

# PROWLER

Quince Orchard High School • 15800 Quince Orchard Rd, Gaithersburg, MD 20878

## Empire actor shocks nation with fake hate crime

By CINDY LIU  
Associate Editor

The political climate in the US is more polarized than ever. With so many different perspectives on social policies, many conflicts have occurred. June 26, 2015 marked a milestone for the LGBT community in America with the legalization of gay marriage. Then came the debate over personal beliefs and acceptance of LGBT individuals, with some businesses refusing to serve them. "Marriage is legal in all 50 states. Discrimination is still legal in 31 states," according to the "Beyond I Do" campaign. Then there are generation-old issues, such as racism, that have recently reached a rather boiling point.

On January 29, African-American openly gay actor and singer Jussie Smollett reported he was assaulted by two men who, according to Fox News's account of his testimony, "hurled racial and homophobic slurs at him, beat him and poured an 'unknown chemical substance' on him" while also shouting Trump's slogan "Make America Great Again." The shocking re-

port sparked outrage on social media regarding hate crimes. Smollett gained supporting words from the likes of U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris of California, U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush of Chicago, and openly gay TV host Ellen DeGeneres. However, there was much skepticism regarding Smollett's story as police found evidence insufficient.



PHOTO COURTESY OF WREG.COM

Smollett was reportedly upset with those who doubt his account. "It feels like if I had said it was a Muslim or a Mexican or someone black, I feel like the doubters would have supported me a lot much more," Smollett revealed in an interview with *Good Morning America*, just days before being charged with disorderly

conduct for allegedly filing a false police report about the attack. "Chicago police Superintendent Eddie Johnson said Smollett faked a threatening letter and then, a week later, staged the attack because he was 'dissatisfied with his salary' on 'Empire,'" according to the *Chicago Tribune*.

The two brothers, Abel and Ola Osundairo, that were arrested as 'persons of interests' accused Smollett of paying them \$3,500 to help him fake the attack and "take advantage of the pain and anger of racism to promote his career," Johnson said. The brothers' attorney has since released a statement of them having "tremendous regret over their involvement in this situation, and they understand how it has impacted people across the nation, particularly minority communities and especially those who have been victims of hate crimes themselves," according to *USA Today*. However, the damage is already done. While Smollett still maintains his innocence, if found guilty, this could set a precedent for attitudes towards accusations of hate crimes. Smollett was scheduled to appear in court on March 12.

## 91st Oscars successful even without host

By AYESHA SHAHZAD  
Editor-in-Chief

On February 23, the most widely-watched awards show held its 91st ceremony at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles, California. Oscars night is one of the most eventful Sunday nights of the year for many, being a great celebration of film and art.

This year, the ceremony was quite different than its preceding years; there was no official host for the show, for one. Comedians and actresses Maya Rudolph, Tina Fey, and Amy Poehler opened the show while making it clear that they were not hosting. "So just a quick update for everybody, in case you're confused. There is no host tonight, there won't be a popular movie category, and Mexico is not paying for the wall," Rudolph said. The crowd seemed to enjoy their bit immensely.

According to the Academy, the biggest films of the last year were *Roma* and *The Favourite*, tied for the most nominations with 10 each. Both tell very unique stories; *Roma* focuses on indigenous woman Cleo and her life in Mexico in the 70s. Cleo is the maid of a wealthy family, and the story combines the difficulties of their daily lives with the political turmoil in Mexico at the time. *The Favourite* is quite different, and much more raunchy, as it tells the story of Queen Anne and her relationships with her associate

Lady Sarah Marlborough and her servant Abigail Masham. It is based on truth, but the real story is embellished upon. *Roma* took home the awards for Best Foreign Film, Best Cinematography, and Best Director (Alfonso Cuarón). *The Favourite* won Best Actress, which went to Olivia Colman, who portrayed Queen Anne.

Besides those two hits, *Vice*, *BlackKkKlansman*, *A Star is Born*, *Black Panther*, *Green Book*, and *Bohemian Rhapsody* were the Academy's favorites for the year. *Vice* had eight nominations, *A Star is Born*: seven, *BlackKkKlansman*: six, *Black Panther*: six, *Green Book*: five, and *Bohemian Rhapsody*: five.

The big wins were not unanimous among viewers. The greatest upset of the show seemed to be *Green Book* winning Best Picture. The film highlights the life of the real Dr. Don Shirley, a famous black pianist. Based on a true story, Shirley enlists Italian-American bouncer Tony Vallelonga to be his bodyguard as he goes on tour. Firstly, Shirley's family was unhappy with the movie's depiction of his life. "The thing that bothers our family is the focus of the film is all about a white man who was an extreme racist who was still a racist at the end," said Karole Shirley Kimble, Shirley's niece, according to *USA Today*.

Secondly, many were unhappy with the film's avoidance of the topic of actual Green Books. "For a movie named after Green Books, *Green Book* hardly

explains what they are. Published from 1937 to 1966, the *Negro Motorist Green Book* was an essential document for any Black individual traveling throughout the country – not just the deep south, as the movie implies. The book, which was created by mail carrier Victor Hugo Green, detailed the restaurants, stores, beauty shops, hotels, and private 'tourist homes'...that were welcoming to Black travelers... That Green Books were even needed is a travesty, something of which Green was acutely aware," according to Elena Nicolaou of *Refinery29*.

A gathering of so many actors is bound to cause drama, and this year's show had its fair share of it. Leading up to Oscars Sunday, there was a lot to talk about; first, the Academy announced that not all of the Best Song nominees would perform. This news was not taken

well. Later, the decision was rescinded. However, they blundered again when deciding that certain categories would have to be presented during commercial breaks to keep the TV-broadcasted awards show from getting extensive. After receiving backlash, they once again took back the decision and all categories were presented properly.

One of the most memorable moment of this year's show was arguably the performance of "Shallow" from *A Star is Born* by Lady Gaga and Bradley Cooper. "The performance lived up to the hype. It was, like the movie from which it came, both epic and intimate," according to Jen Chaney for online news publication *Vulture*. "That wasn't just a performance. That was a journey, a modern adaptation of a Jane Austen novel, and a rock opera, all played out in roughly three minutes."



PHOTO COURTESY OF GOLDDERBY

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The Prowler gladly accepts comments, concerns, and letters to the editor. Letters may be emailed to qohsprowler@gmail.com, mailed c/o The Prowler to the school address above, or dropped off directly to Ms. Cooley-Klein in Room 241. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

**ABOUT**

The Prowler is published six times a year by the students of Quince Orchard High School, and it has been continuously published since the 1988-89 school year. To become a staff member, students take Journalism A & B to qualify for the Advanced Publications class.



## QOverture spreads love on Valentine's day

By JENNA LEVY  
Managing Editor

Singing with a band is one thing, but having the ability to make music solely with your mouth is another. The members of QOverture, an a capella group that is led by music teacher Robyn Kleiner-Vilgos, do just that.

Every year, students have the opportunity to buy their loved ones a unique and personalized gift for Valentine's Day—a song-gram. These song-grams can be heard throughout the school all day. For \$5, upon any student's request, QOverture would sing a song and share a message in their special person's first,

second, or third period class. The style of song is entirely up to the buyer. Additionally, 90% of the proceeds benefit the Choral Department and ten percent benefit the QOHS General Fund.

This past Valentine's Day, QOverture was pretty difficult not to notice. Their cheerful songs uplifted the whole school's mood. This reporter followed them to get an inside look at their process of delivering song-grams. Even in between their fearless performances, their happy-go-lucky attitude was very prominent. Their positivity was infectious. Junior Drew Reuschlein said this was an opportunity "to decompress and not have to stress about

much." Whether they were singing in the hallways or laughing with one another carelessly, the talented group of students didn't let anything get in their way. Dry vocal cords? No problem! The group made a couple pit stops to give their "musical instruments" a break and get them ready for the several additional performances ahead of them.

When the a capella group isn't singing song-grams, they are preparing for Festival. Reuschlein described Festival as "a field trip where other choirs from Montgomery County compete." The competition takes place during mid-March every year and this year it's on March 5. In class every day, Kleiner-Vilgos leads the

vocal warm-up. "Sometimes we do this thing called sight reading. Sight reading is where we all look at music and [you] try to sing your own specific note without hearing it first. Another exercise we do is called rhythm reading, where we tap to the beat of the music," junior Maddie Fox said.

Many components go into making harmonious music. "There's different voice parts where guys generally sing the lower vocals and girls sing the higher vocals," Fox said. For example, Reuschlein is a tenor—the highest male voice. He also happens to be the section leader. "The guys have trust in me to teach them songs. It's pretty cool," Reuschlein said.

## Mayhem ensues as spring parking passes are issued

By ASHELIGH GORDON  
Managing Editor

Wrapped around the lobby of Quince Orchard in the frigid February weather a few weeks ago was a line of students waiting their turn to pick up their Spring parking pass for the school parking lot. Holding their registration and driver's licenses in hand, many of those students would be forced to return to the line the following day at lunch. They were pleasantly surprised that ultimately, this frustrating situation was solved.

Senior Jacob Lindner was pretty annoyed by the process. After waiting in line for an entire lunch period and not receiving a pass, Lindner returned after school to ensure his spot in

the QO lot. "If everyone ultimately gets a pass, I don't see why we can't park wherever we want," Lindner said. He was "so mad and so annoyed" at the process, speaking for many other students as well.

Junior Megan Roche waited in line for multiple lunch periods and was one of the next people in line when she heard there were no more passes. "I was furious. My mom has a job and can't take me to school every day," Roche said. Similarly, junior Carson Burke didn't think he was going to get a pass, even after completing his application and waiting in the lengthy line with everyone else for days.

Junior Carter Boswell was taking a math test on the first day the passes were

being issued. "I didn't have a choice; I couldn't miss the re-take," Boswell said. Confused as to why he would be penalized for choosing schoolwork over a parking pass, Boswell was also frustrated when he didn't initially receive a pass.

After a few days, Roche, Burke, and Boswell, along with many others who didn't get a spot in the Quince Orchard lot, were called to a meeting where they were informed of the possible solution. Principal Beth Thomas announced that some students would get parking spots in the Safeway parking lot across the street and others would be parking on the basketball courts. While these proposals first came as a surprise to students, they quickly adapted to the change.

Boswell has found the positive side of his parking space at Safeway. "Having to walk in the cold is inconvenient, but I can get in easier in the morning," he said. Avoiding the morning parking lot traffic has its benefits, said Burke, when talking about his parking space on the basketball courts, "I feel special because it's your own little area. You avoid all of the traffic throughout the lot."

While the problems of overcrowding in the lot could have had negative consequences on the students, we are lucky to have a great working relationship between staff and students. The solution created by Mrs. Thomas and the Administration has allowed for students to get to school and park their cars in a timely and effective manner.

## Powerful display at Black History Month assembly

By NIKKI AHMADI  
Managing Editor

Last month, QO held their annual African-American History Month assembly. The assembly consisted of a number of performances from students and guests to showcase their pride for their heritage.

According to junior and Africa United club president Michal Kissiedu, being a part of the assembly each year is important because it allows students to "showcase the struggle of the past and what our family or ancestors have gone through, through our dance."

This year's assembly took a different approach to assemblies from past years, starting with a disclaimer from Assistant Principal Ahmed Adelekan. He took to the stage, asking for respect and understanding from the audience, as this year's acts would be covering material people might deem disturbing or upsetting. The performances specifically focused on looking back at the movements, protests, and acts of violence

that have led society to the position it is in today.

The assembly also differed from years past in that they asked for audience feedback. They shared a video titled "The Talk," demonstrating conflicts young African-American children have faced through different moments in history. Each clip displayed a different child faced with a different problem, but ultimately they all centered around racial discrimination. After presenting the video, the hosts, seniors Teresa Shelton and Kamryn Dillon, asked the audience to follow a link to a questionnaire about their opinion on the video, how

they define racial bias, and if they have ever experienced discrimination. After a few more speakers and a musical performance, senior Alexis Martin took to the podium to read the results of the survey.

As the assembly was coming to an end, the Africa United club gave an eye-catching and moving performance. On either side of the stage, students could be seen taking a knee as others walked onto stage in a line, connected at the ankle by faux shackles. This dance act—along with poems from students about racial bias, slavery, police brutality, and the #MeToo movement—showcased the serious tone

of this year's assembly. At the end of the assembly, Adelekan again came to the stage to thank the audience and say that talking about these sensitive topics are important if people want to create change.

Students from the Asian Culture club are working to gain an assembly as well to demonstrate the pride they have for their heritage. Senior Bridget Lam, president of the club, says that it is important to celebrate Asian culture because "it often goes unnoticed at QO and there should definitely be a county and nationwide month of awareness." She has not yet been able to secure a date for the assembly, or a guarantee that it will be able to take place, but she is in the works with Principal Beth Thomas at the moment. Although the assembly has not yet been set in stone, it would be a good addition to the other events QO hosts in celebration of its various students. "I think it's a good idea. We have Hispanic and black [assemblies] so I think it would show how our school's more diverse," said senior Melissa Kavege.

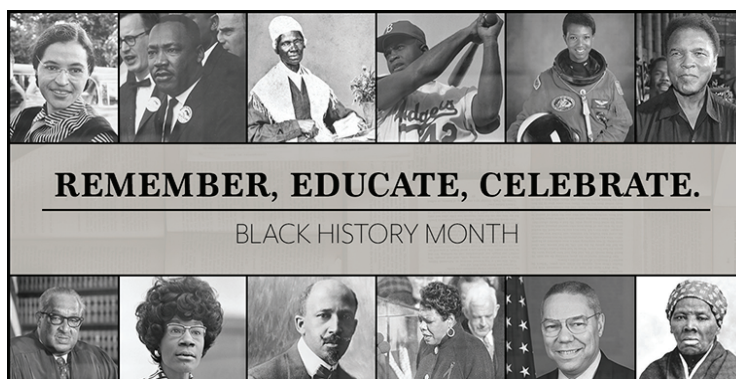


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VIEWPOINT

# Here's some 'tea' on the Red Army Generals

By HANNAH MYERS  
Staff Writer

Red Army Generals. A staple in the Quince Orchard community and the leaders of our student body. Our school spirit is, arguably, one of the only ways in which our student body can come together. On the other hand, are the generals being given too much authority? What exactly are their qualifications? Roles? How involved exactly is Principal Thomas and administration in electing and coordinating with the generals? Are there unseen privileges to being a general? Why was this year the first year we've had a female general? These are all legitimate questions that will be shortly answered my friends. What surely separates QO

from our neighboring schools is our fierce pride and school spirit which is enforced and embodied through our Red Army Generals. Prior to principling QO, Mrs. Thomas was also a Principle at Kingsview Middle school and proceeded to work at Central Office as a director supervising Montgomery County middle schools. Therefore, working in a high school was fairly new to Thomas at the start of last fall, not to mention having to navigate the uniqueness of our student body.

Essentially the role of the generals is to promote school spirit, get everyone pumped up, act as the middleman for getting messages from Thomas to the student body and even on occasions help keep control over routy events. For example, if administration heard rumors of "something happening at a

pregame party we would meet with the generals," explained Thomas. In the past, rising seniors were elected by the current acting generals to be the following years senior classes generals. However this year applications were opened to all of the student body and it was not just simply the "helmets being passed down," said Thomas. This raises the question of whether or not administration will or should become more involved in the selection process.

Although there has been an extreme increase in coordination between the generals and administration, with meetings, planning etc, Mrs. Thomas does very much acknowledge that she wants the Red Army Generals "to be a true representation of our student body while having freedom of expression and be-

ing able to guide our students."

Senior and Red Army General Caroline Gilligan claims that although her experience was "overall very positive" she did have several rather irking situations come up. As she was the Red Army's very first female General, she received several accounts of backlash. She stated that multiple QO students, current or past, anonymously contacted her via iMessage telling her that she wasn't welcome as a general and to "f\*\*\*k off." This later escalated to "vandalism," Caroline reported. "My house was egged and then someone left fireworks in my mailbox." Even after all of the reprisal, she still continued to apply for the position and was strongly encouraged to join by her peers as well as by Thomas. Even though this does not justify the actions of our peers, push

back is expected. "When you come into such a rich history and rich tradition," explained Thomas. It should be noted that Thomas was not made aware of the situation until "well into the first marking period."

All in all, and after careful research, the Red Army Generals are truly a unique aspect of our student body and although it is not a perfect system, they do make this school very special.

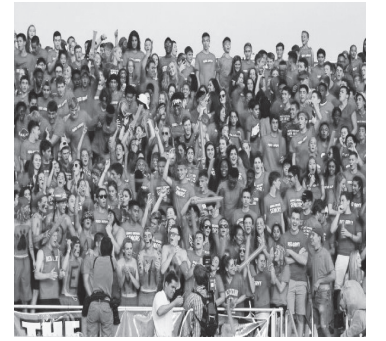


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# Seniors compete for the titles of Mr. and Ms. QO

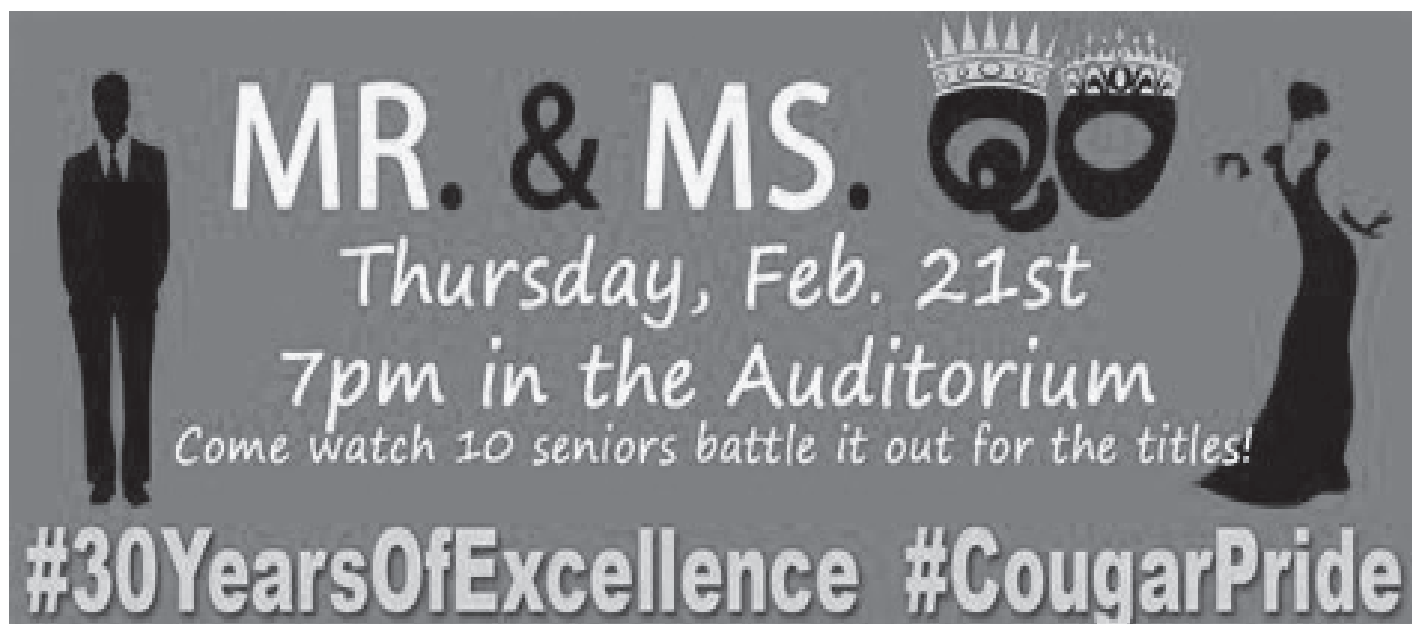
By **ASHLEIGH GORDON**  
Managing Editor

“Come Watch 10 Seniors Battle it Out for The Titles!”

The posters plastered across the school hallways and throughout classrooms invited students and staff to the annual event where 10 seniors prepared a talent, participated in a trivia contest and showed off their formal wear in an effort to win the title of Mr. or Ms. QO. The competition was fierce, and only two seniors could claim the honor.

After a night full of singing, stand-up comedy, and even rollerblading, seniors Sydney Lauricella-Reed and Cooper Hoffman took home the titles. Though the competition was tough, their talents set them apart from the rest of the competition.

Lauricella-Reed’s night was a dream come true—literally. “In 5th grade, I had a dream where I was standing on a stage in a green dress singing ‘My Heart Will Go On,’ Lauricella-Reed recalled. “So that was what I had to do!” Her sparkling green dress dazzled under the bright lights, astonishing the crowd. Although she hadn’t sung a solo on stage since 8th grade, her powerful voice moved the audience. Flashlights sparkled throughout the auditorium as the crowd swayed with the music. “I was generally surprised when they announced I won; I really did not



This is the poster hung around school before the Mr. and Ms. Qo event. The date was later changed to March 7th. PHOTO COURTESY OF QOHS.ORG

expect it,” Lauricella-Reed said.

Hoffman had practiced for weeks in order to prepare for the competition. While he was unsure of his chances at winning it all, he felt extremely confident in his talent, singing “You’ll Be Back” from the musical *Hamilton* with a dedication to his dog. “I have performed the song at other public functions and felt it was perfect for the occasion due to the light and airy tone,” Hoffman said. Winning the title

of Mr. QO was a whirlwind of emotions for Hoffman. “I can remember hearing my name and walking to the podium, but everything else was a blur!”

Lauricella-Reed and Hoffman are both happy they got to experience the night. They both are especially proud of the crown and sash that they were awarded. If they wanted to wear them, they could walk the halls and everyone would know they are officially Mr. and Ms. QO!

I can remember hearing my name and walking to the podium, but everything else was a blur!

- Cooper Hoffman

## VIEWPOINT

# AP Lit curriculum and why it needs to be changed

## Seniors discuss effectiveness of socratic seminars

By **AYESHA SHAHZAD**  
Editor-in-Chief

Second semester is now upon us. This is generally very good news, for seniors especially; only one semester stands between them and graduation. By this time of year, “senioritis” is known to be widespread for the graduating class.

However, many seniors are still working ardently in their classes, especially in their AP classes. AP Literature and Composition, better known as AP Lit, is the most popular AP class among seniors. It is the final high school English class for many, and it is quite the finale. I, along with others, feel that the AP Lit curriculum is ineffective and somewhat contradictory to what was taught in preceding English classes.

The course focuses on the analysis of literature in different forms. In first semester, AP lit students read and analyzed first *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini, and then *The Handmaid’s Tale* by Margaret Atwood, and many other excerpts throughout. Recently, we have been concentrating on poetry. As an AP Lit student myself, I feel that teachers often railroaded the analyses of given writing pieces. Despite my belief that literature is completely up to interpretation and can mean different things to different people, it was clear that there were correct answers to analysis questions proposed in essays, socratic seminars, etc. It came to the point where, during

seminars, there was no real conversation taking place; students were repeating the same ideas with different words. This was my experience, but it certainly was not exclusive to me.

Senior Brooke Buchner has some ideas as to how to improve the curriculum. “The socratic seminars can be improved, the essays can be improved, and the poem unit especially,” Buchner said. “The past three years of high school, we’ve been taught to write literally but now we have to write abstractly, and it’s so confusing

because they didn’t teach us how to write abstractly,” Buchner added.

Senior Ria Dubey feels similarly to Buchner. “They always taught us how to do it one way, and now want it more abstract but never taught us how to change it. So grading really hard [isn’t beneficial] because we don’t know how to write any differently,” Dubey said. She is also not a proponent of the way in which socratic seminars are carried out in the course. “Most of them seem really forced. Forcing kids to talk takes away from saying

actual points and actual thoughts. [It] makes it more about the grade than actual discussion,” she added.

Of course, not everyone feels this way. “I think we are focused on teaching critical thinking skills and getting into the deeper analysis of language, [which] is really effective for students both in the AP Lit curriculum, but also applicable in real life,” AP Lit teacher Marisa Trettel said. “With any class, there are going to be complaints.”

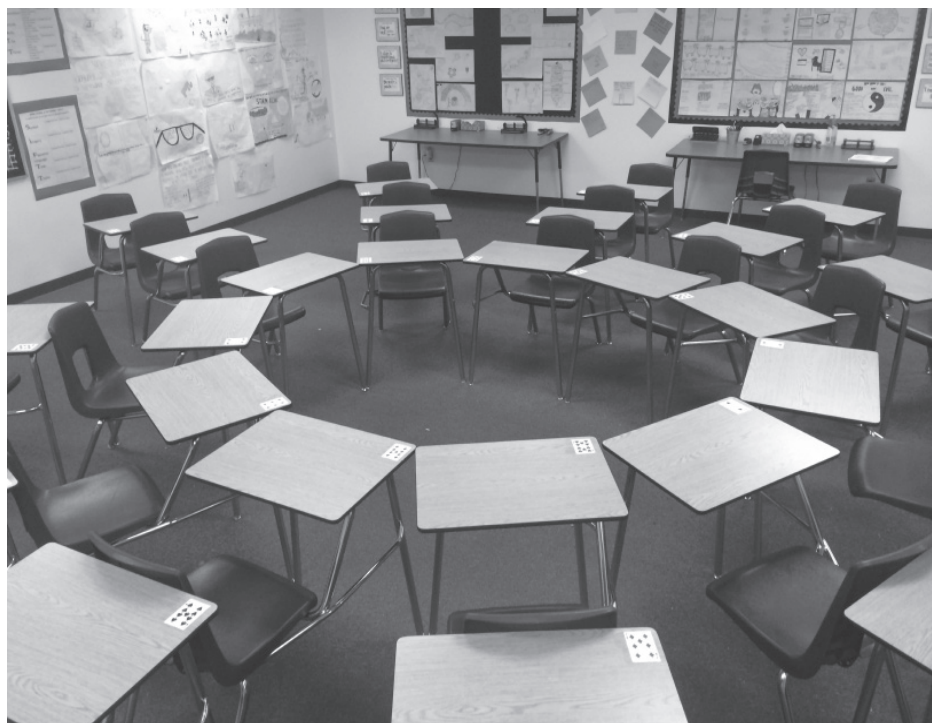


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They always taught us how to do it one way, and now want it more abstract but never taught us how to change it. So grading really hard [isn’t beneficial] because we don’t know how to write any differently.

- Ria Dubey





# A glance at the past: QO teachers edition

By ZOE BELL  
Managing Editor



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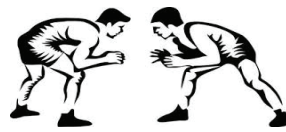


PHOTO COURTESY OF CLIPART



PHOTO COURTESY OF JOSHUA DAVIS

Math teacher Joshua Davis (pictured left, bottom left) was a straight-A student who participated in both varsity wrestling and theater all four years of high school. He was interested in math and science and took AP Calculus in his senior year. It wasn't until after high school, however, that Davis really "fell in love" with math and decided to pursue teaching. Now, Davis teaches Algebra 1 and Algebra 2.

Jenifer Soykan (pictured right), AP Lang and Honors English 9 teacher, was athletic for as long as she can remember. She participated in cross country, indoor and outdoor track, and soccer, but she found her true passion in ice hockey. Originally, Soykan learned figure skating in sixth grade, but her brother, who played ice hockey, "looked like he was having a lot more fun." She hopes to take up hockey again once her kids are older.



PHOTO COURTESY OF JENIFER SOYKAN

## How to survive senior year

By NICKI THOMAS  
Associate Editor

Senior year should be the best year of your high school experience, but you cannot let that overshadow your impending bright future. Here are some DOs and DON'Ts to ensure that when your time comes, whether it's the final stretch of this semester or three years away, you enjoy it and get through it all with ease.

**DOs:**

- Pay your obligations
- Be nice to your teachers and counselor
- Be first in line to get a parking pass
- Make memories
- Appreciate your time here
- Your homework
- Attend school and school-sponsored events

**DON'Ts:**

- Get an E3
- Wait until last minute to apply to college
- Expect your teachers to go easy on you
- Let senioritis hit first semester
- Lose your parking spot to a sophomore
- Expect to go to Harvard
- Do anything to jeopardize your college admissions



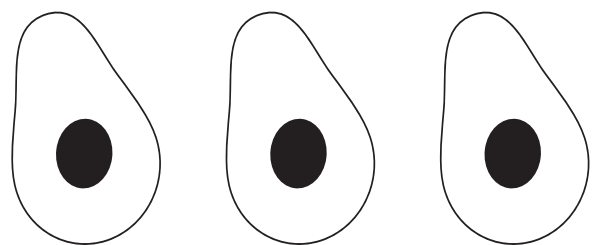
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# What to do over

Take this short quiz to determine wh

By LISETTE GEILING ar





# er Spring Break

here you should go over Spring Break!

and REID PLOSHNICK

here!  
enjoy flying?



Do you like the land or sea more?

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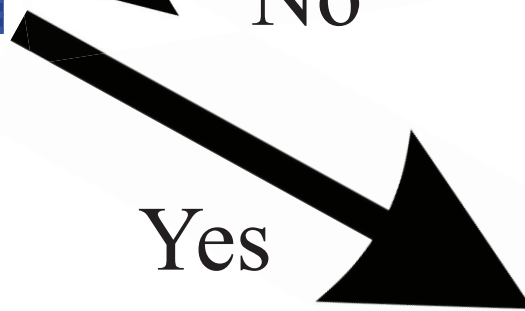
ng new foods?



Do you want to experience a new culture?



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Do you like hot or cold weather?



ork City!



Vacation in Cancún!



Take a trip to Iceland!





# New club on campus

By FAITH LANE  
Managing Editor

There are many either newly created or small clubs at QO that you may not have heard of, but they could be perfect for you. One of these clubs is called Lend a Hand, which was created a little less than a year ago by juniors Katie Orr and Matthew Nagy. Lend a Hand, as you can tell by the name, is about volunteer work and helping others. They have completed many different types of projects in the past year and are excited about future projects.

When thinking about creating a club, Nagy said, "We live in such a diverse area with many unprivileged communities nearby, that we could easily help through community service. Katie and I knew we could make a difference both in our community and our school by starting a club that did different community service projects." Once the club was created, Orr and Nagy began to spread the word of the club and gain members. Today, they are up to 98 members and are always looking for new ones.

Their first project was in April 2018. On Earth Day, Orr, Nagy, and a few other members of the club walked around and picked up trash at a state park. "Although this was a simple project, it felt good to start off the club by doing something easy but still very helpful," Orr said.

In October, Lend a Hand connected with the City of Gaithersburg to offer help for the annual Oktoberfest held in the Kentlands. Many members of the club worked at Oktoberfest, where they provided directions, gave information, and conducted a survey about where people lived who were at the celebration.

Another project the club did was

in November, when they sponsored two families for Thanksgiving. Orr and Nagy assigned different Thanksgiving foods to different people. Then, once the food was organized in festively decorated boxes, members of the club dropped off the food at the families' houses.

In February, the club volunteered to work at the Manna Food Center, where they spent a few hours sorting food. Although this was a short project, they sorted through many boxes, which was a big help for the Manna Food Center. Sophomore Stacy Shin said, "It was a super fun experience because it was relatively easy with all the volunteers and we got to help out which was rewarding."

Members have received SSL hours for most of the projects they have done. So if you want SSL hours, t-o join a club, or are interested in community service, the Remind code for Lend a Hand is @lahqohs and you can follow them on instagram @lahqohs.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KAREN JONES

**THANKSGIVING PROJECT:** Katie Orr, Maddie Pomrunk, Jack Faucett and Matthew Nagy delivering food for families in need.

## VIEWPOINT

# Let's learn life skills

By TORI BERRY  
Editor-in-Chief Emeritus

We all see this on our report cards four times a year: the credits we have and the credits we need in order to graduate. In Montgomery County, the high school graduation requirements state that students must have four credits in math, four in English, three in science, three in social studies, one in art, one physical education, one in technology, and half a credit in health.

Most of these requirements make sense. For instance, the importance of taking English courses should be self-explanatory, given that English is the first most commonly spoken language in the United States and third most in the world, according to World Economic Forum.

English courses teach students written and analytical skills that are widely applicable in everyday life and in a variety of careers. Biology and health teach students the basics of life and their own bodies, two subjects which affect and are important to every person regardless of their potential future careers. Physical education encourages students to stay active, art fuels creativity and expression, and technology teaches students the computer basics that the modern world seems to demand.

The commonality between these is that all students, regardless of what they hope to do with the rest of their lives, will benefit from the knowledge gained from these classes.

However, the math requirement is not quite as just. Originally, students were only required to obtain four math credits, including algebra and geometry, before graduation - meaning that after passing four classes, students were no

longer required to take math. Starting with the class of 2018, though, the state of Maryland changed this so that high school students must take at least one math class every year for all four years.

Basic math skills can be useful to all in everyday life, and is certainly necessary for common calculations such as tips and taxes. But after algebra and geometry, the math classes become more focused and less practical. Many students eventually have to take calculus, for example, and yet most will never encounter integrals for the rest of their lives.

Sure, some STEM careers may need you to find the area under a curve, but the skillset from calculus is not realistically applicable to a large proportion of students' futures. Statistics is arguably more useful, but still only so to certain careers. Why should all students waste their time and energy learning these subjects that they will likely never even see again?

Instead, students should be offered classes that teach content useful to all, regardless what future career they may do, like financial literacy or just basic life skills. While I may never have to think about chemistry another day in my life, I will have to think about financial management, loans and insurance, household and car maintenance - all things that I still do not understand, and I'm going to be living on my own in just five months.

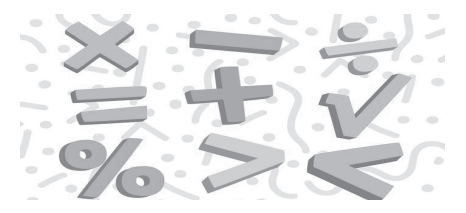


PHOTO COURTESY OF VECTEEZY.COM



COMIC BY ADRIAN ISASSI





# Theatre will go Hollywood with spring musical *Hello, Dolly!*

By **RONNELL FOREMAN**  
*Staff Writer*

Even after the devastating news of Mr. Saadipour's exit from the program, the theater program remained resilient and has been rolling into the spring season. This year's spring musical, *Hello, Dolly!*, has fans going into spring with much to be excited about.

Senior Anthony Marin "is not planning on studying theater in college, but he says theater has changed his life immensely and he has been honored to take part in the process. "I like the experience and the things I can learn which allows me to be a greater person overall." Anthony has been a crew manager for two years and has taken over a big leadership role this year. He has gotten more leeway from the directors to help with the set and has more say in decisions. He also has been very vocal on the program's behalf in regards with the budgeting and practice times.

Another person thankful to be a part of the program is junior Malachi Green, who has been striving in the program since he joined in his Freshman year. Theater has been such a pivotal part of his life. "Theater is amazing because you can be who you are and people will accept you as family," he says. He played a lead role in *Clue* last fall and is prepared to do the same with *Hello, Dolly!* as Horace Vandergelder. Who plays as Dolly's husband. However, Malachi knows he still needs to improve because of how much theater needs him. He states he wants to "give

his character more personality and flow."

This year, the theater department has faced so much adversity but has also been extremely resilient and determined to be one of the best theater programs in Montgomery County. This has also been a very pivotal year in the program's history. With many of the seniors on their way out, the theater department had to find a way to make do. Luckily, they most certainly have and they want to end the year off with a bang.

"I like the experience and things I can learn which allows me to be a greater person overall."

- Anthony Marin



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANTHONY MARIN

# My glamorous night at the Grammys: Expectations vs. reality of attending music's biggest night

By **JENNA SHATZMAN**  
*Associate Editor*

This year, I got to cross off the #1 thing on my bucket list and attend the 61st Grammy Awards. The experience was as magical as I could have ever imagined it to be, and I'm here to tell you guys what it's really like to attend music's biggest night.

EXPECTATION	REALITY
You'll walk the red carpet.	Unless you have a special pass or are a celebrity, most people attending the Grammys cannot walk the red carpet. However, there are backdrops throughout the arena for other attendees to take pictures in front of!
There are long periods during commercials where nothing happens.	Commercial breaks go by really fast, and you can watch artists prepare for their performances or watch the big screens as they play performances from past Grammys.
You'll be sitting next to a celebrity.	Unfortunately, you will most likely not be sitting next to a celebrity unless you already are one and get to sit in the floor seats. However, you may be sitting next to someone cool who works behind the scenes! I sat in the 200 section and was sitting next to a songwriter.
You can print your tickets online just like you do at most concerts.	You don't print your tickets online. Instead, you go to the Los Angeles Convention Center to pick up your tickets, but the biggest celebrities will most likely send someone to pick their tickets up for them.
Everyone at the Grammys is famous.	Everyone at the Grammys is definitely not famous. In fact, there are probably more people like you and me than celebrities. But, with everyone wearing tuxedos and glittery dresses, we could all pass for the rich and famous.
The Grammys happen at night and end really late.	On the east coast, the Grammys start and end late. However, the Grammys happen in Los Angeles where there time is 3 hours behind us. I got to the Staples Center at 3:00pm and was back at my hotel by 9:30pm!
There is only one artist on stage during their performance, and they take up the whole stage.	To my surprise, during most performances, the artist's set only took up half of the stage! While one artist was performing, on the other half of the stage crew was preparing to present another award and get ready for another performer.





# The Month of Madness is finally upon us

By **BEN FLEISCHER**  
Managing Editor

The month of March is finally here and you know what that means: it is time to watch some basketball in 7th and 8th period (get your work done first). The Division I NCAA Tournament has arrived and 64 teams have been fighting for their spots in the clash for the title.

Selection Sunday is this coming Sunday, when the teams who made the tournament are announced and ranked in their given regions of the bracket. Due to this, none of the rankings that are stated here are 100% definitive.

According to CBS Sports, the top four teams in the men's tournament are Duke, Kentucky, Virginia, and Gonzaga, giving them the #1 seeds in each of the regions. The ACC takes the top ranked teams by having two of the top four in Duke and Virginia. On the opposite side of the region, the current #2 seeds are Michigan, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Michigan State, so there are two Big Ten teams with the #2 rank (Michigan and Michigan State).

Now for our predicted Cinderella and dark horse teams (the lower seed surprise of the tournament and the average team that makes it far). Last year's tourney had #16 UMBC beating #1 Virginia, along with Sister Jean and Loyola-Chicago as the Cinderella teams, but this year is another story. Murray State just squeezed into the tourney with a conference tournament win last weekend and they are definitely a force to be reckoned with. They are led by guard Temetrius (Ja) Mo-

rant who is projected to be the #2 overall pick in the NBA Draft next year. However, Wofford is going to be the team to turn heads and make it to the second week of the tournament. Wofford is in a favorable position: they will play near their hometown of Charleston when they play in Spartanburg, South Carolina. If they are to win then they will most likely have to play Virginia, but they will have the crowd and home advantage.

Last year was a huge earthquake in the tourna-

ment, shaking people's brackets all over the place. There were many upsets and some predicted wins, but in the end the dark horse turned out to be Michigan, making it all the way to the championship game. The dark horse this year, though, is going to have to be our hometown team of Maryland.

Maryland has been underperforming all year, and all of their losses were right around or under ten points, except for at Michigan State, at Michigan, and

at Penn State. Maryland has a very young team (the 4th youngest in the nation) with a veteran point guard leading the charge. Junior guard Anthony Cowan knows what it feels like to lose in the tournament, and he has just begun imparting his leadership on the younger players. Turnovers have also been a huge issue for the team and when they take care of the ball, they win games.

Maryland is in the East region, as of now, and the Sweet 16 and Elite Eight games will be played in Capital One Arena in Washington, D.C. just 24 miles from their homes at College Park. In previous years, Maryland has had a huge winning percentage when they play at home with the crowd on their side, so having these games in their backyard is the perfect setting for sending them to the Final Four—if they can make it there.

This upcoming month is definitely going to be one to remember as the tournament gets better every year. Be ready for some heated games with every team battling it out to get to the Big Dance and obtain the crown of 2019 National Champions. Fill out those brackets!



PHOTOS COURTESY OF STREETER LECKA/GETTY IMAGES

The Florida Gulf Coast Eagles and North Carolina Tar Heels fight it out for the tip in the beginning of the tournament two years ago.

## Spring sports excited for upcoming seasons Cougars ready for new challenges that will arise with the competition

By **JACOB CHERIS**  
Staff Writer

When the weather starts to get warm, it signals the time for spring sports at QO. Teams like baseball, tennis, lacrosse, and softball are all looking to have successful seasons.

QO varsity baseball is looking to find some consistency after going 11-8 last season. According to junior shortstop Griffin Snyder, "I can expect everyone to work hard. We aren't going to have as much talent as last year,

but we are going to work harder," said Snyder. "One thing that we struggled with was being able to string hits together and start rallies."

Head coach Jason Gasaway also believes that his group will be confident. "We are going to have a lot of new faces out there, and we are looking to see how they've developed from sophomore year to junior year," he said.

QO varsity girls tennis has a new face this year. Julie Lyst, a Learning for Independence (LFI) teacher at Montgomery Village Mid-

dle School, is the new head coach of the team. Building off a team record of 7-5 last season, Lyst wants to start creating relationships with players. "I'm looking forward to meeting everyone, starting the girls on the right foot, and help[ing] elevate their play," said Lyst in an email. "I come with some quality experience that I'm excited to share."

Senior captain Serena Tong is also looking forward to having a new coach. "I think it's gonna be really interesting to see how she

works with us, and we have a bunch of newcomers coming and that's always exciting to have new players on the team," said Tong.

QO boys varsity lacrosse won their third straight division title last season and had a regular season record of 10-7. Just like all sports, hard work and dedication leads to success. "I can expect a lot of hard work and effort so we can win," said junior defenseman Will Spano. "We can improve on our communication on and off the field with each other."

This year's team has lots of old faces, and head coach David Gonzalez has high expectations this season. "We have the mentality that we have the opportunity to win a regional championship," he said, something that hasn't been done in school history. "We are gonna need to make sure we take care of our bodies, our minds, our sticks, and they need to make sure they are watching film and learning what the opponents are doing," added Gonzalez.

QO girls varsity softball didn't have the best season last year with a 9-10 record, but the new leadership core hasn't backed down. Senior pitcher Tehya Harbaugh has high expectations going into



*"I can expect everyone to work hard. We aren't going to have as much talent as last year, but we are going to work harder."*

-Griffin Snyder



PHOTO COURTESY OF WONGHAN

The boys lacrosse team run out in all smiles for a game in the 2017-2018 season.

the season. "I expect us to all get together and work together well," said Harbaugh, who has been on varsity since she was a freshman. "We've been working harder, but we still have to work on communicating better."

This year's team has a mix of new faces and old faces. According to head coach Colleen Adams, "We only have five upperclassmen, but we got some sophomores [who] spent some time on varsity last year [who] were really strong."

The rosters are set and each team is ready to get rolling for a tough and exciting season.





## VIEWPOINT

# Bryce Harper FINALLY makes his decision, leaves behind D.C.

By **JANTZEN FOCHT**  
Associate Editor

It will be an event that highlights the end of an era and will illustrate a key turning point in a franchise. Years down the road, when we look back on this turn of events, March 1st, 2019, will be one of extreme importance to the entirety of the MLB. This is the day that Bryce Harper left the city where he was beloved for the biggest athletic contract ever, becoming one of the most infamous figures in D.C. sports history.

No longer will you see fans of all ages parading down South Capitol Street wearing "34" Nationals jerseys, no. Instead, these same fanatics who stood up for Bryce when others attacked him,

loved him for his in-game heroics, and remained by his side during his historic lows, will be the same people who deafeningly boo him to no end the nine or so times the Phillies play the Nationals at home for the next decade and a half.

Harper, who signed a 13 year, \$330 million contract with the Philadelphia Phillies this past week, all but ensured an exponential increase in tensions between the two rival NL East teams.

Where all this future bad blood comes from doesn't stem from the fact that he left; we saw this potential move coming from a mile away. Never for one second did Nationals fans truly believe that he wasn't going to test the waters in free agency. Whether it was his constant "love affair" with the Cubs' Kris

Bryant, his family's long standing admiration for the Yankee franchise and Mickey Mantle, or his desire to be close to his hometown of Las Vegas, it was not really all that shocking to hear the rumors that Bryce might leave. It's the notion that he left for a division rival for essentially a worse deal than the one Washington proposed to him back in the fall that really sets Nationals fans off.

Even though the figures look more lucrative at \$330 million over 13 years, its average annual value, or the amount he gets paid per year, is actually less than that of the one Nats GM Mike Rizzo offered him a while ago.

Look, I'm not going to sit here and say that Harper is an awful person for wanting a pay raise. I think that all of us would certainly entertain the offer of leaving a job we enjoy for a new adventure with higher pay. After all, the MLB is a business, where money factors into a player's decision along with—or even more so—than loyalty.

In summary, my thoughts about him leaving are this: one, if he stayed with the Nats, he could've been the next Derek Jeter, Cal Ripken, or Tony Gwynn, all of whom stayed with one team for all of their careers, and were subsequently beloved for generations to come. (Seldom is this the case anymore, as leaving for bigger contracts is more commonplace, given the influence of free agency.)

Second: honestly, this most likely worked out the best it could for both sides. For the Phillies and Harper, they got their face of the franchise for the next 10+ years, and Harper got the one thing he always wanted to be: the highest-paid athlete of his respective time period. As for, the Nationals, their payroll will be much cleaner for years to

come, allowing them to seek future acquisitions they could not have otherwise pursued with Harper on their payroll.

Essentially, Harper left because he didn't absolutely WANT to stay with the Nationals, and Washington didn't necessarily NEED him either; they already had three more than capable outfielders in underrated Adam Eaton, blue chipper Juan Soto, and potential All-Star rookie Victor Robles. In reality, the proposed 10 year, \$300 million deal the Nats offered Harper was never really a love letter, it was an "I sort of like you" letter, which illustrated the two parties mutual, but not intense, interest in one another. Harper saw flaws in the Nationals offer, and the Nats viewed Harper as a less than perfect commodity. Simple as that.

The Nationals will be just fine without him. Harper's replacement, Juan Soto, has shown flashes that he might be as good as, or even better than, his former teammate. The starting pitching rotation will still consist of two of the best arms in the game (Scherzer and Strasburg), and will now feature an all-star in the form of Patrick Corbin for the next six years. They will still see an enormous amount of production out of their star infielders Anthony Rendon and Trea Turner, and will find some promise in new signee Brian Dozier and veteran Ryan Zimmerman. Their catching corps is now fixed, and their bullpen is even more solid with the addition of Kyle Barraclough and Trevor Rosenthal. This team looks better than ever and should still win a fair amount of games (barring any unexpected injuries).

My prediction for this year? A record of 92-69, a playoff appearance, and a whole lot of unkind sayings directed at Mr. Harper.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHICAGO TRIBUNE

## Boys basketball season is over

By **GABI EYRICH**  
Editor-in-Chief

After a long and brutal—but fun—season of everyday practices, the boy's basketball team's season has come to an end. However, the team's season ended on a high note. The boys played their heart out at their last game against Wootton; they gave it their all and left it all on the court.

After four quarters of non-stop battling and plenty of lead changes, the game came down to the final minute when the ref made a very debatable call that sent a Wootton player to the free-throw line to put the game away.

The boys lost two key players, both seniors who would have been helpful,

before the final playoff game due to personal conflicts with coaching. While their teammates were sad to see them go, they were relentless and fought hard in their last game.

Although the season didn't end as everyone had hoped, it was still a successful season. The team finished the season with 11 wins and 11 losses, filled with plenty of ups and downs. This team is primarily made up of juniors and sophomores, so the future is bright for this team. The graduating seniors have paved a good path for the younger players to follow. With consistent off-season workouts and training, the young team should be fit and ready for next season. Going into next year's season, the team only has one thing on their mind: redemption.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PHIL FABRIZIO

**HOOP DREAMS:** Sophomore Alex Parisotto leaps for a board against Wootton.

## Croquet: Does it deserve more hype?

By **ZACH LEVY**  
Managing Editor

In November 1856, Isaac Spratt, a London native, created a set of rules for a game that would change the world forever. Spratt called his game "croquet." Croquet is a game that requires either plastic or wooden balls, a wooden mallet, pegs, hoops—known as wickets in the United States—and elite athletes that want nothing but to win.

Croquet is a similar game to golf—but it's far superior. The goal of croquet is to use the mallet to knock the balls through the hoops. Each ball must go through the hoop in a specific direction, and the hoops must go in a specific order. Each time a ball rolls through the hoop, the

player earns one point. To win the game (in standard scoring), a player or team must reach six points and then hit the peg with each ball they have left (14 total points).

Often times, croquet is enjoyed as a pastime and played over a cup of tea. However, croquet can also be a very competitive game; it was an event in both the 1900 and 1904 Summer Olympics and major tournaments such as the MacRobertson International Croquet Shield Tournament, which was last won by the Australian national team.

Sadly, croquet is not very common in the United States and is more commonly played in Europe. Quince Orchard should start a croquet team to spread awareness and love for this beautiful sport.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PLENTIFUN.COM

**MAKE CROQUET GREAT AGAIN:** Croquet, Levy argues, should make a much-needed comeback.



# ATHLETE OF THE MONTH QUESTIONNAIRE

## Co-Ed Volleyball



**Konstantine Kahadze '20**  
Junior Konstantine Kahadze uses his height advantage on the court. He is easily able to elevate above the net and spike the ball.

## Baseball



**JJ Wilson '20**  
JJ Wilson's on- and off-field presence always boosts the team's attitude. Around the halls, and even on the field, you will always see JJ with a giant smile on his face.

## Softball



**Aniko Alexander '20**  
Junior Aniko Alexander is a very hard worker who never fails to take the extra step to success. She is a key piece to this year's softball team.

## Outdoor Track & Field



**Isabelle Pardo '21**  
Sophomore Isabelle Pardo is a very explosive runner off the start. For Isabelle, the key piece to a race is the start.

## Boys Lacrosse



**JR Walther '20**  
Junior JR Walther can always be seen jumping like a rabbit to beat his defender and pass the ball. He uses quick movements on and off the ball to either score or set up a goal.

## Girls Lacrosse



**Lauren Ransing '19**  
Senior Lauren Ransing has both the experience and skills to lead the lacrosse team during playoffs.

### We asked these athletes the following questions...

	<b>Konstantine Kahadze</b>	<b>JJ Wilson</b>	<b>Aniko Alexander</b>	<b>Isabelle Pardo</b>	<b>JR Walther</b>	<b>Lauren Ransing</b>
If you could pick any teacher to be your new coach, who would it be?	<i>Ms. Hollies</i>	<i>Soykan</i>	<i>Burdette</i>	<i>Schuman</i>	<i>Ms. Pags</i>	<i>Mr. Klein</i>
Are leprechauns real? If so, how do you catch them?	<i>Yes -- with nets</i>	<i>Most definitely, just have to use boxes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Yes, with Chase Reed</i>	<i>Yeah, use a pot of gold as a lure</i>
What is your pre-game ritual?	<i>A good warm-up</i>	<i>I sit there</i>	<i>Tap my bat on home plate 3 times</i>	<i>I don't have one</i>	<i>Playing 22 levels of Angry Birds</i>	<i>Listen to music</i>
What're you looking forward to most this season?	<i>Playoffs</i>	<i>Being back with the boys</i>	<i>Bonding with my teammates and winning games</i>	<i>Making new friends</i>	<i>Dubs</i>	<i>Playing games and being with my teammates</i>
What is wrong with Maryland weather?	<i>Too cold in the mornings and too hot in the afternoon</i>	<i>It's wack as heck</i>	<i>It sucks</i>	<i>Nothing</i>	<i>It changes too often</i>	<i>It's really bipolar</i>
What does red taste like?	<i>Like strawberries</i>	<i>Energy</i>	<i>Strawberries</i>	<i>Spicy</i>	<i>Red</i>	<i>Sweet</i>



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