

The Prowler



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Iowa results: Cruz trumps Trump, Clinton edges Sanders

By **ANDY GOLDSTEIN**
Editor-in-Chief

On the first day of February, Iowans of varying political loyalties came out in record numbers to nominate a candidate for both the Republican and Democratic Parties. On the Republican side, in a slight upset, Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) won 27.7% of the vote, beating Donald Trump's 24.3% and Senator Marco Rubio's (R-FL) surprising 23.1%. The Democratic Caucus was much more complicated: former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton edged ahead of Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) by less than one half of a percentage point, 49.9% to Sanders' 49.6%. While Cruz's camp celebrated to a rousing speech earlier in the night, Clinton did not declare victory until well after midnight.

So what exactly is a caucus? The Iowa Caucus, much like primaries in most other states, is a part of the party nomination process, in which one candidate from each party is selected to represent the party in the general election. Each state assigns elected state delegates to candidates based on either the proportion of votes they get, or by a winner-take-all system to whoever won a plurality. After each state has held its primary or caucus, every delegate then meets at the Republican or Democratic National Convention, depending on the party they were elected to. At each Convention, delegates then cast votes for a candidate, depending on their state's system and their constitu-

ents' primary or caucus votes. Caucuses and certain primaries use a proportional system, in which the percentage of delegates that vote for a candidate reflect the percentage of vote they received in that state, but

many states have winner-take-all primaries.

A primary is similar process to a general election, in that it is a statewide election in which voters privately cast their support for candidates, and the candidate with the

most votes wins. However, a caucus is different in that each party is given the power to organize and declare the rules of their caucus. Each party organizes local meeting places for the caucus to occur in each election precinct. It is also unique in that, instead of privately casted votes, public declaration of support and citizen speeches to sway other voters are present and encouraged.

The Republican Party, after all speeches and arguments occur, vote by raising their hands. The Democratic Caucus is slightly more complex, as all voters break up into groups according to their preferred candidate, and then work to sway others around them to join their group. All candidates must meet at least 15% of the vote to be counted; those that do not have their supporters broken up, and other voters attempt to sway these voters to their candidate. After all voters have either left or decided on a candidate, each person in every group is counted as one vote.

Polls leading up to the Caucus showed Trump regaining a dominating lead against Cruz, who had been up by 10 points in December, but had fallen 8 points below Trump in January. The victory came as a surprise but a huge boost for the Cruz campaign nonetheless, who has been attempting to usurp Trump's spot as the anti-establishment candidate in the Republican race. Rubio, who was trailing both by at least 10 points going into the Caucus, will work to capitalize on the momentum of his strong third

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PHOTO COURTESY OF STEPHEN CROWLEY

CRUZ CLAIMS VICTORY: Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) celebrates and shakes hands with supporters after media outlets call the Republican Caucus in his favor.

Hop on the Calculus bus: how Jernigan's teaching works

By **LAKSHMI SHYAMAKRISHNAN**
News Editor

Juniors and seniors are faced with the task of studying harder than ever before as their grades become even more important, with the college admissions process shrouding their eyes from any other future prospects. They take more difficult courses, which are sure to boost the amount of homework and stress that they have.

There is one class at Quince Orchard High School—offered to sophomores, juniors and seniors—that people tend to find the most notorious of them all, and that is the one taught by none other than Jeffrey Jernigan, the school's AP AB Calculus teacher.

Past and present students alike mention Jernigan's strictness, his different teaching style from most other teachers, and especially his passion when it comes to ensuring that his students learn the material. Most people who have not experienced his class have the wrong attitude, however, when thinking about the course and the rigorous workload that comes with it.

Jernigan has been teaching at Quince Orchard for seven years, his love of math and calculus projecting onto his students and causing the stigma of the unapproachability of math subjects to vanish. His strategies for ensuring the learning of his students include encouraging academic language and formulating groups for students to work in teams. "[These methods of teaching] are a combination of thinking about my own experiences, and the past teachers that I've had," Jernigan said. "I...have always learned from other people...basically stealing ideas and adapting them and making my own."

Jernigan's well-known "Calculus Bus" metaphor signifies the importance of his students getting on board the math experience. In order to get on and stay on the bus, students need to be deeply dedicated and invested in the course. "Part of the education is kind of like business: it's a business partnership," Jernigan said. "The teacher has the responsibility to present and provide opportunities for students to learn, but students have a responsibility in that part-

nership...to try." If one were to not try, it would be easy to get kicked off of the bus.

"The teacher has the responsibility to present and provide opportunities for students to learn, but students have a responsibility in that partnership...to try."

-Jeffrey Jernigan

Most students agree that this course requires a lot more time and energy than most of their other classes. Senior Aak-

ruti Patel, a current member of Jernigan's AB Calculus class, found that she had gotten better at figuring out the "proper way to study," which consisted of working out problems step-by-step instead of just skimming through them, using lunchtime to ask questions, and separating oneself from any source of technology. "I've been getting better grades and understanding why I do a step in a problem rather than just memorizing the process of doing a problem," Patel said.

Like many other students, Patel was not inclined to the subject of mathematics—that is, until she arrived at Jernigan's class. "Mr. Jernigan helps you during lunch and expects you to come during lunch if you need help, [so] I've been able to regain my skills that I had lost [in the past]," Patel said.

Students from Jernigan's various AB Calculus classes are usually found in room 302A during lunchtime, writing out math problems on the whiteboard and putting their heads together to solve difficult problems. Because Jernigan is

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President Obama signs new executive orders to combat gun violence in wake of tragedy.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF AUDE GUERRUCCI

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Students discuss their favorite activities and places to go in Montgomery County.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF ADAM LEVITON

Sports

QO Poms spends the entire school year training, competing, and performing.

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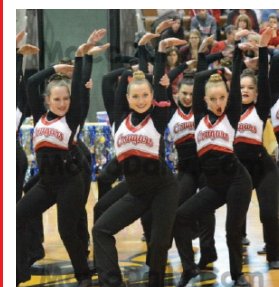


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Tremors in North Korea may signal nuclear test

By ANNA GOOREVICH
News Managing Editor

In early January, the US Geological Survey detected a 5.1 magnitude earthquake located close to North Korea's nuclear bomb testing plant Punggye-ri, in the northeast part of the country. Experts soon determined that the tremor was unnatural, which consequently sparked debates surrounding the possibility of a North Korean nuclear test. Soon after, the North Korean government released a news report centered out of their capital in Pyongyang with claims that they had successfully tested a hydrogen bomb.

North Korea's military and secret nuclear program has been in action for about 20 years, raising concern all over the world due to the aggressive actions of its leader, Kim Jong-un. So far, North Korea has held four underground nuclear tests since 2003. Weeks before the January 6 test, Kim Jong-un announced that the country had developed a hydrogen bomb, also known as an "H-bomb."

The H-bomb is one of the

most powerful weapons in the world. Using a process called nuclear fusion, an H-bomb is powered by the combination of hydrogen isotopes called deuterium and tritium, generating enormous amounts of energy. Prior to this nuclear test, North Korea had only tested weaker atomic bombs similar to those used by the United States in World War II in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In contrast to H-bombs, atomic bombs are powered by a process called fission where the bomb splits apart heavy atoms such as plutonium and uranium, producing energy.

Another concerning aspect about H-bombs to the United States and its allies is that they are lighter and smaller compared to atomic bombs. This means that if North Korea has produced an H-bomb, they can more easily load them onto missiles and aim for countries such as South Korea, Japan, or even the United States.

An H-bomb is hundreds of times more powerful than an atomic bomb, and, if it is true that North Korea has produced an H-bomb, this will dramatically advance

North Korea's military power.

However, many experts are skeptical of North Korea's claims that their test was successful. White House spokesman Josh Earnest said, "The initial analysis is not consistent with the North Korean claims."

Martin Navias, a military expert at King's College in London, told CNN that the earthquake produced signals that "[the nuclear test] doesn't look like [a hydrogen bomb] ... one would have expected [the earthquake] to be greater if it was an H-bomb."

Although the success of a tested H-bomb is doubtful, experts agree that the nuclear test is significant, and many are debating if the bomb tested is a different, weaker type of nuclear device, commonly known as a "boosted" weapon. According to CNN, a boosted bomb "uses a small amount of fusion to boost the fission process, but is not an H-bomb," meaning that it is considerably weaker than a real hydrogen bomb. Although this test may not be a hydrogen bomb, "there is little doubt that North Korea did conduct a new significant nuclear test," reported CNN.

In response to the nuclear tests, the United Nations Security Council is sure to implement punishments to North Korea for violations of past resolutions such as new sanctions. The UN has established past sanctions on North Korea including travel bans, luxury goods embargoes, and more. However, none have been able to stop North Korea from continuing its nuclear program.

Additionally, President Obama has led an alliance with South Korea and Japan in "strongly condemning" the nuclear tests. Obama also confirmed the United States' defense commitments to South Korea and Japan in retaliation to the North Korean tests.

According to the BBC, the bomb test has also further isolated North Korea since China, its closest ally, declared that it "firmly opposed" the nuclear tests.

Officials around the world are still unsure of whether or not North Korea has tested an H-bomb. Although evidence shows that the presence of an H-bomb is unlikely, this nuclear test should not be taken lightly.

Jernigan's AP Calculus Caucus indicates tight race

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available most lunchtime periods, students take advantage of the time and usually cannot be shifted from their studying.

Senior Rebecca Worley was in Jernigan's AB Calculus class in the last school year, and noticed how her math skills had "changed drastically" during the course. "Jernigan didn't make doing poorly an option, and I will truly be indebted to him forever for teaching me that," Worley said. Most teachers check to make sure their students complete their homework. Jernigan does not check, he "just knows" if you did not complete it. His teaching method revolves around

"making us want to do well for ourselves, not for anyone else," according to Worley.

It is the student's job to learn the material, but Jernigan finds ways to ensure his students' progression in the course. With a test or a quiz every week, Jernigan checks his students' performance and monitors the amount of effort they are putting into their work. "At the end of the day, he wants you to be able to say that you gave it your all, no matter what the turnout," Worley said. "But trust me, he'll know if you're giving it your all or not. Don't test him."

Jernigan is known by his students as both extremely helpful and strict. But the reason

is that all he wants is for his students to succeed. Rumors cause students to be afraid of the class, but all Jernigan is there for is to help his students gain the knowledge. "Before we begin class, he will start to tell [the students] about how he wants everyone to do the best that they can," Patel said. "When you get to know him, you immediately realize that he's there to lend you a big hand if you stumble on something."

And help he will. The average score for AP tests, ever since Jernigan started teaching the course, has been approximately 4.73 out of 5. Students are taught to study to learn and do well, and doing so clearly prepares them for the AP test in May.

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and secure the support of important donors who do not wish to see fringe candidates like Trump (and, to a lesser extent, Cruz) represent the GOP in the general election.

The Iowa Caucus was touted by many in the Democratic Party as a moment of truth, in which the reality of Sanders getting the nomination would be put to the test for the first time, and inversely, the reality of Clinton facing real electoral challenges against her competitor. Polls leading up to the caucus had the two in a virtual tie, with Clinton leading by less than two points, well within the margin of error. Analysts had established that a

high voter turnout at the Caucus—which usually indicates a higher presence of younger voters, a demographic that Sanders unquestionably dominates—could mean a victory for the outsider.

Clinton did not declare victory until early the next morning, and even then she was not officially decided the winner until hours later. Headlines spoke volumes about the tightness of the race, stating many things similar to CNN's "Ted Cruz wins; Clinton claims victory," drawing a stark contrast between the definitiveness of the two parties' races. Sanders supporters have largely proclaimed the Caucus a victory for their campaign, showing

that the former Secretary of State could face real challenge. Even so, this victory is largely symbolic, as Sanders would have to have won about two-thirds of the delegates in Iowa to be realistically on track for the Democratic nomination. The Senator from Vermont rides high into the next primary in New Hampshire, where he controls a dominating lead of at least 15 points.

Both the Republican and Democratic nomination contests have defied all prior prediction; both have seen a fall in popularity of mainstream candidates like Jeb Bush, and to a far lesser extent Hillary Clinton, allowing fringe candidates like Trump and Sanders to soar in popularity.



SNOW, SNOW, AND MORE SNOW: A historic blizzard hit the East Coast this month and piled over 30 inches of snow on Montgomery County. Schools were closed for a grand total of five days as most people were trapped in their homes due to the heavy piles of snow.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PHIL FABRIZIO



Scientists discover new elements for periodic table

By **MATT LOWINGER**
News Editor

Thanks to the RIKEN research team, the bottom period of the periodic table was officially completed on December 30 with the addition of four new elements. The elements with the atomic numbers of 113, 115, 117 and 118 were discovered after a long eight year stretch of research. All that is left is the naming of these four extraordinary elements.

In 1999, researchers claimed the discovery of the heaviest known element, No. 118. However, the data conducted was proven to be false by the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC). The real discovery of the four

newly added elements came between the years of 2002 and 2010. The creation of the elements came after extensive work with particle accelerators. According to *Science* magazine, "The particle accelerators fired beams of lighter nuclei at samples of heavy elements, smashing the atoms together until some of them fused." The IUPAC contacted a team of researchers in the United States and Russia for the discovery of elements 115, 117, and 118. The remaining newly discovered element, 113, became the first element named in Asia. The credit of naming element 113 goes to RIKEN Nishina Center for Accelerator-Based

"The particle accelerators fired beams of lighter nuclei ...smashing the atoms together until some of them fused."

-Science

Science in Wako, Japan. On December 30, when the elements were discovered, Ryoji Noyori,

former RIKEN president and Nobel Laureate in Chemistry, said, "To scientists, this is of greater value than an Olympic gold medal." Noyori is ecstatic about the new findings because the newly created elements serve more than the discovery of four new elements. According to *Science*, they are an "insight into the forces that hold atoms together."

Researchers found that "elements heavier than any yet created might have conformations that are especially stable—suggesting that if we can ever make atoms that big, they might stick around for longer than a few microseconds."

Jan Reedijk, president of the Inorganic Chemistry

Division of IUPAC, said that the organization has now begun the process of formalizing names and symbols for these elements. The temporary names formulated are ununtrium, (Uut, element 113), ununpentium (Uup, element 115), ununseptium (Uus, element 117), and ununoctium (Uuo, element 118). These four elements have temporary names and symbols on the periodic table, as their existence was hard to prove. According to the IUPAC, newly discovered elements can be named after a mythical concept, a mineral, a place or country, a property or a scientist.

Proving element 113 was extremely difficult for lead researcher Kosuke Morita at RIKEN:

"For over seven years we continued to search for data conclusively identifying element 113, but we just never saw another event." Morita's team persevered and, after long workdays and countless hours in the laboratory, element 113 was finally recognized by IUPAC. Morita added, "Now that we have conclusively demonstrated the existence of element 113, we plan to look to the uncharted territory of element 119 and beyond."

The four elements have a high rate of decay, so researchers found it challenging to reproduce the elements more than once; however, after eight dedicated years in the laboratory, the elements came into existence finally.

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Gun violence debate in America sparks unease *Obama takes measures to appease the public with stricter law enforcement*

By ANNA GOOREVICH
News Managing Editor

At an emotional press conference last month, President Barack Obama announced new executive actions aimed at reducing gun violence.

Signed to bypass a gridlocked Congress, Obama's orders call for comprehensive enforcement of many gun control laws already put in place.

According to the White House, "Over the past decade, more than 100,000 people have been killed as a result of gun violence - and millions more have been the victim of assaults, robberies and other crimes involving a gun."

For years, President

Obama has attempted to curb gun violence by supporting various laws to increase gun control, many of which were not passed by Congress. Now, to limit gun violence, Obama is calling for a national "sense of urgency."

"Each time this comes up," said Obama, "we are fed the excuse that common-sense reforms like background checks might not have stopped the last massacre, or the one before that, or the one before that, so why bother trying...I reject that thinking."

The greater use of the "common-sense reforms" Obama spoke of are the basis of his executive orders. First, the White House plans to use the FBI and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco,

Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) to increase the use of background checks in order to "keep guns out of the wrong hands."

Second, the White House is increasing funding for the ATF to hire more agents and investigators. Additionally, the ATF is creating an Internet Investigation Center in order to track illegal online firearms trafficking, all with the purpose of "making communities safer from gun violence."

In addition to expanding background checks and the ATF, the White House is proposing a \$500 million investment to "increase access to mental health care."

Lastly, Obama's executive orders call for

cooperation between the Departments of Defense, Justice, and Homeland Security to sponsor and conduct research on gun safety technology. Obama has also directed these departments to explore further ways to improve gun safety.

Obama's orders have resulted in an uproar from Republicans. Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-WI) said that Obama's actions "will no doubt be challenged in the courts" since he has bypassed Congress.

Ryan further criticized the President: "From day one, the President has never respected the right to safe and legal gun ownership that our nation has valued since its founding."

However, Obama insisted that his executive actions keep the Second Amendment in mind. Obama stated that the orders are "not a plot to take away everybody's guns."

"I believe in the Second Amendment, there written on paper, that guarantees the right to bear arms," said Obama.

"I also believe that we can find ways to reduce gun violence consistent with the Second Amendment."

The latest polls indicate that many Americans support greater gun control. A Quinnipiac University poll conducted in December found that, overall, 89% of Americans support expanded use of background checks. Although many

Americans agree with greater background checks and other methods of gun control, it is evident that not all would want gun laws to become stricter.

A recent CNN poll indicates that 48% of Americans were in favor of stricter gun laws, while 51% were against.

Gun control has been a controversial issue for years. While almost every American recognizes the importance of protecting the constitutional right to bear arms, Americans also believe that change has to develop in order to stop mass shootings at places such as Virginia Tech, Tucson, Aurora, Sandy Hook, San Bernardino, and many more from occurring.

Prom planning becomes a priority for Class of '17

By SOPHIE LANE
News Editor

The Class of 2017 Student Government Association (SGA) members have been diligently working, coming up with many different fundraisers to generate money for, prom and other events for the Class of 2017. By attending these fundraisers, students are not only supporting the Class of 2017, but also supporting almost all future school events, such as prom.

Junior class Secretary Lauren Kelly spoke out about the issue regarding their financial position: "Since we don't have as much money as we would

like, the school has to help in coming to our fundraisers."

Furthermore, she adds that "money is the most important thing that [they] need" and in order to acquire the funds necessary to pull off a special prom, the junior class needs the school's support. Kelly believes that "the most effective way to raise money is by having fundraisers, but they need to be successful in order to have a prom that's fun." The SGA asks students to buy a cookie at a home basketball game for a bake sale or come to a local restaurant during a fundraiser.

Junior Alex Saks joined the Class of 2017's SGA as a cabinet member. Saks

"The school has to help in coming to our fundraisers."

-Lauren Kelly

not only has experience being in class SGA, serving as First Vice President her freshman year, but also is currently involved with the Student Member of the Board (SMOB) as a communications deputy. In her job, Saks helps Eric Guerici, the 38th SMOB, "get in touch with people and get people in touch with him." She describes her job as "practically his connection to what's happen-

ing all around the county."

At QO, Saks' main job is to work with fundraisers, but she also is ready to assist any SGA member who needs it. Specifically, Saks works "closely with junior Jessica Weiss to think of fundraisers that would not only appeal to many, but raise money for the events." Then, Saks and Weiss "work with the members of SGA, our sponsor, and administration to make it happen."

An important event this year, and every year, for seniors and juniors is prom. Saks stated, "The Class of 2017 is paying for prom this year and without sufficient funds, we can't make prom the best it can be."

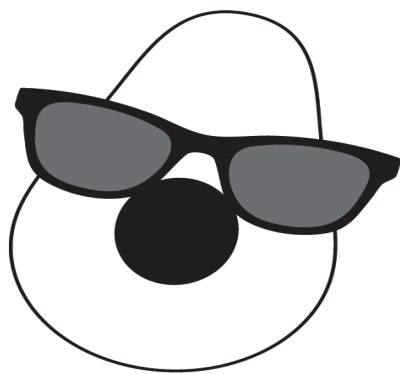
Junior Class President Dana Freedman plans to do many fundraisers, such as "restaurant nights, bake sales, and selling candy grams for Valentine's Day." She encourages students to help give "promotion of the fundraisers, support, and participation".

Ideally, Freedman plans to raise enough money to have a fantastic prom and make tickets affordable and

reasonable enough to allow students to come and have fun. As president, Freedman is very involved in fundraising "by meeting with the other SGA members and coming up with creative ideas, picking dates for the events, promoting the events, and recruiting people to make the event successful."

Overall, the Class of 2017 SGA is working hard to come up with new fundraisers to make prom a special night that can be shared among every junior and senior at QO who wishes to. The members of the class SGA encourage everyone to come out to the fundraisers that they have been planning.

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When the Wifi dies : Valentine's Expectations

A horror story about losing touch

By **BELLA ROBERTS**
Editor-in-Chief

"Charging complete."
Meg jolted awake, the excitement of charging of her new iPhone 6 pulsating through her veins. She wandered downstairs with a peppy gait, and passed on her usual cup of coffee, the knowledge that was yet to come from her phone acting as caffeine strong enough to arouse her from any lethargy she once experienced.

As she ate her normal power breakfast of two eggs, bacon, and avocado in the silent bubble she liked to exist in during her morning time, she thought of how her family playfully called it her "mommy and me time," referring to the phone as her baby. Meg chuckled to herself, then quickly suppressed it, alarmed that she would ruin the silence she so carefully dedicated to her phone.

Her phone really was like her baby, she thought. The concept amusing her, she unlocked her phone to google "Baby Names" for a possibility of what to name her new iPhone.

She waited the split second she was accustomed to, but the Google search still did not load. The wifi was down. Meg sighed, a surge of annoyance washing over her. She hated when the family WiFi was down, for it made all of her daily activities of Youtubing, Instagramming, Googling, Tumblring, and Tweeting so much more difficult and time-consuming.

She switched her phone to 4G LTE, not worrying about the data she would use, for wifi was what made her world operate.

She googled "Baby Names" once again, but the page just would not load. The signal seemed to be bad. She gobbled down the eggs quickly and began to walk around her house for

a better signal. She googled again, but nothing happened. She quickly exited her home and began to pace around her neighborhood. Still nothing. Meg felt frozen in time. Is this how the pilgrims felt? She was disconnected from the world. She thought about what she would have to do to get information. Go to the library? A chill went down her spine. No, the thought seemed too dramatic. She wouldn't have to go to the library, it would not come to that. She would get her wifi working. Meg began to run. Quicker. She was now sprinting quicker than wii fit, yet, no wifi was to be found.

She began to think about all the information she was missing out on. What would Kim name her baby? Was the dress white and gold or blue and black? She had to google it.

Meg suddenly halted. Her phone had died. Meg screamed, as her baby was no longer with her. Blackness washed over Meg.

By **ALEXIS KIM**
Design / Layout Manager

Valentine's Day is a special day for couples to shower each other with gifts and get extra romantic. Even kids get to join in—elementary school classrooms are filled with children passing out candy valentines to each classmate.

If only the same could be said for high school students. According to a children's research organization, Child Trends, only 9% of high school sophomores and 16.3% of seniors date regularly, so chances are, you'll be spending Valentine's Day single. This isn't a bad thing, of course, it just means you'll probably be sick of the overly-affectionate displays of love that'll leave you wondering if it's possible to be that saccharine. Who knows? Whether you're single, in a relationship, or somewhere in-between, here are some expectations and realities we might experience this Sunday:

Expectations for someone in a relationship: "They're going to come to my house with a life-sized

stuffed bear, chocolates, and roses. Later, we'll enjoy a romantic dinner where I'll get to bombard every social media outlet about how me and my boo are #goals."

Reality: Your significant other is just a high school student, which means they're living the broke life. Also, the NBA All-Star game happens to be on Valentine's Day, so if your SO is into basketball, you may be spending your romantic dinner in front of the TV. Here's hoping your boo thang isn't into sports.

Expectations for someone single: "I'm going to spend Sunday crying over how I'm so single and lonely. I'm going to end up stuffing my face with ice cream and scrolling through Instagram."

Reality: You're probably 100% okay with being single and it'll just be another Sunday for you, which means scrambling to finish the homework you procrastinated 'till

the night before to do and chilling in pajamas. You'll probably still consume your body weight in ice cream, just without all the self-pity and moping.

Expectations for someone who's crushing: "It'd be a dream come true if I could share this day with them. Oh well. I'll never get over this crush, even when I'm 84, where I'll be reflecting on my youth and how different my life might've been had I told them how I felt." (Think *The Titanic*-level reminiscing.)

Reality: Maybe you've decided that this is your chance to reenact something straight out of a teenage rom-com and finally snag that special someone. Perhaps it's a sign that you're better off getting over your crush. Or you'll stay home and actually watch the *Titanic*. This one's totally up to you.

No matter what you decide the kind of Sunday you'll be having, know that all Valentine's Day-themed chocolate will be on sale everywhere right after the holiday, and that's all the day is good for.

Fight of the Films: 2016 Academy Award Predictions

By **JACOB CORNBLATT**
Managing Editor

Best Picture

Will Win: *The Revenant*

Could Win: *Spotlight*

Should Win: *Spotlight*

I really despised *The Revenant*, but I know a best picture winner when I see one. Because of the struggle it took to make and the pretty, pseudo-intellectual photography, the voters will be immediately drawn to pick it. If they decide to actually think about their choice for a minute, however, they would without a doubt choose *Spotlight*.

Best Actor

Will Win: *Leonardo DiCaprio (Revenant)*

Could Win: *Michael Fassbender (Steve Jobs)*

Should Win: *Michael Fassbender (Steve Jobs)*

Leonardo DiCaprio should have won in 2005 for *The Aviator*, and the voters know that. Since there wasn't a truly breathtaking performance this past year, it is a prime year to give Leo what he deserved.

Best Actress

Will Win: *Brie Larson (Room)*

Could Win: *Charlotte Rampling (45 Years)*

Should Win: *Cate Blanchett (Carol)*

Room was one of the lesser known Oscar movies in 2015, but people and voters adore Brie Larson for some unknown reason. Solely because of this, she will be taking home a statue.

Best Foreign Film

Will Win: *Son of Saul*

Could Win: *A War*

Should Win: *Son of Saul*

Son of Saul is currently being considered one of the greatest films ever made, and I have to agree. It will without a doubt win, and if the Academy Awards had any sense, it would win Best Picture as well (even though it wasn't even nominated).

Best Cinematography

Will Win: *Emmanuel Lubezki (The Revenant)*

Could Win: *Robert Richardson (The Hateful Eight)*

Should Win: *Ed Lachman (Carol)*

Every year, this award goes to the Director of Photography who manages to make the cinematography look prettiest, so regardless of Ed Lachman's photography for *Carol* being gorgeous and brilliantly deep, Lubezki will win because he captured some nice looking mountains.

Best Director

Will Win: *Alejandro Iñárritu (The Revenant)*

Could Win: *George Miller (Mad Max: Fury Road)*

Should Win: *Tom McCarthy (Spotlight)*

I never know what they are looking for when giving this award out, as one can't evaluate another's directing without witnessing it on set, but I do know who wins these awards. The director with a nice public image who made a fairly mainstream movie always wins, and Iñárritu is that director this year.

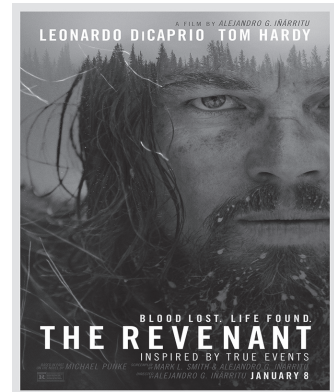


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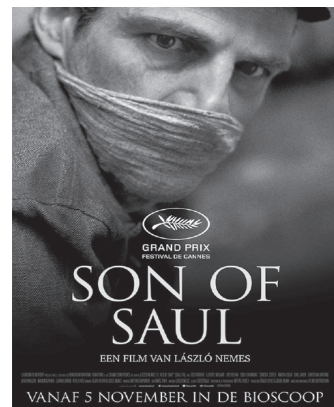


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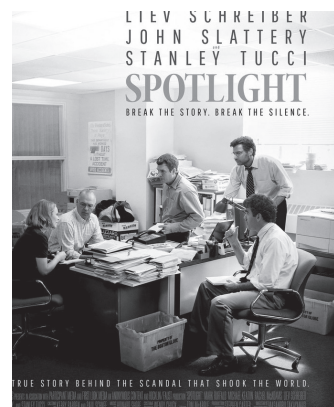


PHOTO COURTESY OF ROTTEN TOMATOES

Take a slice of Moco

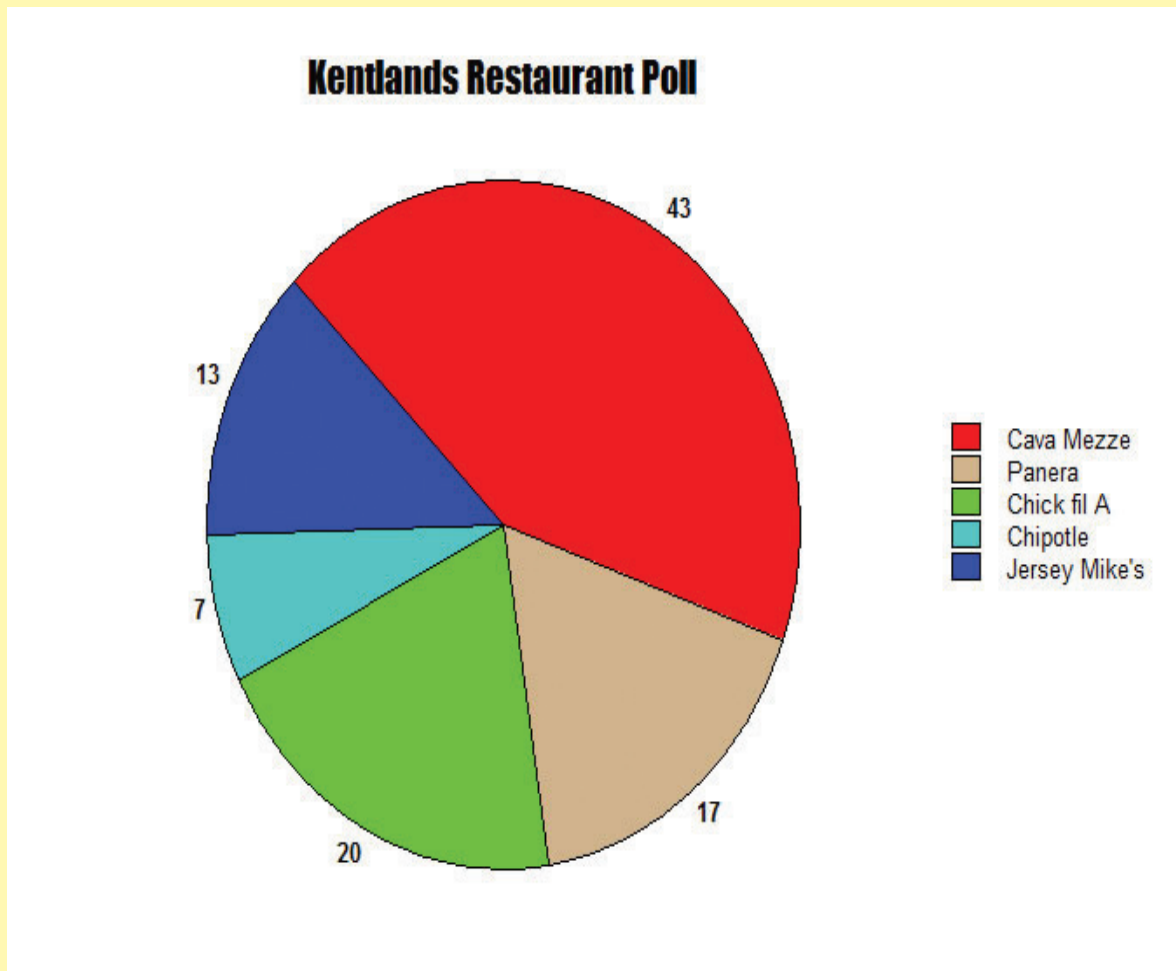
By **BRITTANY MILLS**
Double-Truck Managing Editor

Giuseppi's: A family owned and operated store for 23 years. The store is located in Kentlands and employs many QO alumni and current students. Customers of Giuseppi's rave about the friendly service. The thin slice of pizza is praised for its tasty dough crust and a fine layer of cheese that allows an authentic New York style pie. Sophomore Micaela Brick likes the fact that customers can see the pizzas being made. The restaurant is truly shaped for families, as the arcade in the back fulfills the needs of younger family members. As a staple in the community, it is home to many end of season parties and family get-togethers.

California Pizza Kitchen: Pizza chain located in the Rio shopping center down the street from the movie theater. It has risen due to their great pizza and fun atmosphere. The restaurant offers an upscale touch of sit-down eating, but Freshman Max Hyman also appreciates that the restaurant includes take out for the families on the go. With a menu that includes everything from Belgian chocolate soufflé cake to a half roasted salad offer variations of meals for everyone in the family. As a change of pace from your normal pizza places, CPK's restaurant chain remain alive throughout the US.

Coal Fire: A hidden gem commonly forgotten in the mix of Chipotle, Chick-fil-A, and Jersey Mike's, Coal Fire has emerged as the top spot for a great slice of thin crust pizza, whether you are looking for a sit down meal or a takeout pizza. If you are going for a great meal you might run into Junior Alex Romano who works at Coal Fire. Romano believes "Coal Fire pizza is to die for because the crust is perfectly cooked." Romano also suggests trying the salads Coal Fire has to offer, such as the Burrata Beefsteak. A perfect balance of pizza and delicious meals keeps Coal Fire at the top of the chart.

The Prowler surveyed 100 Cougars to get their opinions on their favorite Kentlands restaurants.



Oh, the P

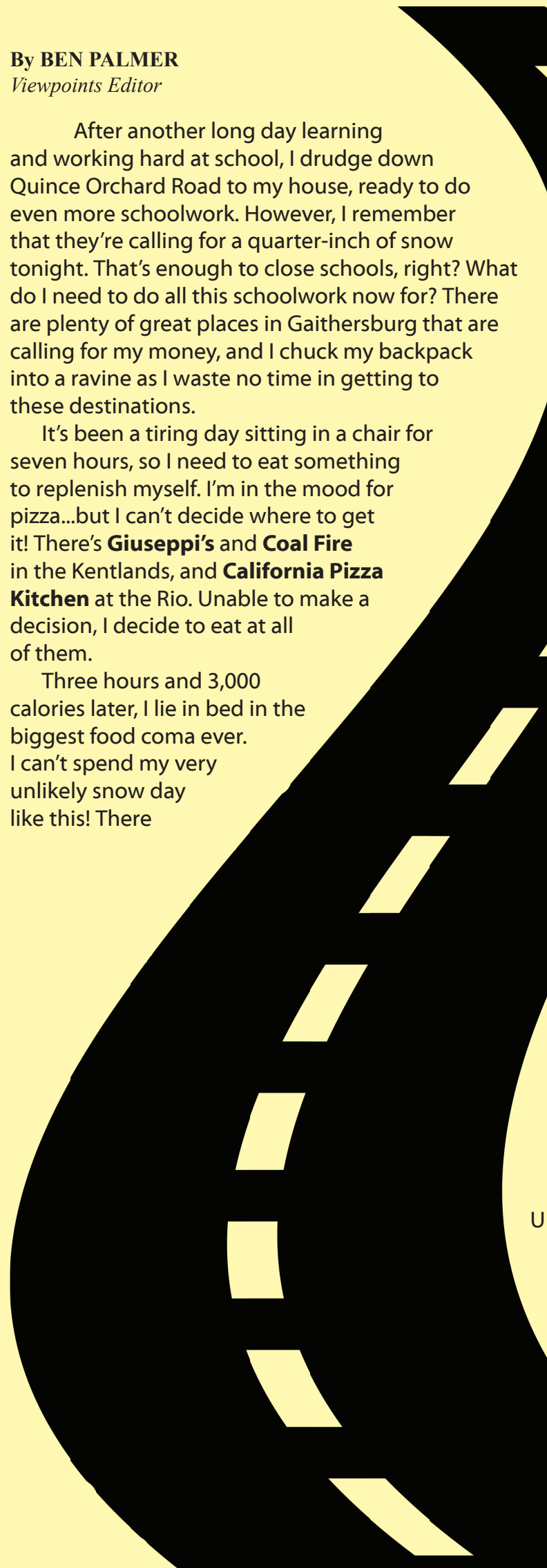
IN MOO

By **BEN PALMER**
Viewpoints Editor

After another long day learning and working hard at school, I drudge down Quince Orchard Road to my house, ready to do even more schoolwork. However, I remember that they're calling for a quarter-inch of snow tonight. That's enough to close schools, right? What do I need to do all this schoolwork now for? There are plenty of great places in Gaithersburg that are calling for my money, and I chuck my backpack into a ravine as I waste no time in getting to these destinations.

It's been a tiring day sitting in a chair for seven hours, so I need to eat something to replenish myself. I'm in the mood for pizza...but I can't decide where to get it! There's **Giuseppi's** and **Coal Fire** in the Kentlands, and **California Pizza Kitchen** at the Rio. Unable to make a decision, I decide to eat at all of them.

Three hours and 3,000 calories later, I lie in bed in the biggest food coma ever. I can't spend my very unlikely snow day like this! There



Places You'll Go!



A day of zipping and chipping

By WILL HUSTED

Double-Truck Managing Editor

Another weekend has come and gone and you find yourself wanting to go out and do something fun, but what is there to do?

If you love high flying adventures with friends, a ropes course nestled in Rock Creek Park may be calling your name. **Go Ape** provides a unique experience and a change of pace to the normal weekend routine as well as a break for your eyes from a screen. Go Ape provides a chance to get up and experience new escapades that are often underappreciated.

courses challenge you while maintaining excitement throughout the adventure spent above the trees. The view from the top of the course allows for a sense of pride and understanding of the area around you. It is very rare to appreciate what is in front of you in the moment. Go Ape provides that chance.

Go Ape provides a great place for teens looking to escape the monotony and routine they find themselves in, an opportunity to experience life in a thrilling way. Gordon add that the

will be sure to encounter when you step foot in the dark, neon-filled golf course. Complete with an arcade, the course boasts all original artwork with local ties, including a Cal Ripken painting as well as a replica of the tree found on the City of Gaithersburg emblem. The local features as well as the distinctive design give the familiar game of mini golf an interesting twist.

A cheap nine dollars for a round, the course is entertaining and a great way to spend a few hours with friends. Manager Frank describes the course as “fun



PHOTO COURTESY OF GO APE

Just a 20-minute drive from QO, the course includes five sections of trails high up in the trees

course provides “a sense of solidarity and bonding when teens go together.” This bonding tied with

and enjoyable for anyone.” This universal ability to entertain makes Monster Mini Golf a great destination



PHOTO BY WILL HUSTED

with increasing difficulty.

Each section ends with a fun-filled zip line that takes you quickly to the ground. The courses are made up of “numerous rope ladders, crossings, two Tarzan swings, and five zip lines,” according to a Go Ape spokesperson. The

adventure can go a long way and greatly improve your weekend blues.

If you are looking for an indoor alternative, **Monster Mini Golf** is a great option. Established three years ago, Monster Mini Golf provides a unique atmosphere which you

for a fun time in the area.

While you may be tempted to stay at home in the safe confines of your bed and laptop, explore the exciting activities your local town has to offer and get outside and enjoy them. The excuse that your town is boring is no longer valid.

are a lot of physical activities available to me, and I start off with **Go Ape** in Rockville, a place filled with treetop ropes courses. However, after getting kicked out due to ripping off a rope bridge and doing the Tarzan scream on it, I decide to take it a bit easier. I ended up at **Monster Mini Golf**, which only intensely frightened me every five seconds.

All this physical activity has made me hungry again, and I’m sensing a vicious cycle occurring. I’m back at the Kentlands, and I don’t want pizza. Unfortunately, this isn’t New York, so I still have a multitude of options that I once again can’t decide from. Rather than eat at all of them, the Prowler staff and I decided to **ask our readers**. While I wait for the results, I’ll be fishing my backpack out of the ravine, and upon finding it in the gutter, I hope for another snow day. To my readers: don’t throw your backpack off a cliff, but do read the articles reviewing the places I’ve just described!



The Denver Broncos are crowned Super Bowl champions

By **DAVID SUGGS**
Managing Editor

As the confetti rained down on the crown jewel of the Bay Area, Levi's Stadium, Peyton Manning looked into the crowd, surely soaking in the last image of his illustrious career. Manning held up the fabled Lombardi Trophy, a fitting end to the most exciting postseason in recent history.

For the Panthers, their season began in a cloud of doubt, as an uninspired 7-8-1 record from the previous season was saved by a historically bad NFC South, allowing them to advance to the postseason and defeat the injury-riddled Arizona Cardinals in the NFC Wild Card game. Additionally, WR Kelvin Benjamin, the Panthers' leading receiver from

the 2014 year, suffered a season-ending ACL injury, leading many respected analysts, including former NFL executive Charley Casserly and senior Sports Illustrated writer, Don Banks, to predict that the Panthers would not make the playoffs. However, they started the season strong, allowing only nine points to the Jacksonville Jaguars in a 20-9 win. This victory began a fourteen-game win streak for the Panthers, highlighted by victories against the reigning NFC champion Seattle Seahawks, the Aaron Rodgers-led Green Bay Packers, and the New York Giants. During this stretch, Carolina averaged a whopping 32 points per game and forced 35 turnovers. Despite a 20-13 loss to the Atlanta Falcons, the Panthers got back on track with a 28-point

victory against the Buccaneers, clinching home-field advantage throughout the postseason. QB Cam Newton accounted for almost 4,500 yards of offense, scoring 45 total touchdowns while SS Kurt Coleman finished second in the league in interceptions. Additionally, linebackers Luke Kuechly and Thomas Davis combined for over 200 tackles and 8 eight interceptions, spearheading the aggressive defense.

The Broncos faced a dilemma at quarterback following their shocking loss to the Indianapolis Colts in the AFC Divisional Round last year and rumors swirled about Peyton Manning's potential retirement. Following this disappointing loss, the front office decided to shake some things up, firing John Fox and hiring

Gary Kubiak to take his place. Additionally, Wade Phillips was hired as the defensive coordinator. The season started well for the Broncos, as a 13-10 victory against the Ravens seemed to justify the Phillips hiring. Throughout the season, the Broncos' defense, led by LB Von Miller, DE Demarcus Ware and S Chris Harris, among others, enjoyed a fine season, as they held opponents to 32 touchdowns. However, the offense was rather middling, ranking 19th in points per game and 16th in yards per game. Manning, who broke the record for most yards in NFL history this year, was historically bad, having his worst statistical season. In fact, after a four interception performance against the Kansas City Chiefs, Manning was benched in favor of

Brock Osweiler. Osweiler would play seven games in relief of Manning, mostly as a result of form and injury, and went 5-2, beating the Patriots in an early preview to the AFC championship. Manning was brought back in week 17, and led the Broncos to a victory in their final game of the season, clinching home field throughout the playoffs.

After their bye week, the Broncos faced off against the worn-out Pittsburgh Steelers, dominating them 23-16. The Manning vs. Brady matchup that everyone dreamed of was in the cards. In the game, Manning and the Broncos were able to get a quick lead, and the defense was able to hold off a late Brady assault, as the defense stuffed the Patriots on a two-point

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Taking a huge leap into the Leap Year

By **DANIELLE PASEKOFF**
Managing Editor

A lot of things are happening in 2016: the presidential election, the Rio Olympic games, the Friends reunion – the list could go on and on. But while everyone is excited about these events, they tend to forget about something that's just as special that will be happening in 2016 – the leap year. Most people don't know or don't care about leap years, but they're actually pretty cool.

Leap years occur every four years and are 366 days long instead of the typical 365. According to History.com, the extra day on these special years

is "built into the calendar to ensure that it stays in line with the Earth's movement around the Sun." This is important because although our calendars tell us that a year is 365 days, the actual time it takes for Earth to orbit its star is closer to 365.2421 days, which is slightly longer. Essentially, leap years happen because of the Earth's orbit around the Sun, and have a lot more scientific meaning than most people think. There is a deep history regarding leap years; they date back to Ancient Egypt and Julius Caesar, and have been incorporated into our calendars ever since. On a leap year, February has 29 days instead of 28, which

goes unnoticed by most. That is except for people who are born on February 29.

According to the New York Times, February 29 is the least common birthday, most likely due to the fact that people try to avoid having a kid on this date. Because so few people are born on February 29, it's difficult to find someone born on this leap day. Having a birthday on February 28 happens every year, so the correlation between that date and February 29 is not as great as people think, junior Jessica Osborne says. "Having my birthday that close to [February 29] doesn't affect me too much," says Osborne, who wasn't born on a leap year. Birthdays that

fall every year have little to no relationship to a leap day birthday, so there's no surprise that February 29 has a minimal effect on non-"leaplings." You may ask yourself: "What day do leaplings celebrate their birthdays on non-leap years?" Most of us don't realize that we're lucky to celebrate our birthday every year, and take it for granted. If junior Camryn Mercer was born on February 29, she would "cry because [she] technically wouldn't have a birthday every year." This may be one way of coping with a leap day birthday, but most leaplings usually celebrate on February 28, the day before their birthday, or rarely on March 1.

Opinions about leap years vary, depending on the person you ask. Most think it's pointless, or are indifferent to leap years, especially if they aren't directly affected by them. Leap years are "useless," according to Mercer, because they "have no point and are [pretty] confusing." Whether you support leap years or not, they aren't going anywhere. Osborne thinks leap years are helpful, because they "make time actually work." If it weren't for leap years, time would be all messed up! As long as we are around, leap years will be as well. But, if I were you, I would "take the leap" and celebrate February 29 this year!

A BAD DAY FOR CHIPOTLE

By **PAIGE MIRKIN**
Editor In Chief

Remember when you couldn't go to Chipotle without waiting in a line that was out the door? Those days are over. An E.coli outbreak has contaminated Chipotle restaurants in 9 states. Originally, E.coli cases linked to the restaurant existed only in places far away from our hometown, such as California and Illinois. But the game was changed when there was a case in Maryland. All of a sudden, E. coli became a reality that haunted everyone's thoughts as they decided where to go to eat for dinner. The conflict of choosing Chipotle or Chick-fil-A turned into a no-brainer: not many people wanted to risk their safety by eating Chipotle.

According to the Huffington Post, sales declined about 30% since the first outbreak in August. The alarming part is that Chipotle has been unable to find a source of the contamination. That means E.coli can be brewing in the chicken or poisoning an ingredient as simple as lettuce. The Kentlands Chipotle has been in a slump, as well as many Chipotles across the country. Over 60 locations have had to close due to a decline in business.

Rumors about Chipotle's future have circulated. While it is true that some locations have closed their doors, it was rumored that all Chipotles would be closed on February 8th for food safety meetings. I'm actually unsure if this rumor is true since major media outlets such as CNN reported on it, but I guess we'll find out. Another rumor that had arisen was that Chipotle would be giving out free burritos to gain customers' trust back. Personally, that would affirm my suspicions. Like, why would they be giving out free food? Obviously, it remained only a rumor, as it was confirmed by Chipotle's Twitter account.

Chipotle should thank their loyal customers who still spent their money on their food. Many users on Twitter expressed their minimal concern stating, "Chipotle is so good I don't mind if I get E.coli, at least I'll die happy." As of February 1, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) declared Chipotle's E.coli outbreak over. The Huffington Post announced that "the company's stock price surged" as a result of the declaration. Good for Chipotle! Maybe I'll give it another try. New year, new Chipotle? Only a month late.

Punxsutawney Phil: America's Hero

By **BELLA ROBERTS**
Editor In Chief

As I write this I am eagerly anticipating the biggest moment of the year. No not the Superbowl, the Oscars, or the Iowa Caucus. I await an even more influential moment, a moment that literally decides the rest of the year: Groundhog Day.

For those of you living under a rock, or a burrow per se, Groundhog Day falls every year on February 2 and is the day Phil comes out of his burrow in front of thousands to predict the weather for the rest of the winter.

According to legend, if Phil sees his shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter weather. If he does not see his shadow, there will be an early spring. Who is Phil you ask? Punxsutawney Phil.

He's basically the Phil of the Future, only in animal form because he lives forever and can see into the future. Besides having an obviously superior name, Phil the groundhog plays a crucial role in American society.

Basically, how we dress, the number of snow days we receive, and our entire perception of the natural world rests on Phil. Phil is an all-powerful force in that sense – he can control how

we see America. Phil is so noble, in fact, that he was named after King Phillip. Phil has been holding the reins for a while. In fact, he held his first Groundhog Day in the 1800s. And yes, I know your first thought is, "Wow, he named the celebration after himself" and

org, "Phil gets his longevity from drinking 'groundhog punch'", (No, not that kind of punch, though Phil is past 21.) "One sip, which is administered every summer at the Groundhog Picnic, gives him seven more years of life." Therefore, Phil is immortal.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF GALAXYHOOKS.COM

the answer is yes. He can do that.

Maybe when our weatherman starts predicting weather accurately, they can have a day to themselves too. And yes, I know your second thought is probably, "No way has this groundhog lived that long." Well, if you are thinking that, you are silly for underestimating Phil and misjudging him as but a mere groundhog. Phil is more than a groundhog. Phil is America. Also, according to groundhog.

Phil rules with a mighty fist but is not corrupt. Groundhog.org denies that Phil's forecasts are made in advance by the Inner Circle, stating that, "After Phil emerges from his burrow on February 2nd, he speaks to the Groundhog Club President in Groundhogese. His proclamation is then translated for the world." Phil is justice. This Groundhog Day, remember the true American hero. Hail Punxsutawney Phil.



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two-point conversion at the end of the game, securing the win, 20-18.

The spectacle began with a stunning Lady Gaga performance, as she sang "The Star Spangled Banner", evoking memories of Whitney Houston, among other musical legends. The Panthers elected to defer to the Broncos, and the flashbulbs illuminated the San Francisco sky as the Graham Gano kick was returned by Andre Caldwell. During the first drive, Peyton Manning established himself with a series of decisive throws, including an 18-yard throw to TE Owen Daniels and a 22-yarder to Andre Caldwell. The drive stalled, however, and ended with a Brandon McManus 34 yard kick. After successive three & outs by both teams, Carolina received the ball back. On second down, it appeared as if WR Jericho Cotchery reeled in a bobbling ball for a first down. The ball was ruled incomplete, however, and Carolina coach Ron Rivera challenged the call on the field. The original call stood, as there was not enough evidence to overturn the call. The significance of this controversial call was apparent, as

two plays later, All-Pro LB Von Miller (the second pick of the 2011 NFL draft, behind Cam Newton), stripped Newton of the ball, sacking him and sending the wayward ball towards the endzone, where it was recovered by Malik Jackson for a touchdown, giving the Broncos a ten point lead, which remained until through the end of the first quarter.

Throughout the first quarter, the Broncos' front seven was putting tremendous pressure on Newton and the Panthers, as they were unable to create any true scoring opportunities. A late drive led the Panthers down the field, and they got on the scoresheet early in the second quarter, with Jonathan Stewart leaping over Denver's defensive line, making the score 10-7. The defenses remained active, with each team exchanging turnovers. However, neither team could make anything out of them. Another McManus field goal made the score 13-7, and with the clock nearing a minute, the Panthers were driving down the field, looking to get the game within three points. Poor clock management and excellent pass defense extinguished this opportunity,

as the Panthers were unable to get any points from the drive, keeping the score 13-7 for the Broncos.

The exquisite Coldplay performance was highlighted by a fantastic rendition of the Mark Ronson and Bruno Mars hit, "Uptown Funk" featuring Beyoncé. Following the halftime show, the Panthers received the ball, and their first drive got off to a promising start, as they were able to work the ball down the field via 45 and 14 yard receptions by Ted Ginn. The drive stalled as a result of an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on Trai Turner, and kicker Graham Gano missed a 44-yard field goal, setting up the Broncos with decent field position. Two 20-yard passes to Emmanuel Sanders set up a 30-yard field goal for McManus, making the score 16-7. Carolina drove the ball down the field, but a bullet pass whirred past Ted Ginn and into the hands of Safety TJ Ward, ending the drive on the cusp of a potential game-changing touchdown. Even despite the Kony Ealy fumble recovery, the damage was done, as the Panthers were unable to create any sort of offense throughout the remainder of the third quarter. The defensive

stalwarts on the Broncos and the pedigree that the Panthers have earned guaranteed that the stage was set for an intriguing fourth quarter.

Going into the fourth, the Broncos defense had held as it has this entire season. However, the juggernaut that is the Panthers offense looked to be advancing the ball more efficiently. This was evidenced by a quick drive that led to a 39 yard field goal by Gano. The Panthers cut the lead to six points, but were unable to advance the ball through either of their next two drives. In fact, with 4:19 left in the quarter and the ball on the Panthers 25, Von Miller, who, alongside with Demarcus Ware, had the entire left side of the Panthers' offensive line in his back pocket, evaded LG Andrew Norwell and LT Michael Oher on his way towards Cam Newton, who he stripped for the second time of the game, effectively ending the Panthers chances. CJ Anderson's two yard scamper officially spelled the end of Super Bowl 50. As the mixture of confetti and Gatorade rained upon Peyton Manning and Gary Kubiak, a sense of childlike wonder filled the future Hall of Famer, as he seemingly

went out on top.

The Lombardi Trophy was carried towards the podium, with 51 players touching and kissing the grand, old trophy. As former Super Bowl MVP and Hall of Famer, Lynn Swann traversed through the 200+ pound behemoths, CB Aqib Talib, who had a very combative matchup with Carolina WR Philly Brown, held up the Microsoft tablets used as playbooks, revealing a crudely written statement: "Super Bowl Champs." John Elway, the two-time Super Bowl champ and one of the most decorated players in NFL history, yelled "This one's for Pat!" echoing former sentiments by the incumbent GM of the Broncos, Pat Bowlen, who just 19 years ago built the first championship team in Denver. Manning, not revealing any of his future plans outside of kissing his wife and kids, held the Lombardi trophy up for the second time in his career and the fourth time for the Manning family. Numerous storylines will be written in the next few months about what is going to happen next year, but another season has closed, and Manning has done something most never do: finished his career on top.

Indoor track sweats out the competition

By PATRICK PAOLINI

Managing Editor

Not even the cold weather or persistent snow could have stopped the Quince Orchard indoor track team from hitting the ground running. Having only the 4a West Region Championship meet and the Maryland State Championships, the indoor track team is looking optimistic at their chances for state domination. Other than the last two meets in their season, the indoor track team has completed the rest of their season under the careful and dedicated leadership of Coach Seann Pelkey.

The indoor track team's most recent meet was the Montgomery County Championships, where the boys placed third with a

team score of 49, and the girls tied Montgomery Blair for ninth with a team score of 19. There were many events in the Montgomery County Championships and the indoor track team held their own against the competition; however, it was in the 800 meter and the high jump where QO shined.

Senior Liam Walsh became county champion with his performance in the 800 meter dash by finishing it with a time of 1:59.52, narrowly beating out his competitor, Thierry Siewe Yanga from Blair, who finished with a time of 1:59.96.

"It felt pretty good to become a county champion, but more so because I have never really won any big races before," said Walsh.

Senior Gregory D'Elia also became a county champion with his performance in the high jump. D'Elia gave a stunning performance by jumping to a final height of 6-02.00. D'Elia did not have to worry about giving up his title to a fellow competitor because right behind him was Dylan Bikim, another QO senior.

"It was a great feeling to win," said D'Elia. "I felt proud because I have been consistent all season with my height and even more so because I got to compete against last year's outdoor state champion."

On the girl's, QO had two strong fourth place finishes, one from junior Maya Jacobson in the 3200 meter and the other from junior Heather Calvin in the

4kg shot put. Jacobson had a finish time of 11:36.13, which was a clear lead over the fifth place finisher from Sherwood, while Calvin had a throw of 30-04 meters.

As the team prepares for their final two meets, Jacobson said, "We are preparing for these last couple meets by getting in some final workouts and then just doing some light runs." She added, "We also try to have a fun for the seniors by having dress-up day and snowball fights on runs."

Overall, the Quince Orchard indoor track team performed well at the Montgomery County Championship and are looking forward to the challenge of the regional and state competitions.

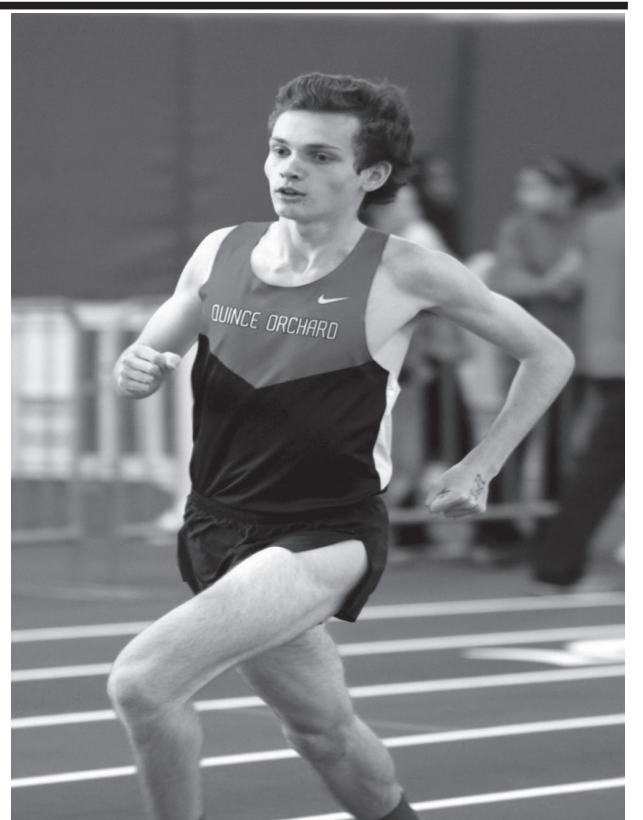


PHOTO COURTESY OF FACEBOOK
GO, GO, GO: Senior Liam Walsh races around the track in order to beat his competitors

Boys basketball continues to stack up points and wins

By DAVID STRICKMAN

Sports Editor

The boys' basketball team has been stellar thus far with an amazing 11-2 record in this long winter season. Coached by Paul Foringer, the boys have steadily improved their chances to reach the playoffs yet again. The boys are playing very well and were two made baskets away from an even more exciting 13-0 record.

This year's team is young but filled with lots of talent. The starting five consists of seniors Damon Daniel and Jack Ropelewski, juniors John Fierstein and Matthew Kelly, and sophomore Daniel Dorsey. This season has been a wild year for juniors and sophomores on the team, with Fierstein averaging 17.7 points, 8.3 rebounds, and 3.8 assists a game, followed by Kelly, who is averaging 15.6 points and 3.1 steals a game. Dorsey is averaging 6.4 rebounds a game and Daniel is averaging 3.2 assists a game as well.

"Every game is big now since we are a game up in the win column

on our competition," said junior shooting guard Colin Crews. As in previous years, the biggest goal for this team this year is to make it to the Xfinity Center for the state championship. "Everyone has been working hard and playing a key role in our success; if we keep improving I think we'll be able to get to states," said Foringer.

So far its been a fun season to watch: all the games, all the points, and especially all the wins. With all the hard work and sweat coming out of practice, these players are still enjoying themselves and having fun throughout the season. "My favorite part so far this season has been beating Springbrook. We went into that game as an underdog, and when we won it felt like we were on top of the world!" said junior center Ulric Fandalor.

Most of the team's wins have been landslide victories thus far, beating most teams by an average of sixteen points. Their last four games have been absolute blowouts, beating Northwest by 14, Seneca Valley by 17, Damascus by 43, and

Gaithersburg last game was closer by 31.

Power forward Fierstein and point guard Kelly have been huge leaders and contributors throughout the season. Not only do they tear up the scoreboard, they make everyone around them better on and off the court. "The most exciting part of this season has been coming together as a team and winning games. Its been fun to see everyone grow and get better throughout the season," said Fierstein.

The squad has improved dramatically over the months since the beginning of the season. "We want our bench to play better. Sophomore Jack Faraone has stepped up and Fandalor has improved. But we need more help," said Foringer. You can catch the team in action playing their last three games of the season home against Clarksburg on February 12, away at John F. Kennedy on February 16, and home against Tuscarora on February 18.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PHIL FABRIZIO
DEFENSE ON THREE: Junior John Fierstein surprises the Seneca Valley player when he steals the ball right from his hands.



Poms dazzle judges, look to place first at Counties

By **SAM KIRSCH**
Editor-in-Chief

Though often unrepresented in the QO sports world, the Quince Orchard Varsity Poms team has been dancing and flaring their way through the year, led by a combination of strong leadership, choreography, work ethic, and raw talent.

This year's team is composed of 16 members, consisting of four freshmen, four sophomores, four juniors, and four seniors, already showcasing the team's consistency. Out of the four seniors, three captains have emerged as Halle Grossett, Shelby Hardy, and Rachel Sneeringer. These captains have led the team through physically demanding practices and provided a model of excellence to their fellow pompom-wielding teammates.

The Poms' season is essentially two parts, with the fall primarily focused on performing at football games and the winter filled with pom competitions, or 'pompetitions.' The former acts as a fun warm up for the girls, where the team chemistry is created. "Football season is always fun and we can come up with some really creative routines," said Grossett.

Football season also serves as a valuable forum of rehearsal. "We think of football season as a practice because we get to learn techniques and teach other girls new moves," said junior Kasonde Chisaka. "It also serves as a practice for performing in front of large crowds and the student body."

Evidently, the Poms take their sport seriously, and recognize that the only way to place in competitions is to put in the necessary work. The team started their practices early in August, rehearsing their

routines and perfecting new moves for two hours a day Monday through Friday, often holding Saturday practices before competitions. However, the ladies' dedication doesn't stop there. "Recently with snow days and breaks preventing us from being able to practice as a team, we would send videos of us doing our dance to get feedback and help," senior captain Shelby Hardy said.

Poms season doesn't truly start until their first competition, with the annual county competition serving as the grand finale. Similar to other sports, Poms is divided into four divisions, with Division 1 boasting the top teams such as Sherwood and Damascus, down to Division 4 where the teams have quality routines yet still have much to improve. The QO Poms team has remained in Division 2 for the last few years, and are joined this season by Wootton, Churchill, Paint Branch, Walter Johnson, BCC, Clarksburg, and Einstein.

Competitions, however, are a thing of their own. Each team performs a six minute routine and are scored by up to six judges on five different categories. The categories—choreography, technical dance, group execution, overall presentation, and deductions—ultimately add up to a final score, with the highest scoring team winning. "The hardest part is keeping up our endurance. Through running and workouts every day we are able to do a six minute nonstop routine including every style of dance," said Hardy. Aside from the team score, there is an award for best captain performance as well as the spirit award, where the team with the greatest fan support wins a trophy. The competitions

GO, GO, GO: Senior Shelby Hardy performs a showstopping solo routine for the raucous fans at Damascus. PHOTO COURTESY OF LAURA HARDY



are nothing short of intense for both players and the crowd alike.

Leading into the season, the girls had lofty but reasonable expectations. "Our goals at the beginning of the year were to challenge ourselves with difficult choreography, work together, and ultimately win counties," said Grossett. Thus far, the team has placed in the top half in each of their competitions, placing second, second, and fourth in their chronological events. Both Grossett and Hardy agreed in who their toughest competition would be for this season: "Our biggest competitors would have to be Wootton and Churchill," said Grossett. "[They] have continued to rank high as they have both come first before us at least once." Both teams have been demoted from Division 1, which adds to their intimidation.

In their first competition of the year at Northwest, the team impressed the judges with their hip hop

and overall performance, placing second and establishing themselves as one of the top teams in the division. Hardy also helped win the choreography award, a big win for the Cougars. "Being awarded the choreography award was one of the best moments of my life," said Hardy. "Knowing that something I put my heart and soul into was seen as the best made my day even better." Wootton came in first and BCC followed QO, placing third. However, controversy ensued as the team's score of 616.5 was just 0.5 points away from first, due to a penalty for excessive thrusting.

In their second competition at Blake, the girls proved to be

consistent, placing second yet again. Clarksburg won first, and BCC placed third, proving to all teams that there will be no clear front runner for future competitions. The team was once again close to the elusive first place trophy, this time just one point off the lead.

The final competition so far took place at Damascus. Expectations were not reached in the event, unfortunately, as QO turned in a fourth place finish. "Energy-wise, we just need to bring it up," said Chisaka. "The long break might have been a factor. We just need to clean everything up before we perform." All reasons aside, the team is continuing to take the result in stride, using it as extra motivation for the county competition.

Throughout the

competitions, the most debatable of awards is arguably the spirit award, given to the best and most passionate of fan bases at each event. While the Red Army failed to win the award in the previous two events, the squad came through in Damascus, riling up the gym and claiming the prize. "Spirit is a big part of every competition," said Hardy. "QO is known for being one of the best student sections in MoCo."

The final competition of the year, the mother of all events, is Counties, which takes place at Blair tomorrow, February 13. QO, along with Wootton, Churchill, and Clarksburg, are expected to be the top teams, but no one will know for certain until it's all said and done. Next year's team is poised to be strong, but it will look much different due to a larger number of members. "A big team may not be a bad thing, however, as we can make it look good and clean, which the judges love," stated Chisaka.

Swim & Dive looks to advance deep into playoffs

By **LOGAN FEINGOLD**
Sports Managing Editor

The Quince Orchard swim and dive teams are on the prowl for playoff success this year. The teams are practicing hard in order to advance as far as they can in the county and state playoffs, where the Cougars will definitely be a force to be reckoned with.

The diving squad is doing fantastic this winter, scoring many points in their meets. Cougar divers are scored based on how well they enter the water, how far away they land from the diving board, and how robust the start of their dive looks. However, most competition dives are based on flipping. Divers also practice outside the water and do intense

conditioning in order to remain in top physical shape. Junior and team captain Joseph Canova related how his favorite thing about being on the dive team is "trying to see how many flips I can do, generally pushing myself to

"We're scoring a lot of points for the team overall and hoping to win a lot of meets."

try harder dives." Canova is also excited about the team's prospects this year. "The team is doing really well," said Canova. "We're scoring a lot of points for the team overall and hoping to win a lot of meets." The team looks set for playoff success this winter.

Both teams are doing their best to maintain the team's culture of success. Although the girls team features many more underclassmen this year compared to last year, both teams are preparing hard for divisionals and looking

to advance throughout the state playoffs. Coach Todd Garner has created drills for the team in practice in order to better prepare for meets. Despite their inexperience this year, junior team captain Maddy Zarchin believed the girls' team is "gaining more

and more experience and confidence as the season continues." The team is looking to score well at relays in the state and metro competitions later in the season. The boys team is also doing well, and is currently one of the higher ranked teams in their division.

The team mixes a competitive atmosphere at practices and meets with humor between swimmers in order to better increase their team chemistry. Junior and team captain Griffin Mann believed the team's 4-1 record will put them "in a good position for divisionals." Even though they have had some close calls at meets, that 4-1 record means the squad will be in a good position for divisionals and advancing deeper into the playoffs.

Since time in the pool is precious, weekly practices for the team are held from 5 AM to 6 AM. Many swimmers have different methods for trying to complete their schoolwork and waking up this early, with Zarchin "finish[ing] homework earlier on nights before morning practices in order to get to bed earlier" and Mann mentally preparing for "school the next day knowing that [he] will have to wake up at four in the morning."

With the swim and dive teams scoring a lot of points and placing well at meets, the Cougars look to be in a great position for the upcoming divisional, state, and metro competitions later this year. Be sure to cheer the Cougars on as they swim towards success!



QO girls basketball continues its rapid ascension

Odom highlights a young, up-tempo team looking to reach new heights

By **HUNTER BOOTHE**
Sports Editor

The QO girls basketball team is on track to finish with their best record in years. The Cougars are currently 11-7 and trending upwards. Although the season is still young, the team already owns a long list of accomplishments, including a season sweep of Gaithersburg, the program's first win over Damascus since 2003, a school record for points in a game (82) vs. Seneca Valley, and last, but most importantly a back to back 10 win season for the first time since the 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 seasons.

The Cougars are led by sophomore floor general Jordan Odom, who averages 16 points per game.

Odom has had a fantastic season, building off of last year's performance, which included a 37-point game vs. Gaithersburg-- a school record. This season alone she has turned in stellar performances vs. Gaithersburg (32 points) and Seneca Valley (9

assists). Those statistics are good for fifth and fourth in school history, respectively. With defenses keying in on Odom, her teammates are given space to flourish. This can be seen in the Cougars' balanced scoring attack. Seven players average 6 points or more, and nine average at least 4 points per game. Junior guard Amanda Bishop believes that this is a product of numerous things, including quality ball movement, team chemistry, and defense. Bishop stated that the team "[shares] the ball well" and has "great team chemistry," while they get momentum from their defense which "transfers to offense that helps us score."

Even with their many successes, the team is still young and consequently has struggled with consistency. Riding a 3-game winning streak, the Cougars lost to 5-9 Northwest by 16 on February 5, the same Northwest team that they had easily overpowered a few weeks earlier. Head coach Chris Campbell recognized



PHOTO COURTESY OF PHIL FABRIZIO/PHOTOLOAF.COM

PLAYING WITH PACE: Junior *Giulia Sanmartin (31)* tries to create off the dribble against Springbrook. this, as he said, "We are still a young team that is growing." Campbell noted that there is room for improvement in areas such as rebounding and finishing around the rim.

Still, the positives far outweigh the negatives for the Cougars. Campbell lists defense, shooting, and decision making as strengths that have clearly improved over the course of the season.

"We have more [defensive strategies] we can

turn to and the team is getting stronger playing together on the defensive end" said Campbell.

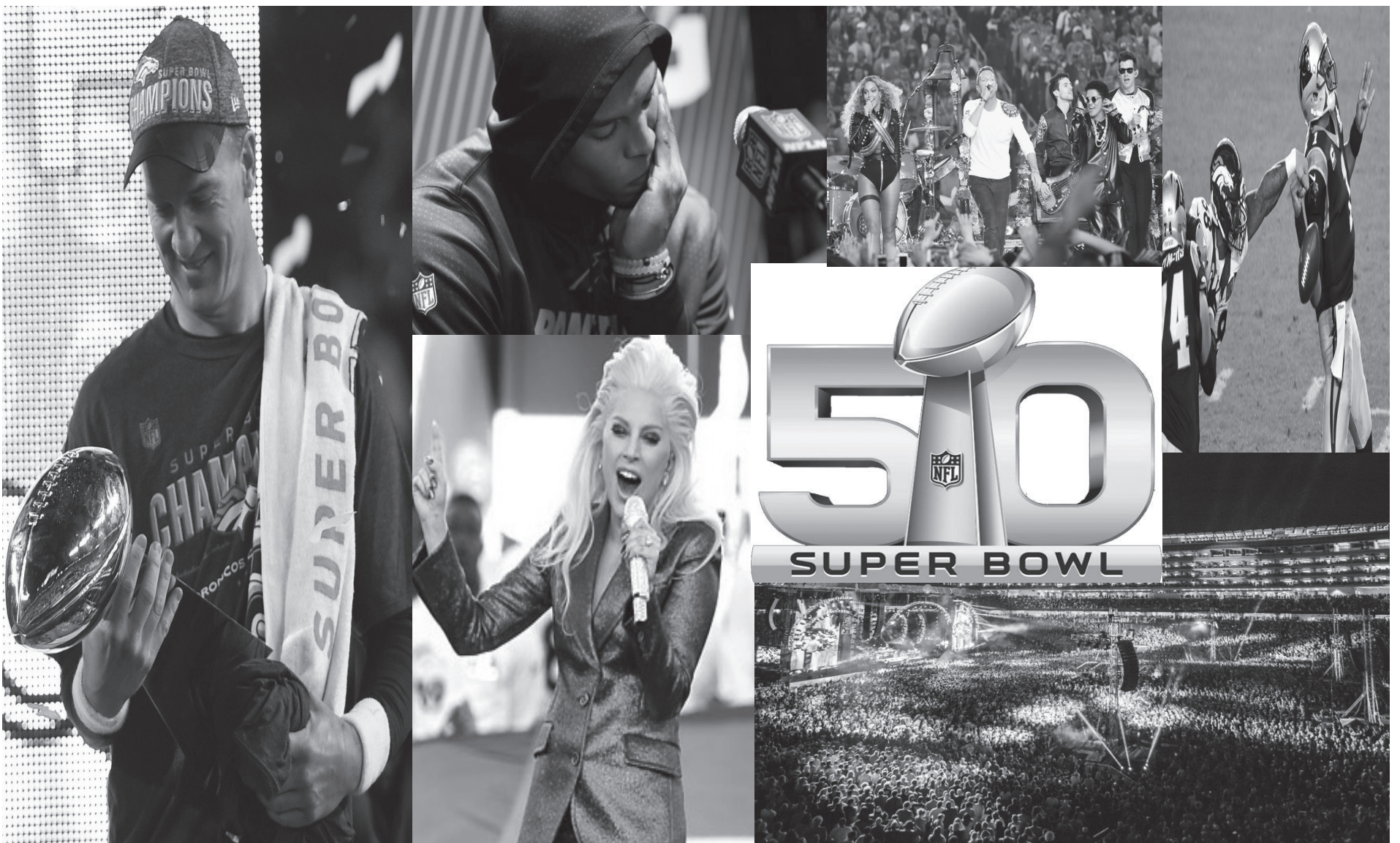
On the topic of decision making, Campbell said that his team is "making better decisions with the basketball and [is learning] scouting reports, working hard to shut down the top players on opposing teams."

The program has come a long way from two seasons ago, when the Cougars

finished with a 3-20 record. Things began to turn around last season, as the team improved to an even 11-11. With nine players returning from last year's team, a winning attitude remained in the program, and it appears to have manifested itself in this impressive season.

With the state tournament only weeks away, the Cougars have a lot to play for, and the potential to make this a truly special season.

From Gaga to game on: sights of Super Bowl 50



From left to right: (1) Peyton Manning holds the Lombardi trophy; (2) Cam Newton sulks in defeat; (3) Coldplay performs alongside Beyonce and Bruno Mars; (4) Lady Gaga sings the National Anthem; (5) Super Bowl 50 logo; (6) Super Bowl halftime show

PHOTOS COURTESY OF: GETTY IMAGES (1), FOX SPORTS (2), BILLBOARD (3), CBS SPORTS (4), JUST JARED (5), DOGO NEWS(6)



Quince Orchard rolls its way to bocce states

Team uses positive attitude to create wins and meaningful friendships

By Jamie Fink
Sports Editor

The Quince Orchard Cougars rolled into the bocce playoffs with a record of 2-3. Coached by Greg Benas, they practiced twice a week and had one game a week. The bocce team is very inclusive, with both special needs and neurotypical students, which creates a fun, positive, and competitive environment for all students to enjoy the game of bocce.

In bocce, there are a total of eight balls, four for each team. The team consists of four players. The game begins with a coin toss and the

winner gets to decide if they want to roll first or second. The object of the game is to get the heavy ball closest to

team's focus is not hitting the other team's balls and only getting closer to the pallina. "The team gets along so

got along very well with one another, hanging out before and after practices. They all had the same goal of having fun and winning games. "I like[d] making new friends throughout the season," said sophomore player Allyson Hirsch. "I met a lot of new people and made a lot of new relationships."

QO won in the regular season against Northwest and Seneca Valley, proving their hard work and determination paid off. They did, however, lose to Watkins Mill, Clarksburg, and Damascus.

Sophomore Emily Kramer stated that the team "work[ed] really hard and push[ed] each other to do

"The team gets along so well together and always has fun. I was always excited for practices."

- Abby Cohn

the little ball, known as the pallina, and the team with the most balls closest to the pallina wins. Players either toss or roll the ball across the floor, which results in many different strategies to win the game. However, the

well together and always has fun," stated sophomore Abby Cohn. "I was always excited for practice day to see all my teammates."

The Cougars have had good team camaraderie throughout the season and

Bocce BALL!



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLIP ART

Northwest, and Clarksburg. QO took the victory from Watkins Mill and fell to Northwest in the next round. The Cougars finished their season placing 4th overall.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLIP ART

[their] best all the time." She, like all other members, was proud to represent QO this year on the bocce team.

The team had been working extremely hard and put a lot of effort to improving their game for playoffs, which were played on Saturday, January 30. They competed against Watkins Mills,

ATHLETE OF THE MONTH QUESTIONNAIRE

BOYS BASKETBALL

Ulric Fandalor '17



Junior Ulric Fandalor has stepped up big for the team mid-way through the season. He competes every game, grabbing rebounds and pounding the board.

SWIM AND DIVE

Katie Coulson '16



Senior Katie Coulson is a very spirited competitor. She gets the team pumped for every meet and has the attitude to motivate her peers.

INDOOR TRACK

Maya Jacobson '17



Junior Maya Jacobson is a strong runner on the indoor track team. She's a leader during practice and always pushes herself during the meets.

POMS

Halle Grossett '16

Senior captain Halle Grossett is a three year member on the Poms team. She leads the poms in their routines, always with a smile on her face and an attitude to be the best.



GIRLS BASKETBALL

Emily Baumgartner '16

Emily Baumgartner is one of only two seniors on this year's basketball team. Her hard work at practice and in the off-season allowed her to be one of the leading scorers on the team.



WRESTLING

Tyler Enceneat '16

Senior Tyler Enceneat is a big leader on the wrestling team. He wrestles in both the 220 and heavy weight class. Tyler is a very hard worker and puts the team first.



THE PROWLER ASKED THESE ATHLETES THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS...

	Ulric Fandalor	Halle Grossett	Katie Coulson	Emily Baumgartner	Maya Jacobson	Tyler Enceneat
Who is your Valentine?	Nancy Kelly	Not Carson Knight	Gina Wingate and Hoodie Allen	Hannah Spector <3	M i t c h	Ms. Trettel
What is your idea of the perfect date?	Horseback ride on the beach	Watching Step Brothers and eating pizza	Watching my boyfriend on Broadway	Anywhere with Hannah	Ordering chinese food and watching scary movies	Netflix and chill
What would be the worst date ever?	Pizza Hut	Getting stuck in the snow on Valentine's day	A day spent without Cava	Anywhere with Shayne	If my date threw up on me	If I ever forgot my wallet
Chocolate or flowers?	Flowers	Flowers	Chocolate in the shape of flowers	Yes	Flowers!!!	Both
Which teacher would you give flowers to on Valentine's Day?	G o s h i m e	Mr. Mikulski because he's my fav	Ms. Stein	Ms. C-K <3	Mr. Pelkey	Goshime
What would your chalk heart candy message say?	It's hard to love out there in the streets	You're cute ;)	Roasted?	KIK?	Warm me up	U ugly