Daily

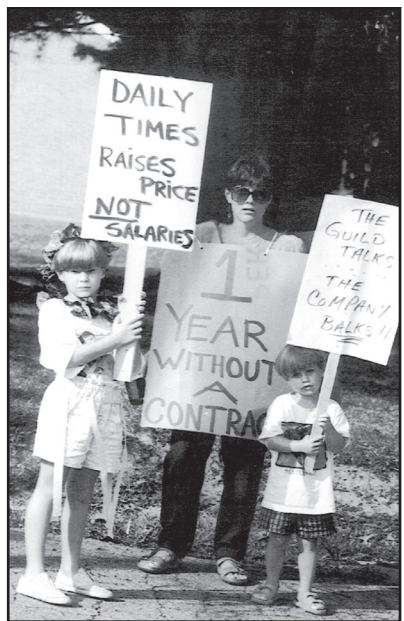


PHOTO BY BERT HODGE  
Mulshine and daughters Molly, left, and Casey during a job action at her paper.

Times in suburban Philadelphia. She started on the police beat, moved to government reporting and eventually became an investigative reporter.

Mulshine and her husband decided to move to the Jersey Shore in 1996, so she quit her reporting job. After arriving in New Jersey, she got a job at "The Leader," a weekly paper in Point Pleasant Beach. She became

the editor, but it folded after two years. Her last newspaper position was as the editor of The Brick Communicator.

Mulshine said that Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, the investigative duo who reported on the Watergate scandal, were her inspirations for pursuing a journalistic career. She thought of them as heroes, "guarding us against a really corrupt president." Mulshine believed that, as a journalist, she too might make a difference.

"My favorite part of journalism is that feeling you get when you know you're making a difference. It's silly sometimes," Mulshine said. "And then sometimes it's so great, when you put corrupt politicians away."

Some of her efforts were met with resistance. She was sued several times by the politicians she covered, winning every time.

"You work around it," she said.

As a journalist, Mulshine experienced harmful rumors and hateful actions. Once, a family friend warned her to stay away from a certain town because an influential politician there had instructed the police to stop her.

Now as a teacher, Mulshine passes along her experiences and expertise to her students in the hopes that they, too, will want to make a difference in the world, she said.

## 1 in 300



BLOT PHOTO BY GRACE MALONEY

When he isn't trading items in hopes of a great find, junior Cameron DeStefano of Middletown works magic, as he did at Coffeehouse.

### A magician with a passion for trading

By JULIA PARDEE

A battery-powered Star Wars candle. A paper clip. A pair of wireless headphones. Junior Cameron DeStefano of Middletown has traded them all on his mission to upgrade from a paper clip to "trade my way higher and higher."

After hearing a true story of a man who started with a paper clip and traded up to a small house, DeStefano decided to try it out for himself.

"My trading system always starts the same. I begin with a paper clip," DeStefano said. "Once I get to a point where people no longer have things valuable enough to trade, I start over and keep what I have."

But some items are more difficult to trade for than others.

"The hardest item to get rid of was a battery-powered Star Wars candle," DeStefano said. "I had that for a few weeks before I finally traded it away."

Last year, he ended with a pair of wireless headphones.

Aside from his trading, DeStefano is known at CHS for his magic. He has performed at Coffeehouse this year as well as Headstart last year.

"I first got into magic in eighth grade. My friend had shown me how to do some tricks, and I was immediately interested. He stopped, but I kept on practicing," he recalled.

Most of his tricks involve a deck of cards and swift hand movements to fool his audience. He cites the audience's amazement as his favorite part of performing.

"When I find someone who takes a lot of joy in seeing magic, I love it," he said. "It's amazing to see child-like wonder come from a teenager or adult. It can really separate people from the stress of life, and bring them to a world of impossibility, wonder and awe."

His favorite trick? "One of the two I performed for Coffeehouse, the trick where two signed selections switch from one mouth to the other," DeStefano said. "It's truly impossible, there is very little sleight of hand to see, so it's a great crowd fooler."

DeStefano plans to continue to perform magic in the future.

"It's become a part of who I am," he said. "And I wish to continue bringing people enjoyment with it."

## Students and teachers encounter famous figures by chance and at planned events

By JACQUELINE GELLER

Not every person has the opportunity to walk down the red carpet in the latest fashion made by couture designers, but that does not stop CHS students and teachers from encountering celebrities.

Junior Arielle Hutchinson of Ocean won a radio station contest on Z100 and was able to see 5 Seconds of Summer (5SOS) at iHeartRadio's Dunkin' Donuts Iced Coffee Lounge.

"When I was sitting down in the lounge and I saw them walk out, it was so surreal. It was hard to believe they were real people," Hutchinson said.

After 5SOS's performance, Hutchinson met and took pictures with them. She said that the band noticed that many girls were shy, and they tried their best to make everyone comfortable.

Hutchinson thought the 5SOS

members were normal guys in a famous band, and her opinion did not change when she met them.

Hutchinson also believes celebrities may act different in public.

"If a celebrity is being mean or unfriendly when they meet their fans, I always think there is a reason why; maybe they're tired, hungry or in a bad mood. It is impossible to be happy and smiley 100 percent of the time," Hutchinson said. "At the end of the day, they're human too."

Math teacher Justine Lane had a unique celebrity experience when she was 16. She was shopping when her friend told her that Bruce Springsteen was in the mall.

Lane did not want to bother the 20-time Grammy-winning singer, but eventually she gave in to her friend's request and decided to go find Springsteen.

"He goes 'You know, I've given



BLOT GRAPHIC BY KATRINA EGGLESTON  
Survey of 248 students from Nov. 29, 2016 to Dec. 1, 2016

out so many autographs today. How about a holiday kiss instead?" So he kissed me on my cheek," Lane said.

After the encounter, Lane had to sit down and have some soda because she was in shock.

Whether it is winning a contest or being in the right place at the right time, there are opportunities to meet someone with superstar status.

## REPORTER Q: When did you stop believing in Santa Claus and how did you find out?

ROVING



Freshman Mary Kate Cashman of Bradley Beach  
"I stopped believing in Santa when I was nine. I always thought the whole idea of Santa was strange but went along with it ..."



Sophomore Kelly Forrester of Spring Lake Heights  
"I was always unsure about Santa, but I was positive he wasn't real when I went on Amazon and saw that my parents had ordered everything I had asked for."



Junior Brigid Garrett of Wall  
"I was on the bus in kindergarten when some fifth grader told me that the big man wasn't real. I went home and cried and my mom tried to convince me that Santa was real."



Senior Leo Ross of Fair Haven  
"I'm Jewish."



INTERVIEWS BY  
EMMA HECHT

PHOTOS BY  
AUDREY MANNION

# Students volunteer across the nation and world

By EMMA WILENTA

Some teens may dream of traveling on lavish vacations, but for senior Isaiah Drake of Spring Lake Heights and junior Sara Cole of Matawan, their travels have a different motive: service.

Drake has traveled to Managua, Nicaragua twice, once in 2014 and once in 2015, as a member of a team from Grace Bible Church in Wall. Drake said their goal was to serve the locals and share the love of God.

Drake said the trip in 2014, which was his first time traveling out of the country, was the best experience of his life.

The children he encountered in the poverty-stricken capital of Nicaragua were

the ones who touched him the most.

"It was the children that broke my heart," Drake said. "They would cross the highway to get a cup of cereal and a pouch of milk. Their clothes were tattered and many walked barefoot."

Throughout his one-week stay, Drake and the group from his church bonded and formed relationships with the community's children.

"I had the opportunity to take Polaroid pictures with the kids and give them it to show that I would be praying for them even when I got home," Drake said. "It showed that I loved them. I told them the good news of Jesus Christ."

Cole traveled to Albany, N.Y. and De-

troit, Mich. as a member of a volunteer team. She repaired homes and worked at a free health fair.

There, she realized that traveling to a new place to volunteer was more rewarding than volunteering locally.

"I was out of my element. I was put in a situation where all of my efforts were funneled into helping others," Cole said. "I felt like part of a bigger machine in each city. In local volunteering I feel like I'm not doing something with a big enough impact."

Cole's experience broadened her view on the world and how she was able to contribute.

"Being further from my family and



PHOTO COURTESY OF ISAIAH DRAKE  
Senior Isaiah Drake of Spring Lake Heights spent summers helping Nicaraguan children.

comfort, I had to reassess my place in the world and how to best improve it," Cole said.

## Controversial political protests entice students

By PHOEBE DRUMMOND

Fifth Avenue - the shopping center of Manhattan, with block after block sporting stores such as Gucci, Saks Fifth Avenue and Louis Vuitton - has been more crowded than usual. But those crowding the streets since Nov. 9 are there not to pick up a new handbag, but to protest President-elect Donald Trump outside his own home and office building, Trump Tower.

The protests happened not only in Manhattan, but across the country. Protesters "flooded the streets," of major cities including Boston, Los Angeles and Chicago, according to CNN. But several CHS students, including junior Erica Lalor of Aberdeen, do not think they are worthwhile.

"[Protesters are] not going to change the president just because people are rioting about it," Lalor said. Freshman Emily Madeira of Howell agreed.

"We shouldn't be hateful, and we shouldn't follow what Trump is doing," Madeira said. "But they are following it up by doing very hateful acts so it's kind of contradictory."

Unlike Madeira and Lalor, sophomore Liam Marshall of Sea Girt believes that protesters, depending on the situation, are able to get an effective message across.

"I think they really can get the word out about a cause," Marshall said.

Junior Zoe McDonnell of Middletown attended a protest against President-elect Trump at Union Square Park in New York City on Nov. 12, and she had a really positive experience while attending.

"Most people see these protests as kind of negative things and all about bashing Trump," McDonnell said. "It was mainly about where we can go from here."

McDonnell said that many people were upset. There was a microphone being passed around where people shared ideas on what needs to be done now. She described the experience as "uplifting" and would definitely attend another protest.

"It is important to have your voice heard and not sit down and do nothing," McDonnell said.

## DJ Fridays bring turntables and tunes

By CAROLINE MONAGHAN

It is the typical Friday lunchtime at Communications High School. There are club meetings, crowded labs and something different: a student DJ.

Friday lunchtime DJs have become something regular at CHS since the 2015-16 school year.

Radio teacher Bill Bengle first proposed the idea of DJ Fridays to the Radio Club council.

"Mr. Gleason saw a DJ come for a dance and said, 'Why don't you find some equipment similar to that?' I figured, 'Alright, well, it would be silly to have this equipment sitting around just for dances,'" Bengle said.

Bengle said any student can become a Friday lunchtime DJ.

"You don't even have to be in Radio Club. You just have to come,

sign up, learn the equipment and bring some music to

show your skills on Fridays," Bengle said.

Junior Abigail Karl of Monmouth Beach DJed once in November.

"I decided to be a lunch DJ because I've always loved music, and DJing is something that I've always wanted to try," Karl said.

Sophomore Nikolai Held-Mares of Keyport felt that DJing was "occasionally stressful" in the beginning.

"Once you get the hang of it, it is kind of relaxing and it feels nice [that] you're doing something for other people," Held-Mares said.

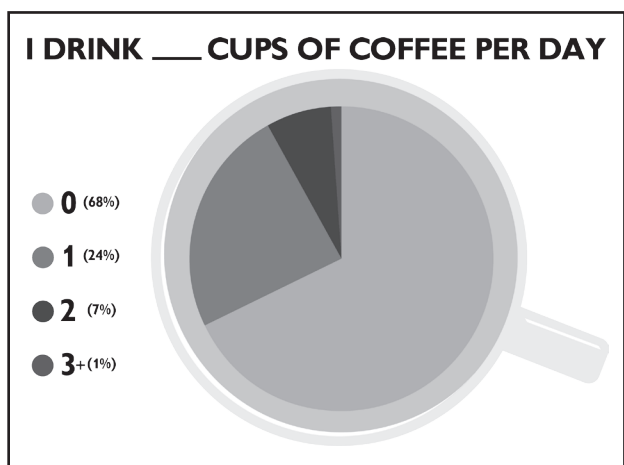
Emma Wilenta of Wall said she loves the weekly DJs.

"It makes me happy to see everyone singing and dancing together. It's something that makes CHS special," Wilenta



BLOT PHOTO BY MARISSA HO  
Radio club member and senior Leo Ross of Fair Haven DJs during lunch on Dec. 9.

## Coffee supplies energy, possible health risks and benefits



BLOT INFOGRAPHIC BY CONNOR MARTIN  
Survey of 248 students from Nov. 29, 2016 to Dec. 1, 2016

By SAMANTHA HOGAN and CATHERINE LIANG

Some students cannot roll out of bed without it. Others do not depend on it at all. Some studies show that it is unhealthy while others demonstrate that it has health benefits. The ambiguous subject, coffee, has many people in arguments.

CHS students have different coffee-drinking habits. Sophomore Nicole Molnar of Rumson drinks coffee every day.

"My mom makes some in the morning, so she brews some and I take some," Molnar said.

Senior Annie Ruoff of Monmouth Beach makes coffee runs before school.

"Sometimes it's just for myself, but I usually will offer it to my friends as well. I'll usually get a flavored coffee, latte or hot chocolate," Ruoff said.

With an average cup of coffee costing \$2.70, according to U.S. News, her habit is limited.

"I try not to get it too often because then it will get expensive," Ruoff said.

Unlike Ruoff, junior Kyle Robinson of Middletown doesn't drink coffee.

"I really don't like the taste, and caffeine never gave me a big enough effect for it to be worth it," Robinson said. Freshman Bryan Schade of Tinton Falls agrees.

"I never really loved the taste of it and I don't like having that much caffeine because it's not really good for you," Schade said.

CHS students also disagree on the health effects of coffee. Some students say coffee does not have drastic effects on their health.

Senior Jessica Jo of Eatontown drinks coffee once in a

while.

"I don't drink it that much so I don't think it affects my health," Jo said.

Molnar said there are no health effects that she knows of.

Other CHS students said coffee could be harmful for one's health.

"I know that caffeine is not good for you, and if you get a lack of sleep, that's obviously going to be bad," Schade said.

According to Mayo Clinic, all these students are partly correct. While high consumption of unfiltered coffee has been associated with a mild increase in cholesterol levels, research indicates that drinking coffee in moderate amounts does not have many negative effects.

Studies conducted on coffee consumers have even shown that coffee can bring health benefits, such as lowering the risk of Parkinson's disease, type 2 diabetes and liver disease.

This could be good news for coffee drinkers, but it does not mean that coffee is a healthy drink.

"Although coffee may have fewer risks compared with benefits, keep in mind that other beverages, such as milk and some fruit juices, contain nutrients that coffee does not," according to Mayo Clinic. It also adds, "some coffee drinks contain more than 500 calories."

## Junior Marie Schobel breaks record for 100 meters



PHOTO COURTESY OF MARIE SCHOBEL

Schobel started swimming at 6 years old. She said she can't remember a time she wasn't swimming.

BY ARIELLE COHEN

Marie Schobel of Sea Girt broke the previous Manasquan High School record for backstroke on Tuesday, Dec. 6 with a time of 58.33 seconds. She beat Caroline Petrone's 2013 record of 59.04, according to NJ.com.

Schobel has been swimming for "as long as I can remember," starting when she was 6 years old. Her parents have always wanted their kids to be able to swim, especially because they live in a beach town, so they started with her older brothers.

Without hesitation, when asked about her inspirations, Schobel said it has always been her dad, who is a very fast swimmer.

After the CHS junior swam the 100 meters in Holmdel, she knew instantly that she did well. The swimmer in the lane next to her had always

been a top competitor of hers, so when she beat her she knew that her time was a good one.

Her coach was not sure if she broke the record at the time, but she was just happy that she won the race.

Not only did Schobel beat the school record, but she also improved her personal best by over 40 seconds. Last season, her best time was 101.67. Schobel credits her improvement to this past summer's nationals where she swam for her club team, Red Bank YMCA.

It "woke me up," and since then, she has become a more focused swimmer. She has changed her training and began to swim more often and more competitively.

"It's nice to see that I beat the Manasquan record ... but I think constantly improving is always more important," Schobel said.

## Sports recruitment complicates the college hunt *Athletes take the initiative and reach out to colleges they want to attend*

By MARY KATE CASHMAN and KIERA GILL

Even though CHS does not have sports teams, that doesn't stop students from excelling in sports at their home high schools and being recruited by college coaches.

According to the NCAA, 6 percent of high school athletes compete for their college. CHS has a number of athletes who are aiming to be in that 6 percent and continue with their sport in college.

Senior Abby Silva of Neptune has been running cross country, winter track and spring track for Neptune High School since her sophomore year. She said she was contacted by colleges but she mainly reached out to coaches herself.

Silva stressed the importance of athletes contacting

the coaches first so the coaches know the students are interested in the school. There are over 7 million high school athletes, and only enough Division I college roster spots for 2 percent of them, so it is crucial to get on coaches' radars as early as freshman year.

"If they're reaching out to you, usually that doesn't say as much about you wanting to actually attend the school," Silva said.

Sophomore Ron Cole of Neptune plays varsity baseball for his high school and has already committed to Penn State as a pitcher. Cole, who never emailed coaches and only made a few phone calls, said his recruiting process was fairly simple.

"I went to a tournament down in Florida with my

travel team, and my coach got a bunch of college coaches to come to the game I pitched," Cole said.

Coaches of schools such as Penn State, Maryland, James Madison and Stony Brook all expressed interest in Cole and shortly after he made visits to those colleges. Penn State made an offer to Cole and he decided to commit there because it was the best fit for him, he said.

For many athletes, such as Silva, the recruiting process puts pressure on the athletes to perform at a certain level to be noticed by a coach and possibly receive a scholarship.

"At times, there is a little bit of pressure to perform well and hit those times that would make the coaches more interested in you because it really is solely based off of those times that you hit," Silva said.

## CHS sports are family affair

By MIA GALLO

Family history and upbringing play a part in what sports students choose to pursue throughout high school and beyond.

While there may not be families of the caliber of the Mannings at CHS, athleticism is definitely passed down from generation to generation in some CHS families.

Some students develop the passion for their sport on their own while others are born into an athletic family and playing sports was just a given.

For sophomore Kyle Wheeler of Wall and junior Matthew Avena of Middletown, they have experienced the latter first hand.

Wheeler attributed his choice of sport to his family. Since all of his siblings – two of whom are CHS alumni – and cousins played soccer, it was natural for him to take up the sport as well. His sister, Allie Wheeler, Class of 2016, and his brother, Michael Wheeler, Class of 2015, were big influences in Kyle's athletic career.

"I want to succeed in soccer because I want to be better than my siblings," Kyle Wheeler said.

Kyle Wheeler also mentioned that this sport brings his family closer. He said

that whenever they are together, all of his siblings and cousins always play soccer together, which helps them bond. But athleticism is not a new trait of his family.

"A lot of past generations in my family have been athletic because on my mom's side both of my grandparents played hockey," Kyle Wheeler said.

Avena has soccer in his blood as well. Avena's parents signed him up for soccer at a young age, and he continued to play.

"[My family] always push me and try to help me do my best," Avena said.

Avena also talked about how soccer is a bonding activity for his family. Since Avena's brother, Louis Avena, Class of 2016, and all of his cousins play or have played the sport they sometimes go to a field and play together.

Matthew Avena feels as though it's a good way to spend time with family while partaking in a common interest.

But for sophomore Grace Treshock of Monmouth Beach, the sports her siblings play didn't necessarily influence her decision to start playing a sport.

Treshock plays tennis now but said that during her childhood she played recreational basketball because her older brother did. Her brother was always the tallest and biggest man on the basketball

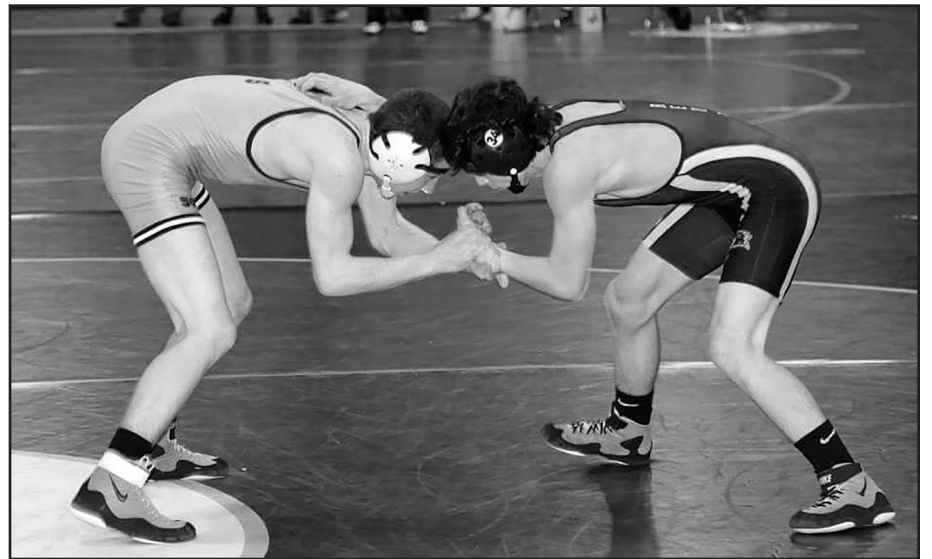


PHOTO COURTESY OF LOUIS AVENA

Alumnus Louis Avena of Middletown, left, is the fourth of seven people in his family to be a high school athlete. His younger brother, junior Matt Avena, follows in his footsteps as a soccer player.

court, leaving Treshock with some metaphorically and physically large shoes to fill. And since Treshock was just your average height forward, not a monstrous center, she ventured out to other sports, such as tennis. As soon as Treshock began to play tennis, basketball was no longer a blip on her radar.

"When I started playing tennis, I never looked back on basketball," Treshock said.

When they were younger, basketball

was one of Treshock and her brother's easiest ways to bond. Now that they are older, there are other topics that they can discuss while basketball is still one of them.

Many students at CHS, such as Kyle Wheeler and Matthew Avena, have older siblings who went to CHS as well that play a large role in their athletic careers. Also, some students, like Grace Treshock, decided to deviate from the path their family had laid out for them.

## Female athletes still feel subtle sting of discrimination at all levels

It took women over 2,000 years to be allowed into the Olympic games, according to Infoplease.com. Since then, female athletes are slowly becoming more accepted, but not everything is equal between the two sexes, even now.

One of the biggest differences between women and men is the lack of recognition women's sports receive as compared to men's, sophomore Grace Treshock of Monmouth Beach said.

"Boys' soccer and football are a lot more hyped up," Treshock said.

Freshman Matt Emery of Ocean acknowledges the popularity of men's professional sports over women's.

"People watch the NBA a lot more than the WNBA," Emery said.

Another aspect of sexism is the different standards that males and females have in regards to their appearances while playing sports. According to Inquiries Journal, female athletes, "beauty and sex appeal usually overshadow highlights of their on-field endeavors."

Sophomore Phoebe Drummond of Little Silver, a cross-country runner, has experienced discrimination based on her appearance.

"During the summer, when it's really hot, the boys on the football team can practice without their shirts on," Drummond said. "We are not allowed to run in our sports bras."

But sexism can go both ways, junior Brigid Garrett of Wall said. She believes that the stereotype that sports are

for males puts pressure on boys to be athletic.

"Girls feel like they can do things other than sports, but ... judgment is passed when a guy doesn't play a sport," Garrett said.

The stereotype that men are more athletic than women has been around for some time, but recently the negative connotation that comes with doing something "like a girl" has shifted.

Organizations such as Always are taking measure with their campaign #LikeAGirl to bring awareness to inequality in sports.

Sexism is a long-held tradition, especially in the world of sports. Although some strides have been taken, athletics are still far from equal.

Meeting the quota: the modern meaning of Christmas

MERRY CHRISTMAS\$



What'd you get me?

'It's all about the commercial'

By VAUGHN BATTISTA In 'How the Grinch Stole Christmas,' Dr. Seuss eventually learns that the unjolly Grinch who without gifts and feasts, illustrating that material things are not what the holidays are about. Nineteen percent of CHS students are unhappy with the commercialization of the holidays, while 23 percent are happy with it, according to a survey of 248 students from Nov. 29 to Dec. 1. Fifty-eight percent of students are indifferent toward this commercialism. Since the 1960s, the commercialization of the holidays has grown greatly, impacting the religious aspect of the season, gift-giving, the entertainment industries and even seasonal beverages. Sales and advertisements swell during the holidays, by all accounts. Christmas truly became a holiday of gift-giving in the late 1800s, according to Bloomberg View. As the country industrialized and the economy grew, Christmas moved away from celebrating the birth of Jesus and towards the inundation of buying and selling. Not only are ads very prevalent during Christmas, but they often start long before December. Many retailers begin holiday marketing as early as Nov. 6, according to Marketing Week. Seventy-five percent of CHS students believe that holiday ads should not begin until after Thanksgiving, according to The Inkblot's survey, while the rest think that ads should start before Thanksgiving. Zero percent think that they should commence before.

Halloween. A shining example of this commercialization is the two biggest shopping days of the year: Black Friday and Cyber Monday. On these days, stores offer deals to attract many customers as possible in a 24-hour time span. Stores opened on Thanksgiving as early as 4 p.m. to begin the Black Friday sales, according to DealNews. Approximately \$5 billion was spent online this Thanksgiving weekend, as reported by CNBC. Fifty-two percent of CHS students participated in these sales, according to the same Inkblot survey, joining the 154 million people that shopped on Thanksgiving weekend, according to CNBC. Some students enjoy the shopping aspect of the holidays, such as sophomore Julianna Anderson of Howell. "I always enjoy it because it's an experience you don't get any other time of year. I can really get into the holiday spirit and enjoy the shopping and sales with my friends," Anderson said. Unlike Anderson, freshman Logan Peterson of Middletown believes money-making hinders the holiday spirit. "Christmas is about spending time with family and friends," Peterson said. "The commercialization ... ruins the experience." As consumers navigate the busy holiday season each December, people will continue to decipher the meaning of the holidays for themselves. As the Grinch said, "Maybe Christmas doesn't come from a store. Maybe Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more."

Students discuss the Christ in Christmas

Mom and Dad: the real...

1,700 Starbucks gift cards sold per minute on Dec. 24 according to CNN Money



## Protests can help or hurt the cause

We've all seen it: "Keep your tiny hands off our rights." "Free Melania." "This baby would make a better President." These phrases have adorned signs and Twitter feeds nationwide following the announcement of the 45th president-elect of the United States: Donald J. Trump.

Since Nov. 9, #NotMyPresident has taken over city streets. The recent protests in at least 10 cities regarding Trump have exhibited the incredible power of free speech.

The Inkblot advocates for the First Amendment, but without leadership, unity and a clear message, anti-Trump rallies will fizzle out just as the Occupy Wall Street movement has.

Like the anti-Trump rallies, Occupy Wall Street has a solid cause: fight against the 1 percent. Yet the movement's Achilles heel is its leaderless (and leader-full) mentality. To fight the man, Occupy Wall Street stands without a face of the campaign, which has particularly impacted its financial status since its start in September 2011.

When the protesters received funds, "there was no leadership on how to distribute the money," according to International Business Times (IBT). Schisms between the different sectors of the movement then developed.

Like Occupy Wall Street, the anti-Trump movement itself lacks a Martin Luther King. There is no face of the campaign or even an official campaign name itself. There is no one leader that thousands would come to hear speak, as they did 53 years ago at the March on Washington.

Every protest needs a strong leader just like our nation needs a strong president.

Aside from lacking a leader, the anti-Trump rallies lack a country-wide unity, another downfall of Occupy Wall Street. In its heyday, the Wall Street protests were too centered in NYC at Zuccotti Park. The movement had a small national presence.

That crusade was based on the idea of residing in the business district and holding rallies there, but in cities like Boston and San Francisco, the "occupying" turned into simply camping out, according to press reports.

Likewise, from city to city, each anti-Trump protest has a different mentality and agenda. While New York protesters hold hands in solidarity outside Trump Tower, Portland opts for violent riots. Some want a recount and others just want Trump to listen to their fears for the next four years. Without clearly vocalizing exactly what the entire movement wants, it is unlikely Trump or the government will ever bend an ear.

A successful protest needs leadership and unity, but it also needs passionate and informed participants who all want to be there. The Huffington Post said Occupy Wall Street protesters acquired the reputation of "drifters, vagrants and freeloaders rather than committed protesters."

Anti-Trump rallies are heading down the same road and are seeing a rise in uninformed and uninvolved "protesters" joining the cause for kicks. Portland Patch reported that of the "112 people arrested...only 73 were registered to vote in Oregon and, of those, only 34 actually cast a ballot."

If the anti-Trump protesters want to make change, then listen up. Your support base is enormous: in one day alone, a protest in Los Angeles amassed upwards of 8,000 citizens, according to press reports. So wise up, and use your protesters wisely. Find your leader. Standardize your message. Keep waving your flags – or burning them – as long as your protesters are in for the long haul.

## College debt proves undue burden on undergraduates

By IZZY CAVAZZONI

After sleepless nights, hundreds of coffees, countless extracurricular activities and copious amounts of standardized testing, you are accepted into your dream college – and you are thousands of dollars in debt.

Punished for pursuing higher education, 60 percent of college graduates enter the workforce toting hefty amounts of student loan debt, according to Lend EDU. Over 43.3 million college students trade pristine credit scores and debt-free lives to take out student loans in hopes of obtaining a high-paying job for a reasonable return on investment.

In 1987, a New York Times article listed America's Top 10 costliest educational institutions. The tuition for each school was under \$18,000. For example, an undergraduate degree at Columbia University totalled up to \$17,120 per year; adjusted for inflation, this would be about \$36,430 in 2016. Now, according to College Data, admission to Columbia University not only requires high grades, SAT scores and writing supplements, but also \$71,690 for annual tuition and fees.

Schools like Columbia University offer financial aid to lessen the blow of the excessive price. Yet, the notion of charging a single student upwards of \$250,000 for a college education is, in the first place, outrageous.

College tuition is astronomical for the average family.

CNN reported that in 2014, a typical American family earned only \$53,657 per year. In short, even a year's worth of work cannot cover a year of college tuition. This is not taking into account expenses such as groceries, insurance and mortgage payments that normal families must pay.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CAROLINE COLLINS  
 Boston College, where annual tuition is \$65,644 for the 2016-17 school year.

Not only has tuition risen to unfathomable numbers, but the admissions process has become a business in its own right. College Board – the nonprofit organization that administers the SAT – cashed in with net revenues at \$65.6 million in 2010, according to The Hechinger Report. To take the SAT with essay, College Board charges \$57 per registration.

Combine SAT fees with pricey test preparation programs like Princeton Review, whose "Immersion" course costs \$1,999, according to their website and high school students are looking at an exorbitant amount of money for a necessary degree to obtain a job and a college education less about learning, more about money.

As I venture into exploring college campuses and various majors, I – a 17-year-old – must also take into account how much debt I want to carry going into my career and that is altogether unacceptable.

## Makeup is about confidence and inclusion Industry evolves to include all genders in ad campaigns

By LAUREN SPIEZIA

News flash: people wear makeup for multiple reasons, not just the need for other people's approval.

Since the ancient Egyptian tradition of wearing kohl eyeliner, the beauty industry has widened to cater to people from both sexes. This growth proves the fact that people have different cosmetic concerns and thus, wear makeup for their own personal needs.

The average makeup-wearer spends about \$15,000 on cosmetics throughout their lifetime, according to budgeting website Mint.com. The products that can make up this sum include various face, eye and lip products. This myriad of items is found in cosmetic stores around the world; the main question remains as to

why people choose to use these products. There is no one direct answer to this, as every person's reasoning is different. Junior Abigail Coneeny wear makeup to boost confidence.

"I wear makeup because I feel much more put together and elegant when I do, which in turn affects how I act and present myself," Coneeny said.

In our world, you are more likely to succeed if you exude confidence and present yourself in the best way possible. Makeup can help many people to help achieve that.

Whether it be to cover up a small imperfection or highlight a lovable feature, makeup gives anyone the opportunity to enhance their natural beauty for school, work or any place else.

The makeup industry has diversified and widened to en-

compass all people's wishes.

Another result of the growth of the cosmetics department is the recent push for the acceptance of makeup-wearing men. Refinery29 reported that CoverGirl Cosmetics recently announced their new spokesperson, male teenaged makeup guru James Charles.

Other companies have followed suit in the inclusion of both sexes in their public marketing. Makeup never comes with a label marked "female only," and we must discourage discrimination against males that also have every right to purchase cosmetics.

To my fellow makeup lovers – no matter your gender or reasons to use cosmetics – may your eyeliner wings always be even and your bronzer always be blended.

**CORRECTION:** Issue 2, pg. 3 MCVSD graphic by Katrina Eggleston, not Rishi Karthikeyan



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## Social media is changing the way people consume news

By LAUREN SPIEZIA

In a world ruled by the internet, social media platforms make news more accessible to the public, but can also further the divide between people on opposing sides of social and political issues.

About 50 percent of social network users have shared or reposted news articles, photos or videos, according to the Pew Research Center. This includes the public's discussion of newsworthy events and opinions about them.

Once supporters on both sides of issues take their beliefs to the internet, the gap that separates them only widens. Charles Steinfeld, a Michigan State University professor, reported to the Minnesota Post that "social media conversations tend to connect like-minded people, so it isn't as likely to bridge big ideological divides and is more likely to deepen divisions."

Part of the reason that social platforms are more likely to link people with similar ideologies is the algorithms used by each website. These sets of codes monitor the type of news pages that each user visits and dictate the types of new stories that show up on their notification feeds.

The main issue with a news filtration system is that each website user is trapped in their own bubble, only presented with stories that align with their personal be-

liefs. Once they're confronted with a viewpoint that strays from their own, a feeling of discomfort or offense comes over them, called cognitive dissonance. This can make us demonize and invalidate people with other opinions.

These effects of news consumption through social media were increasingly apparent in this past election, one of the most controversial that this country has ever seen.

Throughout the year, lefties and righties alike have butted heads online in conflicts over the candidates' policies, statements and scandals. This dissension has had its consequences on the nature of the country. Junior Marcos Guevara of Cliffwood said, "social media has made a really divisive climate for American politics, and especially in this election."

Many Republicans and Democrats have antagonized each other over social media, to the point of name-calling and assumptions made about a specific person's character solely based on their political stance. Trump advocates are stereotyped as racist or homophobic while Clinton supporters are labeled as extreme socialists.

It is immature to stereotype a large group of people only based on the few radicals of that group.

In the aftermath of a period that has divided the country enough already, a gap only amplified by social



PHOTO COURTESY OF CREATIVE COMMONS  
Social media has had a profound effect on the way people interact, particularly concerning the events of the recent election.

media, it is our sole responsibility to come together as a nation and encourage conversations about both the election and other controversies to bridge the division between us.

## Late-Night Shows are more for entertainment than factual journalism

By JACK HESTER

Late-night talk shows have been around since the late 40s, starting with "The Ed Sullivan Show," and are still becoming increasingly popular. But one thing has changed from the early days of late-night talk shows: nowadays, people don't watch the late-night shows to get informed on current events. People watch them to have a laugh at the end of the night. Back during the early days of late-night television, it was the opposite.

Instead of wanting comedy, most people wanted to know what was going on, especially during the heated times of the Cold War. As a result, the meaning of "late-night show" has changed drastically and has given these programs a new audience. What used to be a formal show with questions from the audience and special guest interviews to inform the audience is now a program filled with various skits and jokes, such as Stephen Colbert's "Clueless Gamer" series.

The host's goal is to make people laugh and have a comical interview with a celebrity. The most successful late night show hosts have been using this new formula and are surpassing millions of views each week. According to tvbythenumbers.com, Jimmy Fallon, one of the very popular hosts of "The Tonight Show," surpassed 3.2 million viewers from Sept. 26 to 30 in 2016. Stephen Colbert, host of "The Colbert Report," surpassed 2.7 million viewers during the same time frame.

Late-night show hosts talk about current events, but may purposely put bias into what they say. Another difference between the hosts and news anchors is that hosts use comedy to their advantage and do their best to make the audience laugh by the end of the program. I find this to be great because it allows people to be able to make the best out of controversial subjects, but people should know that late-night show hosts are entertainers, rather than journalists.

## Cast of Broadway's Hamilton did not harass Vice President-elect Mike Pence

By ALLY WEITZMAN

Recently, when America discovered that Donald Trump, a man who has made numerous racist and sexist remarks, would become the president-elect, a feeling of alarm and fright was generated across the country among Hillary voters.

To make matters worse, the vice president-elect and former Governor of Indiana, Mike Pence, is openly anti-gay. He supports a ban on gay marriage, encourages the government funding of conversion therapy and doesn't believe anti-discrimination laws should include gay people. This shows his lack of concern to protect the members of the LGBT+ community.

People are genuinely scared for their liberties, and rightfully so. This was especially evident on Nov. 18 after a performance of the Broadway musical "Hamilton" in New York City.

Pence attended the show, and after the final bows, cast member Brandon Victor Dixon, who plays Aaron Burr, stopped Pence from leaving early to talk to him, according to The New York Times.

Dixon encouraged Pence to honor the vast diversity of American and to "work on behalf of all of us." During this short speech, Dixon was respectful, quieting

boos from the crowd by stating, "There's nothing to boo here. We're all here sharing a story of love."

Afterwards, #BoycottHamilton began trending on Twitter, and Donald Trump expressed his dismay. He tweeted that Pence was "harassed," that Hamilton is "highly overrated" and that the theater should "always be a safe and special place."

Simply, he demanded an apology from the cast and producers of Hamilton.

Trump speaks of safety, but how can citizens feel safe when their very rights are threatened? Some feel that calling out Pence was disrespectful and uncalled for. This is not the case.

Exercising one's right to freedom of speech, especially when it preaches love and tolerance, should never be frowned upon, even when it is aimed at the vice president-elect. The ability to disagree with people in power and to freely express opinions is what makes this country great.

Respectfully addressing valid concerns is not "harassment" or unsafe behavior.

If our president-elect can't recognize the inalienable right of freedom of speech, we have a long four years ahead of us.

## Trump will be our next President — so where does the country go from here?

By WILL DEAN

The American people voted Donald Trump into the highest office in the land, the presidency, on Nov. 8. Within hours, protests began in many major cities, including New York City, Portland and Washington, D.C., according to The Washington Post.

Protesters claimed that Trump is not their president because he did not win the popular vote. But our country is not a direct democracy; it is a federalist republic. This means that each state chooses electors, who in turn vote for the president. As it currently stands, Trump has 306 electoral votes while Clinton only has 232 votes.

Even though he clearly won the Electoral College, protesters still disavow the fact that Donald J. Trump is going to be our President.

Some even go as far as sending death threats to members of the Electoral College, according to the Detroit News.

"I've had people talk about shoving a gun in my mouth and blowing my brains out," Mike Bane-rian, an elector from Michigan, said.

Meanwhile, the protests became criminal; 19 cars were



PHOTO COURTESY OF ELVERT BARNES  
Protesters gathered outside of Trump buildings around the country to protest his presidency following his win of the electoral college.

vandalized and crowds armed with bats threw projectiles at police in Portland, protesters shut down Interstate 25 in Denver and in Oakland graffiti stating "Kill Trump" was found, according to USA Today and CNN. Violent protests do not change election outcomes after the voting period has closed.

Trump won. Get over it. The fact that Trump won does not give him immunity from criticism. Americans are not only justified but obliged to hold their leaders to a very important stan-

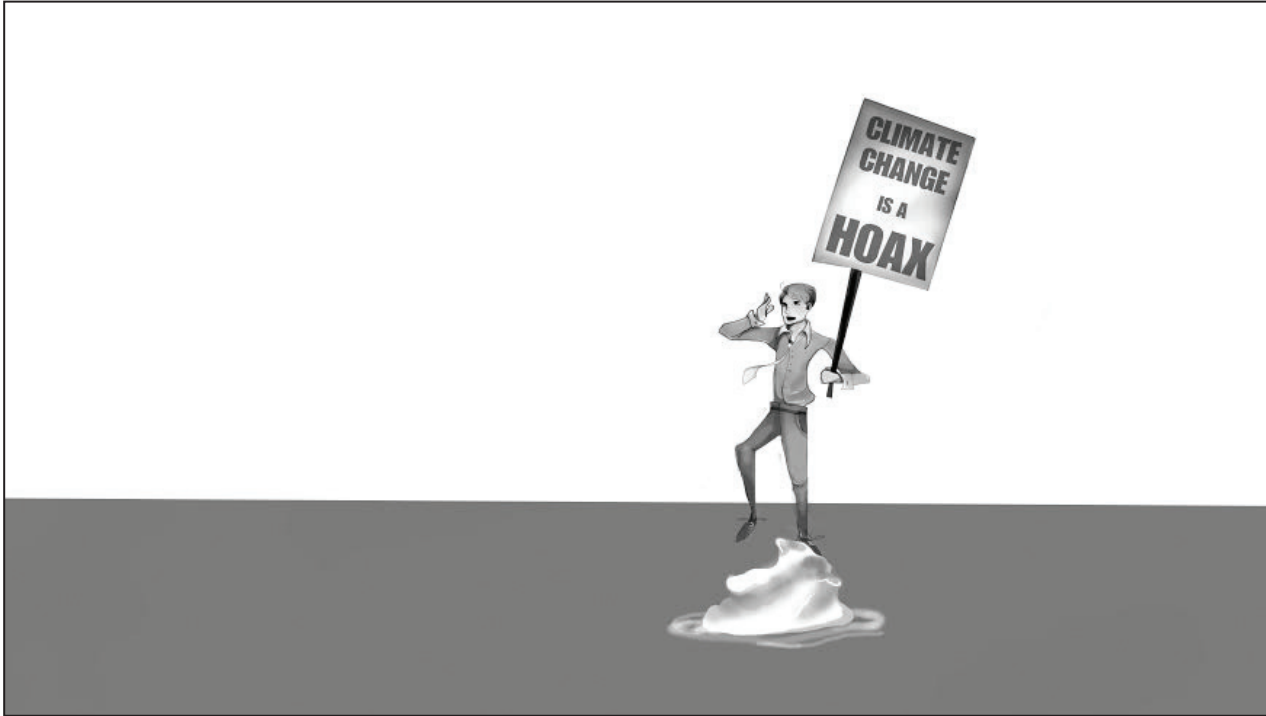
dard: whether or not they uphold the Constitution.

Donald Trump has not been sworn into office yet. He has no ability to propose or enact legislation until he is President. Until January 20, he is just a citizen with no power to violate the Constitution.

Nonetheless, why not give the guy a chance? He just got elected. Let Trump prove that "this will be a great time in the lives of ALL Americans," as he tweeted. Let's all join together and sing kumbaya in the hopes of a better America.

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BLOT CARTOON BY EMILY MADEIRA

## Climate change deniers: check the evidence

By COLIN MARTIN

The issue of climate change is a divisive one in the United States. Curiously though, it did not come up as frequently in the presidential debates as other topics such as immigration or trade, despite being just as crucial to the nation and the world.

Despite the fact that, according to NASA, 97 percent of scientific papers that have taken a stance on climate change agreed that it was caused by humans, we as a country are still divided on this issue.

There are several arguments against man-made climate change. The first comes from a website called LongRangeWeather.com, run by climatologist Cliff Harris and meteorologist Randy Mann. They created a chart which essentially argues that climate change has fluctuated in the past, and will eventually reverse itself in the future.

There are a few arguments against this chart. For one, Harris is not actually a scientist. The article "Climate Change Has Happened Before, So Why Worry?" by Education for Sustainable Development debunks the very theory that the two support. The article states that while the climate has fluctuated a lot in the past, there have always been obvious natural causes for those changes. This time, there are not.

The second argument comes from Dr. Roy Spencer, a former NASA scientist and climatologist, who argues that if scientists were to look hard for a natural cause of climate change, they would find it easily.

Spencer's position is based on the idea of the Earth's "climate sensitivity," or how radically the Earth reacts to changes. Spencer's argument essentially states that Earth's climate sensitivity is not as high as scientists believe, meaning that the changes would be caused naturally rather than by humans.

Whatever your position on climate change is, it should be in the best interests of every person on this planet to make sure that our home, this Earth, stays safe. For this reason, we need to make an effort to be united in the cause of saving the planet.

The best way to do this is to pay attention to who you vote for in public elections. Everyone's best chance at saving the planet is to elect public officials who understand and support ending climate change. So pay attention to your local politics, and vote to end climate change and to save our planet.

## Android has benefits Apple lacks iPhones may be in, Androids are reliable and customizable

By SALLY EHLERS

The amount of variety in smartphones is overwhelming, but Apple conquers the industry. As an owner of an Android, I am often questioned about my choice.

"Do you wish you had an iPhone?" they ask. "Why would you buy an Android?"

No, I do not want an iPhone. Apple products aren't bad, but Android products are better.

As soon as I walked into the cellular store, it was obvious that Android outshines Apple. The iPhone only has the most recent model – practically the same as the previous model.

Android phones have many and varied models, including Nexus 5, HTC One, Droid Mini, etc. Having many choices allowed me to find the phone that fit my needs best rather than feel obligated to buy the most recent Apple product simply because

it is new.

Once I bought my Android, I discovered that my phone had many more useful features than Apple products. For example, Apple forces their users to leave all of their apps on their home screen, whereas Android allows the user to pick and choose what apps they want shown, and add extra widgets to their home screen.

Android products also have several more passcode options than Apple products – Apple has either a number or fingerprint passcode to unlock the device whereas Android has pattern, number and facial recognition code options.

Also, on certain Android devices, there is an option to lock each app individually rather than the whole device. Android's customizable features make their products more desirable for each unique individual.

Many of my peers with iPhones

seem to need a new one every year due to malfunctions. According to a recent report, Q2 2016 State of Mobile Device Performance and Health, 58 percent of iOS devices experienced issues during the second quarter of 2016 whereas only 35 percent of Android devices experienced issues.

Even over a year after my initial purchase, my Android works flawlessly. By manufacturing longer-lasting phones, Android saves the customer time and money.

And if your Android does break, most times you can just buy the one part that broke and quickly fix your phone yourself. For example, Android devices, unlike Apple, have battery slots on the back of the device that can open, allowing the battery to be easily replaced if it were to die.

Fight against the common trends. Get the product that works for you. Go Android.

## Anti-Trump protests are not pointless exhibits

By CAROLINE SAVAGE

In the early hours of Nov. 9, Donald Trump was elected as the next President of the United States. Almost immediately, protests formed across the country in cities like New York, Chicago, Seattle, Minneapolis and Los Angeles, according to the Associated Press.

But conservatives were quick to denounce the protests. Bill O'Reilly of Fox News claimed that "left-wing protesters do not respect an honest election" on his show "The O'Reilly Factor," even comparing the protests to those of the communist uprisings in Cuba and Soviet Russia. Trump himself, via Twitter, accused the demonstrators of being "professional protesters, incited by the media" and rebuked their actions as "very unfair!"

Despite what many conservatives believe, these "Anti-Trump" protests aren't ridiculous, unfair or pointless. The simple fact is that the Electoral College, although put into place by our Founding Fathers for good reason, is a broken system that has failed the majority of the voting-age population.

The country did not choose Trump to be its president. In fact, according to CNN, Hillary Clinton was, as of Dec. 8, leading the popular vote by over 2.5 million votes, a number that is expected to grow as more votes are counted. To put that in perspective, the popular vote margin of the famously controversial 2000 election between Al Gore and former President George W. Bush was a mere 539,000.

The Electoral College not only failed the people, but it failed in its intended purpose. In Federalist Paper #68, Alexander Hamilton puts forth that "the process of election affords a moral certainty, that the office of President will never fall to the lot of any man who is not in an eminent degree endowed with the requisite qualifications."

Donald Trump, an accused sex offender with no political experience, fails to fulfill the Founding Fathers' design of the President of the United States. Thankfully,



BLOT PHOTO BY ZOE MCDONNELL

Junior Zoe McDonnell of Middletown attended an anti-Trump at Union Square Park in New York City on Nov. 12.

those same Founding Fathers granted all of us the right to protest the government in the First Amendment.

It's clear to anyone paying attention that anti-Trump protesters aren't sore losers and their message isn't ridiculous. They've been failed by a system that has never failed so catastrophically. They're people of color, people of the LGBT community, immigrants, Muslims, women, men,

Americans. They're people who have had eight years of unprecedented acceptance and progress – progress that, if he holds true to his campaign promises, Donald Trump will undo. To exercise the rights that the First Amendment granted all of us in the face of a terrifying and dangerous future in Donald Trump's America is not ridiculous or useless – it's essential.

## A Tribe Called Quest returns with hit album



CREATIVE COMMONS PHOTO COURTESY OF CLARICE L.

A Tribe Called Quest performed at the music concert, Rock the Bells. Since their debut in 1990, A Tribe Called Quest has released six albums, according to the New York Times.

By SYDNEY CONEENY

A new sound is trickling through the radio stream of similar-sounding indie pop songs. With its techno-funk and flashback hip-hop vibe, it's a retro-revolution kind of music bringing back the beat that once drove old school hip-hop.

Don't get the wrong idea though: A Tribe Called Quest is a cast of veterans. "We got it from Here... Thank You 4 Your service" is the American hip-hop group's first release after an 18 year hiatus, but the time apart doesn't show – the EP debuted at number one on the Billboard chart.

After their performance on "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" on Nov. 13, 2015, the same night as the Paris attacks, A Tribe Called Quest started work on the politically and socially charged album. Recorded before the death of group member Phife Dog, the EP encapsulates themes such as racism and sexism within a sound that brings you back in time and throws

you forward just like the rips of a turntable. Commentary on American politics appears on the album with Trump-slamming songs such as "The Donald" and keeps with the album's concept of shedding light on serious matters.

Flash back about 20 years ago when A Tribe Called Quest was a small hip-hop group coming up in Queens involved in the East Coast-West Coast hip-hop feud. Now, several of their albums are regarded as classics. After 18 years with little news, the pioneers of alternative hip-hop have triumphantly returned to the musical scene.

"We got it from Here" is an album I have blasted in my car and jammed to with friends. It is an album that you want to listen to on repeat, if only to decipher just what it is they're saying, because when the lyrics finally hit you, they really hit you. Full disclosure: do not listen to this EP with your parents, your thoughts on it just may conflict.

## "Arrival" brings more than aliens to the movie screen

By SAWYER BARTH

The major motion picture "Arrival," written by Eric Heisserer and based on the 1998 science fiction novella "Story of Your Life" by Ted Chiang, hit U.S. theaters Nov. 11. The movie received a 93 percent critic rating on Rotten Tomatoes and earned third place in the box office during its opening weekend, according to Box Office Mojo.

The film is centered around Louise Banks, portrayed by Amy Adams of "Man of Steel." Banks is an ingenious linguist and college professor who is recruited by the American military when the Earth is spontaneously flanked by a dozen extraterrestrial vessels.

As the film progresses,

Adams' character spends an increasing amount of time inside the ominous alien ship located in rustic Montana. Here, she attempts to decipher the visitors' language and answer the questions assigned by her employers.

Forest Whitaker, star of Lee Daniels' "The Butler," plays U.S. Army Colonel Weber, who is sent to collect Banks. During their helicopter ride towards the spacecraft, he lays out her objective: "Priority one: what do they want? Where are they from?"

According to IMDb, Adams is coming off two consecutive Golden Globe wins in 2014 and 2015 for "American Hustle" and "Big Eyes," respectively. Her powerhouse performance in

"Arrival" could lead to her first Oscar after five previous Academy nods and subsequent losses.

The combination of Adams' poignant performance and the contemplative mood set by "Sicario" director Denis Villeneuve provides a scintillating look into a unique relationship between humans and extraterrestrials in this psychological drama.

Don't buy tickets to this film if you're looking for an action-packed alien invasion epic to get your heart racing. This movie strays from stereotypical science fiction glory and violence, proving to be a purely emotional and intellectual story about a woman who discovers herself through extraordinary circumstances.

## "La La Land" captivates viewers

By SARAH LYNCH

On a blustery Saturday, I trekked the streets of Manhattan to see "La La Land," the movie musical I'd anticipated for months. In a sold out theater near Lincoln Center, the excitement was intoxicating. Even with all the stars seemingly aligned, I feared the film would fall short of my sky-high expectations. Two hours and eight minutes later, I left the theater relieved of all worries and with the giddy feeling that only comes from a truly breathtaking film.

"La La Land" follows the irresistible love story of two struggling artists in modern-day Los Angeles. Mia, played by the endlessly versatile Emma Stone, is a struggling actress who is rejected with disheartening frequency. In her quest to make a name for herself, she stumbles across Ryan Gosling's character, Sebastian, who is desperately trying to preserve and re-popularize pure jazz music.

Immediately it is clear that the chemistry between Gosling and Stone has only sweetened since their previous movies together – "Crazy, Stupid, Love" (2011) and "Gangster Squad" (2013). But the most enchanting part of Mia and Sebastian's relationship is not their romance, but how they encourage each other's dreams and the impact that support has on both of their lives.

Writer and director Damien Chazelle's ingenious script, intricate characters and vibrant scenery are nothing short of masterful. Chazelle's work is further elevated by the catchy and toe-tapping score by Justin Hurwitz, with whom Chazelle collaborated in his 2014 hit, "Whiplash."

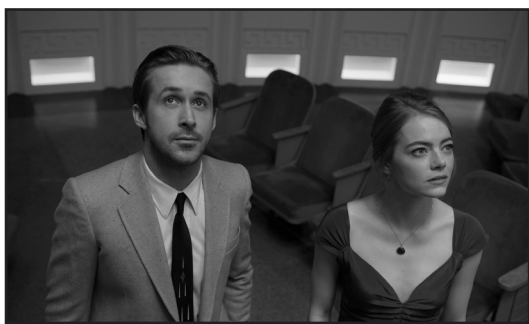


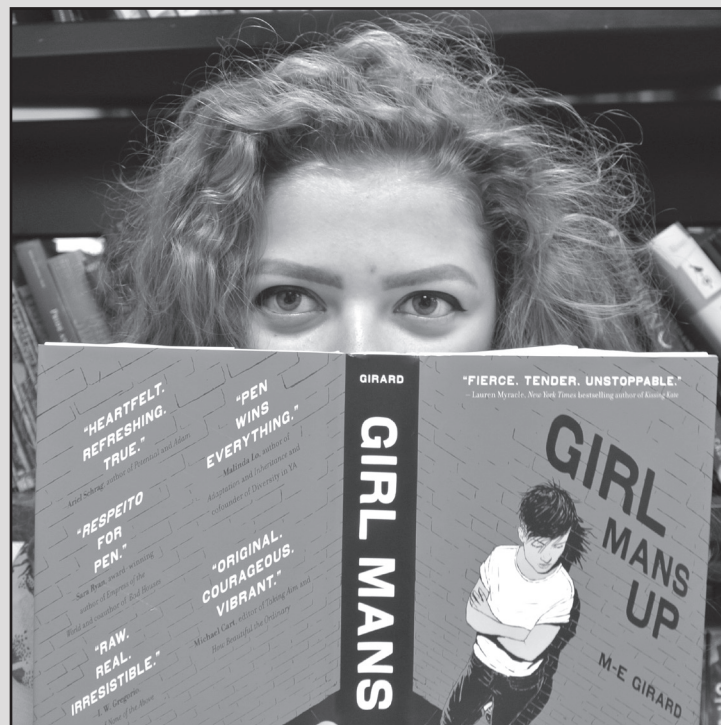
PHOTO COURTESY OF DALE ROBINETTE

"La La Land" opened in select cities on Dec. 9. The film received seven Golden Globe nominations, including Best Picture, Best Actress and Best Actor.

The most touching part of the movie is how deeply Gosling and Stone visibly connect with the characters they play. Not many years ago, they too bounced from audition to audition. Stone told Backstage magazine, "Auditioning, that kind of rejection, I went through three years of that - not six (like Mia), but I knew that world and what that felt like."

Pure and powerful emotion is at the heart of every aspect of "La La Land." While the special effects and theatrical aspects are fantastical, the feelings that drive the plot are true and relatable. By the end, I was moved to tears. "La La Land" is not just a love story; it is not just a musical. It is an awe-inspiring masterpiece that is a tribute to the pianists, actors and artists of the world who work tirelessly and thanklessly every day to enrich our culture and open our minds.

## "Girl Mans Up" breaks LGBTQ+ stereotypes



BLOT PHOTO BY IZZY CAVAZZONI

Junior Veronica Yaron read "Girl Mans Up," a book that rises above stereotypical LGBTQ+ literature and overcomes gender roles.

By VERONICA YARON

I have never wanted to thank my friends for abandoning me in Barnes & Noble more than when I stumbled upon "Girl Mans Up" by M-E Girard. For the first time in years, I picked up a young adult novel that I truly saw as different and not a pre-sold idea that has been rehashed a hundred times before.

The young adult genre has catered towards unrealistic teen romance for years. For the LGBTQ+ youth, the chance of finding a book that represents them is slim to none. For people of color, these numbers are even lower.

The book follows Pen, a Portuguese teenager who presents herself as more "masculine" and likes girls, but has no interest in being a boy. What makes Pen such a strong character is that she knows who she is and what she wants. Her struggles are not internal at all. The conflict in the book stems from tensions between her traditional parents and a toxic relationship with Colby, her manipulative childhood friend.

Pen stole my heart. Her voice feels like that of a real teenager and not some adult trying to connect to the struggles of race, gender and sexuality.

She is the independent lesbian character that teen fiction has been missing for years. Pen realizes that the only way to get people off of her back is to stand up for herself. The loyalty and respect demanded from her friends and family mean nothing if she can not do the same for herself.

As Pen grows into her own identity, readers watch her create new friendships and get the girl. By the end of this book I had formed a crush on Pen myself, as she flips the term "having to man up" from something derogatory to something that gives hope and drive to any person who needs it.

## “The Nutcracker” turns an old classic into a new tradition



PHOTO BY SARAH TAKASH

Seniors Catherine Escueta of Eatontown and Anna Soltys of Holmdel performed on Dec. 10 and 11 in their last Nutcracker show with the Company of Dance Arts at the Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank.

By EMILY TORO

“The Nutcracker” ballet is performed around the holidays by numerous dancers worldwide. Derived from the classical period of ballet, “The Nutcracker” is based off of the tale “The Nutcracker and the Mouse King” by E.T.A Hoffmann.

According to The New York City Ballet, the first performance was shown in 1892 at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia. Ballet master of the Russian Imperial Ballet, Marius Petipa, asked Pyotr Tchaikovsky to compose the music for the ballet and asked his assistant, Lev Ivanov, to choreograph it. According to an analysis done for Tchaikovsky’s song “Dance of the Sugarplum Fairy,” it is used in many different forms of media including children’s movies.

In the United States, “The Nutcracker” was presented by the San Francisco Opera Ballet in 1944 and directed by William Christensen. According to the New York Times,

George Balanchine added choreography from “The Nutcracker” that he danced in as a child to make it more comforting for people.

Balanchine produced a show for the New York City Ballet in 1954 and established the show as a holiday tradition. According to the about.com, “Numerous ballet companies around the world stage the famous ballet every year during the month of December. Both children and adults look forward to attending a magical performance of ‘The Nutcracker’ each holiday season.”

Not only does this ballet bring holiday spirit to audiences from professional companies such as the American Ballet Theater and the New York City Ballet, but pre-professional companies and dance schools as well. Freshman Riley Rademacher of Wall shared her experiences from dancing in “The Nutcracker” at the Spring Lake School of Dance. Rademacher says that she participates in this show every year and enjoys performing a part in a story as op-

posed to simply dancing.

“I have participated in this show ever since I was three,” Rademacher said. “. . . the roles for everyone change every year; it is great to be challenged every year with both harder dances and roles to play.”

Senior Catherine Escueta of Eatontown is performing in the Company of Dance Arts’ production of “The Nutcracker” as the role of the Sugarplum Fairy. This will be her tenth year participating in the show.

“It is really fulfilling to be a part of something that is such a tradition in so many people’s holiday plans,” Escueta said. “‘The Nutcracker’ is special to me partially because I’ve been doing it for so long and also because I really love performing.”

Through Balanchine, “The Nutcracker” has touched the hearts of many people and is still affecting the lives of many dancers today by allowing them to be a part of a popular holiday tradition.

## From Kennedy to Obama to Trump, keep America fashionable

By CAROLINE COLLINS

Thanks to Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton, 2016 will go down in history as the year of ill-fitting trucker hats and snappy pantsuits. This year’s election proved the runway of Capitol Hill will never fail to provide the public with something to talk about.

But before Melania Trump and her pussy-bow Gucci blouse, there was Martha Washington and her British silk stockings. First ladies have been one step ahead of the fashion game since 1789. Their style reflects the trends of the moment while remaining inexplicably timeless.

Over the past eight years, Michelle Obama became known as the first lady of fashion. Time Magazine credited her with putting Jason Wu, a 26-year-old Taipei-born designer, on the map with her first inaugural look in 2009. The white one-shoulder gown with stunning embellishments is on display at The National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C.

President Barack Obama clearly took some cues

from his wife to earn himself the title of “best dressed American politician in a generation,” according to GQ Magazine. In fact, his style is often compared to that of John F. Kennedy: effortlessly polished. Yet many argue that no Commander in Chief will ever manage to top Kennedy’s iconic, all-American approach to dressing.

The right pair of sunglasses became synonymous with the spirit of patriotism as JFK and First Lady Jackie Kennedy made them a fashion necessity. Men and women everywhere attempted to emulate the power couple’s impeccable style from statement watches all the way down to pillbox hats. After his assassination in 1963, the 35th president left behind an unmatched legacy of smart and sophisticated fashion and politics.

The pressure is on for President-elect Donald Trump and his family to stylishly serve our nation, and one can only hope that he begins by leaving his campaign accessories in 2016. It’s time to Keep America Fashionable.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GAGE SKIDMORE

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/gageskidmore/30460317165>  
First Lady Michelle Obama shows off her style at a rally in Phoenix, Ariz.

## “Settle for More” incites action and inspires readers

By ISABELLA CAVAZZONI

From a young age, my mother instilled in me that as a woman, I can do anything I set my mind to. She also pointed me to who would be my role model for the next four years and counting: Megyn Kelly, someone who personifies feminism, though she may never outwardly say it.

As a woman who speaks her mind and stands up for her beliefs, Kelly introduced me to the realm of politics I hardly acknowledged. Her journalistic endeavors and hard-hitting presidential debate questions in the first Republican primary debate pushed me to dig deeper into my own beliefs. This very scene of

the debate and my political awakening is exactly where her new novel, “Settle for More,” takes off, launching readers into Kelly’s clash with President-elect Donald Trump: “Debate day: August 6, 2015. I woke up in Cleveland, excited for what was to come.”

My first impression: Kelly’s style of writing is brazenly simple and personal. The prologue, entitled “Tough Questions,” takes no prisoners as she finally shares her experience of the day that turned her life around for more than a year. With short, declarative sentences and strategically placed dialogue fragments, Kelly creates an intimate relationship with her readers.

Not only does Kelly offer insight in her political career, but she also shows the trials and tribulations in her life as a young woman. She was not always the strong, independent spitfire many people see her as today. In fact, her bold personality can be attributed to the incessant bullying she had to endure as a pre-teen, the death of her father, the heartbreak caused by her ex-boyfriend Jim and the sexism she endured in her workplace.

“Here I was working tirelessly at this firm because I wanted him to see me as a future associate,” Kelly said. “He went on to tell me how attractive I was, just his son’s type and would I consider dinner

out with the two of them?”

It was this moment, in her former employer’s office, that Kelly realized she would struggle to get men to take her seriously. As a law student, Kelly’s peers called her “Barbie.” Yet this kind of sexism only pushed her to work harder and prove them wrong.

“You think I’m a ditz?” Kelly wrote. “Stand by.”

“Settle for More” is an eye-opening epic into Megyn Kelly’s life. Her determination, strength and ability to never take no for an answer urged me to continue to pursue my dreams, and if all else fails, “I will have accomplished the satisfaction of attempting.”