

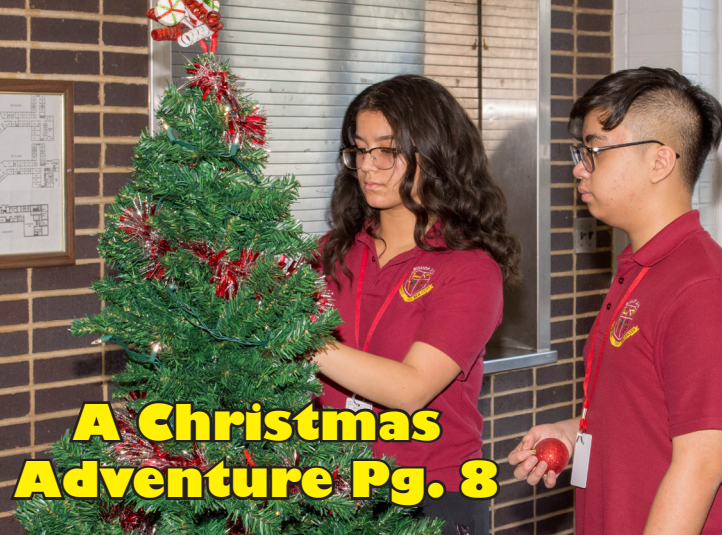
**Crimes of
Grindelwald
Review
Pg. 4**



**Wildfires Rage
Through California
Pg. 6**



**Sports
Spotlight
Pg. 13**



**A Christmas
Adventure Pg. 8**



**A New Year's Letter
from the Staff
Pg. 16**





New Year's Resolutions

Pros v. Cons

New Year, new me! Although this may be a new phrase, New Year's resolutions have been around for over 4,000 years. They can be found throughout many different cultures and religions in various forms. As the first to celebrate the new year, Babylonians made promises to their gods hoping for good fortunes in return. In ancient Rome, sacrifices were made to the two-faced god Janus (who said to look back into the past and forward into the future) along with promises of good conduct. For early Christians and Protestants, vigils were held as a time for people to reflect on past actions, make

resolutions for the new year, and pray. With thousands of years of history, common themes of self-reflection and positive change have been carried on to the present time.

How can one move forward without reflecting on the past? Self-reflection is a time that allows people to meditate on their past thoughts and actions. It is a time when people can reflect on their accomplishments and struggles from the past year. In the wise words of Theodore Roosevelt, "The more you learn about the past, the better prepared you are for the future." To set achievable goals, people reflect on past

actions to steer themselves in the right direction. In addition, once issues are recognized, setting a target can empower people to achieve them.

New Year's resolutions are usually ambitions that improve people's lives. According to YouGov, the top New Year's Resolutions of 2018 were to eat healthier, get more exercise, save money, focus on self care, read more, make new friends, get a (new) job, learn a new skill, and take up a hobby. Alice Walker once said, "Every small positive change we make in ourselves, repays us in confidence in the future." Resolutions do not need to be huge

changes over a long period of time. Even small, short term goals can have a huge impact.

"The calendar change symbolizes new beginnings, which makes the New Year a perfect time to create new goals" (The Odyssey Online). Everyone wants to achieve their goals, but sometimes it is hard to find the ambition to start. The New Year offers a starting point and incentive for those dreams. "Nothing we do can change the past, but everything we do changes the future" (Ashleigh Brilliant). No matter what someone's resolution is, they have the power to make a difference in their life.

Every year, people are eager to create New Year's resolutions, most of which are broken within the first month. Behind the New Year's resolution lies the stigma "new year, new me." Caught up in the enthusiasm and optimism of the new year inspires people to create resolutions thinking if they follow it, it will improve themselves either physically, spiritually, or mentally.

One reason New Year's resolutions aren't useful is the unrealistic expectations set by people in the beginning of the year. It is not uncommon to see by the end of the first month that most goals are either unkept or broken. Everyone already has their set habits created by themselves based on their

daily life routines. Usually a New Year's resolution aims to break one bad habit or add a good habit, but it is difficult to follow through because it is hard to break or change routine aspects of your life. You are so used to doing something a certain way or not doing something at all, that psychologically your brain will automatically reject. This is where motivation and determination are also a problem.

It seems like some people choose resolutions believing that creating unrealistic commitments based on other people's expectations will make them happy instead of asking themselves what will actually bring them joy. At the end of each year it is traditional to see many people interested in creating a goal

to follow for the new upcoming year, but how many people do we actually see accomplish that? Whether it be "to exercise more" or "eat healthy," New Year's Resolutions are extremely difficult to follow through. We create goals based on others' outsized goals set by family, friends, and marketing messages. Professor John C. Norcross Ph.D. of the University of Scranton estimates that less than 10% of New Year's Resolutions are achieved. The determination to maintain a desired goal for an entire year requires incredible motivation, which most people don't have. It is one thing to be motivated and another challenge to stay motivated. Wanting something is easy, striving for something is the

hard part and where most people seem to lose commitment.

Thirty-Nine percent of people in their twenties achieve their goals each year according to the University of Scranton's Journal of Clinical Psychology. The likelihood of actually accomplishing New Year's Resolutions decreases as you get older. For many of us, making New Year's resolutions backfire. "Right from the getgo a resolution has failure and procrastination built into it," says Timothy Rychyl, associate professor of psychology at Carleton University in Ottawa. Due to unrealistic expectations combined with a lack of motivation and undesired commitments, New Year's Resolutions are determined for failure right from the beginning.

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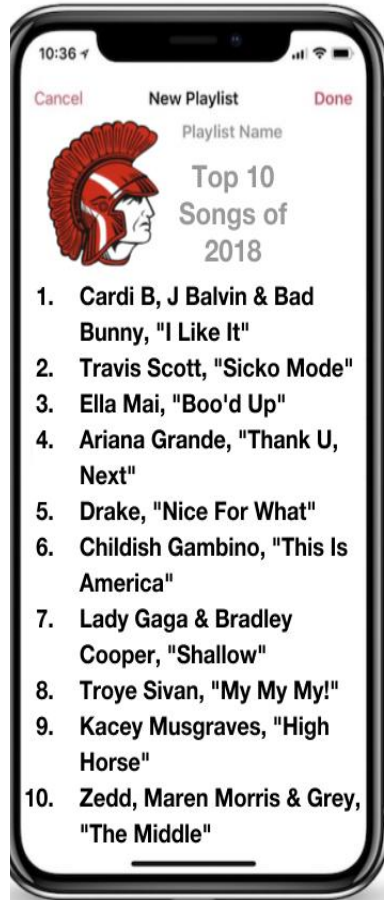
Vol. 49, No.2

The Satoma Newsmagazine is a student publication which is the forum of expression for the student body at Bishop George Ahr High School, One Tingley Lane, Edison, New Jersey 08820. Letters to the editor should be signed although names will be held upon request. The Satoma Newsmagazine is a member of the Quill and Scroll and the American Scholastic Press Association.

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What's Trending @Satoma

Top 10 Most Tweeted Celebrities of 2018:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. BTS | 6. Ariana Grande |
| 2. LeBron James | 7. Cardi B |
| 3. Kanye West | 8. Beyonce |
| 4. Drake | 9. Jimin Park |
| 5. EXO | 10. Nicki Minaj |

1 hour ago via web  Favorite  Retweet  Reply

Top 10 Grossing Movies of 2018:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Black Panther | 6. The Grinch |
| 2. Avengers: Infinity War | 7. Mission Impossible- Fallout |
| 3. Incredibles 2 | 8. Ant-Man and the Wasp |
| 4. Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom | 9. Solo: A Star Wars Story |
| 5. Deadpool 2 | 10. Venom |

December discussions

Youtube Rewind, 'Baby It's Cold Outside,' 'Bird Box'

BY: GIANNA STRAZZULLA AND SYBILLE RATEAU

Youtube's annual Rewind, a video that's supposed to review the highlights of the year, sparked major backlash with the website's community. It took about a week for the video to reach 15 million dislikes making it the most disliked video on the site beating Justin Bieber's "Baby" music video, which took 8 years to accumulate 10 million dislikes. The video was released on December 6th and included more than 130 stars. Most viewers believed that the video avoided many popular topics and did not include Youtube's most famous influencers. In response to the rewind, many Youtubers have made parodies of the video or clips sharing their thoughts and feedback. However, the company has listened to their community and in a tweet said, "We hear what you're saying, and we want to make next

year better for all of you."

When the holiday season was approaching, everyone was waiting for their favorite Christmas Carol to play on the radio and all their favorite Christmas movies to air on television. However, this year "Baby It's Cold Outside", a holiday classic, was banned on some radio stations. A Cleveland radio station's host, Desiray, defended the decision to ban the song by stating, "I do realize that when the song was written in 1944, it was a different time, but now while reading it, it seems very manipulative and wrong." Although this song is a holiday classic, it lit up social media for a time this month.

With over 26 million views in a week after its December 13th release, *Bird Box* has caused the internet to explode. It is the most watched movie on Netflix and its debut week viewership comes

in second only to Season 2 of *Stranger Things*. Although the internet has divided opinions on the movie, it has created countless memes on social media and a new challenge called "The Bird Box Challenge" where people try to do daily tasks blindfolded. However, this challenge may cause big problems for Netflix. Recently, a teenager in Utah caused an accident while driving blindfolded. Netflix and law enforcement agencies across the country were quick to issue warnings that people who have seen the film should not partake in dangerous activities that could cause harm to themselves or others..



BIRD BOX. PHOTO COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES

A RIDDIKULUS-LY GOOD MOVIE

BY: MADISON LUONGO

Although the original book/movie series of Harry Potter has ended, that hasn't stop J.K. Rowling from revealing more and more of the wizarding world through spinoffs, sequels, and, in this case, prequels. In November of 2016, the first installment of the *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* series hit theaters, giving fans a view of what wizard life was like before the "boy who lived". The series takes place in 1920s and focuses on Newt Scamander (played by Oscar-winning Eddie Redmayne): a shy magizoologist who prefers animals over people. In November of 2018, Newt's story continues with the release of "Fantastic Beasts: the Crimes of Grindelwald".

The story starts with Newt going to the Ministry of Magic to try and restore his rights to internationally travel. While there he runs into his old friend from Hogwarts, Leta LeStrange (Zoe Kravitz) and is told that if he helps the Ministry search for Credence Barebone (Ezra Miller), who is assumed to be the long-lost brother of Leta, he will get back his right to travel. However, Newt turns down the offer.

He is later approached by Dumbledore and is asked to go to France and stop the tyrant Grindelwald, who believes wizards should rule the

world and non-wizards should bow down to them. With his legion on the rise, he reluctantly agrees to help.

Unexpectedly, two of Newt's old New York friends Queenie Goldstein (Alison Sudol) and Jacob Kowalski (Dan Fogler) show up at his house. Jacob however was put under a spell by Queenie to get him to go with her. When the spell is undone, Queenie and Jacob bicker and Queenie runs off. Newt also hears that his friend



A PROMOTIONAL POSTER FOR THE MOVIE FEATURING EDDIE REDMAYNE AND JUDE LAW. (PHOTO COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

Tina Goldstein (Katherine Waterston) is in Europe searching for Credence. Newt goes with Jacob and, ignoring his travel ban, goes to France.

In France, Newt and Jacob reunite with Tina while searching for Credence. Tina and Newt sneak into the French Ministry of Magic to find records regarding Credence's true identity. The two run into Newt's brother, Theseus (Callum Turner), and Leta, who confesses Credence is not her brother, because she unintentionally killed her brother when he was a baby. Meanwhile, Grindelwald calls an assembly of all his followers. Newt and the others go to confront him, and Jacob reunites with Queenie, but she is allied with Grindelwald. As Theseus and other aurors (basically wizard cops) fend off Grindelwald, Leta sacrifices herself to save Newt and everyone. Grindelwald flees with Credence and Queenie follows behind.

Newt travels back to Hogwarts to talk with Dumbledore, who reveals he made a blood pact with Grindelwald when they were young, swearing not to fight each other. Meanwhile, Grindelwald is with Credence, who reveals himself as Aurelius Dumbledore, the long-lost brother of Albus Dumbledore.

Although *Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald* had mixed

reviews, the majority of the negative views were people in a "just-let-the-series-end" type of mindset. The movie in itself, however, was an immersive and fun movie with lovable characters. The main problem was, since it is a continuation of the *Harry Potter* franchise, they had to fit a lot of information in the movie to set the scene for the next movie (yes, there's going to be another one). Due to this, some scenes of the movie felt forced and were just put in to try to shove as much information as possible into them. The forced information threw off the pacing of the movie.

The Crimes of Grindelwald was an interesting addition to the wizarding world, as it went more in depth to the problems pre-*Harry Potter*. There are reportedly going to be a total of five movies in the *Fantastic Beasts* franchise, counting the two already released. *The Crimes of Grindelwald* and even its predecessor had this interesting take on wizard life that was diverse and far from the original *Harry Potter* series. However, is it necessary for three more movies to be made? Absolutely not. As enjoyable as both the movies were, they should keep the *Fantastic Beasts* series at two movies. But who knows? Maybe the *Fantastic Beasts* franchise will turn things around and will continue to release new films.

BECOMING MORE THAN JUST THE 'FIRST LADY'

BY: MICAH KELLY

In her book "Becoming", Michelle Obama talks about her life and journey on how she became the First Lady. Mrs. Obama spent most of her childhood on the Southside of Chicago, Illinois. Mrs. Obama's book is becoming a big hit and people can't seem to get enough of it. People find Mrs. Obama's book to be inspiring and really like the story she is telling.

Growing up, Mrs. Obama was raised and taught how to act like an adult. Her parents never attended college, but they had that drive and motivation to keep pushing and working hard and to encourage their young daughter to achieve her dream. Mrs. Obama thanks her mother and father for what they have done and have taught her. It is because of them she is where she is now. Moving on to her later life, Mrs. Obama attended Princeton University and went to

Harvard University for Law School. Mrs. Obama had worked at a law firm in Sidley Austin, where she would meet her future husband, Barack. They later got married in 1992 and now have two girls, Malia and Natasha (commonly known as Sasha). In 2004, Barack was elected to the U.S. Senate as the Junior Senator from Illinois. Michelle spends some time talking about the adjustments that came with this change, and after serving only three years in the Senate, the Obama family changed drastically with Barack's election as 44th President of the United States.

Mrs. Obama wrote her book "Becoming" to profound her frustration of being misunderstood. Also in her book, Mrs. Obama talks about the discomfort of being a woman only recognized through her connection of a powerful man. In the part of her book called "Becoming

More" Mrs. Obama talks about how there is more to her than just being Barack Obama's wife. Mrs. Obama really expressed herself in this book, and I like the fact that she did that. Mrs. Obama also talks about how people should speak up and express themselves. She says, "Your story is what you have, what you will always have." Her saying this really inspired me to tell people my story and let people know that I am more than just another face in the crowd.

Mrs. Obama has been in many interviews since the release of her book. Oprah Winfrey, who has her own book club, stated, "This book is everything you wanted to know and so much you didn't even know. I believe it's going to spark within you the desire to think about your own becoming." Mrs. Obama believes that this book was a great opportunity to express who she has become.



THE COVER OF MICHELLE OBAMA'S BEST SELLING BOOK. (PHOTO COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES.)

RALPH BREAKS INTO THE BOX OFFICE

BY: SEBASTIEN PEREZ

"Ralph Breaks the Internet" is a sweet, funny and worthy follow up to the Oscar nominated 2012 Wreck-It Ralph. The sequel finds room to grow on the original film's premise by exploring not only a larger world beyond video games but also new and more complicated dimensions like the internet, to the core friendship at the heart of these movies. Gaming remains a factor this time around, especially when



RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET IS A FUN MOVIE FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY TO ENJOY.(PHOTO COURTESY TO GOOGLE IMAGES)

Ralph and Vanellope's on-line adventure leads them into the very dangerous and over the top kind of game called Slaughter Race, and the quest to save Vanellope's "home" Sugar Rush from extinction is the plot's main objective. But the Internet, as the movie's title makes obvious, is the main subject of this keen parody, and this shifts the focus from the

past to the new games. Everything from viral videos to the dark web to online shopping gets done here.

All the fun at the Internet isn't exactly a novel idea at this point, so as cute and funny as it is to see *Ralph Breaks the Internet* poke fun at popular viral videos and online behavior, the film gets far more mileage and bigger laughs with its observations on its parent studio. Ralph and Vanellope's visit to the real OhMyDisney.com provides a steady stream of Easter eggs and hilarious meta commentary on Marvel, Star Wars and other Disney properties.

But the inarguable highlight of all this Mouse House mocking is the amount role played here by a large amount of Disney Princesses. The Ralph sequel gets its biggest laughs in sequences where all the outdated elements associated with these animated icons are royally and uproariously sent up and addressed head

on. The feeling audiences get after watching the film will remain in the collective memory long after *Ralph Breaks the Internet* leaves theaters and many of its meme jokes lose their relevance. Ralph and Vanellope also cross paths with two new characters who are each entertaining additions in their own ways. Gal Gadot shines as Shank, the oh so cool, anti-hero of Slaughter Race. Shank originally is the antagonist in the movie, but by the end of the film she assists Vanellope. Meanwhile, Taraji P. Henson goes big in the showy role of Yesss, a trending algorithm who knows how to exploit any online problem. Yesss and Shank both got positive receptions from audiences, but Shank proves to be the slightly more critical character in the film's plot line through assisting Vanellope. *Ralph Breaks The Internet* really stood out in its own ways compared to other recent Disney films.

Ariana Grande continues to top billboard charts

BY: SAMANTHA SOLDO

If you aren't a part of the group of 183,000,000 people to have already seen it, drop everything you're doing and check out Ariana Grande's "thank u, next" music video. Having evolved from an underrated Nickelodeon star to an international pop icon, Ariana Grande has been on a rollercoaster of success ever since the beginning of her career. From the beginning of her claim to fame, debuting in the adored teen show *Victorious*, she's been nonstop working hard to create a successful career that can be admired by all in the music business. Behind the scenes, Grande has also been working toward a loving relationship that might last beyond the cameras and glitz and glamour of being a celebrity. For the singer, 2018 did not fall short in terms of wins and losses when it came to her personal life, but really, what better way is there to celebrate the highs and lows of creating memorable relationships in life than in a Billboard No. 1 pop anthem?

If you're not sure what it means, the phrase "thank u, next" is Ariana Grande's playful nod to the way people can enter your life, change it for better or for worse, and walk right

out of it. For Ariana, there could not be a better string of words to describe the way her past relationships have ended, especially that of her most recent relationship with SNL comedian, Pete Davidson. Starting in May, 2018, a sudden but strong relationship emerged between the two, and their love for each other was made obvious by constant appearances on each other's Instagram accounts. For a while, people questioned the relationship, and whether or not it was anything more than surface-level, but rumors were shut down when the two decided to publicize their quick engagement only two weeks after they initially started dating. As much as it may have seemed like Ariana was finally getting her fairytale-ending, the two broke off their engagement in October.



ARIANA GRANDES SONG THANK U NEXT INCLUDES FAMOUS CHARACTERS FROM "MEAN GIRLS." (PHOTO COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

This tragic break-up, along with the recent death of her ex-boyfriend Mac Miller, was enough to test the singer's strength and sanity. Many fans, media outlets, and friends of the singer were unsure of how she would be able to recover

from all that she'd been through this year. However, just like a Phoenix rises from the flames, Ariana Grande proved to herself and society that her latest break-up was just another brush off of her shoulder. On November 3rd, 2018, Grande dropped "thank u, next," the first single to introduce her upcoming album and an anthem to her resilience and her hopes for the future. The song begins with allusions to some of her most notable relationships, including those with Big Sean, Ricky Alvarez, Mac Miller, and of course, Pete Davidson; "one

taught me love, one taught me patience, and one taught me pain." As the song progresses, the lyrics go on to convey that despite loving and losing, Ariana Grande respects her past and is ready for what the future holds for her.

Grande did not stop after her single reached number one in ten countries or even after the record hit most plays on Spotify in a single day by a female artist. On November 30th, she dropped the music video for her song with plenty of pop culture references featured in the five minute visual. The music video includes cameos from her former Nickelodeon co-stars (such as Liz Gillies, Matt Bennet, and Daniella Monet), her friends in the pop industry (Troye Sivan), and even a few YouTube stars (Colleen Ballinger and Gabi Demartino). The video also recreated scenes from some iconic chick-flicks such as "13 Going on 30", "Mean Girls", "Legally Blonde", and "Bring it On." With memorable references and appearances such as these, it is enough to forget the sad reason why the song was written in the first place. But, as the award-winning artist Ariana Grande declares to her suffering and shortcomings, thank you, next!

Wildfires rampant throughout wine country



A GROUP OF U.S. FOREST SERVICE FIREFIGHTERS MONITOR A BACKFIRE WHILE BATTLING TO SAVE HOMES AT THE CAMP FIRE IN PARADISE, CA, NOVEMBER 8TH, 2018. (IMAGE COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

BY: JULIA KEBULADZE

Planet Earth has endured many abhorrent natural disasters, and in some areas those phenomena occur on an annual basis. Similar to the east coast's hurricane season and

the midwest's season of relentless blizzards, the state of California has been a victim of a wildfire season for decades. The dry climate and intense winds coupled with many more environmental factors create sweet spots in the Golden State for those

fires to breed and spread over miles. However, the devastation caused by the 2018 wildfire season has far outbeat each previous year. Currently four fires still blaze through the state; Woolsey Fire claiming three lives, Camp Fire taking seventy-seven, Hill Fire, and the newly ignited Sierra Fire. The toll number is expected to continue rising as the Camp Fire has become the most deadly wildfire in the states history. They are not to be mistaken for small blazes that have erupted through forests, but these are enormous fires that have wreaked mass destruction of nearly two million acres of land, with a total of close to nine thousand fires currently burning today. These statistics do not include the hundreds, even thousands of citizens unaccounted for, the 300,000 citizens who have been displaced, and the countless towns, such as Paradise, California, that have been burned to the ground. While most of the fires have become contained, the amount of civiliza-

tion and people that have been engulfed by the raging fires is a wake up call to the entire nation. With the budget of the Environmental Protection Agency slashed, many citizens are fearful that the wildfire seasons will only continue to get worse over the years. A military veteran present during the Camp Fire destruction in Northern California commented "The fire zones remind me of war zones, both in the way they look and the camaraderie develops in harm's way." The message that is to be taken away from this is the importance of the place we live, our country and the land we live on and reap the benefits of. Hundreds of thousands of firefighters risk their lives to isolate these fires, but on a national level, more attention must be brought to the subject of saving our planet. Otherwise, more instances like typhoon Haiyan, Hurricane Sandy, and Camp Fire will continue to impact our world in unprecedented manners until they become the unfortunate norm.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

BY: MAIA LIM

According to The National Conference of State Legislatures, in higher education, affirmative action refers to the admission policies that provide equal access to education for those groups that have been historically excluded or misrepresented. The history of affirmative action began in 1941 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt made an executive order, outlawing discrimination based on ethnicity, religious background, and national origin in preparation for. Several executive orders in the following years made by various presidents elaborated on employment discrimination and affirmative action programs for federal contracts. The controversy surrounding affirmative action in higher education most prominently began with the case of *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* in 1978 where the court ruled in favor of a white man who, despite exemplifying qualifying academic requirements, was rejected twice by the University of California Medical School because of the school's strict racial quotas. Issues with affirma-

tive action continued to surface in cases following the Bakke incident. The most recent case that may have a monumental impact on college admission process involves a lawsuit denouncing Harvard discrimination against Asian-Americans.

In 2014, a group of Asian-Americans rejected by Harvard, coining themselves the "Students for Fair Admission," filed a lawsuit against the university, accusing it of using intentional discrimination against Asian-Americans in its admissions process. They are led by conservative activist, Edward Blum, who led two other cases concerning affirmative action to the Supreme Court. Although the lawsuit was filed in 2014, the issue of Asian-American discrimination at Harvard began long before that. After facing lawsuits during the 1980s, Harvard was cleared of all charges accusing them of discriminating against Asian-Americans in the college admission process. The current plaintiff group presented crucial evidence of several of Harvard's reports on its admissions process in October, showing that being Asian-American is a disadvantage. There

was also evidence that the personal scores for Asian-Americans were lower than other ethnic groups. Harvard claims they do not use racial quotas in its admission process, but consider race because it is crucial to their mission for cultivating diversity in higher education.

The Harvard case holds extreme importance in that the university has been a top private institution in the world for years. If the plaintiff group were to win, the results would likely be the end of affirmative action not

only in Harvard's admissions process, but in potentially every other school of higher education. The most recent trial that concluded in the Boston federal court brought the issue of discrimination, bias, and diversity to the general system of higher education. The presiding judge of the Boston federal court trial, Allison Burroughs, is expected to give her ruling on the case early during this year and there is a large probability of the case landing itself in the Supreme Court in the months and years to come.



PROTESTORS IN BOSTON FIGHT AGAINST HARVARD UNIVERSITY'S ADMISSION PROCESS, ACCUSING THE SCHOOL OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ASIAN-AMERICANS (IMAGE COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

France in fear from the 'yellow vests'

BY: MICHAEL TRINIDAD

France had been embroiled in a state of turmoil as thousands have flooded the streets of Paris. The reason: a particular tax enforced by the French government. French president Emmanuel Macron recently enforced a gas tax hike to satisfy the globalist policy of the Paris climate agreement. Much to the animosity of the French citizens, they initiated the "Yellow Vest" protests as a response to the unpopular decision.

The protestors expressed their economic distress avidly. Rock throwing, human barricades, and violent authority/citizen encounters became a common sight in the streets of the French capital. Signs such as "Death to all Taxes" and

shouts of "Macron Resign" depicted the citizens' frustration over the government. Protestors and riot police shared nasty exchanges. Nearly 1400 were arrested and apprehended nationwide. Riot police even had to resort to water cannons and tear gas to disband the massive crowds.

In other countries, supporters organized more peaceful protests to showcase their support. Even President Trump voiced his distaste: "Very sad day & night in Paris, maybe it's time to end the ridiculous and extremely expensive Paris Agreement and return money back to the people in the form of lower taxes?" Eventually, Macron decided to suspend the French gas hike on December 4th amid the "Yellow Vest" protests. Despite the suspension of the tax hike,



MASKED FRENCH CITIZENS GATHER TO RALLY AGAINST HIGHER FUEL PRICES (IMAGE COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

French citizens are still not pleased with Macron's leadership, as his current 23% approval rating reflects. The French protests have imposed a new question for the world to ponder: is taxation a form of theft? One French citizen explained: "We

are overtaxed. There are taxes on everything, gas." Whether or not you may agree, we can come together on one thing: no one enjoys being required to hand his/her money over to the government and so the protests will continue.

Health hazard from health food staple

BY: MARIE MAURO

Many people try their hardest to be healthy and to resist junk food and indulge lower calorie, more nutritional meals such as salads. Most people would not think twice as to what could potentially be wrong in a salad (as vegetables have a reputation of being healthy). However, there are serious problems with certain vegetables that are being cultivated in California, specifically romaine lettuce. The CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and the FDA (U.S. Food and Drug Administration) are investigating an outbreak of a strand of toxic E. coli, Escherichia coli O157:H7, that was connected to romaine lettuce. Initially, in November, the CDC and FDA recommended to not consume any of the food products and were removed from stores. But finally, they have related the products with E. coli to certain areas of California.

E. coli is normally harmless (people have that bacterium in their intestines). However, certain strands like the one that was found in the lettuce are toxic to humans. It produces a toxic compound called Shiga toxin that makes people very sick and causes severe vomiting and intestinal problems. For some people the infection may last for only a week but for others it could lead to worse

problems. Dozens of people have gotten sick since this current outbreak. Some people who had gotten sick from the lettuce had kidney problems and even kidney failure, specifically a kidney failure known as hemolytic uremic syndrome and other organ failures. People who have weak immune systems and elderly people are more likely to be affected more drastically. Cases of people getting sick are being reported in the United States and as well as in Canada, but not every case gets reported.

The suspected culprit from this bacterium is from the intestines of cattle. Water runoff from a rainy day, dirty farming equipment, or someone processing the food that did not wash their hands is how E. coli normally gets into food. The case is still being investigated. The FDA and CDC traced the strain back to a reservoir at a farm that is owned by Adam Bros. Farming, Inc., located in Santa Barbara, California. Many cases were linked to that farm and other farms in that area. They found that their irrigation reservoir tested positive for E. Coli strains. Since then, they have recalled their cauliflower, green leaf lettuce, and red leaf lettuce harvests from November 27-30 but not all of their produce.

The CDC has informed the people to not eat any of the romaine lettuce from certain counties in the

Central Coastal growing regions of northern and central California; from any other location it should be safe. The counties where the lettuce was linked to the toxic E. Coli are Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Barbara. It is now being encouraged that romaine lettuce producers should label their products to show where they were grown so consumers are aware where their food comes from and if it is safe. Unlabeled romaine lettuce is considered unsafe since there is no knowledge from where it has been grown. If people do not know where their lettuce came from or if it is romaine, they should disregard it and throw it away to be safe, along with clean-

ing out the area where it was stored.

Illnesses that are linked to food are very common and almost 48 million Americans get sick from food every year: 128,000 of them needing to be hospitalized while 3,000 of them die from it. It is very easy for the food that we eat to become contaminated through careless practices. It is important for companies to treat the food that they produce for the people with care. Consumers have to be aware as to what goes into their food, where it is cultivated, and how it is produced. E. coli outbreaks happen too often and something needs to be done to make sure that they happen less, which starts with good sanitary practices.



SAMPLE OF E. COLI GETS TESTED FOR LINK TO ROMAINE LETTUCE (IMAGE COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

Welcome to Satoma's Spectacular Christmas Story! In this choose your own adventure game, you will embark on a fantastical holiday journey ending at either Rockefeller Center, the North Pole, or Disney World. Over the course of this tale, you will stumble upon some hard decisions that will decide your fate, so choose wisely. You may never know what the future holds, but you can decide how to get there.

You have no desire to be stuck on a bus the day before leaving for Christmas Break, so you pull out your phone and text _____ to see if you can ride with them. They pick you up and you turn on your favorite Christmas jam "_____."

You are then faced with two choices: go home or go to the mall.

Your friend drops you off at your house, wishes you a "Merry Christmas," and drives away. You open the door and **find out that...**



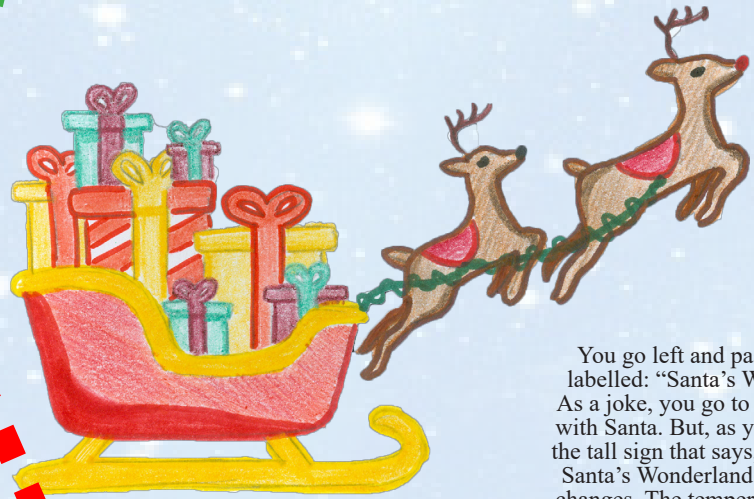
You go right and ask a lady what's happening. She tells you they're all participating in a lottery to win tickets to Disney. You immediately sign up to enter the raffle. You listen closely as the employee calls out your favorite number _____. You are the winner, and a few days later, you and a few friends arrive in Disney and meet your favorite character _____!

You tell your friend that you've had a long day and that you could use a trip to the mall. You notice a crowd of people gathering around a Christmas tree. As you get closer you see two lines.

Do you go right or left?

Your mom is home. She tosses you an envelope with your name on it. You open the envelope and there's a plane ticket, a picture of Mickey Mouse, and _____.

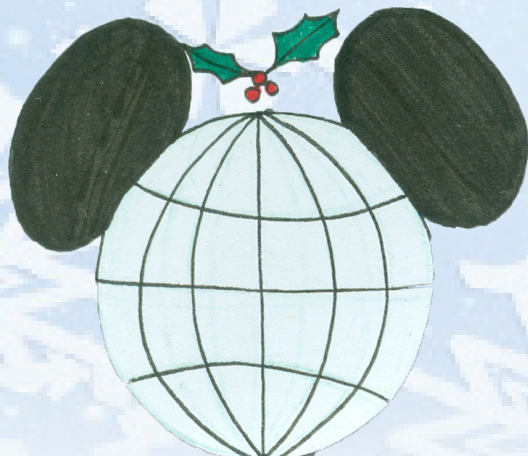
You look up and your mom tells you to pack as quickly as possible because the whole family is spending Christmas in Disney this year! Amazed and shocked by this announcement, you sprint to your room, pack as many clothes as possible and rush off to the airport to catch your flight. You and your family arrive safely in Florida and when you get to the park, you are greeted by your favorite Disney character _____. This is literally the best Christmas ever!



No one is home, so you decide to go sledding with the neighborhood kids. You put on warm clothes and head out to meet them your usual sledding hill. You reach the bottom and realize you lost your _____.

While you search for it, you stumble upon Santa's sleigh and reindeer. Immediately, you yell, "I NEED a picture for my Insta." But as you're taking pictures, suddenly the reindeer take off and in what feels like seconds, you land in the North Pole.

You go left and pass by a sign labelled: "Santa's Wonderland." As a joke, you go to take a picture with Santa. But, as you pass under the tall sign that says, "Welcome to Santa's Wonderland!" everything changes. The temperature drops to freezing temperatures and the fake snow becomes real. As you question what's occurring, you see a big village with elaborate Christmas ornaments. Before you start screaming in a panic, someone places their hand on your shoulder. You quickly turn around and find yourself face-to-face with the real Santa Claus.



Once upon a time, in a medium-sized, Edison-based, Catholic high school, Bishop Ahr, attended a tired, stressed, and severely in need of a break student named _____.

Upon the last bell ringing, you walk outside and have a decision to make.

Should you ask a friend for a ride or take the bus home?

Deciding to go home on the bus, you sit on the slightly uncomfortable seats of your bus, forced to listen to Mariah Carey's "All I Want For Christmas Is You" for the 51st time this week. As you fall asleep, you see the snow falling more and more, but think nothing of it. That is until your bus stops with a jolt and you realize the bus has stopped due to the snow. Stuck on the side of the road, you have two choices: **call an Uber or call a friend.**



Instead of waiting out what could be an eternity on the bus with freshmen screaming and Saint Joe's boys, you pull out mom and dad's credit card and call yourself an Uber. When your Uber arrives, you're faced with two choices: **be responsible with your money or spontaneously go to New York City**

With your plans ruined and not wanting to stay stuck on the side of the road in the freezing cold, you take your phone out and call for your friend _____. _____ has a card for you but first, they ask if you'd rather see a lame snowglobe their grandma gave them first. **Do you open the card or do you ask to see the snowglobe?**

You tell the driver you want to go to _____ in New York City and off you go up the busy and frustratingly gross New Jersey Turnpike. You finally make it through the Lincoln Tunnel and arrive at your destination. You pay, get out of the Uber, and stroll like a king/queen up to the tallest and brightest Christmas tree in the world at Rockefeller Plaza.

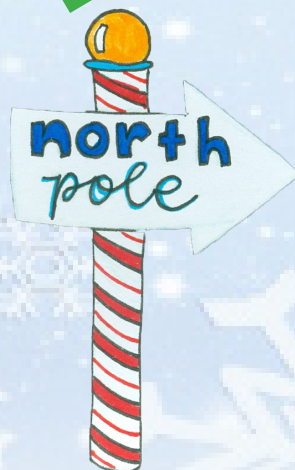
You ask to see the gift and they toss it to you. Once you catch the fragile gift, you take a closer look at it. As the glitter and snowflakes are settling, you see a tiny replica of the North Pole. All of a sudden you feel a huge gust of wind. You look up from the gift and realize that you and _____ are in the North Pole! You start walking around to see a sign surrounded by a group of elves that reads "_____."



When you get into the Uber intending to go home, you are greeted by your Uber driver, an old man with a pearly white beard and glasses, who says his name is _____.

You sit back and relax until you notice that the snow has blanketed the area. Then the car magically changes into a big, red sleigh. Your driver, now wearing the trademark suit of Santa Claus, smiles and says, "Welcome to the North Pole."

You open the card and read that your friend bought tickets to ice skate at Rockefeller Center. You relax as _____ drives you to New York City while you listen to _____ for parking at an overpriced garage, you walk in the freezing cold to see the tree and go ice skating.



The class of 2020 rings it in

BY: ALYSSA PITTARI

On Tuesday, December 11, students and family members of the Class of 2020 gathered in the main gym for the annual Junior Ring Day Ceremony. Students processed in to the gathering song “O Come, All Ye Faithful” surrounded by Christmas trees, light-up angels, and poinsettias.

Junior Class President Craig Mollica began with an introduction that explained the theme of the ceremony, “These Ahr the Times to Hold Onto.” He said that the theme of the night symbolized that the Class of 2020 should cherish all of their memories and never forget their high school years.

After, there was a recitation of Isaiah 40: 1-11 and the Gospel Acclamation of Alleluia was chanted along with claps throughout the gym. The Gospel reading was fol-

lowed by Father Keith’s homily, during which he talked about how fast time went by and how it is important to remember all of the good memories that are made in high school. After the sending song “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing,” it was time for the ring ceremony to begin. Symbols such as a friendship chain, an hourglass, and a Christ candle were brought up to the altar. These symbols reflected the theme and the memories of the Junior Class. The history of the school ring was read by Class Officers Craig Mollica and Alyssa Pittari. They stated the significance of the ring, and that by wearing the rings students are reminded of their time at the school.

Once Father Keith blessed the rings, they were handed out to students. The ceremony ended with

students reciting a pledge, followed by closing remarks by Sister Donna and Class Moderator Ms. Penny. Students were reminded to turn their rings 70 times, representing the 50

years of the school plus 20 for their graduation year of 2020. Junior Ring Day will definitely be a “Time to Hold Onto” for the junior class; a memory they will cherish forever.



MR. FIORE PLACES A RING ON CAROLYN FOLEY. (PHOTO COURTESY OF BGAHS PHOTOGRAPHY)

Having a ‘snow’ ball

BY: MEGAN LIM

A new spin on the highly anticipated school-wide dance of the year, “SnowBall” officially debuted on the night of December 1st. Planned by Social Chairs Sohini Bhattacharjee and Sarah Shanahan along with their fellow student council members, the event was a thrilling success from decorations to music and food.

Walking into the main lobby, students were greeted with the sight of the traditional class Christmas trees, festively decorated in a range of ornaments and garland. Continuing into the hallway, strings of warm yellow light trailed the ceiling, naturally drawing the attendees into the main gymnasium where they were then amazed by a blue and white Christmas Wonderland. The entirety of the room simulated the perfect winter day, with fake cotton snow perched on the ledges of the bleachers, accompanied by carefully strung tulle, lights, snowflakes, and tinsel curtains. Illuminated angel statues were found on the stage and all corners of the room - the only exception being the DIY photobooth, which consisted of a scenic winter backdrop and an assortment of props to pose with.

When the students weren’t taking pictures at the photobooth, they were on the dancefloor enjoying themselves to the playlist of the new DJ. Playing a compilation of music

suggested by the student body along with other current mainstream hits, the DJ played song after song to keep the students on their feet all night. One of the highlights of the evening occurred to the song “Perfect,” by Ed Sheeran, to which the SnowBall court (which was voted upon for the first time) shared a special slow dance with their partners. The court included Senior King and Queen Jacob Domingo and Colleen Cronin, Juniors Kishan Patel and Sydney Samuelson, Sophomores Joey Valenzuela and Micah Kelly, and Freshmen Dominic Mazzeo and Emily Drill.

However, not only was the DJ or voting system new, but so were the meal options! Switching it up from the entrees of previous years, this year’s cuisine consisted of appetizers and finger-foods. The options varied, from chicken wings to tater-tots to ravioli. Not stopping there, the students were also given the opportunity to grab either chocolate, vanilla, or strawberry ice cream at the dessert bar, giving them an extra burst of energy to work their way back onto the dancefloor.

SnowBall was a huge success, living up to the school-wide attention and publicity received by freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors alike. Sohini commented, “With all the changes ... Sarah, the rest of the



STUDENTS GATHER ON THE DANCE FLOOR WITH FRIENDS AND DATES TO PARTY ALL NIGHT. (PHOTO COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)



student council, and I were scared about how it would turn out ... but I’m so happy it went the way it did, especially since it’s my senior year!”

With increased awareness and

positive attendance from all grades, SnowBall certainly set a lasting precedent for years to come of a night filled with new music, new food, and new memories.

'Putnam' spells success

BY: LAUREN GARDA

On the weekend of November 16th, the Drama Department presented the musical comedy "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee", directed by Mrs. Lea Gossett and choreographed by Mr. Kevin McCarthy. Before the show begins, alumni Ian DiGuillo and Vincenzo Dama walk all around the theatre in janitor jumpsuits, cleaning out the locker room, mopping the floor, and so on to prepare for the Bee.

The show opens with Ms. Rona Peretti, played by Faith Dodge, encountering a flashback of her winning the 3rd annual spelling bee as a child while she prepares for this year's. The characters are then introduced one by one, resulting in a group of misfits ready to win the Bee. The show does an excellent job interacting with the audience throughout the show. After Ms. Peretti greets everyone, she calls four audience members on stage to join the cast in the bee. Throughout the show, Vice Principal Douglas Panch, the official word pronouncer played by junior Cristian Vozza, always uses a comical sentence to use the word



TRISH PONIK LEADS THE "MAGIC FOOT" SONG AND DANCE IN HER ATTEMPT TO SPELL A WORD. (PHOTO COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)

being spelled with. Panch then introduces the Italian mobster, Sal Gambini, and his Brooklyn-based wife, Marie, played respectively by

sophomore Joseph Valenzuela and senior Morgan Frazee. Though the two are clearly out of place, Mr. Gambini is the comfort counselor at



THE OPENING NUMBER OF THE PRODUCTION INCLUDING SOME OF THE POTENTIAL SPELLERS. (PHOTO COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)

the bee only because it's a part of his court-mandated community service.

As the Bee progresses, the audience gets a glimpse inside the lives of each of the spellers as well as the techniques used by each of them. The kids and participants get disqualified one by one, leaving the rather awkward Olive, played by junior Sarah Shanahan, and the rather egotistical Barfée, played by senior Trisha Ponik, to compete for first prize. Barfée catches feelings for Olive and even considers letting her win, but they remain friends as he anxiously spells the winning word correctly, being declared Champion of the 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee.

From being in the mindset of an air headed child to expressing serious emotion with a maintained lisp, each character had a rather difficult persona to portray. The actors and actresses did an excellent job doing so, performing with such strong character and big personality. Congratulations to the cast of "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee" for doing an astounding job and pleasing many audiences!

Decking the halls at the Christmas concert

BY: AN NGUYEN

On December 12th and 13th, the Music Department put on its 21st annual Christmas Concert. The whole show was conducted by Mr. Joseph Cullinan and consisted of performances from the Concert Choir, Select Chorus, Concert Band, and Jazz Band. These groups played a series of Christmas classics, putting everyone in the holiday spirit.

The Concert Choir started the night with a prayer, singing "Take, O Take Me As I Am". They then followed with "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" which truly captured the essence of the Advent season. The Concert Choir sang more familiar tunes such as "Santa Claus is Comin' To Town" and "Et in Terra Pax". The Select Chorus performed "Sing We Now of a Very Merry Christmas", an a cappella arrangement that displayed varying harmonies and dynamics. This group continued to impress with "Patapan" and "Fruitcake". The first act also included junior Alex Domingo play-

ing the avant-garde piece, "Chopin Etude Op. 25 no. 5", on the piano. Closing the vocal portion of the concert was the concert choir and alumni with "Do You Hear What I Hear".

After intermission, the Jazz Band took the stage and began with "Santa Baby", featuring solos by senior Dhruv Patel on tenor saxophone, senior Trisha Ponik on trumpet, and junior Lauren Stoll on trombone. They then performed "Go Tell It on the Mountain" and "Nutcracker Swing", a jazz inspired spin on the Tchaikovsky classic with solos by seniors Kirk Olandres on trombone, Shakthi Boobalan on alto saxophone, and Martin Vavrak on trumpet. Next to appear was the Concert Band, which started with "Star of Wonder", a musical interlude to "We Three Kings". Following that was "Christmas Eve/Sarajevo 12-24" a rendition of Trans-Siberian Orchestra's popularized radio hit, putting everyone on the edge of their seats. The penultimate performance, as always, was "O Holy Night", a beauti-

ful duet by seniors Shakthi Boobalan and Kirk Olandres. The Christmas Concert came to an end with Leroy Anderson's up-tempo "Sleigh Ride".

The musical pieces put on by both the singers and musicians left the audience on their feet. All of

the students' hard work paid off and was shown throughout their performances. The music department is continuing their practice and hopes to have yet another exceptional concert at this year's annual Spring Concert Without a Theme!



TRISH PONIK CRACKS AN EGG ON LAUREN GARDA'S HEAD. (PHOTO COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)

O' little star of Bishop Ahr



FATHER KEITH AND BISHOP CHECCIO CELEBRATING THE EUCHARIST. (IMAGE COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)

BY: CAROLINE DIMAGGIO

Friday, December 14th the school family gathered together to celebrate one of the most wonderful times of the school year. The main gym was filled with sparkling Christmas trees and graceful angels that lit up the stage. The altar was festively decorated with red and white poinsettias making it the picture perfect place for the school's Ahr Star Mass. Bishop Ahr was honored to have Bishop James Francis Checchio and Father Keith Cervine joyfully lead us in prayer during this very special occasion.

The guests of honor were the Ahr Stars themselves, Mikey and Ellona. Both children were accompanied by their loving and supportive family members. Mikey Lucas attended with his mother, his two brothers Tommy and Ryan, sister Kylie, and his grandparents. Ellona Graziano was joined by her mother, father, grandparents, and baby sister Ellyana. The Bishop Ahr stu-

dents and faculty made sure these families had the warmest welcome.

The Mass opened with the heartwarming presentation of cards, candles, and gifts as students proceeded up the gymnasium aisle towards the altar. The musical talent of the choir and band was shared with the student body as they assisted in the celebration with great merriment. They were directed by Mr. Joseph Cullinan who also shared his talents by playing piano, guitar, and drums for the Mass. Mr. TJ Reilly brought Christmas cheer to all with his superb performance of "Mary Did You Know?". He delighted the student body and received a standing ovation.

Ahr Star Chairs Joey Dunn and Bethany Ciccarelli generously worked to raise money through the gracious donations of students to provide Christmas gifts for the special Ahr Stars. Presents were also given to both Mikey and Ellona's brothers and sisters so that they too could feel the comfort and love of the school family. All gifts were



MIKEY BEING PRESENTED WITH A BASKETBALL SIGNED BY THE BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL TEAM. (IMAGE COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)

presented by the Ahr Star Chairs, members of the Ahr Star Board, and the Student Council. Mikey and Ellona were both thrilled to receive a basketball signed by the Varsity Boys and Varsity Girls Basketball teams. The parents of Mikey and Ellona were filled with deep gratitude when given the money raised from the Ahr Star Spaghetti Dinner held on October 4th. To add to the Christmas spirit, Santa Claus even made an appearance, jolly and festive, spreading his love for Christmas!

Mikey's mother and Ellona's father spoke at the end of the mass to thank everyone for their love, prayers, and generosity. The children and their families were then taken to open their presents and enjoy a luncheon where they continued the celebration. The Ahr Stars and their families had the opportunity to visit the classrooms and talk with students and faculty.

The whole day would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of Sister Cynthia Marie, the Ahr Star Chairs, the Ahr

Star Board, Mr. John Roche, Father Keith Cervine, Mr. Kevin McCarthy, and Bishop James F. Checchio. They were the pillars of the event, helping with the detailed preparation and coordination leading up to this annual tradition. Sister Cynthia's words captured the meaning of the Ahr Star Mass: "The Ahr Star Mass is always one of the most anticipated events of the year, and this year was no exception. It is a humbling and heartwarming experience that emphasizes and reminds everyone what Christmas is all about. This year's celebration was no different and proved to be just that – a true Christmas celebration."

The Ahr Star Mass is a reminder of the true meaning of Christmas. Mikey and Ellona were truly shining with the light of Christmas. The peace, happiness, and hope the Bishop Ahr community gave them brought so much joy to their holiday. The Ahr Star Mass was the perfect event for Bishop Ahr students to share their Christmas spirit.



BISHOP CHECCIO METING WITH ELLONA. (IMAGE COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)



SANTA DELIVERING PRESENTS TO OUR AHR STARS. (IMAGE COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)



Name: Freddie Ramirez




Sport: Wrestling (4 Years)

Pump Up Song: "Bet On It" -High School Musical 2

Favorite Post-Game Snack: Burger King Whopper, Chicken Fries, and Sprite

Favorite Holiday Song: "The Christmas Song" -Nat "King" Cole

Name: Olivia Hajdi-Nemeth




Sport: Wrestling (1 Year)

Pump Up Song: "Back in Black" -ACDC

Favorite Post-Game Snack: Gatorade or Water

Favorite Holiday Song: "All I Want for Christmas" -Mariah Carey

Name: Rachael Calero



Sport: Wrestling (1 Year)

Pump Up Song: "Rap Up" -Leondard Grant

Favorite Post-Game Snack: Nature Valley Bar and Water

Favorite Holiday Song: "Last Christmas" -Wham!

Name: Jack Hulsart



Sport: Swimming (2 Years)

Pump Up Song: "Slime Belief" -Young Boy NBA

Favorite Post-Game Snack: Mint-Chocolate oreos and Gatorade

Favorite Holiday Song: "Imagine" -John Lennon

Name: Sachi Negri



Sport: Wrestling (4 Years)

Pump Up Song: "Legend" -The Score

Favorite Post-Game Snack: Five Guys or Pizza

Favorite Holiday Song: "Last Christmas" -Wham!

Name: Gina DeLutio



Sport: Girls Basketball

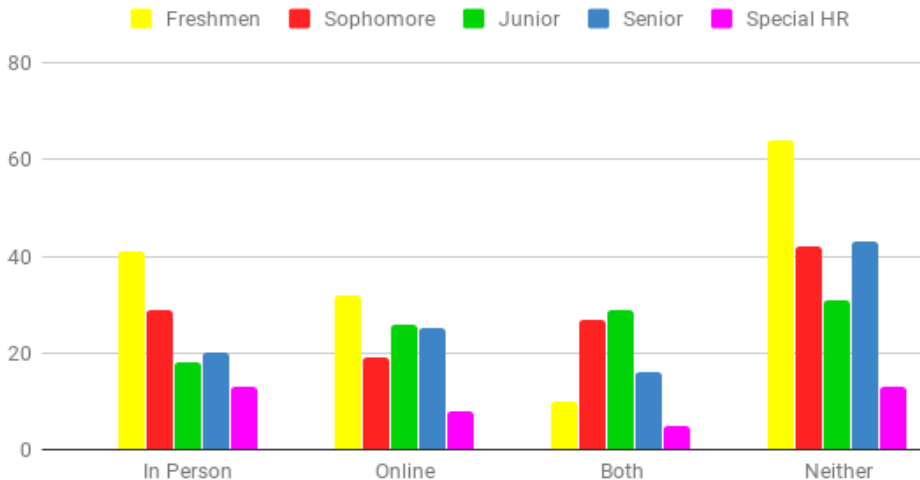
Pump Up Song: "Questions" -Chris Brown

Favorite Pre-Game Snack: Salt and vinegar chips with a Naked strawberry banana drink

Favorite Holiday Song: "Happy Holiday/ It's the Holiday Season" -Andy Williams

Satoma Presents the Question of the Quarter:

Did you go 'Black Friday' Shopping in 2018?



BY: LAUREN GARDA

Black Friday is the busiest shopping day of the year, rallying in many shoppers throughout the Thanksgiving weekend. On average, Black Friday has an in-store discount of 20 percent for the entire week and increases to 37 percent on Thanksgiving, Black Friday and Saturday. The 4-day weekend captured 20 percent of all holiday online shopping and online sales have gone up 26 percent since 2017 according to Adobe Systems. Sales hit a record of \$7.9 billion with forty percent of these purchases being done on mobile. Though it is the busiest shopping day, traffic has declined as much as 9 percent since 2017 and the number of people visiting stores in 2017 was 4 percent lower than in 2016. The National Retail Federation survey reported that stores would hire between 500,000 and 550,000 seasonal workers in 2017. On average, shoppers expect to spend \$1,007.24 each. Of that, they'll spend \$637.67 on gifts, \$215.04 for food, decorations, flowers, and greeting cards, and \$154.53 to take advantage of the seasonal deals and promotions.

LEAVING EVERYTHING ON THE COURT



JALEN JONES GOES UP FOR THE SHOT (PHOTO COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)

BY: KRISTEL RAMBAUD

With the beginning of winter starts the basketball season and all the excitement that comes with it. The boys basketball team is looking forward to having a great season and improving on last year's success. Last year, the team finished with a 10-2 record in conference play, which put them second in the Greater Middlesex County (GMC) Blue Division, and an overall record of 17-8. This year, they're looking to improve upon their record and make it even farther into GMC and state tournaments.

The team will be coached by a new face this year: Mr. Bob Turco. Turco, with his wisdom and experience in coaching, was a good candidate to help elevate the boys' program to the next level. Senior, Ryan Pittari, said that Turco has been extremely supportive and encouraging of the team and has put them "in positions to

succeed both on and off the court."

The team itself is also very new; the only returning players from last year are junior Quadry Adams and seniors Marquise Billingsley and Kobe Walker. Adams and Billingsley, as well as Pittari, will lead the team as the captains. While most of the players are new to the varsity level, they all have the ability to rise up to meet the challenges that will face them throughout the season and provide great depth to the team. Combining everyone's talents, energy, and determination to be the best, the team looks to do great things. Billingsley said that the team hopes "to win it all and accomplish something" they did not last year.

Supporting the boys basketball team will be the energetic and loud Trojan Army. While a fan section may not seem all that important, the members of the team beg to differ. Pittari gives the Trojan Army a lot

of credit because the team "feeds off the energy they provide" and "the bigger the crowd, the more energy we [the team] have on the court." This season, the Trojan Army will partake in many theme nights. Some notable themes are Christmas, costumes, and pajamas.

The team has been led by Adams, who at the time of writing, has scored 206 points across 13 games. Other big contributors have been junior Derrick Grant and sophomores Ernest Carter and Jalen Jones. At the time of writing, the boys' basketball team have an 14-2 overall record and have a 9-0 division record. With the 9-0 division record, the team leads the Blue Division.

The boys' basketball team will undoubtedly have terrific games this year full of excitement and competitive plays. Make sure to catch a home game in order to see this thrilling team in action.

Just keep swimming

BY: JAREN BULIYAT

"I am so proud to be a captain of this team. I can't think of a stronger bonded team. I love them," said senior Sasha Pierre. Swimming is a sport that requires a great work ethic and lots of dedication. The Bishop Ahr swim team is already swimming to success with a great start to the season. The team is led by seniors who set a great example for the underclassmen. These hardworking seniors are Sarah Hardy, Sasha Pierre, Dhruv Patel, Ishan Bhavsar, Allison Van Demark, Emma Walsh, and Katherine Garcia. With such great leaders, the future of the program looks extremely bright.

Bishop Ahr swim team begins to practice before even the sun rises. The team's practices start 5:45 am at the JCC/YMCA of Edison. It takes a lot of effort to drag oneself out of bed very early in the morning and swim a grueling workout run by Head Coach, Amanda Miller. Sophomore Brianna Dy said "Coach Amanda is so sweet and lovable, and she motivates me to work my hardest at every practice and meet." With a motivational coach, the team improves with every practice.

"Our team isn't just a team. We're a family," said junior Katie

Chan. The Bishop Ahr swim team is a family full of enthusiasm. The team always hangs out together before the meets begin. Although not everyone gets the opportunity to swim, all swimmers are there at every meet to time their teammates and cheer them on. Unlike most teams, at the end of each meet, the Bishop Ahr swim team shows their sportsmanship with a chant for the other team. There are multiple chants. One chant is "potato chip, potato chip, munch, munch, munch. Who do we think is a mighty fine bunch? (team name)!" The swim team shows what it means to be a "good sport."

On December 17, 2018, Bishop Ahr swam against White Division rival JFK. Senior Sarah Hardy won the 200 IM and 100 back. Junior Dominic Lawas won the 50 free

and 100 fly. Sophomore Brianna Dy won the 100 breaststroke. Freshman Grace Neno won the 100 free and freshman Sarah Mandy won the 200 free and 500 free. Bishop Ahr's 200 free and 400 free relays also took first place. The team won 100-69.

The Bishop Ahr swim team embodies the saying "nothing comes easy." Even though the swimmers must wake up early in the morning, immediately go to a workout, and still go to school, the team never loses its motivation to get better. The future of the Bishop Ahr swim program is bright. "Waking up and swimming early in the morning is far from easy and is definitely exhausting, but it's all worth it when I get to see how amazing my fellow teammates and me do at each meet," stated senior Sarah Hardy.



ISABELLA HAMM SWIMMING IN A RACE (PHOTO COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)

Strike after strike!

BY: JULIA DUARTE

The girls and boys bowling teams aim for success this 2018-2019 season. Taking on the title of captain this year is both teams' sole senior, Lilah Silar. Both teams welcome back veteran bowlers as well as several new faces.

Among these new faces is Chris Wilton, former BGA bowler and class of 2016 graduate, who is co-coaching the teams with counselor Mr. TJ Reilly. Wilton had this to say about returning to help prepare the teams: "Coming back I saw that there was a young group of interested students with a lot of potential. So I decided that it would be a great opportunity to help develop them to be the best they can be as bowlers, and I hope to give them advice on how to improve their skills while also having fun during their matches."

Both teams have had good wins throughout the season thanks to outstanding performances. In terms of individual performance, junior Christine Iko and freshman Kyle Imperial competed in the GMC individual tournaments. Iko placed 13th and Imperial placed 7th. Congratulations to both teams on their great seasons.

PIN IT TO WIN IT THEY CAN GO THE DISTANCE

BY: SEBASTIEN PEREZ

The wrestling program has had a strong start to an historic season. For the first time in the program's history, girls are now fully part of the program with their own matches and weight classes separate from their male counterparts. When asked about the historic change to his program, Coach Nick Tonzola said, "I really wasn't sure what the numbers would be or what it would be like. The nine girls have been dedicated, hard-working and their practice habits have been fantastic. They are quick-learners, interested in learning a new sport and getting to the next level."

The girls and boys combined for a great run with an overall record of 10-5 (record at time of writing) and a 6-0 record within their division, which led them to a Blue Division championship. This is a huge turnaround from last season, which saw the Trojans endure through



JOSEPH SCHROLL WORKS TO PIN DOWN AN OPPONENT (PHOTO COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)

a 3-19 season. Big performances from a number of players throughout this season has led to the team's success. Veteran wrestlers Freddy Ramirez, senior, and Cristian Diaz, junior, have helped to lead the team to this success with strong showings against division rivals Spotswood and Metuchen. In addition to the experienced leaders on the team, newcomers freshman Owen Disbrow and junior Ryan Gagliardi have been key

in getting results for the Trojans. For the ladies, seniors Rachel Colero, Sachi Negri, and Olivia Hadju-Nemeth have provided invaluable leadership for the developing program.

Thanks to their hard work and dedication, the boys wrestling team won the Blue Division on with a big win over Metuchen. With this championship under their belt, the wrestling team will look to make more championship runs.

BY: CARISSA MATRALE

Winter is finally here, and as the seasons change, people begin to transition out of fall and everyone prepares for the holiday season. Whilst this is happening, our school athletes also undergo a change of season. Football and soccer turn into basketball and swimming, and cross country season transitions into winter track. Runners and throwers from all grades have a chance to showcase their skills, and can go out for the winter track team. Training begins the week of Thanksgiving, and since there are no cuts, everyone interested can join the team. They are then categorized into one of three teams; freshman, JV, or varsity.

There are different races for each set of teams, both girls and boys, and these races are held almost every weekend and occasionally on Thursdays. Starting at the end of December and lasting until mid-February, winter track takes a lot of hard work and dedication from its runners. These student athletes practice every day after school. Throwers go to the weight room or do throwing drills and other related exercises. Sprinters spend most of their time on the track doing different workouts. They sometimes practice distance runs and occasionally go to the weight room as well. Students who are specifically distance runners run all around Metuchen, South Plainfield and Edison as they practice. For distance runners, these runs can be up to 7-8 miles for girls and 8-9 for boys.

Their first big meet was the GMC relays on January 5th, only days after returning from Christmas break. The Trojans were able to take 6th place in the Girls Distance Medley race. Top performers from the race for the Trojans were Lia Acosta, Gabriella Toryk, Kassandra Griffin, and Eleni Alvarez. Since this sport's season is clearly winter, a time of intense cold, the races take place indoors. This insures that the runners are fully warm and can run to the best of their abilities.

As a school filled with enthusiastic student-supporters, it is easy to say that the whole school community is excited for the winter sports season. Go attend as many sporting events as possible and show school spirit by cheering on many of the amazing teams, especially the winter track team.

These girls got game



EMMA BOSLET LEADS A FAST BREAK AGAINST COLONIA (PHOTO COURTESY OF LORS PHOTOGRAPHY)

BY: ANGELINA IOCCA

The girls basketball program this year has a blooming future ahead of them after ending last year's season as White Division Champions and now making an even bigger name for themselves. The team has been ranked number two in the white division but hopes to achieve the number one spot. Junior Captain Emma Boslet says: "Our goal for this season is to win our division and our county. I think as we continue to play together, our chemistry will improve, which will help us achieve a lot. We have a talented group of girls, and we want to go far in our state section."

The team had a strong start to the season with a win over Colonia high school with a final score of 71-27! Throughout the rest of the season, the team will play as their motto states, "Playing for Keeps"! This is what senior Morgan Maguire hopes to achieve in her final year as a Trojan: "During the past three years, we came close in playing in the county championship, but we never got there. However, this is AHR year. We're "playing for keeps" and I think we finally have all the pieces in place-great players, great team chemistry and great coaching-to play at the RAC and win a county championship. I also think we can compete

for a state championship as well. The sky's the limit for this team, so I'll finish with 'Ahr on 3 Family on 6!'"

The girls have been showing to all the other teams they are a force to be reckoned with, proven by their 13-2 overall record and a 8-0 division record at time of writing. Their 10-0 record put them at top of the White Division. The team has been led by Boslet, who has contributed 183 points and 106 rebounds. Sophomore Akiyah Baker and junior Madison Ruddy.

Hopefully, as the season progresses, the team will complete all they aspire to. No matter what, the Trojan supporters will be there through it all.

A Letter from the Satoma Staff

It is with great joy and excitement that we, the members of the Satoma Newsmagazine, wish you a happy New Year! It is interesting to look back on all that took place during 2018 and to realize just how many amazing, unique, awe-inspiring, viral, and sometimes just plain crazy things took place over the course of the year. From the Winter Olympics in South Korea, to the Philadelphia Eagles upsetting the New England Patriots in the Super Bowl. From Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un meeting at an historic summit, to the passing away of political figures John McCain and George H. W. Bush. From the royal wedding of Meghan Markle and Prince Harry to the closing of Toys 'R' Us, 2018 was nothing short of intense. As this new year begins please allow us to take this opportunity to share some thoughts and wishes for you in the months to come.

We wish you success. Success can be a very loaded term sometimes. Society tends to think of success as something that must meet certain criteria to be valid, but that simply is not true. Success is different for every individual and therefore should be measured differently for everyone. Each individual, with their God-given abilities and talents, must choose the definition of success for themselves. What does remain the same, is that to achieve true and full success you must strive for more than what you may be accustomed to. This takes courage. To strive for something that you may have never experienced before and to do so with persistence is a way of achieving success. Regardless of the obstacles, challenges, and slip-ups that may come along the way, always remember to keep pressing forward. As Winston Churchill said, "success is going from failure to failure without losing enthusiasm."

We wish you freedom from worry. There are many words to express this feeling that so many of us have (anxiety, fear, dread, panic), but regardless of the word you use to describe it, it is our hope that this year provides respite and peace for you. Many times, life can feel like a challenge or burden and it can become extremely frustrating when things don't appear to be getting better as fast as we would like. It is in times of doubt and frustration that we encourage you to remember that the best things in life require the most patience and the most dedication. As the scriptures say, "Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." Know always that this school and the members of this community care for you and always have time for you.

We wish you all the happiness this year has to offer. Life is meant to be lived with joy and excitement! Rather than so easily falling into the trap of pretending like the new year means nothing, it is our hope that you will look to find joy and opportunity in the year that lies ahead. Approach this year ahead with the wisdom of Voltaire who said, "Never let the perfect be the enemy of the good." These words are a strong reminder that many times in life, things will not be perfect, but that should never prevent us from experiencing the beautiful and wonderful moments that fill our lives on a daily basis. It is our hope that you are able to find opportunities to experience life the way it was intended to be lived.

All the best,
Megan, Micah, Gianna, Sebastien, Lauren, and Kristel

PHOTOS ON THE FRONT PAGE (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT): SENIORS MELINA COLASANTI AND AVERY MURILLO WITH JUNIOR JOSEPH DUNN COLLECTING TOYS FOR THE NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY TOY DRIVE; MEMBERS OF THE BAND PERFORMING AT THEIR CHRISTMAS CONCERT; JUNIORS NICOLE STADTMILLER, BETHANY CICCARELLI, AND CASSIDY VELTRE AT "SNOW"BALL; JUNIOR KAYLEE PHILLIPS RECEIVES HER CLASS RING FROM VICE PRINCIPAL MARK FIORE; SISTER DONNA MARIE, PRINCIPAL OF BISHOP AHR, WITH THE REVEREND BISHOP JAMES CHECCHIO, BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF METUCHEN; MEMBERS OF THE FRESHMEN CLASS DECORATING A CHRISTMAS TREE TO BE GIVEN TO A FAMILY IN NEED.