

THE PROWLER

Quince Orchard High School

Women's March encourages activism and equality

By ANNA GOOREVICH
Editor-in-Chief

"An uprising of love": a gathering of "nasty women": a congregation of fuschia-pink "p*ssyhats": a swarm of defiant, bold, and inventive signs: and a crowd of around 1.2 million dedicated, frustrated, and courageous marchers all convened on the streets of Washington, D.C. on January 21 for the Women's March on Washington, undoubtedly sending a message to the new Trump administration and establishing a place in history.

The Women's March was originally intended as a response to the election of Donald Trump as president and his rhetoric towards many marginalized groups, which March supporters view as harmful. The Women's March was theorized by a woman in Hawaii, who expressed a desire to march on Washington the day after Trump's inauguration. A simple post on Facebook turned into a worldwide phenomenon, with an estimated 3.3 million people marching that Saturday in the US, including the 1.2 million of those in Washington alone, according to data from the Women's March's official website and Vox, which states the marches collectively "may have been the largest demonstrations in US history."

Marches were also held around

the globe—on all seven continents (yes, including Antarctica!)—with numbers estimated being around 4.9 million marchers worldwide, according to the Women's March's official website.

The march in Washington prompted many celebrities to attend, including actresses America Ferrera, Amy Schumer, and Scarlett Johansson, and musicians Alicia Keys and Madonna, among others.

According to the Women's March's official website, the mission of the march was to "stand together in solidarity...for the protection of our rights. The rhetoric of the past election cycle has insulted and threatened many of us. [The March] will send a bold message to our new government, and to the world that women's rights are human rights."

The Women's March also set a list of "unity principles," which included calls for "reproductive rights, LGBTQIA rights, workers' rights, immigrant rights, disability rights, civil rights, environmental justice, [and] ending violence."

People from all over the country, the world, and even our QO community flocked to the streets of DC. Math teacher and march attendee Susan Stein had a "camp-out" at her house as she hosted many friends coming to march from places ranging from California to France.

Junior Hannah Hallam, inspired by the



PHOTO COURTESY OF POPSUGAR

recent political climate, also attended the march. "The march was important to me because it was telling not only the current administration but the world that just because we're women doesn't mean we're inferior," said Hallam. "Everyone deserves fundamental rights and it's not just going to come without fighting. Change comes from the people."

"I thought it was a good opportunity to

let my voice be heard," said senior Jessica Fisher, who also marched. "The march meant taking a stand and not letting your voice be silenced. Many minorities in the country were being disrespected. You have to stand up for the people who can't be heard."

Science teacher Cynthia Hollies also attended the march. "I always tell my students

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Johnson property annexation

By BRANDON FREEDMAN
Managing Editor

In June 2015, the Johnson Family, owners of the property located at the intersection of Route 28 (Darnestown Road) and Quince Orchard Road, decided to annex their parcel from Montgomery County to the City of Gaithersburg.

This, in turn, started what would become a multi-year dispute between Gaithersburg City officials, residents, and surrounding businesses over the future usage of the land.

Over the past two years, this development has flown under the radar for many. Out of 30 people that were surveyed randomly in local schools and businesses, only two people had heard of any such controversy about the Johnson annexation.

The Johnson Property encompasses the stores from Capital One bank to the Sunoco gas station down to the edge of Riffle Ford Road. The Johnson family is

currently requesting that the 23.45-acre property be annexed into the City of Gaithersburg and rezoned for development. This development would include mixed-use zoning for both residential and commercial purposes.

The creation of up to potentially 305 new housing units would cause multiple issues not only for residents, but for schools, commuters, and pedestrians. They cite traffic, pedestrian safety, and overcrowded schools as the reasons for their opposition to the annexation petition.

In a February 2016 meeting, Russell Johnson, one of the owners of Johnson Enterprises, LLC, released a statement on the proposed development: "Once the plan is finalized, construction would begin in 2018." He claimed that about 50% of the homes would be filled by 2021 and 100% of the housing units should be occupied by 2023.

Regarding the

backlash from the announcement, Johnson reduced the number of proposed housing units from 305 to 120 and by eliminating 185 units of high-rise dwellings. He also reduced the commercial space by about 97%, doubled the green space, and added access to Route 28.

After the updated proposal was submitted, the Gaithersburg City Council voted to approve the annexation. However, residents are questioning the legality of the vote after the council voted without having all members present, resulting in a final 2-0 vote. Within the council there was a debate as to whether or not the vote should take place shorthanded, but it happened anyways.

Over the next couple of months, the chatter about legal issues and proposal changes should quiet down and the plan should come into action, but for now the vote and proposal stand.

Minority Students Project

By DYLAN KEARNEY
Associate Editor

Quince Orchard's newly implemented Minority Scholars Program (MSP) is an MCPS initiative designed to "increase the academic success of minority students and foster positive relationships," said Gboyinde Onijala, host of MCPS TV. MSP is a student leadership program with a goal to spread awareness of and reduce the achievement gap in Montgomery County.

The members were chosen in a pool of 70 juniors who were required to have a 3.0 GPA. The program at QO has four different committees: Academic, members that tutor other students at QO; Mentoring, students who tutor at Ridgeview Middle School; College Prep, where students plan visits, speakers, and inform other students of scholarship opportunities; and Activities, which helps plans activities for the group.

QO's MSP program is led by a group of enthusiastic students. One meeting displayed examples of their plans when they go to Ridgeview, which included playing games like Pictionary, doing worksheets, and participating in group discussions where the Ridgeview students would discuss their future goals. After these activities, each student helps tutor their assigned buddy.

"My buddy's name is Drew. He reminds me a lot of myself," said junior Kendall Bonner. "It's great to be a good example to them, someone they may not have in their own life."

Many new members who haven't attended many events are still excited about their future endeavors in the program. "There are a lot of opportunities and it looks great for college," said junior Nick Aguilar.

Juniors Yoselin Moreno and Esther Quinonez have helped the program by running meetings and coming up with the plans every week. "In the program we help kids stay on track and help them get a better education to prepare for their future," said Quinonez.

The group is important for helping other students in the community, but it is also a great opportunity for the students involved. "We are like a big family," said Moreno. "We're all friends here."

The program has two staff sponsors, counselor John Favazzo and English teacher Nicholas Saadipour, and they also receive a lot of support from current principal intern Micah Wiggins. "Since I came to QO I have wanted to look to be a part of diversity initiatives," said Saadipour. "One of the most important ideals as a teacher is to have equitable practices." For the future of the club and what it will accomplish, Saadipour says the students are excited about the leadership opportunities and a place to openly discuss.

Favazzo mentioned how the students are really the ones who run the program. "The students see that they can make a difference," he said. "They have the power to change the course."

There is a countywide retreat at Northwood High School on February 25 where members network with students from all over the county. There are four different break-out groups that the students will go through, Future, Pride, Step Up and Community.

Through the new MSP initiative, QO is a leader for both the community and the nation in efforts to close the achievement gap.

News

An examination on the participation levels and school spirit at QO.

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@QOPoms



QO response to Women's March

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that I'm building a kinder and gentler world starting in my classroom" said Hollies. "Some of the things I've heard in this election made me feel like this wasn't happening ... I think it's important that we treat each other well, no matter how you voted in the election."

Stein cited many reasons for wanting to march. "I'm marching for the country, for the future, for the rights for my children, and for all people going forward," added Stein. "I'm fighting against anything that makes people feel like the 'other.' Anything that makes people feel like they aren't included or that their contributions or opinions don't matter."

Spanish teacher Elizabeth Rodgers was inspired to march after she was "disappointed and furious" by the election results and Trump's plans for his administration. "I became concerned not just for my rights, but also concerned for my female students, LGBTQ-IA students, [and] my students that are immigrants," she said.

The Women's March had deep emotional and personal impact for many who were involved. Stein stated that in her opinion, the march was the "first positive, inclusive, forward-thinking action that [she's] felt in two years for the political system."

Hollies, who considers herself as an Independent, said that this is the "first time she's felt politically motivated to do something more than just vote."

Most attendees agree that one of the most astounding parts of the march was the sheer amount of people. "It was empowering to be surrounded by all the people who come together for one common cause...you know you're not alone in your beliefs," said Hallam.

Another highlight from the march was the signs. With almost every marcher equipped with one, many were able to produce origi-

"I'm marching for the country, for the future, for the rights for my children, and for all people going forward. I'm fighting against anything that makes people feel like the 'other.' Anything that makes people feel like they aren't included or that their contributions or opinions don't matter."

-Susan Stein

nal, creative, and many times satirical signs. In a more serious sense, Stein was "amazed at seeing how people channelled their anger and frustration about the political system as a creative outlet to make these signs." Some personal favorite signs of this reporter, who also attended the march, were:

- "If Mom's Not Happy, Nobody's Happy"
- "I know signs. I make the best signs. They're great. Everyone agrees"
- "Sorry World, We'll Fix This"
- "I'm Quite Unhappy"

The size of the march and its political message has undoubtedly stamped its place in history. "To stand there in this huge mass of people," added Hollies, "and

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feel that everyone is generally accepting and looking for society to be better left me feeling like I'd participated in a historical event."

However, Stein argued that the march was "historical in the sense that many women, including [herself], cannot believe that [they] are still fighting for the same rights and social issues that [they] have for over 50 years."

While the march has captivated the world and inspired people all around the globe to stand up for what they believe in, many are

left with the question, "What's next?" In response, the organizers of the Women's March have set up a campaign entitled "10 Actions, 100 Days" aimed at keeping up the momentum of the march and encouraging people to take action on the issues they care about.

"My hope for the future," added Rodgers, "is that this wasn't a one-time thing. We marched and now what about the next four years? I'm curious to see if other female leaders do something so that we can continue to voice our opinion and make changes."

PROWLER NEWS FLASHES

By **BRANDON FREEDMAN**
Managing Editor

On January 20, Donald Trump was officially sworn in as the 45th president of the United States and with him comes a new cabinet. As of January 30, only two of the 15 President's Cabinet positions have officially been filled. The remaining 13 have been submitted to the Senate and await approval. The average amount of time to have at least 10 spaces filled is one week; to compare, Obama, after his first week, had 11 of the 15 cabinet seats filled. Currently, Trump has the position of Secretary of Defense and Secretary of Homeland Security filed by former Marine Corps General James N. Mattis and also former Marine Corps General John F. Kelly, respectively. Trump is expected to have the remaining 12 seats filled by the week of February 12 at the latest according to Russell Berman, writer for The Atlantic.

By **ANNA GOOREVICH**
Editor-in-Chief

On February 1, the world was stunned by the news of Beyoncé's pregnancy with twins. The announcement came, unsurprisingly, through her social media accounts, where the famed artist and cultural icon posted artistic photos of her baby bump, shot by photographer Awol Erizku. As of February 6, the photo has amassed close to 10 million likes on Instagram, making it one of the most liked pictures on the social media site. In a political climate consumed by chaotic news of the current presidential administration, the world has revelled in "Queen Bey's" decision to bring two more little Beyoncé's into the world. A day after her pregnancy announcement, it was revealed that Beyoncé is set to perform at the Grammy Awards on February 12. However, Beyoncé's pregnancy has also come with a fair share of controversy. Beyoncé is booked to headline the Coachella Music Festival in April, but it is unknown whether or not she will still perform at the world-renowned event.



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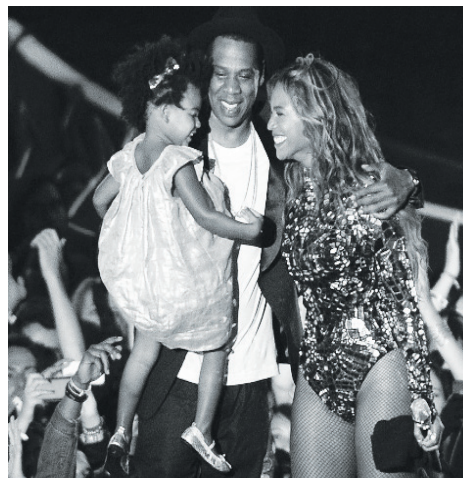


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QO fine arts participates in The Memory Project

By ALEX HAMER
News Editor

This year QO participated in The Memory Project, a charitable, non-profit organization that delivers portraits to underprivileged children around the world that have faced substantial challenges in their life. The Memory Project encourages art teachers and their students around the world to create these portraits to not only help bring happiness into the lives of these youth, but also for the students who create the portraits to become more globally aware of the challenges these youth face, whether it is famine, poverty, or fleeing war-torn countries. At QO, art teacher

Jeremy Lundquist and his National Art Honor Society students have joined into this global effort. "Art is one of those simple luxuries in life that every human has an opportunity to enjoy and be involved in," Lundquist said. Lundquist's love of art, combined with his desire to improve the lives of others, is why the memory project resonates so much with him. "I involve my National Art Society students in this project because it helps them to realize the global power of art and its ability to influence on a humanitarian level," Lundquist added. Since the project's creation in 2004, over 90,000 portraits have been created for children in 42 countries, according

to memoryproject.org. Oftentimes, Lundquist feels we only think of our own lives, and never consider the greater struggles other face. "Simply put, many of us complain so often about everything in our lives, but we really never take a moment to think beyond ourselves. In my mind, that is a totally crummy way to be and the Memory Project is a [way] I can try to change that," Lundquist said. This selfless attitude and realization of how much impact a simple portrait can make is all the motivation Lundquist and his students need to construct these unique portraits. Photographs of the children are initially taken by Memory Project



PHOTO COURTESY OF MEMORYPROJECT.ORG

YOUTH HELPED AROUND THE WORLD : QO fine arts students took part in the worldwide Memory Project through creating portraits of underprivileged children.

workers, who can range from teachers to refugee camp workers. Then the photographs are sent out to teachers and students and Lundquist and his students begin to construct portraits. They are tasked with utilizing the art skills at their disposal to recre-

ate the image into the exact likeness of the child. "The most challenging component of this is probably the most rewarding," said Lundquist. "Knowing that a child out there is having a really tough go of it, there's not much I can do, but

I can do something." Once the portraits are shipped out, they are hand delivered to the children and this entire process is filmed, capturing the impact a simple piece of artwork can have on a child that also helps reveal to the art students that their hard work paid off. The upcoming QO art show in February is not only a great way to acquire artwork from talented artists, but also a way to show support for The Memory Project as the funds raised will go towards the construction and shipping of portraits. In the future if students wish to get involved in The Memory Project, they can either join the National Art Honor Society, or talk to Lundquist separately.

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Mr./Mrs. QO cancelled, questions arise on school spirit

By SOPHIE LANE
Associate Editor

The Red Army is a unique aspect of QO that many students take for granted. While attendances at varsity football games and boys varsity basketball games are extraordinary, many believe that QO could work together and become more well-rounded in terms of participation and spirit.

For example, SGA, specifically our school president [Patty Dirlam] attempted to bring back Mr. and Ms. QO, an event that hasn't occurred since 2014. Despite large effort, there wasn't enough participation and interest in the event to allow it to be brought back this year.

"The main cause for the event failing was that there were only members who were very school spirited signing up" said senior class president Bret Williams.

Although Quince Orchard encourages students to be spirited, in many cases the same people participate in SGA-held events, which can be repetitive. "These are people who are used to being in the spotlight and [I don't] believe enough people stepped out of their comfort zones to participate," said Williams.

Even though it may be disappointing that this event was cancelled, there are many other school events coming up this year

such as a possible Sadie Hawkins dance, prom, the spring musical *Footloose* and more. Williams may believe that "school spirit is not as its peak at the moment," however, "it should be noted that there have been fewer opportunities to show our school spirit and an inadequate amount of advertising of these few events."

Williams reflected on the lack of spirit at the moment with positivity. "I think the Red Army and QO's spirit will bounce back in the coming months looking on playoffs for basketball and other SGA events."

Red Army General and senior class Vice President Joe McGowan contributed by stating "It was kind of disappointing that nobody signed up for Mr. and Ms. QO, but I know it's a lot to ask people to put themselves out there." McGowan also disagreed with the idea that the Red Army has lost its hype in recent years. "Overall, I don't think we are having a lack of school spirit just a lack of adequate opportunities to highlight it, but you can always be more spirited and more well attended." In continuation, McGowan "would like to show the underclassmen how fun and special QO really is so that the red army continues to live on and get better".

McGowan's role as Vice President and Red Army general have really influenced his high school experiences in terms of school involvement, he explained: "they

definitely overlap a bit as I get to help plan events and then help get people to go there do, so I'm sort of on two fronts."

Most people throughout the county—maybe even on a larger scale—recognize that the Red Army is known for their attendance at Friday night football games or big basketball games, but many believe it's time the Red Army expands their support to other school events.

Tobi Baisburd, a junior at QO involved in varsity field hockey and theatre contributed her thoughts on school spirit. Baisburd plays Ariel Moore in the upcoming musical *Footloose* and she asked the Red Army "to be more open to supporting other teams and clubs. I understand football is extremely 'hyped' at school, but I think it would be great if all clubs and sports were acknowledged and supported."

However, in terms of the musical, Baisburd describes the turnout as "good" due to the families and close friends that come to watch the students perform. Baisburd understands that not everyone enjoys theatre, but she states "it would mean so much if the student body came to support the musical regardless of them knowing anyone in the musical or not." Similar to McGowan, Baisburd gets to see two sides of the student support through athletics and theatre. "I have played field hockey since freshman year, and every year the team has been disappointed with the turn-

out. The Red Army doesn't seem to show up to any events in mass numbers besides football, or maybe basketball," Baisburd explained.

The Red Army is a special community that allows students to come together in mass crowds to

"These are people who are used to being in the spotlight and [I don't] believe enough people stepped out of their comfort zones to participate."

- Bret Williams

support their fellow students. There's no questioning that the effort the generals and overall leaders of the student section influence underclassmen and students that wouldn't normally attend sporting events, to go. Therefore, many have hope that the Red Army can become more well-rounded by supporting other athletic teams, clubs, and organizations in the future.

The new guy: a sit-down with Principal Intern Wiggins

By ANNA GOOREVICH &
DYLAN KEARNEY
Editor-in-Chief & Associate
Editor

The Prowler(P): What's your background in education, both as a student and as an educator?

Micah Wiggins(W): I've known ever since I was in the 4th grade that I was going to be an educator or a teacher. When I got to university I was originally a biology major. (I wanted to be a mortician, can you believe that?) I also wanted to be an architect because I like to draw buildings, but then finally I did my first education course. I went into a classroom and I was like, 'Ah! This is it!' My first job in MCPS was at Walter Johnson High School, where I taught for seven years before moving into administration. I moved to Albert Einstein and was an assistant principal there. I was accepted into the Principal Internship program this year and I was assigned here at Quince Orchard.

P: How long are you in your term and how does the principal intern program work?

W: The principal internship program is a very selective program: there are only seven in MCPS on the secondary level. The program is just a year, so it's very intense. You have to establish relationships [at a new school], become a part of the culture and the instructional leadership, and impact that leadership, all within the span of a year. The acting phase is seven weeks and it started when we returned from winter break and it will end on February 17.

P: What are some of your roles around the school and things you've been doing?

W: It's kind of weird because even though your title is principal intern, we have is what we call a gradual release where the principal begins to release

certain responsibilities and duties. So starting as an assistant principal, I was assigned the junior class. Also, my assigned subjects to oversee are social studies, world languages, health, and P.E. [I also worked with] the SAT/ACT

committee and a program here called MSP, the Minority Scholars Program, which is one of our initiatives in our county to close the achievement gap. I am also the person responsible for emergency preparedness drills, as well as any other initiatives that Ms. Working may desire for me to work on while I'm here.

P: What inspired you to go into this field of work?

W: My first principal in Virginia was Mr. Bernard E. Morgan. He was one of those principals that on graduation day, kids would run up to him, they would hug. Whether he knew their names or not, he looked like he did. I struggled with classroom management as a first year teacher and I was having an issue with one of my classes. He, two other assistant principals, and the department chair came in all were wearing suits and they stood behind me, and they were like, 'Mr. Wiggins do your thing.' I realized that's what a principal does to help a teacher get

their footing up. He just had that way of connecting with people, setting the expectation, making sure people knew they were supported, but also challenging us to do the job and to make sure that we remember that at the end



of the day we're here for kids.

P: So what's it like being an intern? What have you learned from Mrs. Working?

W: Being an intern to me is like being a student all over again. People come to you and they look for you to have the answers, but you are actually in a program to learn [and]at the same time you have to balance that with leading. What's very helpful about the program is that if

you make a mistake, there's somebody there. But when you're sitting in this chair, you make your decisions and you have to stand by them. Learning from Mrs. Working is tremendous because she has a wealth of experience. She's been able to change the instructional program here at QO and put the school on the trajectory that it is. I've learned how to be methodical and intentional in your moves, the people that you hire, and the opportunities that you give them to work.

P: Is there anything that surprised you or stands out about QO?

W: The thing that fascinates me most about QO is the students. You all have to be the most respectful kids for high schoolers. Most high school students just walk by, but Nine times out of ten the response from a kid from QO when I ask 'How are you' is 'I'm good, how are you?' Your commitment to core values, your school spirit, your responsibility, the respect, academic excellence, the willingness to take challenging courses, it's a great school. I like the teachers here because they work hard to find ways to implement the instructional focus of the school.

P: Is there anything you would change at QO or anything you could bring to the table to improve QO?

W: For the time that I've been here, [my goal is] helping teachers understand that when we plan, [we should] make sure that we're not just doing it to cover the curriculum, but that we're actually looking at the students and saying 'How do I plan for you?' A broad mission I have is that when high school students leave, they have as many options as possible. If you want to go to college, the workforce, the military, the Peace Corps, [that] we provided you with every opportunity. I don't want any student to say they came through a school where I was the leader and say 'They didn't prepare me for that.'

P: Do you have any advice for students & staff?

W: Keep exemplifying those core values that you have and keep being good. That to me is so unique for high school students. It seems like when I walk down the halls you get a positive, optimistic vibe. Keep that optimistic spirit and willingness to take risks.

Responses have been edited for clarity.



Getting into college: the long and torturous saga

By **WILL HUSTED**
Editor-in-Chief

One cannot talk about getting into college without first mentioning the application process. Your GPA is set. Your ACT is decided. Now it comes down to narrowing down a list of schools you see as best for you.

Criteria often includes program fit, mascot, size of school, availability of ice cream machines in the dining halls, chances of getting into the school, and last but certainly not least, the quality of frisbee played on the quad when you visited in the spring.

All of these factors contribute to selecting the colleges that will spend a large portion of time analyzing your past, present, and future in essays that attempt to be unique, insightful, and original, but also attempt to not scare away admissions officers with a story about how you overcame the adversity of getting a Lego stuck in your nose.

The days and weeks go by and you attempt to give your all into

these essays that a person with the power to decide your worth will read. While daunting, this task is often met with denial and a healthy dose of procrastination, culminating in an application ready to be sent the day before the deadline.

The next step of the process is waiting for the decisions to come out. Often there is a two-month or longer gap between the deadline for applications and decisions being released. This time period is often met with two responses. Some students will attempt to not think about college for the time being and focus on finishing out the year strong, maybe making some lofty New Year's resolutions. The other 99 percent of students will spend most days scouring the Internet for collegiate apparel, car magnets, and possible housing for the college they will be theoretically attending.

During this time, an applicant may begin to see some of their friends get accepted into colleges. This is often difficult: the applicant may begin to

question their own self-worth and grow impatient. This may result in checking their portal incessantly, refreshing the webpage in hopes of a new result.

Speaking of which—in the past, getting into a school meant opening up a piece of paper. Nowadays, the applicant's decision is all electronic.

The rumors start to swirl and you get a text from a close friend who is careful not to build too much excitement that reads “check [insert college here].” Then comes the split-second debate whether to check your status or not. This is quickly met with a resounding internal “yes” and go into that portal you have been revisiting for the past few months. The page looks a tad different and finally you click on your decision link and begin to hunt for that special word followed by unique punctuation all prospective students look for: “C o n g r a t u l a t i o n s ! ”

The feeling of the result of 12 years waking up at an unholy hour, tedious homework, group proj-

ects that resulted in you having to do all the work—it has finally paid off, and you can sleep easy knowing you can pursue your future goals.

However, such an exhilarating emotion is bound to be met with a stark dose of reality. This comes in the form of finding a roommate. Especially those going to the University of Maryland, students may room with friends that they know before they get to college. For others, the following few months will involve skimming through Facebook posts and making roommate match accounts in the formal event of roommate courtship. This is the perfect warmup for college: you begin to figure out who you are and how you want to portray yourself. It's an opportunity to see how well you interact with people from other parts of the country.

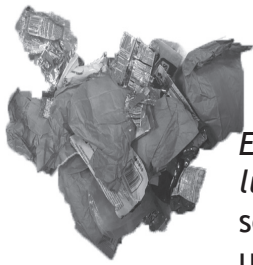
Finishing out the rest of the year knowing what lies ahead of you is difficult. But understanding that the school you are in has shaped the person you will be is not be replicated.

Seniors versus freshmen: What's in your bag?

By **HANNAH PEARLSTEIN AND BRITTANY MILLS**
Managing Editor and Editor-in-Chief

SENIORS

Colored pencils, because coloring is an important skill to hold at 18 years old.



Eleven leftover packed lunches, because no senior actually picked up their lunch pass.

Senior Sam Katzker's Nike backpack is filled to the brim with everything but schoolwork.



A John Wall jersey, so that people vote you for “Most Likely to be featured on the cover of Sports Illustrated” senior yearbook superlative.

Blank attendance notes, because you never know when you might have an impromptu doctor's appointment and will have to leave before you even finish third period.



Car keys, so you can make a quick escape before one of those dreaded AP Literature seminars.



A “Beat Everyone” button as a constant reminder that seniors are the best.

FRESHMAN

Rubber bands for braces to make sure that smile looks pretty when your parent hands out your freshman school picture to every living relative possible.



A hand-sized bottle of lotion to keep those hands moisturized and ready to do work all day long.



Freshman Caitlin Crews' backpack is neatly organized, just as a good student's should be.



A bright pink graphing calculator so you can actually do your math homework, rather than copying it from a friend the period before like most seniors do.



Water bottle to remain hydrated during those tenuous English 9, U.S. History, and General P.E. classes.



A brush to make sure not a hair appears out of place.

A perfectly organized binder to keep all your papers and homework in place.





Heart s

Valentine's D



To: Kaitlyn Price
From: Madison Mills
You make my world go round <3

To: Aiden
From: Dav
I love you

To: Sydney Cauley
From: Alex Kirsch
I love you so much and am so happy to have you as my first Valentine! Through the ups and downs our love has only grown stronger. Happy Valentine's day, baby <3

To: Brittany
From: Joe
Happy Valentine's day to the bes

To: Ryan Bal
From: Your se
Your Tims tak

To: Matthew Gordon
From: Anonymous
When I pass you in the halls on the way to 3rd period, I can't stop the butterflies from fluttering in my tummy.



The Worst Valentine's Day Gifts

By **HANNAH PEARLSTEIN**
Managing Editor

Within the last couple of months, those with significant others have likely been scrambling to try and find the perfect Valentine's Day gift. You will probably read countless articles that recount the best presents to buy for your boyfriend or girlfriend, but they don't tell you what you should really be informed about: gifts *not* to buy your significant other.

#1 Deodorant: This may seem obvious, but why give your S.O. a gift that basically screams "you smell, you dirty rat!" Stay clear of this.

#2 A gym membership: The New Year's Resolution your S.O. made on January 1 has probably been broken by now. However, that doesn't mean you should encourage them to be healthy by insinuating you would appreciate if they would lose that muffin top.

#3 A tattoo of their face: Not only can this be taken as creepy, but if you ever break up, why should you have to be permanently reminded of the face that broke your heart?

#4 A subscription to Match.com: There are more subtle ways of telling your

significant other you think you should start seeing other people, especially on Valentine's Day.

#5 A restraining order: This should be self-explanatory.

#6 A plane ticket to Kazakhstan: Saying you never want to see them again by sending them halfway around the world is a surefire way to get your point across.

Good luck to all on their shopping adventures, hopefully this list has helped give some insight into the best gifts to avoid this Valentine's Day season!

Attack



Day Messages

To: Peter Vaka
From: Sophie Lane
Hey baby :) Stay classy, daddy.
Love you, cutie.

To: Alex Martinez
From: Jamie Fink
I hope you have a swell Valentine's day.

To: Char Freedberg
From: Anonymous
Your "Gooooood morning" is what gets me through the day.

To: Ms. CK
From: The Newspaper Staff
Thanks for always supporting us. We love you <3



Being Single on Valentine's Day

By **BEN PALMER**
Managing Editor

As Valentine's Day approaches, people everywhere are racing to make plans to spend quality time with their significant others.

That's probably the lead I'd write if I was penning some cheesy, BuzzFeed-ish article on the holiday, but I feel that may be inappropriate considering my target audience.

Here you sit, reading the words of a student-written newspaper article in a school newspaper, because without a romantic partner by your side, you find ample time to do so. You may have even flipped here first thing because of all the bright colors, as even things like that can add excitement to your despondent livelihood.

You came to exactly the right place, target audience. While this newspaper is always a worthwhile read, I'm here to show you how you can not only survive

Valentine's Day as a single person, but gain experiences that are so fun they may even cause the happiest of couples to break up, just so they can try them as well.

A basic yet effective thing to do when you're single during Valentine's Day is to go out to a fancy restaurant. Yes, you read that right. Why should you go to a place where you're alone in the middle of a crowd of couples? Well, it's because you won't be alone!

At the fancy restaurant, you can gain valuable company in the form of food, and achieve a form of love higher than most people will be able to comprehend. Relationships are temporary more often than not, but food is eternal; even if you eat all of it, you can always get more. Couples have access to food as well, but they have to be restrained in displaying affection toward it because they are expected to be affectionate towards each other instead.

You also won't have so much strife about who pays the bill: just lay it on that friend of yours who owes you money. Food is the one thing that can fill a hole in your heart (as well as your stomach), and it'll make your Valentine's Day worthwhile.

Take up a hobby! Most of the angst over being single around this time is all rooted in boredom, and though the pangs of sadness may be eternal, a hobby is a good distraction as any, plus it's school appropriate.

You have a lot of options, from collecting stamps to watching paint dry, or if you're craving a bit more excitement, you can collect bricks or take pictures of mailboxes.

Hopefully you should be looking forward to Valentine's Day by now if you're single, or in the process of breaking up with your significant other if you're not, but in case you're just not convinced yet, I have one final option.

Why just have one person love you when you can be loved by many? No, I'm not talking about conquering an entire nation, I'm talking about polygamy!

Oh wait, I am actually talking about conquering an entire nation. But you have to start small. Let's say an island somewhere in the northern Pacific, where the only residents there are bears and some castaway-turned-wildman.

If my RPG adventures have proven to mean anything, it's that the wildman will actually be a wizard that will help you and you'll get slaughtered by the bears. If a good RPG player's adventures have proven to mean anything, it's that the wildman will actually be a wizard and you can work together with him to tame and civilize the bears. Soon the bears will be industry moguls developing nuclear weapons and they'll absolutely adore you. Not only do you get love, but you also get power, and who

could refuse that? While everyone else is struggling to get out of the friendzone, you'll be conquering Siberia with ease.

Those are three simple but fun ways to have fun as a single person on Valentine's Day. Hopefully by the time Valentine's Day rolls around, everyone will be single and I will have single-handedly doomed the human population, so, when you undertake this journey, be safe and have a good time.





Cougars take the plunge

By **BRITTANY MILLS**
Editor-in-Chief

On January 26, a mass of students from across the state braved the 32° waters of the Chesapeake Bay to raise money for the Maryland Special Olympics. Among these Maryland students, 43 Cougars participated in this year's Polar Bear Plunge.

The Polar Bear Plunge is an annual fundraiser for the Maryland Special Olympics and is open to any grade level. The Special Olympics uses the donated money to provide those with mental and physical disabilities with athletic opportunities. Senior Yonatan Babore, a first time plunger, says, "The hope is to draw attention to the Special Olympics and the hardworking athletes that dedicate countless hours to their craft and prove that, despite their disadvantages, they can excel like any other individual."

In order to participate, each student had to raise \$50 for the Special Olympics and have a signed permission slip. Babore recalls that he and several of his friends achieved this requirement by spending time over several days collecting money and spreading awareness of the event around QO.

The bold participants left school after first period and rode in a charter bus to Sandy Point State Park. Upon arrival, participants enjoyed live entertainment and were provided with a lunch all in the comfort of a heated tent adjacent to the chilly bay.

Once the plungers were full of food and entertainment, they made their way towards the Chesapeake Bay. In order to dive into the brisk bay, the participants had to be wearing water shoes, but outfits were up to the plungers' discretion.

Senior Patty Dirlam has been plunging since her sophomore year and is always amused by the eccentric outfit choices of her fellow divers. "The plunge requirements are minimal for a reason to let people's creativity run wild. I have seen people plunge in polar bear suits, boys with matching speedos, wetsuits, and tutus," said Dirlam.

Although running into the near-freezing water is the climax of the event, participants are not required to plunge. As long each student raised \$50 and turned in a permission slip form, students were allowed to participate in the excitement of the event without actually going into the water. However, most accept the challenge as they are able to share the unique experience with their fellow plungers. In fact, senior Matthew Owens testified that his absolute favorite part of the day was dipping his head underwater.

Not only is the day action-packed, but many of the participants believe it is a thoroughly rewarding experience. In addition to all the exciting activities on the day of the plunge, the event is extremely gratifying. "The plunge is rewarding because I am helping those around me. I am becoming a part of a tradition and donating to a good charity," said sophomore Justice Luko.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JUSTICE LUKO
BRRR!: Students dive into the icy Chesapeake Bay for a good cause.

Cornblatt's expert 2017 Oscar predictions

By **JACOB CORNBLATT**
Managing Editor

Best Picture

Will Win: *La La Land*

Could Win: *Moonlight*

Should Win: *American Honey* (even though it isn't nominated...)

As usual, Best Picture is the most predictable category this year. *La La Land* has had it in the bag since the film was announced a year and a half ago. It's the perfect combination of mainstream and art house: just what is needed to win.

Actor in a Leading Role

Will Win: Casey Affleck

Could Win: Ryan Gosling

Should Win: Casey Affleck

Manchester by the Sea is an incredible film; in any other year, it would be sweeping every category. Luckily, Casey Affleck gave such a naturalistic performance that it's borderline impossible for him to not take the statuette. Plus, he added in a necessary sardonic undertone to his character, which is nowhere to be found in the script.

Actress in a Leading Role

Will Win: Emma Stone

Could Win: Isabelle Huppert

Should Win: Isabelle Huppert

I love *La La Land*, but come on, Academy, give the award to Huppert! She was just incredible in *Elle*, and since it didn't follow the proper qualifications to be considered a foreign film (despite it being in French), Paul Verhoeven's excellent film deserves at least one award. Stone won the SAG, however, so the Oscar may as well already be engraved.

Best Directing

Will Win: Damien Chazelle

Could Win: Barry Jenkins

Should Win: Kenneth Lonergan

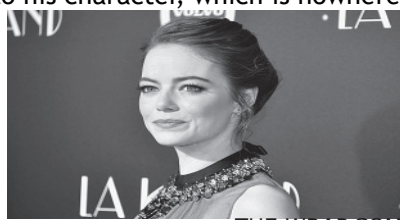
I hate the directing category. No viewer can ever tell from one film if someone is a good director. That's why all predictions are based on Hollywood politics. *La La Land* will sweep, because musicals are back, and Hollywood is eating it up. Chazelle has it pinned.



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ALCHETRON.COM

Behind the paintbrush

A profile of art student Elena Asofsky

By **TORI BERRY**
Features Editor

From our fleet feet in the sports teams to our virtuosos in the music department, Quince Orchard is full of talented students in every branch of expertise. In order to truly appreciate the amount of diversity in our student body, we decided to focus our lens on one of the many talented students in the art department: senior Elena Asofsky.

From being the finalist in PTSA contests to receiving honorable mentions in competitions at Johns Hopkins University, Asofsky's artwork has taken her to some impressive places. But what makes Asofsky so unique is her style.

"[My portfolio] focuses more on the subject than on the elements of art," she explains. Because of this, her pieces are all connected in that they all use the same character and, when put together, would create a story.

Her artwork, she says, doesn't often just happen without a lot of planning: "For concentrations - which is when you make a body of work instead of just one piece - there's a lot more thinking that goes into it. I can spend a day just planning what I'm going to do and sketching the plans and thinking of what would be a good idea to paint."

However, it isn't always this way, she says. "Some of the pieces, they just happen. When you draw for a long time, it's like your hands want it and you just make it."

Among many artists, Asofsky says that her biggest inspiration is Caravaggio, also known as Michelangelo Merisi, an Italian painter from the 16th century. "Caravaggio is one of my favorite painters, he inspires me," she explains.

Asofsky finds more inspiration in other artists and works of art than she does from objects or ideas. She says, "It's usually not [like] I see the sky and [say,] 'Oh, my god, I want to paint!' But it's most often people; I'll see a painting of a person and it'll capture the highlights and the contours of the face and I'm like, 'I really want to be able to do that.'"

In addition, she praises one of her own classmates: "In our art class, I actually really admire [senior] Kristen Tapia. I'm not sure what it is about her style, it's

very unique. She emphasizes the noses and the eyes [...] it's such a look."

Although Asofsky has immense talent, she says that the only way she - or anyone else - has developed this much mastery is through repetitive practice. "If you want to be good at art, it's something you just have to do over and over. What's more important than just being naturally talented is working for it. Even people who are talented, they've been doing it their whole lives."

"So if you want to be good, don't look at someone else's art and be like, 'Oh, man, I'll never be like that,' or 'I really wish I could,' because you can," she explains. "The way to get your own style going is, if you admire someone else's art, try and emulate that. And you're going to mess it up. But if you mess it up enough, you're going to have your own."



PHOTO BY TORI BERRY

IN PROGRESS: senior Elena Asofsky touches up one of her most recent pieces

Foreign Language Film

Will Win: Toni Erdmann

Could Win: Nothing

Should Win: Toni Erdmann

Not even a competition. Cahiers du Cinema said Germany's *Toni Erdmann* was the best movie of the year and many are proclaiming it best of the century. I wouldn't go that far, but as far as the foreign language category goes, don't expect anyone other than the spectacular Maren Ade on that stage.



Photo Credit: BLURAY.COM



QO Basketball continues to roll, strive for states

By **GRIFFIN MANN**
Managing Editor

The Quince Orchard High School boys and girls basketball programs are approaching the playoffs running fast, winning, and ready to carry on their momentum.

The boys program, coached by Paul Foringer, is one of the teams to beat in Montgomery County, cruising by their opponents this season with an incredible record of 15-1. They earned a big victory against divisional rival Clarksburg, winning that game 69-41. The following game, the boys faced a talented squad in Seneca Valley, who sit atop the county standings, losing 65-60, handing the Cougars their first loss of the season. The Cougars were able to bounce right back from their close loss, winning their next two games, dominating Watkins Mill, 64-42 and Damascus, 80-53. Senior guard Mitch Czworka led all scorers in the home matchup against Damascus with 17 points, guiding them to victory. The boys have had an outstanding year with an average point differential of +19.25, outscoring opponents by an incredible total of 308 points.

The boys squad is led by seniors Matthew Kelly, John Fierstein, and Colin Crews. Fierstein and Kelly lead the scoring with 15.1 and 14.1 ppg, and junior Daniel Dorsey is third, sitting at 10.3. The veteran players help guide the younger players in anything they do. "The experienced players are able to help lead the team because they know what to do offensively and defensively," Crews stated. He added that "the experienced players also offer guidance constantly" to the younger, less experienced players. Every player on the team contributes to their success.

The Cougars look to continue their remarkable season as the playoffs are fast approaching. Tomorrow they travel to division rival Gaithersburg. The Cougars have three games remaining before to playoffs. Watch out for them as they look to make a long run in the playoffs.

Meanwhile, the girls team has had a fantastic season. As of February 6, the team has a 10-9 record this season, and is riding high off of the back of consecutive victories against hated rivals Northwest and Poolesville. The girls squad finishes their season by traveling to division rival Clarksburg and then returns home where they will match up against Kennedy.

The team has rallied following the injury of junior forward Yekta Kamali, who suffered an ACL injury last season. Her return has inspired the team to continue their development as they try to make a run for the state championship. Senior Sarah Gleason stated that the team "mimics what the team will do during practices and watch film to try and perfect how (they) need to play in the games." The team's play in the games reflect the play of their practices.

The veteran players on the team help lead the younger players by pushing them to work as hard as possible so they can reach their full potential individually and as a team as a whole. Gleason stated that "(Their) goal everyday is to make each other better." The girls team will use their leadership and dedication to help guide them to a successful play-off run.

Wrapping it all up, both teams in QO are looking to strive towards their state championship. Both the boys and the girls have talented rosters that can go there, so support the teams!



PHOTO COURTESY OF TONY KOSIYACHINDA

TOUGH BUCKET: Guard Mitch Czworka drives to the hole for the very challenging basket.

QO Poms makes history in fashion

By **DAVID SHAPERO**
Sports Editor

In early August, 20 girls came together to practice for the first time, Little did they know, they would embark on a

truly special season. The goal every year for the Quince Orchard Poms squad has been to place first at counties at the end of the competition season. They have dominated every competition, and they did it once again

at Richard Montgomery.

"Our goal ... is the same as it's been," said senior captain Kasonde Chisaka. "We want to be the best." QO Poms has 4 seniors, 5 juniors, 5 sophomores, and 6 freshmen. Before counties

every year, QO Poms competes in invitationals to see where they place among other teams. This year in invitationals they won second, third, and first place. This year at counties, they made history by placing first and being

crowned champions for the first time since 2004. This accomplishment has been 13 years in the making. Among other awards they won during counties was the captain award, awarded to Chisaka. This amazing accomplishment would not have happened if the Poms team wasn't a family, a common theme for this year's squad. "We are all dedicated to our team," said junior Shannon Marsh. "We all want the same thing: to win." A lot of work went into the routines for the pom squad. It wasn't always pretty but when it mattered most, they were able to put it together and place first to top off an amazing season. Marsh said "to be the best and to win, not only do we need to have the best routine, but we also have to be able to perform in such a way that leaves who watch in awe."

QO Poms has left everyone in awe: when QO was declared champions, the whole gym exploded. The feeling of being crowned champions was "literally indescribable," said Marsh.

QO cheer did not respond to any requests made by the Prowler. However, the squad this year also took first place at counties. They were able to accomplish this major achievement even with their music stopping in the middle of the performance.



PHOTO COURTESY OF @QOPOMS (TWITTER)

REIGN OF THE CHAMPS: The Poms squad lines up for a picture with their plaque won at Richard Montgomery.



Super Bowl 51: The Patriots win with stunning comeback

By **MATTHEW GORDON**
Managing Editor

That's that. The 2016-2017 NFL season has ended, and the champion is the New England Patriots. Wow. What a game it truly was. But first, let's begin with the regular season before we get in depth of the big game.

This NFL season included breakouts from rookie studs Dak Prescott, Ezekiel Elliot, and Jordan Howard, and phenomenal seasons from Tom Brady, MVP, Matt Ryan, and Aaron Rodgers. The season was full of surprises indeed, but the entertainment was more than enough for most football fans. The best record in football belonged to the New England Patriots, who finished 14-2. The worst record belonged to the Cleveland Browns, who finished 1-15. The Browns nearly finished 0-16, but thanks to a missed field goal by San Diego Chargers kicker Josh Lambo, the Browns prevailed to their first victory. That's just one example of how exciting the season was this year. However, there were two ties (yes, ties) this year. One was between the Washington Redskins and the Cincinnati Bengals, and one was between the Seattle Seahawks and the Arizona Cardinals. There were a plethora of season-ending injuries, as stars Keenan Allen, Eddie Lacy, and Derek Carr all were injured. It was unfortunate for those players, especially because they are in the upper tier of the league.

But wait a second, how did the home teams do? The Baltimore Ravens finished 8-8, despite having the top ranked defense in the league. They were beat out by the Pittsburgh Steelers in one of the final games of the regular season, which cost them their playoff spot. The Washington Redskins were just as disappointing. They finished 8-7-1, but quarterback Kirk Cousins lost a chance for



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANDREW HANCOCK (ESPN)

PATRIOTS VS. FALCONS: Malcom Brown (90) and Dont'a Hightower (54) celebrate the Pats' 34-28 overtime victory.

them to make the playoffs by throwing an interception to the New York Giants in a potential game winning drive. Both teams look to drastically improve, one on offense, and one on defense. Can you imagine a Baltimore vs Washington Super Bowl? Anyways, let's talk playoffs. Every single playoff game was a blowout. Dallas disappointed, the Green Bay Packers got hot, and New England and Atlanta dominated. The Packers and the Seattle Seahawks were the wildcard winners of the NFC, while the Houston Texans and the Pittsburgh Steelers were the wildcard winners of the AFC. In the NFC divisional round, the winners were the Packers and the Falcons, which resulted in a Falcons win and a Super Bowl appearance. The AFC divisional round winners were the Patriots and the Steelers, which resulted in another Super Bowl appearance for Tom Brady and

Bill Belichick. The Pats and the Falcons were en route to Houston, home of Super Bowl 51. Let's just say, it made up for all of the blowouts in the playoffs.

Wings, pizza, nachos, and football: can't beat Super Bowl game day. The Atlanta Falcons jumped to an early 14-0 lead, killing all of New England's momentum thanks to the high-powered Atlanta offense. The Falcons led 21-3 at half. That didn't really wake up Tom Brady yet, if you were wondering. Running back Tevin Coleman scored for the Falcons, but running back James White of the Patriots put up their first touchdown of the evening to try to gain momentum. The score was 28-9 going into the fourth, Atlanta. The Patriots' Stephen Gostowski kicked a field goal. Tom Brady threw a touchdown to Danny Amendola. James White ran it in. They got the two point conversion. All

of that happened in the fourth quarter, and we had ourselves a tie game with 50 seconds left. Atlanta couldn't get up the field. Overtime. The Super Bowl went into overtime for the first time in NFL history. New England won the toss, received, drove down the field, and James White did it again. The New England Patriots scored a touchdown, and won the championship. What. A. Game. Tom Brady threw for 466 yards, and got his fifth Super Bowl ring. James White broke the record for most receptions in a Super Bowl game, as a running back, along with three total touchdowns (including the game winner). Brady and Belichick now have five championships, and sent the Falcons home extremely hurt and disappointed. What a game to cap off an exhilarating season, and congratulations to the New England Patriots for doing it again!

QO wrestles into the playoffs

By **LOGAN FEINGOLD**
Associate Editor

The Quince Orchard wrestling team is off to a very strong start so far this year and is looking to make a playoff run.

After losing their first county meet 63-17 to Springbrook, as of January 25, the team has won five straight meets against teams like Wootton, Kennedy, B-CC, Seneca Valley, Magruder, and Whitman. In order to make regionals this year and advance in the playoffs, the team must place in the top four of Montgomery County, which they haven't done since 2010. After all these years of missing out on making it to the regional duals, the team is hungry to make it back to the playoffs.

Coach Rob Wolf believes that the Cougars' "big competition will be with Churchill and Northwest, both whom we face in the last week of the season." Doing well against these rivals will be crucial to ensuring the Cougars make it back to the regionals. Senior wrestler and team co-captain Alec Falconer observed that "We got a really young

team right now. [I am] looking forward to see how far we can make it."

One tournament the team competed in earlier this year was the Hub Cup in North Hagerstown. The team had three wrestlers place in the top 5, with Falconer finishing 3rd, junior Alejandro Lopez finishing 4th, and sophomore Jose Echeona finishing 5th. All three are having very impressive seasons so far, and along with their teammates are

"We got a really young team right now. [I am] looking forward to see how far we can make it."

-Alec Falconer

looking to get the back Cougars back to regionals.

As a young team, Wolf believes "competing in tournaments like the Hub Cup, and duals tournaments in Westminster and

Hagerstown have led to improvements.... evident amongst all of our wrestlers." Competing against top-notch wrestling teams at these tournaments have tested the Cougars' wrestlers and given them valuable experience against top competition. Falconer described how himself and his peers "[try] to make sure our younger guys understand what to do in certain situations." With a young team, having the older players mentor the more inexperienced younger players is crucial. Wolf cited how helpful it was to have "returning starters from last year along with some of those that have moved up from the JV team." Another asset of the team is its flexibility. Senior wrestler Bret Williams described how "everyone.... Is very flexible and willing to do what it takes to win as a team", whether it is "cutting down 10 pounds or wrestling up against someone bigger." With a strong and balanced team like the one they have willing to do whatever it takes to win, there is no limit to how far the QO wrestling team could go this year.

Indoor track sprints to the end

By **HUNTER BOOTHE**
Managing Editor

After a whirlwind period of constant competitions, the Quince Orchard indoor track team is looking ahead to regionals and states. Led by coaches Seann Pelkey and William Goodman, the team has competed in four events in January alone: the Southern Maryland Invitational, Montgomery Invitational, the MCPS championships, and the Last Track to Philly Invitational.

The Cougars boast many impressive individual performances this season. On the boys' side, junior Kenny Williams broke the school's high jump record on December 27 with his 6'05" leap, besting the 6'04" record of Dylan Bikim ('16). Senior Amael Etcheu also shone, winning the county championship in the triple jump by over a two-foot margin at 43'07". Sophomore Preston Lane, and junior Chris Thoms placed second in the two-mile race at the team's first county meet.

One of these skilled competitors, senior Matt Owens, competes in the pole vault. Owens has

been a bright spot for the Cougars so far this season, tying his personal record of 10'6" and placing third at the Friends of Indoor Track meet. Owens attributes his success to consistent practice and confidence.

"You can't be too focused on getting everything right in one jump," Owens said. "[You have to] take it step by step."

The girls team has been equally impressive, featuring fantastic individual performances from seniors Abby Potter and Maya Jacobson, junior Isabelle Sajonia; and freshman Kyra Lyles, among others.

Potter has shown great versatility, finishing in the top five of multiple 55 meter hurdle events and one long jump event this season. Jacobson claimed second and third place finishes in the 3200-meter events at the Friends of Indoor Track Invitational and Montgomery County Championships, respectively. Sajonia finished fourth place with a personal record in the 3200 meter race at the Last Track to Philly event.

Track athletes laud

the coaching that they receive from Pelkey and Goodman. "[Pelkey] tells us what we need to do to get better," said Owens.

Potter agreed, "[The coaches] have always supported us throughout the years, so that we may not only reach our maximum potential, but so that we may excel in all our endeavors."

The Cougars are led by a strong core of senior standouts. Owens, Jacobson, Eli Holmstead, Wyatt McCabe, Dana Freedman, Madison Wellinghoff, and Chris Sterling are a few of the many seniors that have been significant contributors over the past few years. Of the seniors, Owens stated, "We hope to pass on a love for competing and our insane speed [to the underclassmen]."

Potter echoed his sentiments, stating, "[We] hope to pass on our knowledge we have gained from years of experience, our passion for the sport, and our drive to work hard and make it to states."

The team will look to finish strong with a great showing in the 4A West regional meet and the Maryland State Championships.



Swim and dive, bocce teams stride towards state championships

For the two youthful teams, this season has allowed for massive amounts of growth

By **DAVID SUGGS**
Editor-in-Chief

As the swim & dive and bocce seasons roar towards their culmination, it seems appropriate to recap the fantastic seasons by two of the more unheralded teams in the school.

For the swim and dive teams, this season has represented massive growth. Following the departure of numerous impactful seniors from last year's team, including Caroline O'Keefe, Cameron Wilcox, and Joe Cooke, the team had to rely on the leadership of upperclassmen to continue to improve.

"Underclassmen look up to the seniors for motivation, especially during our championship meets," said senior captain Maddy Zarchin.

While the season has at times been rough, with both the boys and girls teams going 2-2 in their first four meets of the season, the teams seem to be entering a sort of groove.

Despite a few inconsistent performances, the team is still optimistic, as Zarchin emphasized her personal excitement towards Metros, the preemptive swim competition in the region. "I'm really looking forward to Metros and States, and seeing how well our relays can place at those meets," she said.

Throughout the season, the intensity of practices has increased. "As the season has progressed, we are able to work on more technical sports in racing, like starts and turns, and are able to do more yardage in practices," stated Zarchin.

The team relies on motivating each

other, with Zarchin highlighting the importance of cheering each other on during meets, stating "cheering makes a huge difference in the sport - when you see the team standing and cheering for you when you're about to race, it really encourages you to put your all into it, not just for you, but for the team and the school."

Meanwhile, the bocce team has experienced a bit of a renaissance of sorts over the past few weeks. Despite a difficult beginning of the season, the bocce team has rebounded to get their record to 2-3. Junior Jazmin Argueta highlighted the adjustments each player has had to make during this season, stating "we have been focusing on manipulating the speed of the ball to refine our accuracy."

Throughout the season, the team has attempted to combine the youth

and inexperience of many new players, including Argueta and fellow juniors Hali Hartman and Elena Dietz, with the valuable leadership of members of the team from last season's state championship triumph. Senior captain Turner Thackston was the key member of the state championship squad, and his return to the team invigorated the group as they attempt to repeat as state champions. Argueta further emphasized this, stating "Thackston, through his perseverance, has taught us to never give up, even in our toughest games."

The bocce and swim teams look to continue their rapid improvement as they aim to reach unprecedented heights this season, so let's come out and support our two underrated teams as they attempt to reach states!



PHOTO PROVIDED BY ELIZABETH COOKE

JUST KEEP SWIMMING: Junior Eli Fouts races ahead to defeat his competition in a recent county swim and dive meet.

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for the prowler

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Ice hockey debut season sets groundwork for future success

By **JAMIE FINK**
Managing Editor

The members of Quince Orchard's new ice hockey team have ice in their veins as they continue to skate in their inaugural season. The boys spend many hours on the ice during their season, playing games at the local Rockville Ice Rink on Fridays and practicing every Thursday. Unfortunately, the Cougars were not able to participate in the postseason with a record of 2-11-0, but they plan to finish the regular season strong. The starting lineup this season includes Jackson Harnois, Daniel McGeever, juniors Niklas Palttala and Bennett Cohn, and sophomore Sean Peck.

Senior captains Harnois and McGeever made strides over the course of the season to "lead by example and control the play on the ice," said McGeever. Both captains have a positive attitude while on the ice and enjoy their time. "We contribute by our work ethic and play," said McGeever.

On January 20, the Cougars played their senior night against Blair. The game was a close match, with goals going back and forth. Unfortunately, the Cougars lost 7-5, but McGeever and Harnois led the team with a combination of four goals and five assists.

Some highlights from the season include beating a team that includes a combination of schools called the DC Stars: QO won 7-2, with four goals (the largest point differential win the team has ever had) from McGeever. In addition, the team made an impressive stand as they once led Walter Johnson with a score of 5-1. The team has built good chemistry

throughout the season by getting familiar with each other's style. Additionally, they all played on a combined team with Northwest's hockey players from last year. Now having their own school team, the boys enjoy it a lot more. "The fact that we all go to the same school is huge for building chemistry," said Harnois. Being a new team was "a fun experience as I got to know some guys I wouldn't have otherwise met," said Cohn.

"My goal is to help the rest of the team improve as much as they can before I leave and pass over the team to the juniors,"

-Daniel McGeever

QO's goals include keeping the team alive after this year and building a strong foundation for future players. "My goal is to help the rest of the team improve as much as they can before I leave and pass over the team to the juniors," said McGeever.



Premier league ready for epic finale

Chelsea looks to finish off season strong and preserve 9-point lead

By **DAVID STRICKMAN**
Managing Editor

The Premier League season started in August and is coming to one of its last wires of the season. With one third of the season left, Chelsea holds a strong lead in the league followed by Arsenal, Tottenham, and Liverpool.

Chelsea's own Diego Costa and Manchester United's Zlatan Ibrahimovic lead the league in scoring, and are trying to help their team succeed in the near future on its way to the last stretch of the season.

With Manchester United holding 13 titles, the most

in league history, they look to win their first championship in three seasons. Last season, Leicester City shocked the world by winning their first Premier League championship in team history. The squad beat red-hot Arsenal and may be considered the biggest underdog to ever win the league.

This season Chelsea has the best overall odds to win the league, followed by Manchester City and Arsenal. Not only does Chelsea hold the record for most wins during the season, but they also hold the record for most points during the season as well with

59 points. Not only is scoring a big way of winning, but without assists there would be hardly any goals.

Manchester City's Kevin De Bruyne leads the league in assists with 9 followed by Tottenham Hotspur's Christian Eriksen, West Bromwich Albion's Matthew Phillips, and Arsenal's Alexis Sanchez, all tied with 8 assists.

There are a lot of big games coming up, with Arsenal facing off against Hull City, and the match of the week Liverpool facing off against Tottenham Hotspur. You can catch these games on TV tomorrow.



PHOTO BY IBTIMES UK

ATHLETE OF THE MONTH QUESTIONNAIRE

SWIM AND DIVE

Elizabeth Cooke '18



Junior Elizabeth Cooke competes in the 50m freestyle. Her passion and dedication to swimming is second to none.

INDOOR TRACK

Julia Sloan '18



Junior Julia Sloan has powered through many injuries this year. She has potential to be a great leader and runner to help win states.

MARCHING BAND

Michael Bauer '17

Senior Michael Bauer Drum Major has the Marching Band fully rolling. His quality hand signals and knowledge of music led them to a quality placing in states.



HOCKEY

Daniel McGeever '17

Daniel McGeever is one of only two seniors on this year's hockey team. His hard work at practice and in the off-season allowed him to be one of the leading scorers on the team.



WRESTLING

Cory Amoroso '17

Senior Cory Amoroso is a big leader on the wrestling team. He wrestles in both the 180 and 195 weight class. Cory is a very hard worker and puts the team first.



The Prowler asked these athletes the following questions...

	Michael Bauer	Elizabeth Cooke	Daniel McGeever	Julia Sloan	Cory Amoroso
Who is your Valentine?	Rayna Langholt	Johnny Fierstein	Myself	Austin Burke	The Mat
What is your idea of the perfect date?	A fruit from the date palm tree	Hot Air Ballon Ride	Caps Game	Skiing	Candlelit dinner
What would be the worst date ever?	Anything that's not a fruit from the Date Palm Tree	Going to a funeral	If parents tagged along	Try new foods	When she expects you to pay
Flowers or Chocolate?	Chocolate	Chocolate	Flowers because I hate chocolate	Chocolate	Chocolate
Which teacher would you give flowers to on Valentine's Day?	P. Shannon Fay	Damavandi	Matt Marsden	Burdette	Mrs. Balfour
What would your chalk heart candy message say?	She fine	*Wink Wink*	AllStar	Send Nudes	Love is a lie