

LETTERS FROM THE EDITORS



Everyone says that time flies when you're having fun, and it took 18 years for me to learn that myself. In the blink of an eye, I will be graduating tomorrow. I really can't believe that the time flew by so fast. It seems that it was only yesterday that I walked through the doors of St. Thomas Aquinas High School for the first time as a student. Tomorrow, for the first time, I will be leaving as an alumni. As I reflect on my time in high school, I can't help but think about the

many things that I accomplished during the last four years. I became the editor-in-chief of the Satoma Newsmagazine. I got accepted into the Peer Leadership program. I was inducted into a handful of Honor Societies and survived AP courses. I excelled vocally in the Music Department, becoming a member of the Select Chorus my freshman year and receiving many solos in the years after. I tackled the college admissions process and was accepted into my top choice school. I had the opportunity to make so many friends and meet so many amazing people. While I am glad to have done all of these things in my time at STA, the accomplishment I am the most proud of is my experience with the Drama Department.

I knew from the second I walked through the doors of the Little Theatre that I belonged on that stage, and it seems like I haven't left the stage since then. I give a lot of credit to the Drama Department for making me the person I am today. From performing in thirteen productions over the last four years, I have not only perfected my

skills onstage, but I also learned more about myself and the person I want to become. Through Drama, I found the confidence in myself that I had previously lacked. The performing arts gave me something that I was great at and took pride in. Not to mention, it introduced me to many people that I can call my best friends. I have to thank Mrs. Gossett, Mr. Cullinan, Ms. Byrne, and Mr. Dama for every opportunity that I've been blessed with since I was a little freshman. Thank you for all of your guidance and support, and for giving me the best four years of my life.

I'd like to give an additional shoutout to my Satoma staff. Thank you so much for all of your help writing articles, formatting pages, and providing great ideas for each issue. Ms. Byrne, thank you for allowing me to be one of your editors-in-chief. Fifth period Satoma will always be one of my favorite classes. And to one of my best friends, my co editor-in-chief, Morgan, thank you for being my partner in crime this year. I couldn't have done it without you!

One thing I am grateful that STA has given me is the many people I've met throughout my time in high school. I have to thank everyone who has made my time here as great as it was, especially the Class of 2023. I've enjoyed seeing you all grow in and out of the classroom. I'll always be impressed by everything we accomplished, and glad that we stayed together the whole time.

I leave high school with plenty of wonderful memories that I will always cherish. When I think about the quiet and timid girl I was four years ago, I know she would be more than happy to see the woman that I have become. I am very grateful that I walked through the doors of STA four years ago. It was one of the best decisions I have ever made.

~ Abby Bera
(Editor-in-Chief)



For a long time, I condemned the phrase "high school will be over before you know it!" as cliché and, frankly, inaccurate. How could I believe it while I was trapped in a seemingly endless math lesson, or counting down the minutes until each unreachable Christmas break? But now, as I look back on four years of tests, rehearsals, friends, and lessons both in the classroom and out, I realize that perhaps I should have heeded this warning more carefully. While high school had its undeniable difficulties, between studying for

impossible classes, struggling to make friends, and fighting a two-year-long on-and-off battle with remote learning, I am also endlessly grateful for the opportunities it gave me and can proudly say that I have made some of my favorite memories within the walls of STA or with the people I met here.

I owe a great deal of my high school experience to the performing arts department. I came here specifically to get involved in drama and music after my parents and I were completely mesmerized by the drama department's performance of "The Transylvania Mania" and the Select Chorus' "Africa" at an open house. I know seventh-grade-Morgan wouldn't believe me if I went back in time to tell her she'd be a Select Chorus soloist with eleven drama productions under her belt today. I owe so much of my confidence and joy to Mrs. Gossett, Mr. Cullinan, and Ms. Byrne, who taught me how to be my best and truest self on the stage while finding an indescribable love for the spotlight. Drama and music gave me some of the best friends I could ask for, as well as some incredible memo-

ries. One of the things I will miss most about high school is the Friday nights spent cheering for the football team and dancing my heart out in the color guard, a group that I almost didn't join because I was so nervous about trying something new. My advice to any underclassmen reading is to get involved in whatever your heart is calling you towards, even if you're scared. Who knows? Maybe by senior year, you'll be the captain of a team, the president of a club, or even the editor-in-chief of the Satoma Newsmagazine.

Satoma has also been incredibly important to me, as it allowed me a way to apply my love of writing to something bigger than myself. Now, instead of just writing essays for school and creative stories to keep hidden away in my notes app, I was submitting articles to the school newsmagazine, alongside other people who also loved to write. After two years as a staff writer, I was incredibly honored to be asked to share the role of editor-in-chief with one of my best friends, Abby, by Ms. Byrne, an amazing woman who I have had the privilege of working closely with

across several of my extracurriculars.

As I look ahead towards graduation, and all the amazing memories I'll make in between, I cannot forget all the ups and downs of high school that got me to this point. Thank you to every friend, teacher, director, family member, and classmate who has shaped the last four years of my life and helped me become who I am today. To the underclassmen: remember to truly take in everything over the rest of your time here, and make memories whenever you can, because before you know it, you'll be heading off to the next chapter of your life. Even though some of the days of homework and lectures may seem like they'll never end, Ferris Bueller was telling the truth when he said, "Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it."

~ Morgan Ryan
(Editor-in-Chief)

Mathematically minded valedictorian



VALEDICTORIAN RAJOSHI BASU

BY: ISABELLA DANNER

This year's Valedictorian, Rajoshi Basu, was announced on April 21. She was granted the title with an incredible 4.8034 GPA though, she is better characterized by her bubbly and charitable personality.

Basu heavily involved herself throughout her high school career. She worked to create the Mathletes Club and coordinated events to show the "fun" in math, such as her "Pi"esta, where teachers had their faces smashed with pies. Basu actually credits Mathletes as her greatest achievement. In addition, she has spent her time as a STEM Tech, president of Model UN, Board Member of the Christian Social Action Club, and even a Varsity Tennis player in the fall. Outside of school, she was a member of Frank Pallone's Youth Advisory Council and a member of the Lehigh Valley American Regional Mathematics League. Consistent with her desire to help others, she often volunteered at Luv Michael, a non-profit organization focused on advocating for au-

tism acceptance in education and the workplace, and was an intern at Comet, a company that helps students with their college applications.

Rajoshi Basu is a member of the school's Honors Program and she was also a member of the Columbia University Science Honors Program and attended the Governor's School of Engineering and Technology in 2022. In April of that year, she was inducted into the National Honors Society. Most impressively, she assisted with research at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, co-authoring published research that she conducted and presented to the IEEE Journal.

Basu immigrated from India at a very young age, where she learned to adapt to the American lifestyle quickly, while still preserving values

she holds dear. She has been practicing Kathak, a type of Indian Classical Dance, for the past nine years. Currently, she is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in the hobby.

Basu applied to several schools and she received a total of \$152,928 in scholarships. In the fall of 2023, Basu will be attending the University of California, Berkeley, where she will study Math and possibly double major in Computer Science. She is unsure about her future career but "would like to end up in a profession where [she is] able to continue [her] exploration of math as well as code."

Rajoshi Basu is eternally grateful for her experiences here at school and owes many thanks to her parents, teachers, and closest friends for all their love and support.

Salutatorian to pursue engineering degree

BY: RAJASVI PATEL

Senior Sara Murillo has been given the title of the Salutatorian of the Class of 2023. Murillo has become a member of five Honors Societies: National Honors Society, Science, French, Math, and Social Studies. In addition to these exceptional achievements, she was also a member of the Honors Program, received the Middlesex County Secondary Principals' Association Outstanding Student Award, and received the Society of Women Engineers Certificate of Merit. Murillo has accumulated a GPA of 4.798 at the end of her senior year.

Murillo's favorite subject at STA has been history. She stated, "Mr. Nolan's history class has been amazing since freshman year," particularly Western Civilization and AP U.S. History with Mr. Nolan. She appreciates Mr. Nolan's passion for teaching history,

especially because history was not her favorite subject in middle school. Through taking Mr. Nolan's history classes, Murillo has recognized connections between the past and present of our world.

As she ends her high school journey, Murillo would like to thank Mr. Nolan, Mrs. D'Addio, and Ms. Alexander for the impacts they have made on her life. Through their respective concentrations on history, chemistry, mathematics, and computer science, the teachers' passions and challenges for their classes have left a lasting impact on Murillo. As Murillo moves to higher education, she intends to pursue Engineering as she attends Tufts University. She is particularly considering the combination of STEM and humanities, so she hopes to cater her majors towards that. As she states, "...Engineering brought my passions of

STEM and service together."

At STA, Murillo is very involved! Murillo has become the Christian Social Action Club (CSAC) President this year. As president, she helps to organize service opportunities for students to give back to our community. She is also involved in STEM, as a STEM Technician. She is the Vice President of the Charity Ornament Club and is a part of the Aquinas Star Board as well. In addition, Murillo is a Student Ambassador.

Murillo managed to balance her rigorous academic courses with extracurricular activities. Outside of school, Murillo participates in Karate and Doce Pares (Filipino Weaponry Martial Art). She earned a second degree Black Belt in Karate in sophomore year. She now works as a Martial Arts instructor "teaching children not only how to defend themselves, but also gain confidence,



SALUTATORIAN SARA MURILLO

self-discipline, and focus."

Murillo entered the school with "an open mind and the willingness to take on new opportunities." Murillo really values the opportunities she's had to get involved at during her time here. As she stated verbatim: "[do] not be afraid to try something new, you never know where it will lead you."

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Dorm room must haves & more

By: CATHERINE FROST

Stressing over what to bring to college? Don't know what you need and what you don't? Many high school seniors have these same thoughts because the college or university that you are attending is going to be your new semi-permanent home!

Barbara Reich, a professional organizer, believes that, "... for success at school, the dorm room is super important." This small room will be where you spend most of your time studying, sleeping and relaxing. Most students will be supplied with an uncomfortable mattress—which is why a mattress topper is a must bring in order to be truly comfortable. Your bed is sort of like a "home base." You'll most likely be studying there, watching Netflix and most importantly, sleeping! You will most likely also want additional pillows for your bed as

well. A good option is an upright pillow. This is great if you tend to sit upwards and do not want to be slouched all the time. Students also say these are amazing for reading. An interesting tip, from an RA (resident assistant) at Barnard NY is to not bring any extra furniture until you have seen your room and have gotten a feel for it because it is very easy to clutter these small spaces.

So, after you have gotten a feel for your new home, then you can make decisions on what extra furniture you would like to have with you. But, if you do decide to bring furniture for your dorm, here are some must haves. A rolling cart that moves easily and is lightweight is perfect for snacks, supplies, etc. While on the topic of staying organized, getting either a free standing shoe rack or an over the door hanging shoe organizer is a great way for keeping your shoes from getting scattered all over the place. Keeping your

dorm room organized is essential!

Having a successful academic year also means having great supplies. Having a planner helps your new (and hectic) life so much easier. Always having pens or pencils on you is a must. "You never know when you will need to jot something down!" says a University of Connecticut student. Another academic essential is a reliable backpack. Walking to classes could be rough with an uncomfortable backpack or purse. Make sure to find one that suits you, because when you are out of your dorm, you will need to have all of your necessities with you.

When thinking about packing for college, you truly do have to think about your own personal needs. Everyone is different, and each and every student has their own "essentials" that they can not live without. So, while packing for this new chapter of your life, keep this must haves list in mind!

Why paper books are better than ebooks

By: SAVANNAH MCGUIRE

To some people, there is nothing better than going home, getting comfy, grabbing their favorite book off of their bookshelf, and reading it. 57% of people enjoy reading books. Out of that 57%, however, there are 32% of people who would prefer to read ebooks more than paper books. Why are paper books so much better than ebooks? There are multiple reasons. For example, some of them include internet issues, scams, costs, and health issues.

When someone grabs a book off of a bookshelf, they would not think to worry about the internet cutting out and ruining their reading experience. With ebooks, however, the internet plays a big role in enjoying a book. Most ebooks revolve around different apps or web browsers found on different electronic devices. It can range from a phone to a desktop computer. Most electronic devices will require internet access in order to view its contents. Say it is storming outside and someone wants to read a book on their phone. They get to a really interesting part, and then the internet goes down. Think back on this scenario, but imagine instead of an ebook being read, it was a paper book. The internet goes down, but the book is still able to be

read as the storm rages on. The bottom line is, without internet access, an ebook is practically useless to those who have it.

Most sites found on the internet are scams, where other people trick users into submitting data that can be used to hack personal accounts. In one incident, a scammer named Valeriy Shershtnyov scammed thousands into buying low quality ebooks on Amazon Kindle. Valeriy created multiple fake accounts and used them to create many different ebooks, all using randomized names. This went on for many years and made Valeriy millions of dollars in money. The books that were sold were of very poor quality, and contained hacking malware. This scam is one of many that can be caused by unsafe websites or apps.

Books, depending on the type, tend to be expensive. Regular books range anywhere from two dollars to thirteen and fourteen dollars. Ebooks are usually two to three dollars. Ebooks are, for the most part, pretty affordable. In some cases though, the device in which you are reading the ebook will cost a lot more than the book itself. Take Kindle for example. Kindle is an electrical device that has one purpose, allowing someone to read ebooks. Kindles tend to be more on the expensive side, ranging

anywhere from ninety dollars to over one hundred and fifty dollars. So for a Kindle to break, someone would be losing over one hundred dollars for one device! Whereas if a book is damaged, it has a higher chance of being fixed, and there would be less money lost.

As said before, ebooks are accessed mainly through electrical devices. To read one, someone would be continuously staring at a screen. Staring at screens for long periods of time are proven to cause eye and brain damage. This is caused by something called blue light. Blue light is found in all electric devices. It plays a big part in eye damage. To be more specific, eye strain. When staring at a device for long periods of time, it strains your eyes and causes them to lose focus and vision. Another thing it can affect is sleeping habits. When staring at a screen for a long time, it keeps the brain awake. Even when someone stops looking at a device, it still takes a while for the brain to relax itself for bed. Both of these things will diminish your well being.

Overall, paper books are better to use than ebooks. With paper books, people will never need to worry about internet issues or scams affecting the reading experience. They are always there for us to access.

Juniors on 'Cloud 9'

BY: MARIA GIANNOTTO

On May 5th at 7pm, junior students were welcomed to "A Night On Cloud 9" at The Sapphire Grand in Woodbridge, NJ, for their prom. They were dismissed from school at 12:00 so they could prepare to enjoy a night of dinner and dancing. The anticipation grew as the girls went to their hair appointments and did their makeup while the boys prepared their tuxedos.

The stress was far gone when different friend groups met at houses to capture pre-prom photos. When entering The Sapphire Grand, there was a backdrop for students to get their photo taken. When students entered the ballroom, they were immediately amazed at the LED lights and beautiful decorations. Tables were filled with cotton candy and there were clouds hanging from the ceiling. As if there weren't enough surprises, students were reunited with more friends outside on the patio surrounded by gorgeous flowers. Any setting at The Sapphire Grand was a perfect

spot for them to take photos together. As the rest of the guests arrived, the DJ asked questions that made everyone cheer, such as "are we ready to party tonight?" The crowd went wild as the music got louder. Students and faculty shared laughs as circles throughout the night were created. Several students were the center of attention on the dance floor because of their unique dance moves that resulted in laughs and screams.

One of the most popular attractions during the night was the photo booth where everyone could pose with each other and get their photos printed or texted. Another attraction that had a line of people waiting was a 360 camera center, provided by a student's mother. Students shot money and bubbles out of mini machines and posed at all angles, later receiving the video through text. One of the best parts of the prom was when students took photos with the chaperones; it seemed that the teachers had as much fun as the students.

Prior to dinner, Father Mike said a prayer and class moderator, Vin-

cenzo Dama made a speech. Juniors enjoyed appetizers followed by a fancy dinner. After dinner, students continued to live it up on the dance floor until there was a crowd around the staircase to congratulate the prom king and queen: Ben DiCocco and Brianna Wynn. Ben describes his experience as surprising, saying, "It wasn't something I expected." Olivia Alicante, class president, had some words of her own about the special night. She said, "Prom was more than

just a night of glitz and glamor. It was a culmination of hard work, dedication, and unity. Working alongside Mr. Dama and the prom committee, we poured our hearts into every detail, from the light-up cloud centerpieces to the cotton candy giveaways."

Lastly, the students gave Dama an Amazon gift card to thank him, and everyone enjoyed dessert. The prom was a magical night that will be remembered by the juniors forever.



ASHLEY CALIX, SHREYA VEMPATI, FRANCES DANNER, PRUTHI PARIKH AND GABRIELLE RAMBAUD LAUGH AS THEY STAND ON THE PATIO OUTSIDE OF THE SAPPHIRE GRAND.

SENIORS' 'STARRY NIGHT'

BY: DESI ARLINGTON

On Thursday, May 18 at 7pm, the senior class came together once more at the Imperia in Somerset for their prom. The seniors came dressed for this year's theme, "Starry Night."

After taking photos out by the gazebo, the festivities continued inside with everyone wearing gorgeous, lavish dresses and deluxe suits. Their hair and makeup were done to perfection. They made sure to get tons of pictures to keep, as well as remind them of their senior prom experience with their partners and friends.

Fr. Mike led everyone in a prayer to begin their night, and soon after appetizers and entrees came. The passed hors d'oeuvres included mini reubens, tacquitos, chicken kabobs, stuffed mushrooms, mozzarella sticks, pigs in a blanket, and cheese empanadas. On the menu, they had their choice of chicken, steak, or eggplant, all alongside pasta and salad.

Following dinner, they all enjoyed the music and the amazing view and weather in the waterfall garden. In addition to the picturesque setting

outside, a photobooth was available inside so students could print their memories as they had them. The seniors took to the dance floor and showed off their moves! Dancing soon came to a break and the moment the seniors were waiting for finally came. They announced senior prom king and queen and everyone applauded as Alex Cocuzza and Anika Zavalla were crowned.

Afterwards, all continued to dance the night away. This phenomenal

prom would not have been possible without seniors Isabella Danner and Morgan Ryan, the prom committee and of course their moderator, Amy Kate Byrne.

The night came to an end at 11pm, with some of the seniors still dancing. The class of 2022 had an amazing time at senior prom and even got to take their last Roche cookies home with them as their sparkly star-shaped favors. It was a night they will cherish forever.



ALEX COCUZZA AND ANIKA ZAVALLA STEP INTO THE COURTYARD AFTER BEING CROWNED KING AND QUEEN.

(ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF STA PUBLICATIONS)



MACKENZIE CRUZ, ALLISON DEVITT, BRIANNA HERRERA, MELODY CADET AND LAUREN MULLEN PAUSE ON THE STAIRCASE BEFORE ENTERING THE BALLROOM.

Celebrating four years of achievements

BY: OLIVIA LOCANDRO

Last evening, the senior awards ceremony was held in the main gym. Snacks and refreshments were available for guests and honorees that attended this year's awards ceremony. Students were recognized with awards, demonstrating the incredible impact that they've left on the school during their high school career. Bios for every student were read as they each received their respective awards.

The Satoma Newspaper Editors were recognized, highlighting the effort they put into making the school paper the highest quality possible. Similarly, the yearbook editors and social media representatives were given their moment in the spotlight as all three groups helped create a core part of the school community. There were also awards given out to the seniors involved in broadcast journalism since they too convey school news to the student body and surrounding community.

The drama department recognized the amazing contributions the seniors brought to the department. The music department followed suit, with

awards such as the Woody Herman Jazz Award (Jared Jardiolin) and the Secure Five Marching Corps Marching Award (Mason Farrell). The Student Council also was also recognized for their hard work, as they represented and spoke for the students in the school and also helped plan the events of the year for the enjoyment and participation of the students.

When it came to athletics, two students were honored with the Middlesex Club Scholar Athlete Award, and they were Landon Kearns and Mary-Kate Murray. Memorial Awards were also given out, recognizing students who specialized in given fields, such as the Kathleen Duffy Memorial Award for business which was presented to Benjamin Bussiere. When it came to education-related awards, Kylie Barrett was acknowledged for her perfect attendance.

Since service is such an integral part of the school's atmosphere, the Spirit of Blessed Angela was awarded to Kylie Lucas and the St. Vincent de Paul Award was given in recognition of Sara Murillo.

Academically, the National Merit Scholarship gave letters of com-

mendation to Akash Shiva-Swamy, Rajoshi Basu, and Gabriella Hamm. Students who were part of the Honors Program for the four years of their high school journey were also acknowledged.

When the ceremony progressed into subject-related awards, there was a plethora of students to appreciate, since it reflected the effort these students have put into their educational careers so far. Instead of receiving certificates like the other awards, these students were given plaques or medals to commemorate their achievements. Among the recipients were Sierra Smith, who received the "Excellence in STEM" award from Mike Lewon; Sara Murillo, who received "Excellence in Technology" from Grace Alexander; Morgan Ryan, who was granted the "Excellence in Writing" from Amy Kate Byrne; Gabrielle Cruz, who was awarded a plaque from the Diocese for the Bishop Checchio Religion Award. Christian Perez received the Social Studies award from Paul Nolan; Sara Murillo and Annika Zavalla were presented with the Physical Science and Biological Science awards, respectively, by Sue D'Addio; Ra-



STUDENTS RECEIVED CERTIFICATES AND/OR MEDALS FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS

joshi Basu acquired the Math award from Linda Czajkowski; Missy Collozo presented Alyssa Miel and Naje Lovejoy medals for Health and Physical Education; Gabriella Hamm accepted the English award from Byrne; and Sarah Hamill gave Alexander Cocuzza the Art award.

The students all put in immense effort, and by showing constant and consistent academic and social performance in their school to help the student body, these students saw firsthand last night how appreciated their work and input have been in their time at this school.

A proper senior send-off

BY: ASHLEY WALL

On Thursday, June 1st, promptly at 3pm, the Class of 2023 will turn their tassels, and say their goodbyes. The ceremony is a combination of a Baccalaureate Mass and Graduation, and will take place at the Church of the Sacred Heart in South Plainfield. The graduates, along with faculty

members, will process into church, bringing forward symbols of the class. As they are brought forward, the significance of each symbol will be explained. For example, the Friendship Chain is a symbol of the importance of the strength and friendships students have made throughout the last four years. This is a graduation tradition, and reminds

all of the students what high school is truly about.

The Mass will be presided over by Bishop James Checchio and Father Mike Tabernero. Music Director Joseph Cullinan and some of his choir members will also be present at the ceremony, providing some well loved hymns throughout the Mass and the ceremony. Traditional songs such as "Trading My Sorrows" and "We Are One Body" are staples at this event.

Following the Baccalaureate Mass, the commencement ceremony will take place and there will be multiple speeches to look forward to. These speeches will be read by both students and faculty members, including principal Harry Zeigler. Along with this, speeches by Valedictorian Rajoshi Basu, Salutatorian Sara Murillo, and class officers, Isabella Danner and Morgan Ryan will also be read. The ceremony will continue with the graduates receiving their diplomas, and being recognized for their accomplishments.

As the graduates reminisce on these past four years, they remember all the memories they made. And although this can be a sad time, this is a new chapter for the seniors, as their futures are so bright. Just as they entered high school with a new beginning, they will leave with one as well. So as the new graduates receive their diplomas we hope they are so proud of all they have accomplished. The students and faculty wish the Class of 2023 the best of luck wherever they go!

●●●●●●●●●●
"Goodbye may seem forever, farewell is like the end, but in our heart's a memory, and there you'll always be."
●●●●●●●●●●



THE STUDENTS AND FACULTY WILL PROCESS INTO THE CHURCH PRIOR TO THE BACCALAUREATE MASS AND COMMENCEMENT. (ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

A classic Super Mario adventure



PRINCESS PEACH, MARIO, AND TOAD OVERLOOK MUSHROOM KINGDOM. (ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

BY: GABRIELLE RAMBAUD

“Mama mia!” rang out in theaters all across the world during the screening of *The Super Mario Bros. Movie*, which premiered April 5th and crossed \$1 billion at the world box office. The movie was full of iconic references. From the integration of Mario character staples like Donkey Kong and Princess Peach to the ever iconic Mario Kart franchise, *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* had ev-

erything Mario fans could dream of.

The film opens with Bowser (Jack Black) conquering a kingdom to collect a star, which he claims will make him unstoppable. Next enters brothers Mario (Chris Pratt) and Luigi (Charlie Day) who are desperate to prove that people should take them seriously. Through a series of hijinks, they are separated and transported to “galaxies far far away.” Luigi is trapped with Bowser, leaving Mario to rescue

him alongside some new friends: Princess Peach (Anya Taylor-Joy), Toad (Keegan-Michael Key), and Donkey Kong (Seth Rogen).

The Super Mario Bros. Movie is a classic hero’s journey. Mario goes through trials and tribulations as he becomes accustomed to the new world and perseveres through. In the end, he is able to power through and defeat Bowser, albeit with help from Luigi. His journey as a protagonist is pretty unremarkable. He does not go through huge changes in his personality nor is his belief system challenged. While it is not necessarily a bad thing, it creates a lack of emotional depth that makes an already average movie forgettable.

The movie relies solely on its franchise to keep viewers seated for the full 1 hour and 32 minutes. The wonderful world of Mario is the main draw factor. There were some creative choices to make the world feel more fleshed out. For example, the karts of the iconic Mario Kart franchise are revealed to be creations and the prime mode of transportation for

the Jungle Kingdom. Furthermore, there is a scene where the Koopa General turns into the blue shell while they race on Rainbow Road.

The saving grace of this movie is when the writers went headfirst into the whimsical and silly nature of the Mario franchise. There are many memorable over-the-top scenes in which Bowser reveals that he is in love with Princess Peach and acquired the star solely to impress her. It is silly and absolutely laughable and turns the terrifying King of the Koopas into comedic relief. These scenes and the musical number “Peaches” are the best part of the movie. While Jack Black is cemented as a comedic genius, it is a shame that the brothers Mario and Luigi took a backseat in memorability to their enemy in their own movie.

The Super Mario Bros. Movie is admittedly not super. It lacks a creative and engaging storyline, relying on its already established characters’ lore to carry it through. It is the type of movie that will have you crying out, “Mama mia.”

Coming to you this summer...

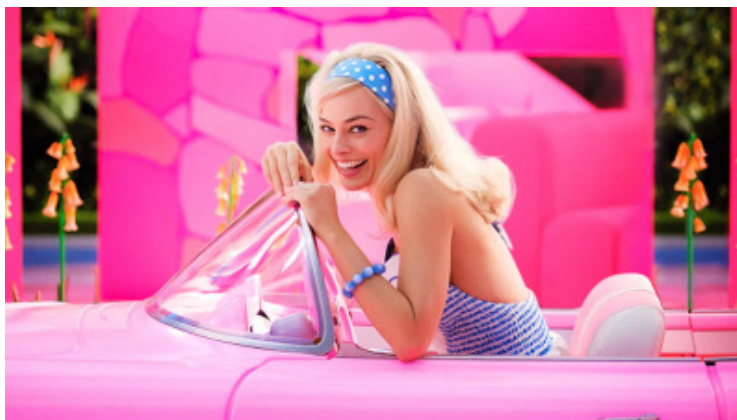
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30	31					

Summer's hottest movie



MARGOT ROBBIE AS BARBIE PULLS UP IN HER PERFECTLY PINK CAR (ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

BY: CHRISTIAN PEREZ

If summer couldn't get any hotter, one of the most anticipated movies of the season is releasing on July 21st. Directed by Greta Gerwig,

the director of 2017's *Lady Bird* and 2019's *Little Women*, her focus is now on casting her vision of the Barbie universe on the big screen. Headlined by popular stars such as

Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling and a popular ensemble featuring Simu Liu, Michael Cera, and Will Ferrell, Barbie is poised to be the most talked about film of the summer bar Nolan's *Oppenheimer*.

The *Barbie* movie is centered around, as what IMDB says, "A doll living in 'Barbieland' is expelled for not being perfect enough and sets off on an adventure in the real world". This grittier approach to a childrens IP is par for the course for Gerwig who, most notably in *Lady Bird*, touches on themes of female self-determination and growth. It can be understood that Barbie will inherit the themes of Gerwig's former works while other rumors swirl about existentialist themes akin to *The Truman Show* (1995), where a man realizes his entire life is the premise of a TV show. Gerwig understands the risk

of such an unorthodox approach in one of her interviews with Vanity-fair, wherein she talked about the risk she felt when deciding to direct Barbie. She says "I am terrified of that." in relation to being given high amounts of creative freedom in deciding the plot of the movie.

The in-depth plot of the movie hasn't been revealed yet, with the only information coming from leaks and rumors. What was released, however, were two teaser trailers which were only a little more than a minute long and divulged few details about the nature of the film. The decision to keep the plot of the film under wraps has only increased speculation about the actual plot, with audiences anxious to know what Gerwig has in mind. Whatever it may be, the veil will be lifted on July 21st when Barbie releases.

Indiana Jones' last run

BY: SIDNEY REIMAN

The iconic *Indiana Jones* film saga will be coming to an end with its fifth and final film, *Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny*. The franchise has followed the legendary archaeologist Indiana Jones on his adventures to find ancient artifacts, such as the Ark of the Covenant, the Sankara stone, the Holy Grail, and a telepathic skull made of crystal. *The Dial of Destiny* will follow Indiana on his journey to find a legendary dial that could change the course of history if it falls into the wrong hands. The movie will make its premiere in the United Kingdom on June 28, 2023, and it will be globally released two days later, on June 30.

Set in 1969, the film will follow Indiana Jones's adventure to find his place in the world as he approaches the age of retirement. At first it seems the world has outgrown the need for Indy, but he is ultimately the hero it needs. Teaming up with his goddaughter, Indiana attempts to retrieve a dial that could alter the course of history, while simultaneously stopping ex-Nazis from getting to it first. The film's plot takes inspiration from

the clandestine operations during the late 1960s, nicknamed *Operation Paperclip*. This was an operation to recruit Nazi doctors and scientists to ensure an end to the horrors that took place during World War II. Some of the hired scientists went on to design rockets that would place man on the moon. Mads Mikkelsen portrays an ex-Nazi scientist with a sinister plan, who is the film's main antagonist.

The movie includes returning cast members Harrison Ford, who reprises his role as the famed title character, and John Rhys-Davies as Sallah, the Egyptian excavator and close friend of Indy. New cast members include Phoebe Waller-Bridge who plays Indiana's goddaughter Helena, and Shaunette Reneé Wilson who plays a CIA Nazi handler. The cast is rounded out with Antonio Banderas, Boyd Holbrook, Karen Allen, Mark Killeen, and others in supporting roles. The returning creative team includes Steven Spielberg, the director of the first four films of the franchise, who is returning as a producer on this film. Spielberg has been replaced as director by James Mangold, who has been directing since 1995.

In an interview about the upcoming



INDIANA JONES GOES ON AN EXPEDITION FOR THE DIAL OF DESTINY.

ing film, Mangold hinted at morals as a major conflict in the film. He mentioned the morally gray nature of the protagonist and how the time period of the film has changed the light shed on Indiana Jones. Mangold explained, "How do you move forward into new decades where the world is no longer seen in such clear demarcations of black and white and good and evil?...Our perception of politics is more gray. Who's a villain? Who are we working with? Who are we fighting against?...It's not as simple as the era around World War II. What happens to a hero built for a black-and-white world, when he

finds himself in one that is gray?"

The movie aims to bring resolution to a story that has spanned over 42 years. The *Indiana Jones* movies have united generations; the tales of Indy's adventures are timeless classics that will go down in history as one of the most beloved movie franchises of all time. Fans of all ages are looking forward to the new movie and are hoping to see an amazing finale to the saga that has lasted several generations. There is a lot of anticipation surrounding the film's release, and many fans predict that this movie will receive nothing but "fortune and glory."

CLASS OF '23 FUTURE FEATURE - ADVICE TO THE PEERS



"GO FOR IT ALL NO MATTER WHAT IT IS. LET GO OF DOUBT AND JUST LIVE FREE."



"ENJOY THESE 4 YEARS BECAUSE IT REALLY DOES FLY BY FAST. GO TO EVERY EVENT AND BE INVOLVED BECAUSE HIGH SCHOOL IS ONCE IN A LIFE LIFETIME AND YOU DON'T WANT TO HAVE REGRETS"



"DO YOUR HOMEWORK, BECAUSE IT WILL AFFECT YOUR GRADE MORE THAN YOU THINK."



"THERE ARE THINGS WAY MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK OF YOU. LIVE YOUR LIFE THE WAY YOU DESIRE, AND DON'T LET OTHERS DIM YOUR LIGHT."

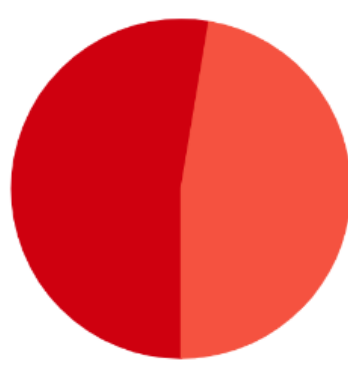


"DON'T BE AFRAID TO LOSE PEOPLE, DON'T BE AFRAID TO CHANGE YOUR HOBBIES. ALWAYS BE TRUE TO YOURSELF."



"LOCK IN FROM THE START."

COLLEGE DECISIONS



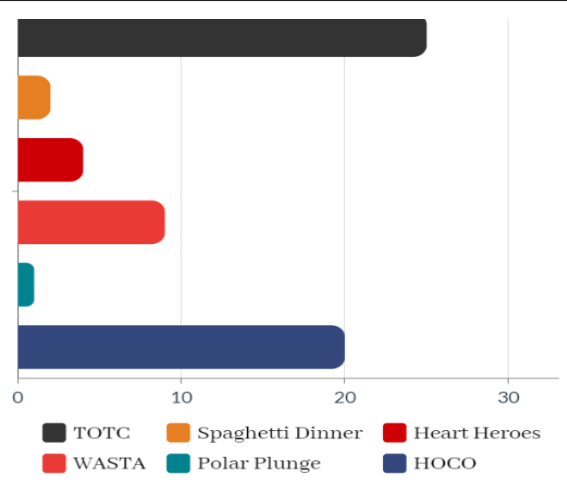
IT LOOKS LIKE A MAJORITY OF THE CLASS OF '23 WILL BE STAYING IN-STATE, REPRESENTED BY THE DARK RED, FOR COLLEGE!



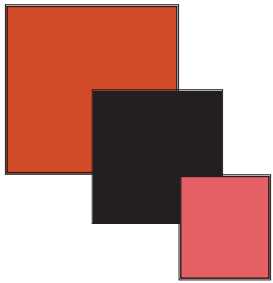
FAVORITE SCHOOL EVENT (SEE GRAPH TO THE RIGHT)

TOTC PROVED TO BE THE FAVORITE PICK OF THE CLASS OF '23, WITH HOCO BEING A CLOSE SECOND!

THE MOST POPULAR CHOICE IS RUTGERS



ASEED ON A SURVEY OF THE CLASS EXTRACURRICULAR PARTICIPANTS



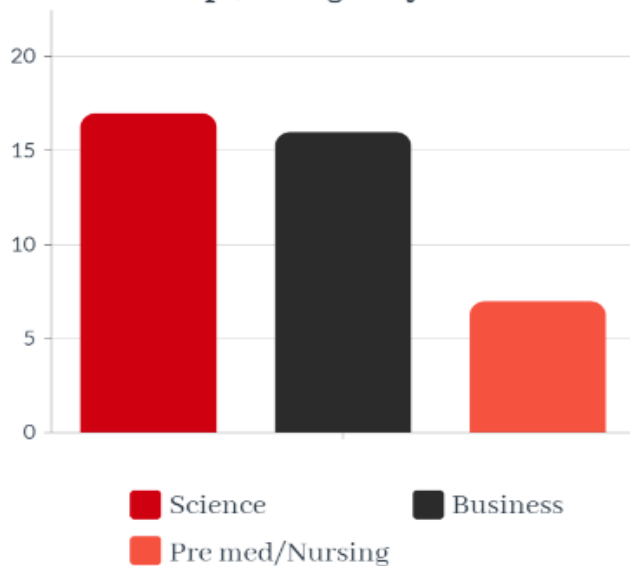
OVER 90% OF THE SENIOR STUDENT BODY ARE ATHLETES, AND ANOTHER LARGE PERCENT ARE MEMBERS OF BAND, CHOIR, AND OTHER MUSIC RELATED FIELDS HERE AT STA

24% OF THE SENIORS ARE COMMITTED ATHLETES

THE MOST POPULAR MAJOR CHOICE IS THE SCIENCES, WITH A CLOSE SECOND OF BUISNESS. COMING IN THIRD IS PRE-MED AND NURSING.



Top 3 College Majors



THIS SURVEY IS MADE UP OF RESPONSES FROM APPROXIMATELY HALF OF THE STUDENT BODY OF THE CLASS OF '23



A FLASHBACK TO OUR FRESHMAN ORIENTATION



A FLASHBACK TO WASTA DAY 2019

CHEETAHS BOUNCE BACK FROM EXTINCTION IN INDIA



A CHEETAH IN INDIA STARES AT ITS PREY IN THE DISTANCE
(ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF STA PUBLICATIONS)

BY: MADISON PACCIANO

Good news for cheetahs and other big cats around the world! Over 70 years ago in India, cheetahs were declared extinct. For decades India has been trying to reintroduce them back into their wild to get their population numbers rising. Within the past year, 20 cheetahs have been brought into India, 12 from South Africa and 8 from Namibia. It was the first time

a large carnivore had been brought from one continent to another and introduced into new areas of the wild.

After years of declining numbers because of hunting, loss of habitat, decreasing prey, and then becoming declared officially extinct, the birth of 4 cubs is certainly a “momentous event” as described by India's environment minister. Another species of the big cat family are Amur leopards,

which are currently critically endangered. Don't give up hope just yet though! On March 28, 2023 one of the world's rarest cats (Amur leopards) was born and welcomed gratefully at the San Diego Zoo. The San Diego Zoo's membership with the global Association of Zoos and Aquariums Amur Leopard Survival Plan has allowed them to do a lot of conservation work in Siberia, which is the native land of Amur leopards. San Diego Zoo claims to have helped increase the number of Amur leopards by 50% over the past decade. Although the 2 cubs may never reach their native homeland their purpose in San Diego is very important! They are inspiring visitors at their zoo to help take action to save the Amur leopard species and actively preserving their genetic pool. In other great news for the population of cheetahs, three years ago the world's first cubs were born using IVF! There are said to be about 7000 cheetahs left, the majority residing in Africa. Being able to use IVF on vulnerable species, like cheetahs, to allow them to reproduce will prove to be detrimental in rescuing them from permanent

extinction. Now what is IVF? In vitro fertilization (IVF) is sperm and eggs that are fertilized in a laboratory then incubated to create embryos. Those embryos are then placed into a female's womb where they then develop into fetuses. On February 19th, 2020, the two cubs were successfully born at the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium. The cub's surrogate was an older cheetah named Izzy, while their biological mother is Kibibi. Dr. Randy Junge, the Columbus Zoo's vice president of Animal Health says, “These two cubs may be tiny, but they represent a huge accomplishment, with expert biologists and zoologists working together to create this scientific marvel”. The now full grown cheetahs Adrienne and Dave, are said to be doing well at the Columbus Zoo. Although IVF has had a few successes in small domestic cats and African wildcats, IVF is still rare in larger cat species such as cheetahs or tigers. The successful birth of 2 cheetah cubs marks the beginning of a remarkable advancement in the department. This isn't just a win for cheetahs, it's a win for endangered species everywhere!

BREAKTHROUGH: NEW MALARIA VACCINE SHOWS PROMISING RESULTS

BY: MADISON BREW

In recent years, there has been significant progress towards developing a vaccine to prevent malaria. One of the most promising malaria vaccines is known as the RTS,S vaccine, which was developed by the pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline in collaboration with the PATH Malaria Vaccine

Initiative. The RTS,S vaccine is a recombinant protein-based vaccine that targets the sporozoite stage of the malaria parasite. It contains a portion of the circumsporozoite protein (CSP) found on the surface of the malaria parasite, which stimulates the immune system to produce antibodies that can recognize and attack the parasite. Clinical trials of the RTS,S vaccine have shown that it is effective in reducing the incidence of malaria in both children and adults. In a Phase III clinical trial, the vaccine was shown to reduce the risk of malaria by around 50% in children aged 5-17 months and

by around 30% in infants aged 6-12 weeks. The RTS,S vaccine has been tested extensively in Africa, where malaria is most prevalent, and has shown promising results in reducing the incidence of the disease. In 2019, the WHO recommended the use of the RTS,S vaccine in children in sub-Saharan Africa as part of a pilot program. The pilot program, which began in 2020, aims to vaccinate around 360,000 children in Ghana, Kenya, and Malawi, with the goal of evaluating the safety and efficacy of the vaccine in real-world conditions. If the program is successful, it could pave the way for the vaccine to be rolled out more widely across Africa, potentially saving millions of lives.

While the RTS,S vaccine is a significant step forward in the fight against malaria, it is not a silver bullet and will need to be used in conjunction with other prevention and treatment measures, such as mosquito nets and antimalarial drugs. In addition, the vaccine's efficacy is lower than that of most other vac-



DEPICTED ABOVE IS THE NEW VACCINE
(ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

cines, which typically have an efficacy rate of around 90-95%. Despite these limitations, the development of a malaria vaccine is a major breakthrough, and offers hope for a future where malaria is no longer a major

public health concern in Africa and around the world.

The continued development and deployment of effective malaria vaccines will be crucial in the fight against this deadly disease.

NEW JERSEY'S NEW ECO-FRIENDLY INITIATIVES FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE



involved and very interactive. The sixth, seventh, and eighth graders are using an aeroponic tower to grow seedlings before being transferred to pots with soil. Set by a timer, the plants are irrigated with tubes of water filled with nutrients. Instead of the runoff potentially becoming a pollutant, it is collected and run back through the system to be reused. "When the kids are able to speak to their passions, they really dig in and are really compassionate about what they do," said Principal Timothy Charleston.

The students of Readington Mid-

dle also took action regarding the issue of food waste. According to their research, the amount of waste in the cafeteria adds up to about 10.75 tons per year. They plan to counteract this with posters all over the school. Their curriculum also included the benefit of trees to our environment. From studying tree rings, the students recognized a diseased tree on school grounds that needed to be removed. As well as planting a tree of their own to produce more oxygen. New Jersey is becoming a more sustainable and eco-friendly state, one step at a time.

NEW JERSEY CREATES A CAMPAIGN TO MAKE THE STATE A 'GREENER' PLACE TO LIVE

BY: MACKENZIE CRUZ

New Jersey is the first US state to make a curriculum in climate change mandatory for public schools. According to Governor Murphy's wife, who's leading this initiative, it's part of New Jersey's efforts to become

100% green by 2035. Each individual school district can decide how to handle the new curriculum, but Readington School District has been extremely successful.

Readington Middle School's climate change curriculum is student



MANY CHANGES ARE MADE TO COMBAT THE CLIMATE CRISIS.

THE UK TAKES STEPS TO COMBAT GLOBAL WARMING

BY: AMELIA YUEN

The UK is facing a severe climate and nature crisis, which is expected to have devastating consequences if left unchecked. To address these issues, the charity Heal was launched in 2020 with the mission to raise money, buy land, and rewild it. In just three years and with £5.25m raised, the charity has made its first significant step towards an ambitious rewilding journey by purchasing a 460-acre site near Bruton in Somerset. Heal aims to create a major nature recovery site in all 48 English counties, covering 25,000 acres by 2050. Heal's first site, Heal Somerset, will serve as a blueprint for its wider plans, and the charity hopes to tackle the nature and climate crises while creating jobs and working with local businesses. Heal is the UK's first registered charity set up to buy land solely for the purpose of rewilding. The charity's mission is to help tackle nature and climate crises by creating large-scale nature recovery sites that will allow ecosystems to thrive. Rewilding is a process that involves restoring damaged ecosystems to their natural state by reintroducing native species, re-

moving invasive ones, and promoting natural processes. Rewilding has become increasingly popular in recent years as a way to restore biodiversity and mitigate climate change. The process of rewilding involves creating space for nature to thrive, promoting natural processes, and allowing ecosystems to function as they would in their natural state. Heal Somerset is the charity's first purchase, and it is a former dairy farm crisscrossed by three tributaries of the River Frome. The site is home to miles of hedgerows, mature oaks, and traditional stone farm buildings that the charity hopes to renovate. Heal plans to introduce rare breed cattle, pigs, and ponies as 'ecosystem engineers' and develop a habitat mosaic of trees, scrub, grassland, bare earth, and water. Around half of the site will be open to the public. The restoration of the land will serve as a blueprint for the charity's wider plans to create nature recovery sites across the UK. The potential for rewilding at Heal Somerset is vast. The restoration of the land will create a safe haven for wildlife, which will help to restore biodiversity and mitigate climate change. The restoration of the land will also provide

opportunities for job creation and working with local businesses. Heal Somerset will serve as an example of what can be achieved when people come together to take practical action to benefit nature, climate, and people. Rewilding has the potential to restore ecosystems to their natural state, which will benefit wildlife and people. Restoring ecosystems will help to promote biodiversity, mitigate climate change, and restore the natural processes that sustain life

on Earth. Rewilding is an ambitious task that requires a long-term commitment, but the benefits are significant. Restoring ecosystems will help to create a sustainable future for people and the planet. Heal's mission to rewind the UK is an ambitious one, but it is essential to tackle the nature and climate crises. Heal Somerset is a significant first step towards creating large-scale nature recovery sites across the UK, and potentially the world.



THE FLAG FLIES PROUDLY OVER THE THAMES AS THE UK JOINS THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE.

(ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF GOOGLE IMAGES)

Passion play inspires prayer

BY: ELIZABETH BERA

Throughout the season of Lent, we remember Jesus Christ's passion and death on the cross. Before spring break began, students and faculty involved in "The Stations of the Cross" devoted their last day of classes to sharing the story of Jesus' death with the student body. Through this reenactment, students who watched from the audience were reminded of Christ's sacrifice for us, and how important it is to carry on his mission and word.

"The Stations of the Cross" was written by Sister Cyndi, directed by Mrs. Gossett, and performed by volunteer members of the theatre intensive class and the drama department. Narrators Nick Basilico and Donato Farid guided the audience

throughout the fourteen stations of the cross, each of which was followed by a prayerful reflection by Mr. Lewon or Fr. Mike. The performance was complete with songs sung by the Select Chorus such as "Ubi Caritas" and "Ours Were the Grieffs He Bore," with live piano accompaniment by Mr Cullinan. Students were invited to enter a time of prayer and stillness.

During the performance, we met the many characters that were present from Christ's condemnation all the way to when he was laid to rest in the tomb. Each biblical figure told their personal story, explaining their relationship with Jesus and the part they played in his Passion. The Guards (Jayden Young and Landen Gonzalez), Barabbas (Jasmine Torres), King Herod (Michael Corradino), Mary (Abigail Bera),

Simon (Lukas Pereira), Veronica (Annika Schmidt), Caiaphas (Gabriella Morelli), The Women from Jerusalem (Celeste Popola, Brianam Gafanhao, Angeleena Figueura), Longinus (Sean Lacko), The Thief Who Was Not Sorry (Emily Smietana), Dismas (Amanda Ponik), Mary Magdalene (Morgan Ryan), Salome

(Mackenzie Cruz), and Nicodemus (Emmanuel Owusu) are meant to show the virtues and failures of each human being, including ourselves. The prayer service calls each individual to truly reflect on their relationship with God during the most Holy time of the year, as we go into Easter and every day after.



THE ROMAN SOLDIERS FORCE JESUS TO GET UP AFTER HE FALLS BENEATH THE WEIGHT OF HIS CROSS

Seniors shine in spring concert

BY: WILLIAM OWENS

On April 29th and 30th, the music department hosted "The 25th Annual Spring Concert Without a Theme" in the school gym, bringing an electrifying performance. This concert was filled with many special and memorable moments, as songs ranged from heartfelt and melancholy, to fun earworms that audiences won't forget.

The Jazz Band was the first performing group to showcase their music, as they played the hits "Take On Me" by A-ha,

"Rolling in the Deep" by Adele, and "Bad Romance" by Lady Gaga. Coming after the Jazz Band, the Concert Band played the songs "Skygazer Fanfare" by Randall D. Standridge, "Blessed Legacy" based on "Nettleton" (featuring specific parts from senior Victoria McLean, junior Anthony Campora, junior Annika Schmidt, senior Jackson Boomer, and senior Mason Farrell), and different themes from "Jurassic Park." Additionally, McLean performed "Premier Solo de Concours" by Rene

Maniet using the baritone horn.

In the second act of the entertainment, the Concert Choir and Select Chorus went back and forth between pieces of music. The Concert Choir kicked it off with "I Hope You Dance" by Lee Ann Womack. Then, the Select Chorus sang an acapella arrangement of "Breakfast at Tiffany's" by Deep Blue Something. The Concert Choir continued with Johann Sebastian Bach's "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring." The Select Chorus jazzed up their rendition of "The Wellerman," a traditional New Zealand sea shanty, with the use of various percussion instruments. This song also featured solos by senior Morgan Ryan, senior Jackson Boomer, and junior Sean Lacko. The Concert Choir then sang "God Bless the Broken Road" by Rascal Flatts, dedicated to music director Joe Cullinan's wife in celebration of their tenth wedding anniversary. The Select Chorus sang "Ours Were the Grieffs He Bore," a hymn used during "The Stations of the Cross." They finished their set with Cyndi Lauper's "True Colors," a solo

by senior Abigail Bera accompanied by backup vocals from the rest of the Select Chorus. The evening was closed out with the Concert Choir's rendition of "Finale B," from Rent, featuring a solo by senior Mason Farrell.

Although the students' talent and hard work is monumental, none of the music department activities would be possible without Mr. Joseph Cullinan, the Director of Music. Mr. Cullinan always works tirelessly to organize nothing short of spectacular every winter and every spring through his musical performances. These musicians are always thankful to have such an inspiring and motivating presence during their experience in the music department.

As some of these musicians depart from the music department as seniors, they reflect on their time in the department, thinking about what they've accomplished, how they've been impacted, and what memories they've made. And, while they cannot stay in high school forever, they all carry experiences that they will remember for life because of the music program.



SENIOR JACKSON BOOMER ENCHANTS THE CROWD WITH THE TALE OF "THE WELLERMAN"

(ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF STA PUBLICATIONS)

Sports Spotlight

Name: Christian Scaff



Nickname: Scaff

Sport: Baseball

Position: Third Base

Lucky Number: 7

Favorite Memory: The Autism Awareness Games

Name: Kylie Barrett



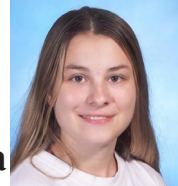
Sport: Lacrosse

Position: Attack

Lucky Number: 16

Favorite Memory: Scoring my first varsity goal against Johnson Regional

Name: Shealyn Yorke



Nickname: Shea

Sport: Cheerleading

Position: Side & Main Base

Lucky Number: 13

Favorite Memory: Celebrating my birthday on Senior Night

Congrats to our 2023 senior athletes!

Name: Amya Hill



Nickname: Mya

Sport: Softball

Position: Outfield

Lucky Number: 3

Favorite Memory: Winning GMCs for the 4th year in a row

Name: Gianna Cosasanti



Nickname: Gi

Sport: Track & Field

Position: Long Distance

Lucky Number: 11

Favorite Memory: Going to Rita's after practice

Name: Grace Farrell



Sport: Lacross

Position: Midfielder

Lucky Number: 20

Favorite Memory: Listening to music at practice

Ready, set, go!

BY: SOPHIA LLAGUNO

The boys and girls track and field team has done exceptionally well this spring season, breaking personal, school, and event records.

Senior captians Alexander Cocuzza and Isabella Danner have been dedicated to the sport since their freshman year and have great optimism about the team's future. "Our team is doing very well and we hope we can bring the same energy to divisions," Cocuzza stated. Danner has overcome personal struggles to achieve her goals, "injury has been rough these past few seasons, but I am really happy to be able to run some of my favorite races and to enjoy my last season with the team."

The boys broke school records for the shot put, javelin, high jump, and long jump events. Junior Christian Magliacano set a new personal record of 40' 9.5" in the shot put; junior Khalil Stubbs threw 95' 11" in the javelin; and senior Sherief Guinyard set a personal record in high jump at 5' 8".

On the girls side, senior Esperanza

Mojica, sophomore Gabriella Politi, and freshman Supriya Moore all set personal records in the shot put with distances of 31' 1", 25' 5", and 17' 2.75".

The athletes and coaches continue to work together in order to build the mental and physical stamina that the Greater Middlesex Conference divisions call for. The team is sad to see its seniors leave but looks forward to the future that lies ahead of them.



SENIOR ALEX COCUZZA EXERTS ALL HIS ENERGY INTO THE LAST LEG OF THE 1600

'Putt-ing' it all together

BY: JUSTIN MOSCARITOLO

The 2023 varsity golf team has really grown in their golf skills. Most of the players on the team are new to the team and have never played golf before. These players have started to learn new golf skills and etiquettes. A majority of the players on the team are sophomores and they started off this season with a rough start, but by the end they mastered how to play golf.

Learning the game of golf will provide these players with skills and advantages that they can take with them for the rest of their lives, such as the social and business aspects. Sophomore Will Thomas stated, "I have grown as a person since learn-

ing how to play golf."

Thomas was one of the new players added to the team over the season and he has grown a lot in his golf skills as well as his manners in certain areas of golf.

Over the past couple of weeks the team has really enjoyed the help from head coach Clem Bottone. He has really made the season a lot of fun and enjoyable as well as competitive in certain aspects of the golf season. Coach Bottone has assisted the teams swings, putts, and motivated them to do their best to win as many matches as possible. The team was rusty in the beginning and were not doing as well as they planned, but with the help from their coach they turned the season around. They were able to win some matches and their scores slowly started to get lower compared to their opponents.

Junior Justin Moscaritolo said "Although our season did not turn out as well as we hoped, we still had a good time while trying to win as best as we could. We hope for a much better season next year and we hope to have the same amount of fun and for more people to join!"

"I have grown as a person since learning how to play golf."

- Will Thomas

Swinging for the fences

BY: FRANCES DANNER

The varsity baseball team is truly unmatched. Filled with talent, teamwork, and dedication, the team is led by head coach Tom D'Agostino, assistant coach Frank D'Agostino, pitching coach Jared DeBrizzi, and captain Ricky Del Rio. Their current record is 13-5 with the remainder of the season looking very promising. Closing off their final year, the team has been honoring their five seniors: Julian Buitrago, Jalen Edwards, Artis Ray, Del Rio, and Christian Scaff. Looking toward the future, Del Rio will continue his baseball career at New Jersey City University, and Scaff will continue his baseball career at DeSales University. The team is sad to see them go, but excited for what is in store for their future!

The baseball team has been blessed with various new players this year. Freshman Louis Rizzolo, has been a star first baseman, showing out for every opposing team. Sophomore transfers Lucas Cassino and Donovan Epps have been amaz-

ing in the outfield. Ray Nault, Benjie Pabon, and Gavin Sansone, all junior transfers, have been vital on the mound, leading their team to victory. Despite the late additions to the team, each and every player has truly shown their strength on and off the field.

The team would be nothing without the endless support they receive from friends and family. The whole community joins together to support them, and lead them in their victories from the sidelines. This past year, junior, Ann-Michelle Afere, took on the role of manager, keeping track of everything inside the team's scorebook. Shelby Decillis has been taking countless numbers of pictures for the team, allowing for each player to remember their memories forever.

With over twenty games played, there remains a few that are truly memorable. On April 23rd, the Trojans played JP Stevens at Edison High School for the Autism Awareness Challenge. The team really proved that it is more than just a game. The bond each player has



SENIOR RICKY DEL RIO WINDS UP IN ATTEMPT TO STRIKE OUT THE BATTER (ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF STA PUBLICATIONS)

with each other and the community goes deeper than what is seen on the outside. On April 26th, the Trojans played Manville at TD Bank Park. Not only did the team pull out an amazing win, but each player made memories that will last forever. David Ryden, junior and starting catch-

er, stated, "The whole team brought energy from pitch one, and it really set us up for a win."

On May 4th, the Trojans played Spotswood at home. Tensions were high, as Spotswood was winning 3-1 most of the game. In the bottom of the seventh inning, the team scored one run, making it 3-2. With bases loaded, junior Zach Diaz came up to bat. He hit the game-winning hit, a blazing shot to right field, bringing in two runs for the Trojans. Diaz led them to walk it off against their division rivals.

Diaz commented on the season so far saying, "Coming into the season we had many goals to reach and achieve. The team has worked extremely hard on and off the field. Every single day we are working to get better. Overall, we know that what we have to get to get done to be the best version of ourselves when we go out and play on the field. Trusting each other is an extremely important part of our team and our culture, and we continue to grow in our trust, as the season progresses!"

Softball continues to dominate



SENIOR MARY KATE MURRAY FIELDS THE BALL TO THROW TO FIRST
(ALL PHOTOS COURTESY OF STA PUBLICATIONS)

BY: EMMA FLYNN

The 2022-2023 softball team is led by head coach Missy Collazo and assistant coach Mark Fiore. The team consists of seniors Amya Hill and Mary Kate Murray; junior Hayley

Wieczerek; sophomores, Gwendolyn Negron, Brielle Cubala, Sophia Colucci, Emma Flynn, Natalie Kandel, Kamerin Collado, Elizabeth Negron, Sophia Casalinovo; and Freshmen, Ariana Barge, Hailey Krainski, and Alyssa Collins. They are having an incredible season so far, with a record of 17-2. Their only losses were against Morris Catholic and Hunterdon Central. The team clinched the red division in the Greater Middlesex Conference for their fifth year in a row! Additionally, a few players hit career milestones and broke records. Murray broke both the school homerun record and had 100 Career Hits. She currently has a .545 batting average and 14 homeruns on the year. Furthermore, Wieczerek hit 500 career strikeouts and broke the school record of 510 strikeouts. She has a total of 221 strikeouts so far this year.

This year's captains are Hill and Murray; they have set a great example and will be missed. Murray stated, "Playing softball at STA has been the highlight of my four years. Throughout the years I have played,

it has brought me friendships and great memories. The team this year has worked really hard in practice, and have really bonded and I think that has played a huge role in our success as a team. We have clinched the Red Division once again, and this will be my third in three years. We are looking forward to the Greater Middlesex Tournament and playing for a trophy. We also, as a team, are preparing for states, and getting ready to face some of the best teams in the state in our Non-Public bracket."

Families and friends turned out to celebrate the seniors on Monday, May 8, 2023. The families of both Hill and Murray turned out to support the '23 graduates along with Principal Harry Ziegler and athletic director Jerry Smith. Both seniors were presented with flowers, signs, posters, gift baskets, jars of dirt from the field, and congratulated with individualized speeches from Coach Collazo. She said, "The team has enjoyed another successful year clinching its 5th consecutive division championship!"

"The team has enjoyed another successful year clinching its 5th consecutive division championship!"
-Coach Collazo

The Trojans advanced to the Quarterfinal Round of the GMC playoffs by defeating Perth Amboy on Wednesday, May 10, with an impressive score of 19-2. There were 6 home runs hit during this game (one of which helped Murray to break the school's all time homerun record which stood at 12) to help the team advance. The Trojans also defeated Woodbridge on Saturday, May 13, at 2pm in Spotswood. Make sure to wish our girls luck for the rest of the season.

Senior boys find new 'love'

BY: MORGAN RYAN

The boys tennis team enjoyed a very successful spring season, with an impressive record of 8-2 across their matches against Dunellen, Perth Amboy, Spotswood, New Brunswick, East Brunswick, and South Amboy. They will also be getting second place in the gold division this year.

This year's team featured two returning members, captains Kameron Johnson and Solim Khan. Notably, they also welcomed several new players, all of whom are seniors. This roster includes Jaser Azcona, Neal Choksi, Matthew Lowe, Charbel Maroun, Alex Pasquale, Christian Perez, Patrick Regis, Miguel Rodriguez, and Akash Shiva Swamy. They are headed by coach Duncan Merriman-Mendez and managed by freshman Miliana Triola.

Most of the new seniors hailed from other sports teams, including bowling, wrestling, and track, but none had ever played tennis before. As good friends both on and off the court, this merry band decided to try out a new activity together, a final

adventure before the conclusion of senior year. "I decided to join tennis this year because all my friends were joining," admitted Rodriguez, who just started playing tennis this season after an impressive high school bowling career.

The team's lineup is filled out by Johnson on first singles, Lowe on second, and Khan on third. The doubles teams include Pasquale and Choksi first, and Shiva Swamy and Rodriguez as the second duo. "My favorite part of working together is how we complement each other so well," praised Choksi, who has built a strong bond with Pasquale as well as the rest of his teammates over the course of the tennis season.

The boys practiced almost every day to keep their serving skills fine-tuned. To pass the long hours at the home courts, they made sure to keep things exciting by maintaining positive attitudes both on and off of the courts. "My favorite part of the team is the fact that we are all just friends," Rodriguez said about his teammates. Clearly the team chemistry added the boys in their victorious season.

Live love lax



THE GIRLS VARSITY LACROSSE TEAM RALLY TOGETHER BEFORE THEIR GAME

BY: KATHERINE XON

This year's girls lacrosse team ended their season on May 10 with a record of 2-9-1. Under the leadership of Coach Jahnno, Coach Webb and captains Senior, Grace Farrell, Senior Brianna Barbarite, and Sophomore Kaitlin Hall had lead their team through the ups and downs of the season. Sophomore Aaliya

Piperato scored the most goals with 17 goals. Farrel led the team with the most assists and points, 7 assists and 19 points. She also had the most ground balls(69) and draw wins(39). Another huge factor in the team's season was the goalies. Gianna Arduini(Sophomore) and Mariana DelaHoz(Junior) saved a total of 62 shots, DelaHoz with 33 saves and Arduini with 29.

The continuous drive of all the players on the roster led every game to end in a good effort. Especially with the help of seniors Farrel, Barbarite, Kylie Barrett, and Ella Federico. They celebrated their senior night against South Plainfield on May 4. Every time they played, their determination was at an all-time high. These four seniors ceaselessly played their hardest all over the field playing their final season.

This team ended their season with a game against North Brunswick. Though the game ended in a loss, this game showed how each player improved from the beginning to the end of the season.

Spring Sonnet

By Grace Mandy '24

The month of March, a lion or a lamb,
 Some years it snows, but at the end the sun
 Shines high above us all the gloom be damned,
 It's at this time you know Spring has begun.
 Soon April comes, its showers soak your hair,
 The wind sings breathy songs and shakes the trees

And it blows dandelions everywhere,
 To children they're a wonder, not a weed.
 Then May brings flowers, on the trees and
 grass

With wonder in my eyes I stop to look,
 I wish forever sweet Spring time would last
 And wouldn't rush like waters in the brook.
 But soon the trees, their flowers they will shed,
 This fleeting time of childhood soon ends.

Spring Poem

By Sandra Abrantes '24

The change in the atmosphere affects us all,
 A change from extreme to temperate, much like
 fall.

The change is difficult for us to comprehend,
 How the winter dulls, warmth floods in, cold will
 not fend.

The change is foreseeable, upcoming annually,
 One knows not what to expect, except weather
 changing gradually.

The change brings happiness, the dead reborn
 and the dreary awake,

Nature responds to the sky, the brightness
 almost too much to take.

The change pulls our world closer to the sun,
 Closer and closer, never done.

The change makes our mornings colorful, and
 the nights breezy,
 However it may seem, it is never that easy.

The change brings us sadness, the threat of dif-
 ference,

It causes some to panic, to overstep, to fly
 away like learus.

The change is not reassuring, it is a reminder of
 the time,

The never-ending clock we all must climb.

The change proves us wrong, its beauty and
 elegance inspiring,

It encourages the premature end, the winter
 retiring.

The change provides solace, a new beginning,
 rebirth.

A reminder of what is provided; the grass, the
 trees, the earth.

The change is represented in flowers, the col-
 ors hypnotizing.

Dawn is sharp, the sun expressively rising.

The change, while unknown, prepares us to fall,
 Sending us into transition, it readies us all.

Thank you to
 everyone who
 submitted
 their work for
 this issue!