

The Prowler



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Attacks in Paris, Lebanon, Nigeria leave world on edge

By **LAKSHMI SHYAMAKRISHNAN**
News Editor

On November 13, the city of Paris, France was assaulted with coordinated mass shootings, suicide bombings, and hostage situations. The attacks were the deadliest France has seen since WWII, leaving approximately 130 people dead.

France had been on high alert for serious threats since the shooting of the satirical newspaper company *Charlie Hebdo* in January, but this was a sudden outburst of attacks. The entire assault lasted about 35 minutes, hitting a music venue—the Bataclan, where the attackers held 89 hostages, and was the scene of the bloodiest attack—cafes, and restaurants.

After the attacks ceased, the question remained of who was behind them, until the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, otherwise known as ISIL, claimed responsibility. ISIL stated

that the attack was in retaliation for the French assault Operation Chammal, which was a series of airstrikes sent to Iraq and Syria in September 2014 to stop the spread of the Islamic State and assist the Iraqi army. Further retaliation

of the French military commenced two days after the Paris attacks to continue Operation Chammal. It was the largest airstrike of the operation, and on November 18, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the suspected planner of the Paris attacks, was killed.

France has declared a state of emergency, but the entire country is beginning to recuperate from the attacks, slowly returning to their daily ways of life. Two weeks after the deadly attacks, France held a national day of mourning

centered in Paris, where a minute of silence was administered. The president of France, Francois Hollande, read aloud the names of the victims, who came from 17 different countries and were mostly younger than 35 years of age.

President Barack Obama visited Paris in the aftermath of the attacks to pay tribute to the victims and their families. Accompanied by President Hollande and Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo, he laid a flower on the makeshift memorial at the Bataclan. With America's strong ties to the French nation, it is no wonder that America's sympathies are directed towards Paris. Even Facebook showed its respect to the nation by offering members a choice to change their profile pictures to a French flag.

However, most people are still unaware of the various other attacks that hit Lebanon and Nigeria in the past month and were said to be committed by ISIL as well.

Lebanon mourned the 43 people killed in the twin bombings in Beirut, responsibility for which was claimed by ISIL. Two suicide bombers carried out the largest and deadliest bombings to hit the nation since their civil war in 1975-



“WE HAVE NO FEAR, LONG LIVE FRANCE”: Memorials were a common occurrence in the streets of Paris and around the world, as the globe mourns the loss of those killed in the shocking events in the French capital on November 13, 2015.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN MEES/CTV NEWS

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It's getting hot in here; temperatures inside QO on the rise

By **ANNA GOOREVICH**
News Managing Editor

Outside, the wintery weather is rapidly approaching, forcing students to pile on jackets for the frosty walk from the parking lot to the school doors. However, upon entering the school, students encounter a terrifying reality: not the realization that you forgot to finish last night's homework, or the sound of the first period bell. It's the slow drops of sweat that begin to accumulate on students' foreheads, or more simply put, the heat.

The climate in the school has reached intense heights this winter. Many classrooms in the school, especially on the third floor, have reportedly reached temperatures soaring over 80 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit, undoubtedly creating harsh environments for students and staff alike. Senior Jenny Baker recollected on one extremely uncomfortable day when her physics class “was unbearable. It was so hot and everyone was sweating.”

The horror stories don't stop there. “I took a math test in a 90-some degree [room]

and it was one of the worst experiences I've ever had at this school,” said junior Patty Dirlam. “Our temperature problem has the ability to transform an innocent classroom into the burning depths of Hell.”

It's not only students who have complained about the extreme temperatures in the school. Teachers across the building also grumble over the uncomfortable conditions. “The last full week before Thanksgiving was pretty bad all over the building,” said science teacher Joseph Boettcher. “My room was around 86 degrees, but there were other rooms that got over 90 degrees.”

While the climate inside the building is mainly warm, students have noted that the temperatures can be very unstable. “The classrooms are so unpredictable,” said Baker. “On Monday, the physics room was so hot, but on Tuesday it was more cold...I never know how to dress.”

Additionally, the climate in the building doesn't only change from day to day, but also from floor to floor. “The math hallway...is nearly always too hot and never too cold,” said Dirlam. “Classrooms

“Extreme temperatures make learning incredibly difficult. It is very hard to focus when all you can think about is how to jump out the window of your classroom without hurting yourself too badly.”

—Patty Dirlam

on the first floor, however, can be too cold and rarely too hot.” These uncertain temperatures forced Dirlam to humorously compare Quince Orchard's heating system to “a temperamental five-year-old. It has mood swings and is unpredictable.”

One of the most notable effects of the extreme temperatures in the building is the harsh learning environment it forms. Dirlam stated that the heat “make[s] learning incredibly difficult,” and also notes that, while in a high-pressure testing situation, “adding heat to test nerves is just traumatic.”

Teachers also have been taking note of how the high temperatures affect learning. “I don't think anyone is at their best when the temperatures are as high as they were the past few weeks,” said Boettcher. “I know I'm not at my best and I notice that the students do not perform as well as they can either.”

As more and more students struggle to pay attention in their classes, severe consequences could potentially occur, such as sleeping through class, declining grades, and more. According to the Washington

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News

Terrorist shootings in San Bernardino, California have increased the country's awareness of ISIS.

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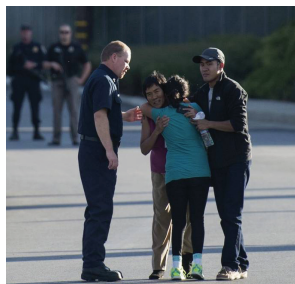


PHOTO COURTESY OF YANG LEI

Features

This year's winter-themed Starbucks cups have caused public controversy due to their plain designs.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF STARBUCKS

Sports

Varsity basketball gets a solid start to the season as competition begins to heat up.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF PHIL FABRIZIO



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Dozens killed and wounded in California shooting

By **ANDY GOLDSTEIN**
Editor-In-Chief

On December 2, a mass killing took place in San Bernardino, California at a Department of Public Health holiday party, in which a married couple armed with an arsenal of weaponry, killed 14 people and injured 21 others.

The shooters, Tashfeen Malik and Syed Farook, were a married couple, living in San Bernardino. Farook, a health inspector for the Department of Public Health, was born in Illinois to a family of Pakistani immigrants. He traveled to Saudi Arabia twice, once to take the annual pilgrimage to Mecca asked of all Muslims once in their lifetime, and the second time to marry his future wife, Tashfeen Malik. Malik was born in Pakistan, but immigrated to Saudi Arabia at the age of 20. She came to the United States on a fiancée visa and became a permanent legal resident in 2013.

The couple left their six-

month old daughter with Farook's mother the morning of the attack, claiming they were going to a doctor's appointment. Farook instead attended a staff meeting turned holiday party for his work at the Inland Regional Center, which 75 to 80 people attended. Coworkers report that Farook had been quiet, and reportedly left the party early under "angry" circumstances, according to the San Bernardino Police Department. Just before 11 a.m., Farook and Malik entered the building wearing black tactical outfits and ski masks, armed with semi-automatic rifles, pistols, and pipe bombs. The couple opened fire on those in attendance, killing or injuring dozens. Emergency personnel received a 911 call about an active shooting, and police arrived on the scene four minutes afterwards. Witnesses say suspects fled in a black SUV, later identified as a black Ford Expedition.

Upon arrival at the crime scene, law enforcement began evacuating survivors to a public golf course across the street, where the wound-

ed would be initially examined and treated by medical personnel before being sent to a nearby hospital. While clearing the building, police discovered three pipe bombs, set to go off by remote control, which failed to detonate. The FBI reports the bombs were likely meant to target first responders. The San Bernardino County Police Department began a manhunt for the shooters, joined by the Sheriff's Department, the California Highway Patrol, the Fontana Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and the FBI. A neighbor of Farook's identified him by name, and police began monitoring his residence after discovering he had recently rented a car fitting the description of the shooter's vehicle.

Upon arrival at the couple's residence, police saw the suspects' vehicle driving away, and the officers requested assistance in pursuit, according to the LA Times. A few minutes later, a call goes out

to all available officers, warning that shots were fired. Malik reportedly fired with a pistol through the back window of the SUV. The suspects fled the car and took cover, engaging in a shootout with 23 law enforcement officers. The suspects fired 76 rifle rounds at police, hitting one officer in his left leg. The officers fired about 380 rounds, and both suspects are killed after sustaining multiple gunshot wounds.

Immediately, speculation ensued about potential connections to the Islamic State or any other prominent terrorist factions. According to the FBI, Malik had made a Facebook post pledging allegiance to the Islamic State, and had made a similar statement during the shooting itself, witnesses reported. Some information is still unknown, but the FBI believes that the attack was planned by the couple in support of the terrorist group, without any real contact or assignment from Islamic State themselves. ISIS released a statement praising the shooters, referring to the couple as "supporters" rather than "soldiers" or "fighters", as they did with previous attacks.

Global Terror Attacks Thousands killed in bombings

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1990. A would-be suicide bomber, who survived the attack, relinquished inside information to Lebanese authorities, stating he and three other attackers were sent by ISIL from Syria a few days before the attacks commenced. The Lebanese intelligence is still working to verify the suspect's claims.

In the Nigerian city of Yola, approximately 32 people were killed in an explosion in a fruit market on November 19. Attacks on Nigeria consisted of three weeks of bombings, as suicide attacks grew ever more common, two of which destroyed mosques, killing 42 people and injuring several. None have claimed responsibility for the attacks, but according to news reports, the blame will most likely be put on Boko Haram, a terrorist group that promotes Islamic

Law. After six years of existence, Boko Haram has killed some 20,000 people, its attacks having spread to neighboring countries as well, like Mali and Kenya.

Nigeria's military is attempt-

World leaders are coming together to find a solution to this problem, among many others.

ing to hinder its progress as best it can, as it has foiled several of Boko Haram's new attempts by destroying their camps through air raids and ground attacks.

Recuperations are slowly taking place in these countries around the world, including Syria and Iraq. At the moment, world leaders are coming together to find a solution to this problem, among many others, facing us today.

QO temperature fluctuates

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PAGE 1

Post, researchers who studied the effects of increasing temperatures on test scores found that "math performance declines linearly above 21C(70F), with the effect statistically significant beyond 26C(79F)," meaning that grades drop as the heat increases.

As complaints have increased, debate on what QO can do to help the harsh conditions has become common among students and staff. "Unfortunately, I don't know if there is anything QO can do about the temperatures, as [they] are set from the central office," says Boettcher. "Administration purchased in fans for classrooms,

which was helpful and showed that they heard our concerns."

Dirlam adds that QO "[has] put thermometers in problem classrooms and seems to be making an effort in fixing the problem ... We'll have to see where they go with the data they're collecting."

QO students have bravely been coping with the heat by employing several strategies. Attempting to create makeshift fans using loose-leaf paper is one way of pushing through the painful heat, but Baker advises students to "dress in layers," which can be a make-or-break decision in how comfortable one is throughout the day.

However, dramatic temperatures

have caused others to consider more radical decisions. "I would recommend bringing an inflatable baby pool to school every day... leave it in the lobby and turn it into a hot tub or ice bath, depending on what the school is feeling like each particular day," says Dirlam. "Take a dip in your kiddie pool between classes to help you power through your day."

Overall, students and staff have had some success in dealing with the heat. The addition of fans and the careful dressing in layers has made the hot days just a little more bearable. On the positive side, the temperatures are sure to keep students nice and toasty in preparation for the holiday season.

Annual school projects donate to many in the area

By **DYLAN KEARNEY**
News Managing Editor

Every year, QO students and teachers have had the opportunity to not only enjoy the holiday season, but to make sure everyone else enjoys it as well. The Giving tree and the canned food drive are two ways to give back to community members that would otherwise not receive much.

The Giving Tree in the main lobby is a tree with cards that have community members names on them that students and teachers can donate to. They choose a card with a specific person and their needs and then go shopping for gifts that to be given to students who would otherwise not receive much. The tree has over 50 cards on it, each with a person and their gift wishes on

it. It is completely anonymous and coordinated through the counseling office where they choose people to donate to. Donating and shopping for someone else can be a very enjoyable for the recipients and for the students giving. "This fundraiser is a great way to give back to the community and to make someone's day," said junior Korianna Holloway. "I also love shopping, especially for other people!" After all of the gifts were brought, the counseling office contacted the parents who received the gifts to give to their students for the holidays. All of the gifts were wrapped by the SGA for the students on December 16th.

Computer Science teacher Colleen Adams runs the Giving Tree and this was her third year helping out and her second year being in charge of the project. "Giving back this way is great be-

cause we are giving to people in the community in about the closest way possible", she said. She also helps by organizing the information with the counselors and supervising the video that shared about the donation. The actual cards on the tree were made by students in the QO Project and also Adam's computer science interns. "I think a lot of students don't realize that there are people in their own community who don't have very much, and this event sheds a light on that," Adams said. "Not only are people donating to a great cause but they are also becoming aware of the need to help in their own school and community."

The canned food drive was another way students and teachers gave back by donating cans of food to people in the community. It was organized and run by the SGA who put a box for cans

in every classroom and the three winning classes who donated the most won a pancake lunch. "We were pretty surprised that we won third place," said science teacher Teddi Bewernitz. "Not many people donated because it wasn't really prioritized. I think if boxes were brought around during lunch or a few students went to classrooms to pick up cans it would help. It could also be held during spirit week, where the class who would donate the most cans could receive points." The fundraiser was successful though, donated.... Any little bit helps though. Junior Darya Malak took the time to donate cans to support her community. "It's great to donate because all of the effort adds up." Students and teachers taking the time to donate has continually given many people gifts to better enjoy the holiday season, while reminding everyone that their are many people in our own community that anyone can help or support.



Teachers react to cancellation of final exams

QOHS faculty questions validity of new MCPS policy

By SOPHIE LANE
News Editor

On Tuesday, November 10, The Board of Education accepted earlier provisions, changing grading methods and no longer requiring students to take end-of-semester exams.

Starting in the 2016-2017 school year, the semester exams will be replaced with centrally-developed marking period assessments. These are intended to better reflect students' achievement and progress throughout the semester.

Although students won't have to sit and take a two-hour test for every core class, a big portion of

their grade will be based off of their scores on the assessments which may include tests, research, papers, and projects.

Many teachers, from high school in particular, tried to voice their opinion against this cancellation, citing the use of final exams in college. By taking more tests now, students learn skills that can be helpful later. Scores from PARCC tests taken in the 2014-2015 school year reflected poorly on the student's test-taking abilities.

Jamie Andrews, an English teacher at Quince Orchard, is against this decision because semester exams "give students an idea of what happens in college,

"Semester exams give students an idea of what happens in college, because [they] will have to take the two-hour exams."

-Jamie Andrews

because you will have to take the two-hour exams." Additionally, Andrews feels that the Board of Education's attitude towards the teachers is reflected through their attempts to understand the teacher's opinions. They sent out a survey, and after collecting the responses, decided to finalize the decision despite opposition from teachers.

Andrews believes the Board is hearing what teachers are saying but ignoring their opinions. Furthermore, she said: "I don't know what the assessments will look like, so I don't know what the endgame is." Overall, her confusion helps illustrate many teachers' displeased attitudes towards the Board's decision.

Math teacher Sarah Straus also voiced her displeasure towards the decision. "I am against getting rid of final exams; I think that only having students take an accumulative exam with PARCC and AP doesn't hold them accountable for their work overall." She also states, "Whether the school board believes it or

not, math classes in college are exam-based." She has reached out to Board members in many ways. "On Twitter, I emailed board members, and I also responded to the survey that was basically ignored by the board members."

For the future, Straus doesn't have high hopes for the quarterly exams that the county is going to install. So, she plans on really focusing on "making our unit assessments true cumulative experiences."

The change will install quarterly assessments that are intended to better reflect the students' progress made throughout the quarter, and hopefully overall increase the material students learn.

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QO Film Society makes movies while watching them too

By **LAKSHMI SHYAMAKRISHNAN**
News Editor

For anyone interested in becoming a filmmaker in the future, or if you just like movies, the Quince Orchard Film Society may be a promising extracurricular this year.

Originally founded during the 2014-2015 school year, the club was created in order to show an appreciation for movies and film and allow students to work together on all aspects of filmmaking, like brainstorming ideas, writing scripts, and blocking and recording scenes. The club had some difficulties at the start, due to a lack of publicity, but luckily the club's members overcame these circumstances.

Senior Olivia Pritchard became the club's president at the end of last year, and she hit the ground running with brand-new ideas on how to expand the club and make it something great. The club expects to see a

multitude of projects arising in the near future. "We focus a lot of our energy on creating short films, which we're starting to get into this year," Pritchard said. "We've already started writing a few, and hopefully we're going to get to put those into production soon." The short films will be on a variety of topics, based on submissions from members of the club, ranging from spoofs of movie trailers to silent pictures.

The members of the club are putting hard work into making these short films, but they also have moments of relaxation during club meetings as well. "We are trying to have a movie night," said Pritchard. "Then we'll have a meeting and have discussions about the movies, how we connect to them, and...the significance... of certain elements."

Pritchard isn't the only one manning the club, though. Along with her are sophomore Luke Tittle (Vice President); seniors Mari Miller and



PHOTO BY LAKSHMI SHYAMAKRISHNAN

FILM SOCIETY MEETING: Meghan Ritter, Kate Threat, and Olivia Pritchard, some of the founding members of the club, meet once a week to discuss future plans.

Kate Threat (Co-Historians/Secretaries); and freshman Meghan Ritter (Events Coordinator), who all help make the club run smoothly. "I joined the club because I like movies," Tittle said. "I have an interest in creating them, so this is a good place for that." The film society welcomes people

with any level of ability and interest; there is no need for anyone to already be an amazing filmmaker.

The club has almost completed a few films which will be shown at the end-of-the-year mini film festival. "We are currently working on a short film about people trying to come up with a short

film," Miller said. "We're just hoping to have people see the inside of what goes on in Film Society." The club hopes that this satirical concept will bring laughs to the audience. The process of making a film is difficult enough, but by displaying it in the film, it helps compound the ingenuity of the club.

"It's basically a film incorporation of our creative process," Threat said.

The club is currently on the prowl for the next Steven Spielberg. They meet every other Wednesday in room 333, and more information can be found on the Facebook group and any questions can be answered by an officer.

Trudeau's Liberal Party takes the helm in Canadian politics

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

In the October election, Canadian voters ousted Prime Minister Stephen Harper and the Conservative Party as the Liberal Party won a shocking majority in Parliament, electing Justin Trudeau to be their next Prime Minister. Since the stunning election, the new government has not wasted any time beginning the long road to reform.

Trudeau, a relatively young politician at 43, is the son of legendary Canadian PM Pierre Elliot Trudeau, who dominated Canadian politics from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s. The former originally shied away from politics, only deciding to pursue a place in the Liberal Party and eventually in office after his father's death in 2000. Political opponents have consistently criticized his youth, citing his inexperience as a disqualifying trait for office. After being elected as a member of Parliament in 2008, Trudeau was seen early on as a potential candidate for party leadership. He declined to run that year, but announced

his candidacy for Liberal leadership in 2012, winning by a landslide the next year.

After nearly a decade of a Conservative government, Trudeau's centrist platform drew a shocking amount of support to the previously ailing Liberal Party. Much of the Liberals' policy plans include chipping away at the conservative legislation put in place under the previous administration, including Harper's infamous proposed ban on wearing veils, like the niqab, for religious reasons. Trudeau has also proposed tax increases on Canadians earning more than \$200,000 a year, while cutting the taxes of middle-class earners. His spending plan includes bolstering infrastructure and creating a short-term deficit to boost the economy. The young PM has also promised to begin work "right away" to legalize marijuana across the country. Centrist reform like this resonated with the public enough to oust the decreasingly popular Conservative Party and stunt the growth of the previously rising, further-left New Democratic Party.

After nine years of leadership, Stephen Harper and his Conservative

government underwent a sharp decline in popularity. The Conservative Party took a beating in the election, winning only 29% of the seats in Parliament, the lowest in more than a decade. Political analysts noted the strong anti-Conservative sentiment this election cycle, with many Liberal, NDP, and Green supporters

If all goes according to plan, by the end of Trudeau's term, former PM Harper's legislative impact will be severely minimalized.

taking an "anyone but Harper" mentality.

The new government, comprised of Prime Minister Trudeau and his cabinet, has unveiled a 300-point plan of core policy ideas they wish to pursue over the course of their term, at least 50 of which

specifically undo some of the laws and mandates put in place under the previous government. Some of these include halting the shutdown of veterans' services offices, allowing scientists and diplomats to speak publicly about their work and instructing ministers to cooperate with the media.

Each of Trudeau's ministers have been tasked with scrapping some portion of the Harper legacy. Finance Minister Bill Morneau will be targeting Harper's altered tax brackets, Heritage Minister Melanie Joly has been instructed to reverse funding cuts to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Democratic Reform Minister Maryam Monsef will be attempting to scrap several provisions of the controversial Fair Elections Act, and Immigration Minister John McCallum will facilitate the resettlement of 25,000 Syrian refugees and attempt to repeal provisions of the Citizenship Act, which allows the government to strip Canadians of dual-citizenship. If all goes according to the plan outlined by Trudeau, by the end of Trudeau's term, former PM Harper's legislative impact will be severely minimalized.

Students enhance careers, join Technical Honors Society

By **MATT LOWINGER**
News Editor

With its first induction ceremony on November 5, the Quince Orchard chapter of the National Technical Honors Society has begun to honor student achievement and leadership in career and technical education, promote educational excellence, and enhance career opportunities for their members.

Treasurer and senior Sydney Maxwell said that the Honor Society is a "culmination of the past four years of high school." In order to become a member, one must have completed at least two

years of programming, gaming, networking, child development, or Project Lead The Way. In a short period of time, Maxwell has "strengthened [her] leadership skills [and] developed [her] strengths that are continuing to [her] major in college and other future endeavors." Maxwell credited teacher Colleen Adams and her peers in the club for "providing a strong support system." Students who might need assistance in some of the coursework previously listed can benefit from student tutoring. Maxwell believes the National Technical Honors Society is a beneficial service due to the dedicated members and sponsors.

Senior Thomas Good was one of the first members to be accepted into the honor society. "I was looking for an honors society offered at Quince Orchard for my future major, engineering," he said. Good loves the National Science and Math Honors Societies, but the NTHS is specific to his major. "The NTHS has given me a good base for my future career. Employers will see I am one of the founding members of this honors society, which will make me stand out among the rest," said Good. As Good applies to some of the most prestigious institutions in the country like MIT and Yale, he looks forward to carrying his dedication

for the club into his future college.

Senior Jason Adle has been awarded the position of secretary within the National Technical Honors Society. Adle "keeps track of meetings" in addition to "making sure the members are in the loop with peer tutoring." He is intrigued with the technical world, which was one of his motives for applying. In addition, Adle believes the tutoring services offered through the National Technical Honors Society are an essential tool in order to do well in the subjects included, because the students in the honors society have excelled in these courses. He thinks it is great to see "students

who are strongly involved in technical classes" within his own community. Adle looks forward to seeing the progression of the club in the following years.

The National Technical Honors Society is looking to expand its presence within the community. The mission statement outlined for the honors society is to sustain growth, innovation, continuous improvement, and building strong relationships between the educational community, business, and industry in order to provide the highest recognition for top students in career and technical education within Quince Orchard community.



VIEWPOINT

Ten-Minute Rule at QO causes controversy among students

By **WILL HUSTED**
Managing Editor

Depending on what you are doing, ten minutes can feel as short as a minute or as long as an hour. For those QO students needing to leave the classroom in the first or last ten minutes of class, the time sure does move slowly.

The new "ten-minute policy" at QO has stirred up some controversy among the student body. The policy, which reportedly vexes some students, is that no student may leave the

classroom during the first or last ten minutes of class. The idea behind the policy is that students leave the classroom for an emergency too often during this time. This policy has been the topic of controversy for a

"I now have to go when I need to be...learning."

-Alex Romano

multitude of reasons.

Some teachers and students argue that the first ten minutes of class are spent settling in, doing a quick warm up, turning in homework, or even just making general conversation with teachers or classmates. The class then naturally shifts into the bulk of instruction and thus the time where students must be in the class. The rule, some argue, makes it so that students must leave during critical learning periods of class. "If I need to leave the classroom at any time for any reason," junior

Alex Romano states, "I now have to go when I need to be actually learning." The policy's original intent is increased learning and decreased hallway activity. However, the result is completely flipped, since more students flood the hallways after the first ten minutes and may miss the bulk of the real learning time

Emergency situations call for a special accommodation. A call for a more understanding policy is greatly needed.

There should be better communication from students

to the administration on this problem and a compromise should also be reached. Jeopardizing students' comfort for the sake of having too many students in the hallways must be reevaluated and would greatly increase the morale of the school.

The last ten minutes of a class period is again not a critical part of the class time. If a student needs to use the restroom, get a drink of water, or do anything that he or she needs to make them feel comfortable at school, the school should not prevent it.

Ask Brittany Mills!

Who do you think will be the next President?
Cooley-Klein 2016. Make English great again.

Aye
You got a kik?

Who would win in a fight between a trillion tigers and the sun?
Goshimi

Is it true Patrick uses rogain for his beard?
Multiple sources confirm that he uses a new drug obtained from south of the Maryland border.

How jazzy is Mr. SONTZ?????
Jazztastic

What is the airspeed velocity of an unladen swallow?
11 meters per second

Would you rather marry someone who is rich and dumb or poor and smart?
Rich and smart... Mamma taught me never to settle.

Don't be afraid of this article Phobias: why they aren't a laughing matter

By **PAIGE MIRKIN**
Editor-in-Chief

19 million people. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, that 8.7% of the US population has a specific phobia. Women are twice as likely to suffer from one than men.

Phobias are a real detriment to mental health. As a sufferer of emetophobia (the fear of vomit) all my life, I can confidently confirm that phobias are real and they are awful.

It's all fun and games to make fun of my fear when I'm in the clear and there's no vomit anywhere. It's irrational at times and when it's not occurring, I think "That's silly" and "Next time I'll be fine now that I realized how silly it is." Nope. I can try to convince myself as much as I want that next time someone throws up that I'll be fine, but when it happens, all those thoughts go away. It becomes silly that I ever even thought my fear could go away in the slightest. School was always hard

for me to attend when I was in elementary school because every week, someone would throw up in the middle of the classroom (Why couldn't you run to the trash can!?) and we'd all have to sit there until the janitor saved the day. My first grade nightmares would consist of sitting in a small classroom, minding my own business reading a picture book, until I hear a splat from across the room. I got special permission from my teachers throughout the years to leave the classroom until the situation was over. There was a time period in third grade where I literally didn't go to school for months in fear that someone was going to throw up every single day.

After my self-pronounced break from school in third grade, my mom tried anything to help me. I attended regular therapy for about a year until we realized it wasn't reducing my fear. Then, the therapist mentioned "exposure therapy" to me. Exposure therapy is when you are exposed to a situation in which your fear would be elicited. Was

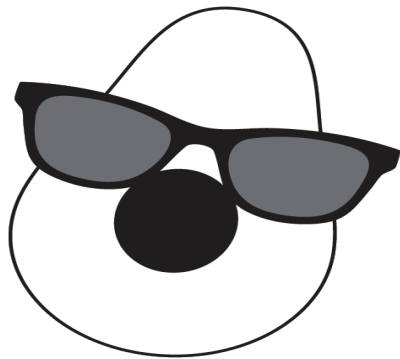
she crazy!? Anyways, I rejected her suggestion and stopped going to therapy altogether.

I ended up getting the 24-hour stomach bug a few months after I quit therapy. Karma for not participating? Well, I was participating then! Every person in my household was sick with this bug and, when my time came, it was four in the morning. Ever since, whenever I wake up at four in the morning, I get anxious it is a repeat of that stomach bug. I concluded that "exposure therapy" only made my condition worse.

Now, my phobia is a little bit easier to deal with due to life experiences. My friends know that if someone throws up, someone has to go take care of the sick one and someone else has to take care of me having an anxiety attack. When people close to you are aware, you have a support system.

Therapy and exposure therapy are both highly recommended for treatment. If you have similar fears, these treatments may work for you. As long as you're not as stubborn as I am.

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Snow Day Agenda

By **Brittany Mills**

Features Managing Editor

This is my schedule of the night before a possible snow day:

3PM: I run into my house and drop all my bags. I take out a piece of paper to record all temperatures and precipitation predictions according to my most reliable weather sources. It is necessary to keep a running tally throughout the night to calculate any variations in the predictions. I then make a pie chart of the possibility of a cancellation or delay. I text my data to Dr. Joshua Starr to help out his decision...but my mans Josh doesn't respond.

4PM: As soon as my family comes home, I consistently ask them their opinions on the future weather conditions. They soon become annoyed and repeatedly tell me that they are not meteorologists nor psychics.

5PM: I start my tributes to the snow gods. I flush exactly 7 ice cubes down the

toilet as sacrifice, one ice cube for every period of the day I am praying to be relieved of.

6PM: I text every person in my contact list and ask if they are going to do their homework. When my grandmother from Florida responds with confusion, I ask her to pay a tribute to the snow gods as well. If the majority of my contacts decide to ditch their homework because of the extreme likelihood of a cancellation, I decide that my peers are always right and I choose not to do my homework. If most of them say they are going to be safe and do their work, then I conclude that their opinions are irrelevant and convince myself that the snow gods will pull through.

7PM: Spend an hour justifying to my mom why I am not doing my homework. I refer to the pie chart I previously made.

8PM: Go outside and hose down the roads so that

they freeze over. The neighbors always give me funny looks, but what do they know? They will thank me later.

9 PM: Put on my pajamas inside out and backwards because everyone knows that it is good luck.

11PM: Sleep till **11:10PM** and wake up at **11:11PM** just to wish that school is cancelled. Go to

sleep with ice under my pillow so I dream of snow.

12PM Ice cube melts, I wake up freezing and wet...would not recommend to readers.

7 AM: I wake up and run to the window. No snow. Skip school because it is overrated.

Next Day: Failed my AP World test. Look for job openings.

Top 20 Ways to use Snow

By **Bella Roberts**

Editor-in-Chief

1. Make a snow angel. Worship it.
2. Make lots of all-natural, easy-to-make, snow cones!
3. Build so many snow balls. Enlist in the army. Go to war.
4. Build an igloo and live in it. This is a free vacation house!
5. Build a snowman. Name him Bob. Run him as a
6. Hide your problems in the snow. Call them white lies.
7. Pretend you are in the movie *Frozen* and gallivant around.
8. Go sledding. Make it to the North Pole.
9. Hide Swedish fish in the snow and go "ice fishing."

10. Build a family of snowmen. Name them. Pretend they are your family.
11. Invite your friends over for a holiday dinner. If they don't come, build snow friends.
12. Build snow pets.
13. Bury yourself in the snow and wait for your problems to "melt" away.

14. Wear as many snow pants as you can and pretend you are a marshmallow.
15. Collect the carrots used in snowman noses and feed them to horses.
16. Chomp down on as many icicles as you can. Call that frostbite.
17. Build a real life replica of human organs, it'll be "cold blooded".
18. Fill your backyard with half and half, it'll make "ice cream."
19. Play with your dogs. You'll be dachshund through the snow.
20. Wait inside until it is summer again.



Starbucks Brews up Controversy

By **BEN PALMER**
Viewpoints Editor

The holidays have been in full swing for over a month now, according to companies, and they've certainly embraced the holiday cheer, which is predominantly Christmas-driven as usual. That includes Starbucks, a brand well known for their bright red holiday cups containing little doodles. These doodles would be of fun and festive Christmas symbols, like trees, elves, and reindeer. However, this year Starbucks made the "big change" of not including those doodles on their cups this year.

Did your mouth fly open in shock when you read this statement? Hopefully, you have better things to worry about. If you did do so, you are unfortunately not alone. The decision to go with a plain red holiday cup has caused multitudes of people to storm social media in protest, complaining of a "war on Christmas" that has plagued our nation for decades. If you want

evidence for why this is false, visit any shopping center...in November.

The issue became widely recognized after Joshua Feuerstein, a social media poster known for his extreme conservatism, threw the change and himself into the limelight with his campaign against the new cups. "Starbucks REMOVED CHRISTMAS from their cups because they hate Jesus," wrote Feuerstein in a Facebook post which quickly went viral. In the post, he linked a video where he told the Starbucks barista his name was "Merry Christmas" in order to trick the workers into writing it on the cup and thus acknowledging the holiday.

This juvenile action has received support from many other conservatives, including our good old presidential candidate Donald Trump, who in a campaign rally in Illinois questioned, "Maybe we should boycott Starbucks?" and followed up by saying, "If I become president,

we're all going to be saying Merry Christmas again, that I can tell you."

I'll admit that I'm not really a coffee person, and I do like old-fashioned doodles, but this is ridiculous. How is Starbucks waging a war on Christmas when their decorations are still predominantly Christmas-themed? People who celebrate Christmas in a religious manner are the ones who have taken the most offense, which doesn't make a lot of sense since previous holiday cups contained predominantly secular things like snowmen, trees, and reindeer. What exactly is this fighting for?

Starbucks is its own company and should be able to celebrate whatever it wants. If they started using cups with menorahs on them and said "Happy Hanukkah," I'd be fine with that, despite not celebrating the holiday, simply because they are doing what they want to do at no expense to others. The holidays are supposed to be a time when people

of all cultures come together and generally have a better time than the rest of the year, with a bit of commercialism thrown in the mix. Aggressively campaigning for the institution of one sole holiday is not going to make anyone cheery and certainly won't improve anyone's opinion of those celebrating the holiday.

Lastly, the uproar over something as trivial as this is quite embarrassing in the context of the Paris attacks and the humanitarian issues faced by Christians and non-Christians alike. If this is number one on our list of priorities, then I am embarrassed by our society. A coffee chain does not dictate how you celebrate the holidays.

If you're still too offended by this change, you have two options: doodle on the cup yourself and create a work of art that sends Starbucks to its knees, or go across the street to McDonald's. Yeah, I heard you shudder. Not really so bad, is it?

Merry Jewmas, and a Happy CHRISMUKKAH

By **DANIELLE PASEKOFF**
Features Managing Editor

December 25. For most of the population, this day has candy canes, reindeer, and Santa Claus wrapped all over it. Children wake up at the crack of dawn to open gifts from under a tree and check to see if their milk and cookies have been eaten. Society has attempted to make those who do not celebrate the holiday invisible, but they have failed. It turns out this day is also special for those who couldn't care less about Starbucks cup designs, or whether or not the holiday ham was on sale at the grocery store. Complete with its own traditions, this holiday is something special -- a holiday commonly known amongst the Jewish community as "Jewmas."

On Christmas Day, December 25, literally nothing is open. No restaurants, banks, stores, or even libraries are open, and there isn't even a guarantee that some gas stations will be open! So, unfortunately for us Jews, we can't spend our time admiring the minuscule Hanukkah section at Michael's, or the odd fact that Giant seems to think matzah is a food eaten on every Jewish holiday. But us Jews don't sit around on Christmas and wallow over the absence of civilization. Instead, we have found a few exciting activities that are open on Christmas every year, and they have quickly become common Jewmas traditions.

The most stereotypical Jewmas tradition is, of course, eating "Christmas dinner" at a Chinese food restaurant. Going out with family and friends for Chinese food is something I have been involved in since childhood, because Chinese restaurants are some of the only places open. A perk of going at Christmas is that there's barely any wait! This activity is the most popular, and arguably the most beloved, pastime of Jewmas followers.

Another common activity among those who celebrate Jewmas is going to the movies and enjoying the unobstructed view (because you're the only ones in the theater). Many new movies and attractions come out on Christmas Day, so you will be some of the first of your friends to see the brand-new movies.

"Chinese food and a movie" is one of the most popular practices on Jewmas.

Even though very few places are open for business on December 25, families can also go on other, more generous ventures. For example, Jewmas enthusiasts can volunteer at a local shelter or soup kitchen. My family has done this in recent years, and it has really helped capture the essence of the holiday season and made us more grateful for what we have. Or, if you're more adventurous, you could go on a hike with family and friends, tour around Washington, D.C., or take a day off of work to relax and rest.

For us Jews, Christmas may present frustration, because it seems as if the whole world stops for Christmas, yet nothing is closed on Jewish holidays. Nevertheless, we use our resources to create the amazing holiday that is Jewmas. No matter what holiday you do or don't celebrate, it is important to remember what is important to you, although it is hard not to get distracted by the toys, gifts, and other commotion that comes this time of the year. So Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy Jewmas everyone!



Anticipated Star Wars film earns sky-high sales

By **BEN PALMER**

Viewpoints Editor

The movie of the year is finally here, after three years in the making. Star Wars Episode VII: *The Force Awakens* was released today, December 18.

In late 2012, people felt a large disturbance when Disney announced they had acquired Lucasfilm for \$4.05 billion. The entertainment giant promptly announced plans to create yet another Star Wars trilogy, this one taking place after the original trilogy.

Many have had a bad feeling about this deal, assuming that the new movies would have the quality of a Disney Channel original movie. What most people failed to realize is that Disney acquired Marvel three years earlier and turned it into a limited liability company, which means that Marvel continues making their own movies while Disney oversees them and makes profit from their work. The consistent quality of the Marvel films has shown that no, Disney does not ruin everything.

This is the same thing that's happened to Star Wars, which, other than an increased presence at Disney stores and theme parks, has largely retained its original feel. Disney and Lucasfilm proceeded to strike back at fans' woes and show the public that it truly cares about Star Wars' integrity with their production decisions. They have a tall order to serve, as Star Wars is seen as one of the top film series in history, despite the mixed reception of the prequel trilogy.

However, their goal has always been the return of the formula that made the original films classics.

The first major move was the signing of J. J. Abrams to direct *The Force Awakens*. Abrams is widely recognized as the director of the two most recent Star Trek films, both of which were very successful, having been met

the original trilogy's precedent by casting relatively unknown actors into main roles. John Boyega and Daisy Ridley, who play main characters Finn and Rey, have few movie credits to their name, but have given audiences little reason to doubt their capability. They and several other new actors are complemented by the re-

public, and expectations for the film are very high. "I think it'll be better than [sic] all of the movies except for [*The Empire Strikes Back*] and [*Return of the Jedi*]," said freshman Cooper Hoffman.

The anticipation for the movie has only increased with each new story released about it, and in an era where upcom-

stand what is going on thanks to the text scrolling at the beginning. The trailers, though short, have given a basic idea of what the plot will be about and have cemented the sheer anticipation for this film. "[The trailers are] really good. They've done a good job balancing the old characters and the new," said Hoffman.

Lucasfilm is well aware of the hype, and they've capitalized on it by selling tickets early. The initial release of tickets was an early Black Friday, and reports have shown that the movie has already made over \$50 million in advance ticket sales alone. This and the overall excitement have caused many people to predict a massive box office performance, with the possibility of passing *Jurassic World* (which grossed \$1.7 billion) as the highest-grossing film of 2015 and joining the ranks of top films such as *Avatar* and *Titanic*. While *The Force Awakens'* success may be a given, what critics will say about it will determine whether it will breathe a new hope into a franchise or if it's a trap.

The critics are sure to say a lot, but it's up to you to determine whether Episode VII is worthy of the hype. Either way, Star Wars isn't going away anytime soon. Episode VIII releasing in 2017 and Episode IX in 2019. If two years is too long, do n't be afraid; independent films are set to be released as well, with the first installment, *Rogue One*, coming out in December 2016. There may never be a better time to be a Star Wars fan than right now.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FLICKR.COM

MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU: *The new Star Wars film, Episode VII, is the first installment of a new trilogy.*

with positive reviews and grossing over \$300 million. Most Star Wars fans were happy that a sci-fi expert was at the helm. Lawrence Kasdan, who wrote the screenplay for *The Empire Strikes Back*, was hired to pen this episode's screenplay. Finally, Lucasfilm followed

turn of much of the original trilogy cast, such as Mark Hamill as Luke Skywalker, Harrison Ford as Han Solo, and Carrie Fisher as Leia. It's clear that both casts will have their time in the spotlight in this movie.

These decisions have been largely viewed as wise ones by

ing releases are leaked left and right by the internet, Lucasfilm has done an impressive job of keeping everything under wraps.

Even if you've never watched Star Wars before, it's never too late to board the hype train, and new watchers can quickly under-

VIEWPOINT Hallway Etiquette

By **WILL HUSTED**

Double-Truck Managing Editor

We have all been by a stairwell between periods and experienced the massive blockade of students attempting to get to their next class. However, this annoying and uncomfortable experience can be lessened and take a little stress off of your commute in between classes.

A list of unspoken rules exists while walking in the halls at QO. The first and the most important rule is to keep a reasonable speed. No one likes to be in a crowded, noisy hallway eager to get to their next class on time only to be stuck behind someone walking at the pace of a snail with their head buried in their phone, texting without a care in the world. On the other hand, if you feel the need to pass a slower-paced classmate, please do not pass with the speed of a race horse. Simply walk at your desired speed, check to make sure the other side of the hallway is free, and make your pass.

Secondly comes the matter of pushing. If you see a large pileup of students, do not feel the need to bulldoze your way through said pile. This will only cause students on the verge of collapse from their coffee they forgot on the counter to "help you" in your speedy journey and "assist" you straight

into the crowd in front of you. While it may be frustrating, take a deep breath, take out your custom stress ball, be patient, and let the storm of students slowly blow over.

A list of unspoken rules exists while walking in the halls at QO.

The highly condensed shape of QO makes traveling throughout the building seem like a never-ending circle of human traffic. It is very important to have a plan before you leave the classroom but also be willing to change that plan when making your journey.

To avoid the highly dreaded hallway pileups, explore new routes to your next classroom. While lonely, the orange staircase can provide a great detour to a series of backups in the halls.

If you follow these rules, you can help make QO a safe place to walk in and allow for an easy flow of people throughout the building. Learning the ins and outs of navigating QO takes time, and that time will bring maturity to your hallway endeavors.

Fame, Fortune, and Flubbery Controversial celebrity comments shock fans

By **JACOB CORNBLATT**

Features Managing Editor

Quentin Tarantino, director of masterpieces *Reservoir Dogs* and *Pulp Fiction* and of the highly anticipated *Hateful Eight*, is not known for being smart.

Recently, he attended and spoke at a protest of police brutality—calling out "murdering cops" throughout the US—which led to a huge amount of backlash. From being called out by Harvey Weinstein to being the victim of a police boycott, Mr. Tarantino is in deep trouble, but why? Let me explain in this article.

Celebrity culture today is in deep need of a reform. Unlike any time period before us, we have access to all aspects of high profile people's lives. We know exactly who is dating whom and what offensive comment

somebody made today—all through Twitter, headline-based news, Facebook, etc.

The problem with all of this is the fact that celebrities are being judged not by their chosen art form, but by their public appearance. Quentin Tarantino is one of the great directors of our generation, but he is only making the news because of his opinions, opinions that may not be so popular in Hollywood. Now, he may struggle to find support for his next film, as his main production company is angry at him. Is that right? No, it isn't at all.

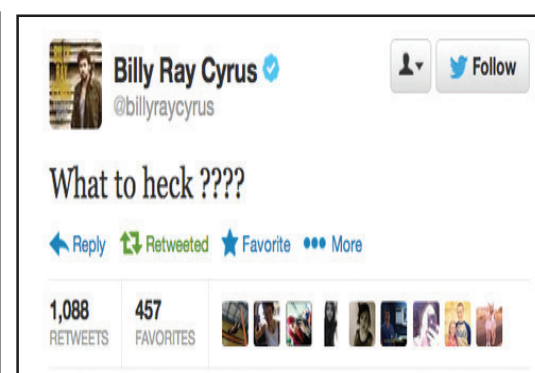
And honestly, why do we even care about these celebrities if we do not truly know them and they have genuinely no idea who we are? The answer is simple: it's an escape.

By following the lives of the rich and famous, we can escape

into "living" their lives, we can be there on every date they have and we can be there when they have an emotional break-up!

Our lives, like all other lives, become so mundane that the ability to leave for just one second and to enter the life of someone we admire is exhilarating, but it is just not right. In fact, those we follow are useless to us, just as we are useless to them. By letting the popular be private, the unknown can become uncontrolled, for the latest Hollywood gossip will have no influence on the unknown, freeing us of any false livelihood.

We need to let go of all celebrities' lives. We need to stop judging celebrities by the gossip surrounding the news. We need to connect with them through their art, and by doing so, we enhance our own lives.





Girls and Boys track start their season with a full sprint

By **JAMIE FINK**
Sports Managing Editor

The time is finally here: Quince Orchard's indoor track season is underway. The team has been practicing for about a month and looks forward to a hopefully successful season. Junior long distance runner Matthew Owens is one of the students that have prepared for the season by running throughout the summer and then following into cross country this past fall. Meet events include long and short distance runs, high and long jump, hurdles, and the pole vault. Most of the meets take place at the PG Sports Complex and some of the teams that compete include Churchill, Northwest, and Wootton.

The boys and girls placed extremely well last year: Quince Orchard placed as a top ten team in the region and two girl relays also placed at states. The challenge lies ahead for them to continue the standard they

have created. "A definite athlete to watch is senior Dylan Bikim in the high jump," said junior long distance runner Maya Jacobson. "He qualified for states last year during indoor and is definitely going to be amazing this year."

The runners have a very specific practice regimen. They break up into small groups and run exercises, which are assigned by their coaches including teacher Seann Pelkey. The

short distance runners complete multiple sets of sprints while the long distance runners circle around the community for several miles. The runners take care of their bodies by stretching before and after as well as staying hydrated throughout the day in school.

The athletes carry a mentality that they want to succeed individually as well as score points for the team. Additionally, many of the runners have personal goals

that they want to beat during the course of the season.

"I hope to break a five minute in the mile and vault higher than 9 feet," said Owens. Owens is a determined runner and puts a lot of effort into his runs.

The teammates are also very encouraging and motivating towards one another. Junior short distance runner Dana Freedman said, "I motivate my teammates by being positive all the time and trying to be a good role model for

the underclassmen." The team has many leaders and several captains, such as seniors Karley Hampton, Gregg D'Elia, Dylan Bikim, and Nate Baiden, that take charge in leadership.

"I demand a positive attitude from every single person," stated Hampton. "It doesn't matter if [they've] been on the team for a few years or are just joining." She also explained that everyone needs to support one another and inspire each other

to become better athletes.

The team consists of all talents ranging from freshmen to seniors. The upperclassmen have to lead by example at practice and form good habits to show the underclassmen. Hampton said, "The varsity team is very lively and inviting towards those who are unsure of how the team works." This creates a positive environment for everyone and allows anyone interested in running to join the team.

Jacobson explained that her favorite part about track is spending lots of time with her teammates and being able to run many different events. She also enjoys going to team dinners the night before a meet for bonding time.

Quince Orchard indoor track is working extremely hard to make it to states. They have many upcoming meets this month, including some in January. Come out and support them!



PHOTO COURTESY OF MOCO RUNNING

ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, GO: Sprinter and senior Karley Hampton races down the track in full stride in order to beat her competition.

Colleges prepare for the second annual College Football Playoff

By **LOGAN FEINGOLD**
Sports Managing Editor

With tons of talented and competitive teams, this year's College Football Playoff, the second ever, looks to be incredibly exciting and intense. The CFP replaced the Bowl Championship Series (BCS), a system that featured the top two teams in a series of special rankings facing each other in the championship game, while the teams below them played in BCS bowls such as the Orange Bowl, Rose Bowl, Fiesta Bowl, and Sugar Bowl. The BCS was criticized by many college

football fans for unfairly leaving qualified teams out. In some years, such as 2004, 2009, and 2010, many undefeated teams were left out of the championship due to its small size. Starting last year, a four-team playoff system replaced the two-team championship game. This new system, the College Football Playoff, looked to replace the errors of the BCS.

The two main highlight semifinal matchups of this year's CFP both take place on New Year's Eve. #1 Clemson takes on #4 Oklahoma in the Orange Bowl and #2 Alabama faces #3 Michigan State in the

Cotton Bowl. The winners of those two games will face off in the National Championship on January 11, at the University of Phoenix Stadium in Glendale, Arizona.

Clemson versus Oklahoma could very well be the most exciting game of the college football season thus far. Both teams are led by mercurial quarterbacks, Oklahoma's Baker Mayfield and Clemson's Deshaun Watson. Clemson's passing defense should be an extremely tough matchup, as the Tigers are fifth out of 128 FBS teams in passing yards allowed per game (166.9). The Tigers are

led on defense by safety Jayron Kears, cornerback Mackenzie Alexander, and defensive end Shaq Lawson. The Tigers' defense is supported by Watson, a dual threat Heisman-contending quarterback who ran for 887 yards this year and passed for 3512.

Clemson's victory over North Carolina in the ACC Championship Game came somewhat controversially, as the referees incorrectly ruled that North Carolina was offsides on an onside kick they recovered, forcing them to repeat the kick, giving the ball to Clemson.

However, as the only undefeated team left in the

country, Clemson should be a tough out for anyone. Oklahoma's offense has gone off the charts recently, as QB Baker Mayfield has thrown for 35 touchdowns. Head Coach Bob Stoops invigorated the offense by hiring a new offensive coordinator and opening up the Sooners' offense in the high-scoring Big 12. Although the team had an embarrassing 24-17 loss to Texas, the team handled the adversity well and rebounded to defeat Baylor 44-34 and Oklahoma State 58-23. Their passing attack should keep Clemson's hands full.

The other playoff matchup is #2 Alabama versus #3 Michigan State. Alabama capped off a dominating season with a 29-15 victory over the Florida Gators in the SEC Championship. The Crimson Tide's offense is led by Heisman favorite running back Derrick Henry, who ran for 1986 yards and 23 touchdowns this year. On defense, the Tide are stacked with NFL prospects, such as linebacker Reggie Ragland, defensive tackle A'Shawn Robinson, and Jarran Reed. The Tide's rush defense is one of the best in the nation and will look to stop the Michigan State attack.

Michigan State looks like a team of destiny after knocking off the previously undefeated Iowa Hawkeyes (16-13) and the Ohio State Buckeyes (17-14). The past few weeks, QB Connor Cook has been bothered by a bum shoulder he injured in a win versus Maryland, but almost four weeks of rest should allow him to nurse his shoulder back to health. A heroic 22 play, 82-yard drive that lasted almost ten minutes helped the team defeat Iowa. This matchup should be one for the ages.

Despite many previously marquee bowl games taking a back seat to the playoff, there are many interesting matchups in the major bowl games as well. In the Rose Bowl, 12-1 Iowa faces off versus Pac-12 Champion Stanford. In the Fiesta Bowl, Notre Dame, two close losses away from making the playoff, faces last year's champions, Ohio State. In the Sugar Bowl, Oklahoma State's vaunted pass attack faces off versus one of the best teams in the SEC, Ole Miss. Finally, in the Peach Bowl, Florida State, fresh off a win versus Florida, faces off versus the 12-1 Houston Cougars. Be sure to tune in to see how all these exciting matchups play out.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PRINT YOUR BRACKETS

GET READY TO RUMBLE: Clemson, Oklahoma, Alabama, and Michigan St. will face off for the championship spot.



QO Bball breaks the ankles of their competition

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

Kobe may be completing his career but our teams sure aren't; the boys and girls varsity basketball teams are beginning their respective seasons, with aims as lofty as Steph Curry's shot.

The boys team is coming off an impressive 2014-2015 campaign, where they made it to the third round of the playoffs but ultimately fell to Magruder. The team has used this disappointment as fuel for this winter's season, having workouts since the beginning of their offseason. Senior captain and guard Damon Daniels stated that the team had workouts "through the summer" and made sure they "were in the weight room getting stronger." This was in an effort to make sure that the team was as fit as possible. "We also had speed and quickness training," said Daniels.

The new training regimen is coupled by the team's tougher frame of mind. "We've changed our mindsets," said Daniels. "We have a lot of returning players who understand the work and dedication needed to win."

Now that the boys have felt the foul taste of defeat, and have set their minds and bodies towards improvement, results are not only desired but expected. This team contains as much fear of its opponents as Rajon Rondo does towards passing, and strong wins like the one against Gaith-

ersburg last year have further cemented this idea.

Daniels is one of four captains for this talented team, joined by juniors Matthew Kelly, John

court as well," stated Daniels.

Though the season is young, the team is cruising along with an overall record of 2-1. The team opened their season on Decem-

made it to the second round of the playoffs, but a loss to Wootton ended their season. However, when factoring in a new coach in Chris Campbell and a gener-

ated, "For this season I expect to go further in [the] playoffs than we did last year. Especially since we are now used to all playing together."

With goals as strong as dried cement, the girls make sure that they put in the work to back up their claims. Some players like Sanmartin have gone out on their own to shoot around and played on travel teams. As a team, there have been multiple workouts and similar training sessions.

The team is led by three captains, juniors Amanda Bishop and Danielle Lehner and senior Lainey Seiner. "In practice they keep everyone focused and make sure that everyone is giving it their best," said Sanmartin. "But they also do a lot off the court. They plan team bonding activities to get everyone closer and make the new players become a part of our team."

As for the competition, players expect Whitman, Paint Branch, and Clarksburg to be the toughest matchups. The girls are accustomed to these opponents, however, as games against Whitman and Clarksburg have been tight in the past.

The girls season started quickly, and a strong record of one win and one loss shows the team's potential. In their first game against Magruder, the girls displayed their dominance and won easily. However, the team fell short at Paint Branch, narrowly losing by the score of 49-54.



PHOTO BY WILL HUSTED

BOOM GOES THE DYNAMITE: Junior John Fierstein attempts to nail a clutch free throw for QO. Fierstein, and Colin Crews.

The captains will aim to keep the team on their toes, as only by playing their hardest on both ends of the court can they unleash their true potential. "Along with playing hard on the court, we also have to be great leaders as captains off the

ber 4, defeating Magruder 61-42 and making the Colonels feel like unranked officers. On December 8, the boys won at home against Paint Branch, expressing their dominance in a 71-64 victory.

Last year was also successful for the lady Cougars. The team

ally young team, the season could be generalized as one filled with growth and success.

Now in the second season under Coach Campbell, the team has built greater chemistry and high expectations for this season. Junior guard Alexa Sanmartin

Swim and Dive go the length

By **PATRICK PAOLINI**
Sports Managing Editor

The school mornings have gone from early to earlier for the Quince Orchard swim and dive team. With practices starting at five in the morning on Fridays, the team is looking to make their splashes heard this year.

The team is comprised of all classes, from freshman to seniors, and all types of swimmers, from beginners to the club level. Before the official season began, the team had a scrimmage on November 28 against Bethesda Chevy-Chase; our QO swim team gave it their best effort against BCC even though they were rough competition. Throughout the scrimmage, Quince Orchard swimmers went back and forth with BCC. At the end of the scrimmage, the team had a chance to evaluate their performances and predict how they will achieve victory in the future.

Even though BCC was the better team, senior Hannah Spector believed that "our club swimmers will be our major players; however, the people who have worked hard throughout the summer leagues will be of big use to the team."

The team's first meet was on December 5 against Sherwood. The Quince Orchard girls gave it their best effort against Sherwood but unfortunately fell 50-121. Even though the girls lost, freshmen Meredith Canova set a new school record for diving

that had not been beaten since 1999 by Nicole Pochetti.

The boys team, however, won by a crushing 108-54 score line. During the boys 100 fly B, QO obtained a first, second, and third finish to dominate the Sherwood team. In the 400 Free relay B, the boys team of seniors Cameron Wilcox, Alex Myers, Christopher Nyborg, and junior Kevin Gurcan took on the opposing Sherwood boys A team. With three swimmers already in and out of the water, the QO boys were behind

"The people who have worked hard throughout the summer leagues will be... [useful] to the team."

-Hannah Spector

when Myers got his chance to dive in.

"When I hit the water I was a few lengths behind him, and on every length of the pool I continued to catch him," said Myers. "And finally on the last stretch I went for the win." With Myers beating the Sherwood swimmer in the last stretch, the boys 400 relay team conquered Sherwood's A team.

Overall, the meet against Sherwood went well and the QO swim team is continuing to figure out what will work best. Senior Caroline O'Keefe said, "Hopefully we will be able to figure out a strong lineup with the swimmers we have, in order to be competitive."

The Quince Orchard swim and dive team continues to work hard for their next meet against Poolesville on December 12.

DC Sports Records

Records as of 12/14/15



Record 20-6-2. The Caps are leading the Metropolitan Division of the Eastern Conference behind the scoring of left wing Alex Ovechkin and the passing of centers Evgeny Kuznetsov and Nickolas Backstrom. After nine years of playoff anguish due to early round losses, the Caps will look to capture their first ever Stanley Cup this year under second-year coach Barry Trotz.



Record 6-7. The Redskins are tied for first in the atrocious NFC East despite a heartbreaking 19-16 loss to the Dallas Cowboys on December 7. With matchups against division rivals such as the Eagles and the Cowboys still remaining, the Skins look to win 8 or 9 games and make the playoffs for the second time since 2008. This goal now seems more likely after a victory over the Chicago Bears on December 12, moving the team to 6-7.



WIZARDS

Record 10-12. The Wizards this year have gotten off to a slow start in the surprisingly good Eastern Conference, but have persevered despite tough injuries. Shooting guard Bradley Beal is going to miss two weeks as of December 12 due to a knee injury, and big men Kris Humphries and Nene have been dealing with lower body injuries of their own. Nonetheless, the Wizards still have All-Star point guard John Wall. The team hopes to recruit Thunder star Kevin Durant and get him to return and play for his hometown team, and a good year could do just that.



Record 4-9. This season has been a miserable one for Ravens fans. After a 10-6 season last year, the Ravens were poised to be favorites in the AFC North. However, star pass rusher Terrell Suggs and quarterback Joe Flacco both went out with season-ending injuries this year, leaving the team struggling to stay buoyant with the Steelers and Bengals both having great years in the AFC North. However, despite this down year, Ravens fans should not lose hope for next year due to injured stars such as Flacco and Suggs returning and a high draft pick that will infuse the Ravens with talent.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CLIPARTPANDA.COM

**FOLLOW THE LEADER:** *Sophomore QB Doc Bonner's five rushing touchdowns were not enough, as the Cougars fell to Northwest 50-40.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF SHUTTERFLY

Special season ends in heartbreak

By **DAVID SUGGS**
Sports Managing Editor

For the third straight year, the football team's season came crashing down at the hands of Northwest. Despite the team's misfortune, its accomplishments cannot be denied; it went on an ten-game win streak, ending the season on the doorstep of a state championship.

The beginning of the Quince Orchard football season was shrouded in mystery following the loss of multiple key seniors, including DE Adam McLean, RB Kyle Green and LB Jason Heyn. These doubts were renewed following a 39-17 loss at Damascus. However, as junior lineman John White stated, the loss actually "showed that we needed to work harder to achieve our goals."

Following the loss, the team reeled off a nine-game winning streak, including a 28-7 thrashing of Northwest, and earned themselves home-field advantage throughout the playoffs. During this stretch, the team averaged a whopping 47.5 points per game, sparked by the three-headed prong of junior Marvin Beander and seniors Shawn Barlow and

Eisley Kim, who combined for over 2,500 rushing yards for the season. The defense was filled with stalwarts throughout, as seniors Sean Green and Khalil Sewell headed an impenetrable defensive line that both stuffed the run and pressured quarterbacks. Additionally, the leadership of the linebackers, including junior Noah Pagley, allowed our playmaking defensive backs, such as junior Fofie Bazzie, to focus on their man and zone coverage schemes rather than providing run support. As the team entered its first playoff game against Blair, expectations were justifiably high.

The first game of the post-season confirmed these notions, as Quince Orchard jumped to a quick lead en route to a 48-17 victory against Blair. This set up a matchup against Northwest, representing the third consecutive season when the two Montgomery County superpowers faced one another in the postseason. Northwest, coming off a successful 8-3 season, had hoisted the 4A championship trophy for the past two consecutive years, beating Quince Orchard to get there each time. The game initially did not

disappoint, as QB Doc Bonner piled on 206 yards and five rushing touchdowns, giving the Red Army hope. However, a couple of late Northwest touchdowns crushed any state championship dreams, as Northwest went on to win the game, 50-40.

The devastating end to the season overshadows a successful year, as many players, including junior Jason Worthy, who felt that the team accomplished their goals of "coming out every week and being [the best] team out there, no matter who we stepped on the field against." Additionally, the fan support was essential to the team's run towards states. Worthy made it known that the Red Army was a pillar to the team's season, saying, "The Red Army is outstanding. They have supported us from the first game to the last, and have motivated us as a whole."

There is an increasing optimism towards next season, as the disappointment will assuredly be used as fuel for next season's quest towards M&T Bank Stadium. While the premature ending to the season is surely a letdown, a new generation of Cougars, led by Bonner and Beander, look to come back stronger next season.

WINTER SPORTS RECORDS

(As of December 14th)

WRESTLING: 3-0**BOYS' SWIMMING: 2-0****BOYS' BASKETBALL: 2-1****GIRLS' BASKETBALL: 1-2****GIRLS' SWIMMING: 0-2****INDOOR TRACK AND FIELD
(FIRST MEET)****BOYS: SECOND****GIRLS: NINTH**

Wrestling readies up

By **DAVID STRICKMAN**
Sports Editor

The wrestling team is ready for another big season this winter as QO has the opportunity to have one of the better teams in the county.

Last year, the team held a record of 12-2 and lost a tiebreaker for the third and fourth spots in the 3A/4A West Region dual playoff. QO had three wrestlers, all seniors, qualify for the Maryland state tournament last season under head coach Rob Wolf. This year will be Wolf's ninth season at QO and his third as head coach.

"We graduated 11 seniors from last year's team, seven of which were in our starting lineup," stated Wolf. The team practices every day after school in the wrestling room located in the Cougar Wing. "In the beginning of practice, we warm up and stretch for fifteen minutes or so, then we'll learn a new move or two or practice old ones before splitting into groups to do conditioning or live wrestling," said junior Blake Adkins.

"Last year we were one match away from making regional duals. This year's team is seeing a lot of experienced wrestlers new to the

QO team or returning ones. I'm confident in my team's abilities to make regional duals this year," said junior wrestler Claus Arp.

Wrestling has its own way of tallying points. You can get points from an es-

"Our team this season has the potential to be even better"

-Rob Wolf

cape, reversal, takedown, or back points, which are when the opponent's back is at less than a 45 degree angle to the ground. A match can be won by having the most points after three two-minute periods or pinning your opponent to the ground.

"Even though we lost a lot of valuable seniors from last year's team, our team this season has the potential to be even better with some strong returning starters as well as a few new faces," said Wolf. QO had their first test on December 5, when they hosted a tri meet with Blair and Kennedy, defeating their foes by scores of 60-15 and 77-6.

Derrick Henry takes home Heisman

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

In front of a packed Sony Theatre in New York on Saturday, Alabama's star running back Derrick Henry won the 2015 Heisman trophy, earning the title as the best player in college football this season.

The vote was close, however, as Henry edged out Stanford running back Christian McCaffrey and Clemson quarterback Deshaun Watson with 1,832 votes to 1,539 and 1,165 votes, respectively.

Throughout the season, Henry was the high-functioning workhorse for the Crimson Tide, and was the driving force behind much of their 12-1 campaign that earned the team the number two seed in the College Football Playoff.

Henry's resume

backs up his Heisman win. His 339 rushes, 1,986 rushing yards, and 23 rushing touchdowns all ranked first across the nation. Henry failed to top 100 rushing yards just four times, and managed to gain over 200 yards on the group four times as well.

As the season progressed, though, Henry's numbers only grew. During Alabama's 30-16 win against LSU, Henry carried the rock for 210 yards on 38 carries, single handedly conquering one of college football's premier defenses. In the Iron Bowl, Henry ran for an astounding 271 yards on an impressive 46 carries, gaining jealousy from carry-hungry running backs in the NFL such as Philadelphia Eagles running back Demarco Murray.

Finally, in the SEC Championship, Henry solidified his Heisman status with 44 carries for 189 yards, helping the Tide roll to a 29-15 win against the Florida Gators.

Henry became just the second player from Alabama to win the Heisman, with the only other being New Orleans Saints running back Mark Ingram in 2009. During that season, Ingram carried the Crimson Tide to a National Championship with his 271 rushes for 1,658 rushing yards. Ingram's 6.1 yards per carry and 17 touchdowns set the standard for future running backs hoping to claim one of sports' greatest honors.

At the Heisman ceremony, Henry was extremely modest, stating that he was not prepared to give a speech in the first

place. Rather than focus on his own accomplishments, Henry extended his gratitude to God, Alabama Head Coach Nick Saban, and all of his friends and family.

The season was filled with emotional motivation to fuel his Heisman run. Henry's grandmother, Gladys Henry, was in the hospital watching on TV, as she had been battling heart and respiratory issues throughout the season.

The 6-foot-3 242 lb. junior back will look to capitalize on his impressive individual accomplishment with a team championship. Alabama plays Michigan State on New Year's Eve and, if they win, will play in the National Championship on January 11 against the eventual winner of Clemson versus Oklahoma.



College hoops pound the boards to prepare for March

With college football taking a break, men's hoops is set to take center stage

By **HUNTER BOOTHE**
Sports Editor

This year in college basketball is especially unclear at the top, with no truly dominant teams. Last year, Kentucky was the clear number one team throughout the season, going 38-0 before falling to Wisconsin in the Final Four. Duke went on to win the title over Wisconsin, 68-63.

After significant contributors departed, all three teams have proved to be less talented than their previous versions, though Duke and Kentucky

remain top ten teams. So who joins them at the top? Any mix of Maryland, North Carolina, Michigan State, Iowa State, Kansas, Villanova, Oklahoma, Gonzaga, Virginia, Purdue, Vanderbilt, Xavier, Syracuse, etc. That list probably included one final four team. It is safe to say that there is no shortage of parity in college basketball.

Evidence of this parity is everywhere. From the November 2 AP top 25 poll to the November 30 version, 10 teams have been replaced in the polls, many due to

upsets by smaller schools. On opening night, Western Illinois beat #17 Wisconsin. Shortly thereafter, Georgetown lost to Radford, Northern Iowa defeated #1 North Carolina, Richmond edged #14 California, and LSU and top NBA draft prospect Ben Simmons lost to Charleston by 12.

Some of our local teams have made some of the biggest headlines this season. Georgetown and Maryland renewed their longtime rivalry, playing in the D.C. area for the first time since 1993. Maryland edged

out the Hoyas in a 75-71 thriller in College Park. In addition, #6 Virginia and George Washington played an exciting early game, with GW winning 73-68.

Perhaps the biggest local storyline is the championship potential of the Maryland Terrapins. With a loaded starting five led by sophomore point guard Melo Trimble, the preseason Big Ten player of the year, the Terps are in line to contend deep into March.

The Terrapins have made a huge turnaround from two years ago, when

they completed a 17-15 season, missing the NCAA tournament for the fourth year in a row. Coach Mark Turgeon was thought to be on the hotseat, as the fan base was itching for success. That all changed in 2014, when Trimble, along with senior forward Dez Wells, led Maryland to a 28-7 record, finishing second in the Big Ten and advancing to the NCAA tournament's third round.

This year, though, expectations are different. Fans expect a deep tournament run, and that isn't lost on the Terps.

They aim to stay focused on the task at hand, finishing non-conference play and battling through the big ten. As Turgeon stated at Big Ten media day, "We'll stay humble because of our schedule, which will make us continue to work hard."

This time of the year, college basketball can get lost in the shuffle, with the NFL and College Football playoffs approaching and the NBA and NHL seasons in full swing. However, if the first few weeks are any indication, this season may shake up to be one of the most intriguing in

ATHLETE OF THE MONTH QUESTIONNAIRE

BOYS BASKETBALL

John Fierstein '17



Junior captain John Fierstein has started the season leading the team in rebounds and points. He has a major impact on the game when the ball is in his hands.

SWIM AND DIVE

Maddy Zarchin '17



Maddy has become one of the strongest swimmers on the team. Her work ethic and dedication put her ahead of the competition.

INDOOR TRACK

Dylan Bikim '16



Veteran high jumper Dylan Bikim is fresh off a state championship and has high expectations for this coming year. His talent and skills are sure to please.

WRESTLING

Alec Falconer '17

Alec has quickly gained the respect of his new teammates by working very hard at every practice. At 145lbs, he is expected to be a very competitive wrestler in the lineup.



GIRLS BASKETBALL

Danni Lehner '17

As a captain, Danni has become one of the vocal leaders on the team. She has been one of the hardest workers in the preseason and performs well in the classroom.



BOCCE

Turner Thackston '17

Turner Thackston always comes to play with a smile on his face. His enthusiastic and competitive attitude has made him a fierce competitor as a part of the Bocce team.



THE PROWLER ASKED THESE ATHLETES THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS...

	John Fierstein	Alec Falconer	Maddy Zarchin	Danni Lehner	Dylan Bikim	Turner Thackston
What is the best holiday gift you have ever received?	<i>Skylar Saffer</i>	<i>Playstation 4</i>	<i>Being with my family and friends</i>	<i>I'm wishing for a million dollars</i>	<i>Xbox One</i>	<i>Sports stuff</i>
What is the worst holiday gift you have ever received?	<i>Ashley Plante</i>	<i>Socks</i>	<i>Practice on Christmas</i>	<i>A fruit cake</i>	<i>Fake polo shirt</i>	<i>Clothes</i>
What is your favorite holiday song?	<i>"All I Want for Christmas" -Mariah Carey</i>	<i>"Season's Upon Us"</i>	<i>"Winter Wonderland"</i>	<i>"Last Christmas"</i>	<i>"Jingle Bells"</i>	<i>"Santa Claus is Coming to Town" -Bruce Springsteen</i>
What is your favorite holiday meal?	<i>Meatis Kelley</i>	<i>Honey roasted ham</i>	<i>Candy, candy canes, candy corn, and syrup</i>	<i>Sweet potatoes</i>	<i>Eggs, waffles, eggnog</i>	<i>Salad and broccoli rice casserole</i>
What is your favorite activity in the snow?	<i>Making snow angels</i>	<i>Build an Igloo</i>	<i>Skiing</i>	<i>Snowball fights</i>	<i>Sledding</i>	<i>Running and building things out of snow</i>
Who belongs on the naughty list?	<i>Skylar Saffer</i>	<i>Krampus</i>	<i>Brittany Mills and Brian Zarchin</i>	<i>Nadine</i>	<i>John Bikim and Gabby Demarco</i>	<i>Rude people deserve coal</i>