

THE PROWLER

Quince Orchard High School — 15800 Quince Orchard Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20878 — @qohs_prowler

Class actions, lawsuits, and unions, oh my! *Amazon faces critics despite rise in online orders*

By SARA KLEMOW
Editor-in-Chief

Amazon — our favorite e-commerce company with fast deliveries and practically everything you can think of from books to Nicolas Cage pillowcases (an item we all need). Originally just an online bookstore, Amazon has risen to the top as a multinational company. Yet, books seem to be a real page-turner for retailers, as the “Big Five” Publishing Groups and Amazon face multiple lawsuits against their non-competitive contracts from consumers and retailers. The “Big Five” is the group of the largest book publishing companies: HarperCollins Publishers, Simon & Schuster, Macmillan Publishing Group, Hachette Book Group and Penguin Random House.

In January, consumer Jordan Sacks filed a class action lawsuit, which is a lawsuit that represents a group of people who are suing for the same reason against one company. The complaint filed states that the anti-competitive clause between Amazon and the Big Five hurts consumers by eliminating price competition. Without price competition, eBooks could become a monopolistic market with Amazon



being the only seller.

That potential result of these anti-competitive clauses caused another class action lawsuit to be filed this February. The class action states, “The Big Five agree not to sell their eBooks at a price lower than the price they sell on Amazon.com in order to maintain supracompetitive prices,” according to Top Class Actions (TCA). Allegedly, this contract between Amazon and the Big Five increases barriers to entry into the book market, allowing Amazon to set whatever prices they want for books — and price-setting by the seller is a basic

characteristic of a monopoly. In a world where going paperless is the trend, these class actions will set the precedent for the future of the eBook market.

In addition to these class actions, Amazon is also facing worker safety lawsuits in the midst of the pandemic. Most prevalent of these cases is from New York State itself. The New York Attorney General, Letitia James, claims that Amazon’s health and safety requirements puts both workers and the general public at risk.

“She accused the company of shoddy contact tracing and poor

cleaning — both designed to prevent the spread of the virus — at two New York facilities: a Staten Island fulfillment center and a Queens distribution center. A worker at the Staten Island plant warehouse died of COVID-19,” said writer Jaclyn Diaz from NPR.

Amazon has profited over \$130 billion so far during the pandemic, yet it failed to comply with New York state guidelines to provide adequate protection since March 2020, when over 250 employees from the Staten Island facility contacted Amazon about their positive COVID-19 tests or diagnoses. “In more than 80 of these instances, Amazon failed to close any portion [of the facility],” according to James’ official complaint.

Meanwhile, workers at an Amazon warehouse in Alabama are voting on whether to join a retail workers’ union. “We’re being treated like we’re prisoners who’re there to get a job done,” warehouse employee Jennifer Bates told CBS.

This would be the first union ever for Amazon in the US, and hundreds of thousands of employees are watching to see how this decision could affect them. Voting on the formation of this union in Alabama is “currently underway by mail, and will end on March 29,” according to CBS.

WashPost journalist Khashoggi killed unjustly

By RILEY SMITH
Staff Writer

On October 2nd, 2018, thinking he was going to retrieve marriage documents, outspoken Saudi critic Jamal Khashoggi entered the Saudi consulate in Istanbul with his fiancée waiting outside, yet he never left.

The rest of the story is history, while inside Khashoggi was murdered, dismembered, and subsequently burned in an oven with 70 pounds of meat in order to mask the smell. Being that Khashoggi was a US resident and contributor to *The Washington Post*, one may think that America would stand up for a journalist who was silenced by his native country’s government, yet quite the contrary was true. Later on, it was discovered that Khashoggi was working with a group of Saudi dissidents who called themselves “The Bees” who worked against state-sponsored Twitter posts in Saudi Arabia in order to get sentiment criticizing the Crown Prince and royal family to trend on the platform.

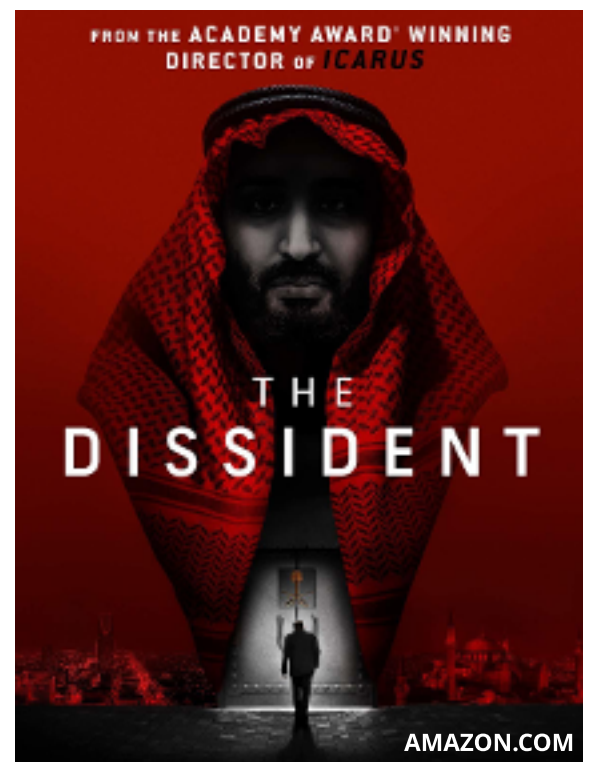
Following the murder, the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed Bin Salman (or MBS, for short), denied responsibility, and President Trump stood with him stating “The King firmly denied any knowledge of it. I don’t want to get into his mind. But, it sounded to me like maybe these could have been rogue killers. Who knows?”

Yet, on February 26, President Biden’s administration released damning reports that the Crown Prince did, in fact, know of the murder, and

that he gave the okay for the murder. Thus far, Biden has placed sanctions on some Saudis, excluding the Crown Prince.

Many describe MBS as “the power behind the throne” and although he was seen as a great liberalizer of Saudi Arabia at first, his thirst for power has been seen by many, including Khashoggi himself, as extremely dangerous. From allegedly hacking the phone of Amazon founder and owner of *The Washington Post* Jeff Bezos to imprisoning Saudis who he saw as a threat to his power, MBS, who is likely to succeed his father as King of Saudi Arabia, is being eyed closely by the world leaders and Saudis alike, as to what his next moves to power may be.

Recently, the documentary *The Dissident* was released by the filmmaker and creator of the Netflix documentary *Icarus*—a documentary following the Russian national team doping scandal. *The Dissident* goes into detail of Bin Salman’s direct involvement in the murder of Khashoggi and how the Saudi government uses social media, primarily Twitter, in order to retain its iron grip on power. While Netflix, Apple TV, and Amazon Prime Video were fearful to pick up the documentary, with filmmaker Bryan Fogel stating, “The decision (for Netflix) not to acquire ‘The Dissident’ had nothing to do with its critical reviews— but had everything to do with business interests and politics and, who knows, perhaps pressure from the Saudi government.” The film is able to be rented across a plethora of platforms. The film has received exemplary reviews everywhere, from *The New York Times* in which editor



Devika Grish writes “Bryan Fogel’s new documentary about the killing of Jamal Khashoggi underlines the disregard for human rights when money and geopolitics are at play,” to the UK paper, *The Sunday Times*, writing “The best thing about the documentary is that it restores Khashoggi to life...”

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WIKIPEDIA



Asian American hate crimes at their highest number in decades

By **JAY MOTIWALA**
Senior Staff Writer

Due to the racism and stigma associated with the Coronavirus, Asian Americans (specifically East Asian Americans) have experienced an astronomical increase in the number of hate crimes directed towards them and their ethnic group.

According to the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism, the number of reported hate crimes towards Asian Americans in 16 major cities in 2020 jumped a staggering 149% compared to 2019. This comes with a report that hate crimes against all other races decreased by 7%. The contrasting numbers between Asian Americans and the other groups within the United States highlights a disturbing pattern of violence towards that group.

The advocacy group Stop Asian American Pacific Islander Hate shared that they received over 2,800 reports of hate incidents directed towards Asian Americans.

Phrases such as the "China virus" and "Kung-flu" have led to some people in the United States to draw unfair and unsubstantiated conclusions about Asian Americans. These assertions, along with the public

erasure of Asian Americans in other conversations, has led to Asian Americans to be treated with disrespect.

Amanda Nguyen, founder of Rise, Inc., a civil rights organization, says that, "We [Asian Americans] have been systematically erased on every single level and people can start to combat that by educating themselves about us."

She feels that Asian Americans have been ignored due to minimal representation in the media, dismissal of their concerns in governmental issues, and the lack of exposure given to Asian problems and their experience as a whole.

She also claims that Asian Americans have become "scapegoats" for people to release their anger upon, and that people in America "can't really differentiate between X, Y, and Z," when it comes to Asian culture, and they commonly regard their different lifestyles as one and the same, when in reality, there are over a dozen East Asian countries with their own unique variations.

Social media has become a launching point for this movement, with the point that Asian Americans being ignored having loads to do with its emergence. The increased activity about these hate crimes on social

media, plus videos of these hate crimes occurring, allowed for more people to become educated and aware of this issue.

Videos shared to social media include an elderly Thai man in San Francisco getting pushed onto hard pavement and ultimately succumbing to his injuries. In addition, there are multiple videos circulating of Asian Americans getting shouted at, cursed at and spit on.

Sadly on Tuesday March 16, eight people were killed at three separate spas in Atlanta, with six of the people murdered being of Asian descent. The suspect in custody specifically targeted those massage parlors, however he claims that the attack was not racially motivated and it was to fuel his "addiction to sex" according to law enforcement officials.

Capt. Jay Baker of the Cherokee County Sheriff's Department drew massive criticism for saying that the shooter had a "really bad day" and that this shooting was an effect of his day. Capt. Baker also had posted an image onto his Facebook page that showed a racist shirt saying, "Covid 19 IMPORTED VIRUS FROM CHY-NA." *BuzzFeed News* requested a comment from Baker over his post, and while he did not respond, the post was deleted shortly after the request was made.

The hashtag #StopAsianHate has gained popularity on apps like Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok. Even celebrities such as Olivia Munn, Daniel Dae Kim, and Younghoe Koo have shared their frustration about these hate crimes on social media.

A common complaint on social media platforms has been the lack of attention that Asian American hate crimes have been gaining, even with these disturbing statistics coming to light.

TikTok user @bxhan posted a video that was viewed more than 200,000 times in which she states that "there have been so many attacks on Asian Americans as of late and no one is talking about it."

A shared hope amongst advocacy groups, social media users, and Asian Americans themselves is that this movement can gain enough attention so that justice can be served.

"We have been systematically erased on every single level,"

- Amanda Nguyen

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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 should take Journalism A & B with Ms. Cooley-Klein to qualify for the Newspaper Production class.

Meet our two SMOB finalists!

By **NATALIA GARCIA**
Staff Writer

You know it's that time of the year again. A connection between MCPS students and the Montgomery County Board of Education. An election held for all students in grades 6-12 and a chance for student issues to be addressed. You guessed it, the Student Member of the Board (SMOB) election!

This year marks the 44th annual year of SMOB elections. The two finalists are Hana O'Looney and Henry Kaye, and both are juniors from Richard Montgomery High School.

Hana O'Looney first began her journey for change after getting involved in student government for the first time in sixth grade. Since then she has held multiple leadership positions and has been able to successfully advocate to end PARCC

testing, organize countywide voter registration drives in the high schools, get free menstrual hygiene products in all bathrooms, and much more. O'Looney wants to address many student issues at Board if she is elected.

"My first priority would be to get everyone back in school, quickly and safely. I think we can work towards getting back to a 'normal' school experience. Secondly, I want to focus on diversifying our staff and curriculum. We should not be having a teacher workforce that is 72% white to support students. Thirdly, I want to address and work on the opportunity gap, I've seen the massive

disparities at different schools. I want to make sure we work towards the future in which your zip code, background, and language don't determine the educational opportunities that you get," said O'Looney.

Henry Kaye, the second finalist, is also committed to bringing meaningful change to MCPS. In the past, Kaye has demonstrated leadership in many of his extracurricular activities, sports, and his part-time job. If elected, Kaye also has some student issues that he wants to address at the Board.



Henry Kaye



Hana O'Looney

"From day one I want to make sure all students have the opportunity to become involved in countywide government and county advocacy. Also, I want to lower the opportunity gap, make sure we're equitably distributing our resources, and that we're managing our budget effectively so that we can treat all students fairly," he said.

The early election begins April 15 and the election has been changed to April 22 - 23 during English and ESOL classes. Previously, Election Day was held on the 21, which is an asynchronous Wednesday. Kaye advocated for that date change. If you want to learn more about their campaigns, here are their websites: www.hana4smob.com and www.henrysmob.com.



Happy (or not-so-happy) 1 year COVID-versary

A look back on the past 365 days living in a world filled with the coronavirus

By **MADDY FREEDMAN**
Senior Staff Writer

A little over 365 days ago schools began closing, jobs began switching from in-person to virtual, and a virus we, the US, simply called the 'novel coronavirus' took over the country. Soon doctors identified this mysterious virus as SARS CoV-2. And as people got gravely ill and deaths piled up, they named the killer disease COVID-19.

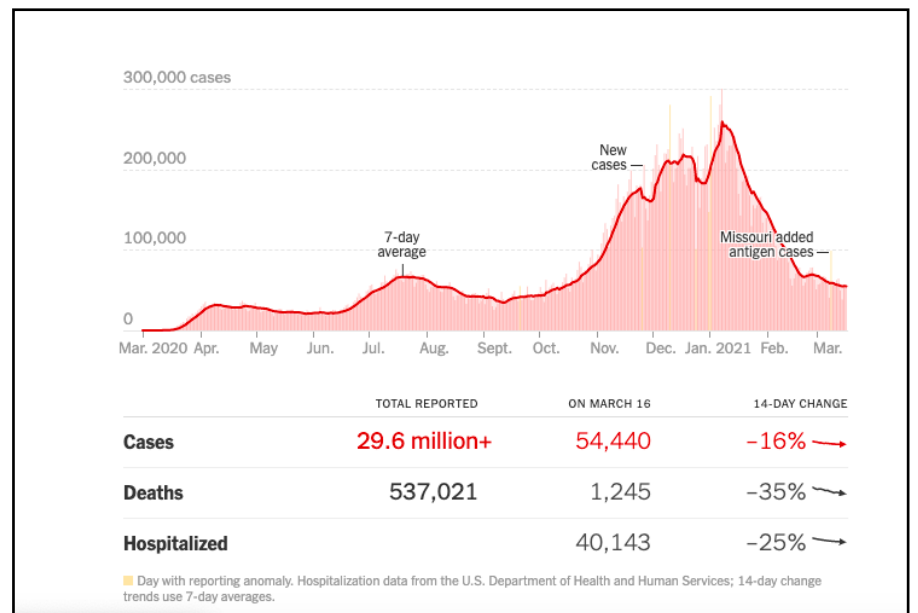
Fast forward to present time almost exactly one year later, and COVID-19 has caused over half a million deaths and infected over 28 million people in the US alone. This caused hospital and urgent care

centers to experience capacities never before seen, and made healthcare workers newfound heroes. Nurses, doctors, and any type of healthcare professional found themselves working longer and harder than ever before and putting their lives at risk while doing so.

Unfortunately for the US, deaths and infections were not the only thing this virus caused. COVID-19 caused a country-wide lockdown, forcing millions of people to lose their jobs and financial independence. The impacts of the pandemic and the economic fallout have been widespread, but are particularly prevalent among Black, Latino, Indigenous, and immigrant households. As unemployment rates

began to skyrocket, we found our country at an all-time low.

Even though this awful pandemic is filled with tragedy, quarantine brought families



Coronavirus in the U.S.: Latest map and case count with over 29.6 million cases and over 537,000 deaths



together, making new norms by going on daily walks, having family movie and game nights, and reminding loved ones just how much you love them. Now as we are arriving on almost a year of an upside down world due to COVID-19, we are finally starting to see some light. Multiple companies

have come out with vaccines that are being distributed to millions of people, along with business and restaurants starting to open again. Hopefully, as we near our one year COVID-versary, we also near the end of this virus for good.

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POC&: Zolani Kizito on being a woman of color born in Africa

By ANYA SESAY
Staff Writer

Walking the asphalt streets of Uganda, she noticed a sight so warmly disorienting that it brought truth and solace to her battered soul, bruised and deceived by the trauma of an unattainable White standard: a mirror image. Every billboard, magazine, and media form standing before her revealed an unassailable truth — White isn't the only right. Beautiful Brown women, from light to deep-hued, sat pretty, smiled bright, and held the cover of practically every Ugandan print and TV media. Mingling with the crowds, the truth held true; she was treated with an unmatched amount of respect, finding amity with others and kindness from strangers. But the reality of this oddity was emphatically shown, when she re-entered the US after her summer in her home country. Running through the memories of her youth, QO senior Zolani Kizito realized that the energy towards Black women was tremendously different on United States soil.

Born in Uganda, Kizito moved to the United States before she turned one. Her father, who works for the World Bank, was transferred to the North American region, which prompted the move.

The early years of her primary education, spent at Jones Lane Elementary School, bring only unpleasant memories to Kizito's mind. "I was repeatedly broken down; my mom would have to come in and say, 'Why are you breaking down this young Black girl?'" Kizito said, "and I never [knew if] it was because I'm Black, or if it was because I actually [needed to be] humbled?" In classes,

she felt that her creative spirit was constantly being stifled, almost as if her teachers were finding every excuse to get her kicked out of class. From being told she doesn't belong in a high-level math class because she hummed, to facing public reproach each time she touched one of her braids, to taking the place of her ignorant, frozen teacher in comforting and enlivening a young Black girl who felt fearful in wearing her natural hair publicly, Kizito was introduced to many harsh anomalies during her elementary school days. Anomalies that would traumatize her for years to come; anomalies that made her long for a new educational institution. So, as her dad was transferred to the Latin American region, Kizito found that her wish was soon realized. Along with her immediate family, she moved to Brazil to finish out her elementary school education.

Kizito attributes her residency in Brazil to much of the person she is today. "I wouldn't have been so outspoken, if I had stayed [at Jones Lane]... In my school in Brazil, I was allowed to express... there weren't teachers who tried to humble me," she said. She recalls it as the place she first found true support and friendship. "I met a [teacher], and she supported me... When I got things wrong, she didn't tell me I didn't belong," Kizito said. This support even emboldened her to run for class president each year that she lived in Brazil.

But one memory sticks out in Kizito's mind, as a moment of ethnological revelation: her fifth grade trip to Bahia, the epicenter of Afro-Brazilian culture. Although she wasn't fully aware of the history of Blackness in Brazil, Kizito recognized

a clear shift from the culture of lightness in Brazil's capital to Bahia's Afro-centric society. Surrounded by the shops began by former enslaved peoples, the foods of Black Brazil, and a keen appreciation of Black female beauty, Kizito was mesmerized by her unique exposure to the totality of this country's roots. "Bahia was the first time I saw a country's history," she said.

After her promotion from elementary school, Kizito's family moved back to the States to be closer to her college-aged sister. Nothing particularly distinct stands out in Kizito's mind about her time in middle school. "When I remember

Ridgeview [Middle School], it's just a blur," she said. However, a few things have forever stained her memory. "It's just like: middle school, permed hair," Kizito said, "[and] I don't recall why, but in Ridgeview I didn't really have the opportunity to make Black friends."

When discussing Quince Orchard, not only did her memories snap back into focus, but she realized that the moments she built have been amongst the most pivotal in her adolescent experience. Initially, Kizito found herself grappling with her intersecting identities. Both fully African, raised in a household that prioritizes Ugandan heritage, and American, growing up for most of her life in a Maryland suburb, she often found it difficult to find her people. "I was in two worlds, so when I did try to make friends with Africans or African Americans, I felt either here or there, like [it was difficult to find the intersection between the two]," she said, "but I know now, I was just complicating

things." But as time went on, so only did growth.

During her freshman year, she shaved her head of all its heated, damaged strands of hair, and watched as the curls she didn't recognize aged into a timeless and healthy visual representation of Afro-beauty. During her sophomore year, she found herself growing more confident in her African identity and physique, and discovering her underlying passion for chemistry.

Ironically, this period of burgeoning self-confidence occurred against the backdrop of an extracurricular activity that exposed her to first-hand colorism and overt racism. "[It] was the first time I was in a room full of White men screaming the n-word," she said, "and being the darkest girl in the room, people would tell me I was intimidating when I hadn't said anything; I mind the business that pays me — how am I intimidating?"

After her annual summer in Uganda, Kizito's junior year felt ridden with contrasting moments. "I felt privileged as a woman in Uganda, yet I came back to people [in the US] who didn't respect me as a Black woman," she said. "It was really an eye-opener for me."

Looking ahead, Kizito is excited to deepen her interdisciplinary curiosity and diverse interests in college. Thinking about her senior year thus far, she saw comfort even in the stressful times. While writing her college essays, Kizito found life essentially coming full circle. "I got to write about how all my experiences brought me to where I am today," she said. "I am forever grateful because I got to look at myself as I am, with my mistakes and my accomplishments, everything."



1918 versus 2020

What we didn't learn from the 1918 pandemic

By MIA RESNICOW
Senior Staff Writer

The year 1918: Woodrow Wilson was President of the United States of America, "Tiger Rag" and "Rock-A-Bye Your Baby" were playing in every household, and the original Little Women film adaptation premiered in theaters.

The main objective of teaching American history is to help us learn from our past mistakes, or at least that's what we're told, but it seems we've learned nothing about how to handle a pandemic. In fact, it seems we are literally repeating history.

Like former President Trump, President Woodrow Wilson downplayed the severity of the virus, telling Americans it was nothing worse than the common flu and pretending it wasn't happening. Trump encouraged mass gatherings despite public health warnings, holding rallies, parties and other super spreader events, exactly like how Woodrow Wilson encouraged public events and told mayors and governors to hold military parades.

Not only were world leaders pushing false information, but people were believing it. In 1918, people believed the virus was made by the Germans and poisoned clouds, while

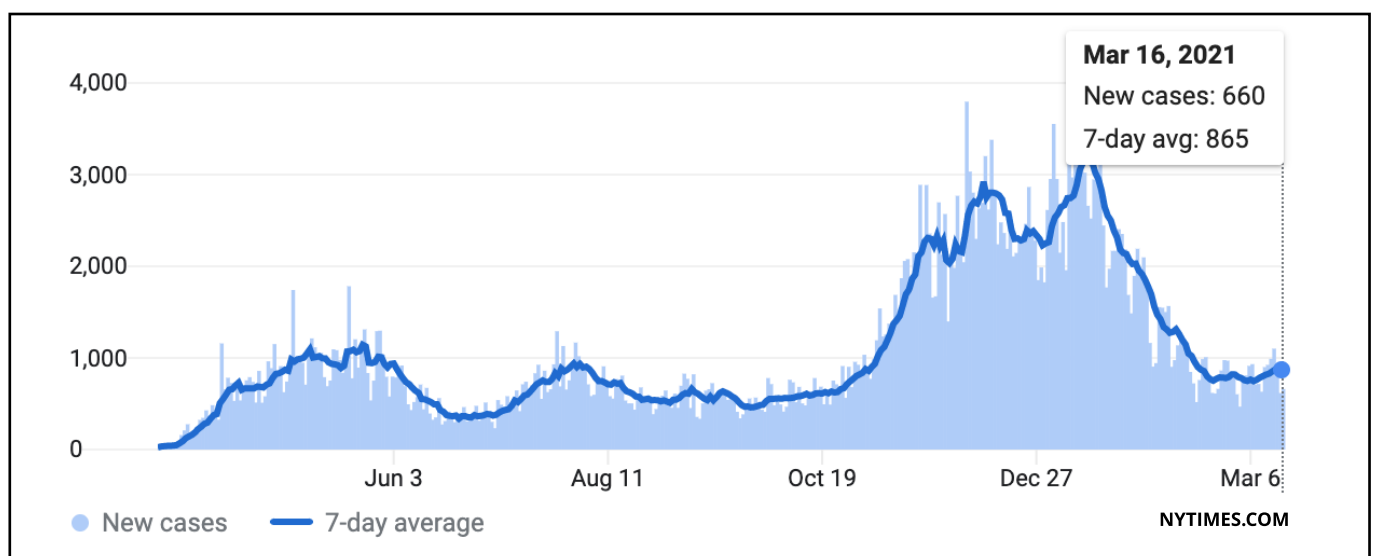
in 2020, many people believed the conspiracy theory that the Coronavirus was made in a lab in Wuhan, China. Trump also mentioned in a press conference that injecting bleach could be a possible cure, which seems to be taken straight from a 1918 newspaper ad that advertised a false miracle cure.

In 2020, many people refuse to wear masks although they have been

proven effective, but were masks even a thing in 1918? Yes, and people also refused to wear them. Cities recommended face masks, but even people living in 1918 called it unconstitutional.

The result: the 1918 pandemic, caused by what came to be known as the Spanish Flu, an H1N1 virus, killed 50 million people and lasted for three years.

According to experts, COVID-19 is much deadlier than the virus that appeared in 1918, but that doesn't mean we are subject to a worse fate or even the same fate. We have the technology and the means to produce multiple vaccines, effectively and quickly, and now, in 2021, we have current President Joe Biden pushing for vaccinations, mask-wearing, and social distancing protocols.



Rollercoaster Data: Daily change in COVID-19 cases in Maryland since March 16, 2021. Cases were remaining steady and low in the summer of 2020, but spiked in the winter.



The *Mandalorian* star Gina Carano will be leaving the Star Wars cinematic galaxy

By MADDY RUBERY
Staff Writer

After implying that being a Republican in the modern day United States is similar to being Jewish during the Holocaust, Disney's *The Mandalorian* star Gina Carano will be leaving the Star Wars cinematic galaxy.

Carano has also been dropped as a client by her agency, UTA.

After her debut in "Chapter 4: Sanctuary," Carano's character Cara Dune was immediately a fan favorite. Her witty banter and tough persona created a powerful role model for girls everywhere, with Dune making appearances here and there almost every episode. But when fans learned of the actress's off-screen behavior, many were quick to call her out.

After a social media storm demanding Carano be removed from the show, a LucasFilms spokesperson stated that "Gina Carano is not

currently employed by Lucasfilm and there are no plans for her to be in the future," and labeled her posts on Twitter as "abhorrent and unacceptable."

A source with knowledge from Lucasfilm told *The Hollywood Reporter* that "they [had] been looking for a reason to fire her for two months, and [this] was the final straw."

Carano had previously been in the spotlight for mocking mask-wearing during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, and for also suggesting the presence of voter fraud in the recent 2020 presidential election.

There is no official release date for *The Mandalorian* season three, but fans can expect to see the first part of the new season to air in early 2022. How the show's storyline will explain the sudden removal of one of its star characters is still unknown.



"I'm going to go down swinging and I'm going to stay true to myself."
- Gina Carano

"...[H]er social-media posts denigrating people based on their cultural and religious identities are abhorrent and unacceptable."
- Lucasfilm spokesperson

VIEWPOINT

The importance of Taylor Swift's re-recordings

Why artists deserve to own their work

By FIONA FEINGOLD
Staff Writer

Taylor Swift is one of the biggest pop stars on the planet. With an estimated net worth of \$365 million (according to *Forbes*), 11 Grammy Awards, and nine studio albums, Swift has it all. You would think that someone with such megastar status would be able to own their work and control its distribution, right? Wrong. Swift only owns about a third of her masters.

Before we go any further into this topic, let's take a moment to define what "masters" are. Amuse, an independent record label, says that "a master recording is the official original recording of a song, sound or performance." Okay, but why is it important for artists to own their masters?

"With a master recording, you can license the recording to third parties, like TV shows, films, commercials or even for sampling use by other artists. If your master belongs to someone else...then they have the right to license out the recording (and collect the royalties)," according to Amuse. Owning your masters gives you more control over what happens to your music and makes sure that you are fairly compensated. If an artist pours their heart and soul into their music, don't they deserve to reap the benefits if it does well?

Swift isn't the first artist to battle for control of her work. Prince and The Beatles have also struggled to obtain ownership of their music. While both were successful, it took Paul McCartney 50 years to finally own his masters (he was older than 64

Fearless (Taylor's Version) comes out April 9, and will include six new songs scrapped from the original album.

when he acquired the rights to *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band!*) Swift hasn't had the same luck. Since she has not been able to obtain the masters to her first six albums, she will be re-recording five this year, as she won't be able to re-record her sixth album *reputation* until 2022.

This is huge, for a few reasons. Swift's re-recordings are causing the general public to gain awareness about the "dark side" of the music industry — particularly, the enormous pressure put on small artists. Plenty of new artists don't even try to fight for control of their masters when they negotiate contracts because they're afraid they'll be blacklisted by record labels.

Many of them don't make much money and can't afford to take that chance. If you're just breaking into the music industry and a huge record label offers you a contract, you'd probably accept, even if it results in you losing the rights to your work.

So, what's the solution to this? Unfortunately, there really isn't one. One article from *The Tennessean*

suggested making "artists subject to labor

laws...For a contracted yearly salary and benefits, musicians would be expected to work 40-hour work weeks. Then, musicians would be protected by labor laws."

Another article, from *Vice*, proposed that musicians unionize and cited the success of the Screen Actors Guild. "Through strength in numbers, artists might be able to standardize more favorable contractual terms such as a reversion of rights after a period of time," the article said.

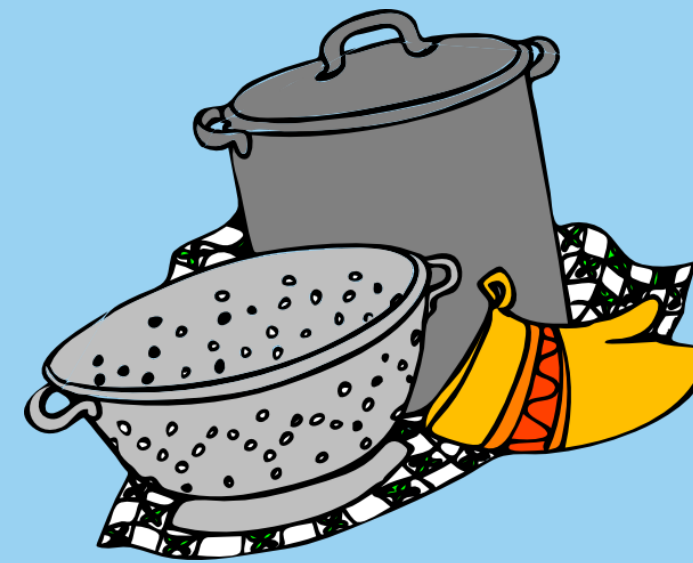
Swift's first re-recorded album, *Fearless (Taylor's Version)*, is coming out on April 9. It will include the 19 standard tracks from *Fearless*, as well as "Today Is A Fairytale" and six previously unreleased songs. This album was a turning point in Swift's career, earning her four Grammys.

While there have been a few instances of artists re-recording old music, such as Jojo and Def Leppard, Swift is the first artist to re-record such a significant portion of their discography. Hopefully, Swift's re-recordings and her platform will start to change the way record labels treat their artists.

"Swift's re-recordings are causing the general public to gain awareness about the 'dark side' of the music industry — particularly, the enormous pressure put on small artists."

How to Travel Safely this Spring Break:

- Think of your entire trip, not just the flight
- Wear a mask
- Don't travel to hot spots
- Remain in your seat the entire time during a flight
- Social distance
- Quarantine and get tested before and after traveling
- Look into state and local guidelines
- Consider all types of travel, e.g. driving
- Wash your hands



Things to do Locally over Spring Break:

- Visit national and state parks
- Camping
- Clean out your closet
- Visit DC and the National Monuments
- Learn to cook
- Get your DIY on
- Watch the sunrise/sunset
- Make a garden
- Have a movie night
- Watch a new TV show





REVIEW

We Were Liars by E. Lockhart

By KAILY PAULINO
Senior Staff Writer

With the new popular book whirring around all over social media and earning the title “Best Book of the Year” from various news sources, *We Were Liars* by E. Lockhart is a stunning coming-of-age story that explores and teaches emotional intelligence for young adult readers.

The book starts with visual imagery to set up the context and backbone of the book. First, a sketch of a map of the island the book mostly takes place in gives the reader a hint of the workings. Then, a family tree of the Sinclairs — including where each member stays. Many characters are introduced at the start of the book, which, in additions to the situations they encounter, may be confusing at the beginning. While reading, there are many key bits and clues things to keep in mind that leave the reader questioning everything because of how mysterious and wondrous it could be. Like how in the story everyone talks about themselves and not about the Liars. However, later on, the plot becomes simpler to understand as moments arise where everything clicks into place.

The book is set up into 5 parts:

Welcome; Vermont; Summer Seventeen; Look, a Fire; and Truth. So the story begins with the narrator named Cadence, explaining her

family and situation. She goes to her grandfather's family island every summer to spend time with them, but always complains about it. Always

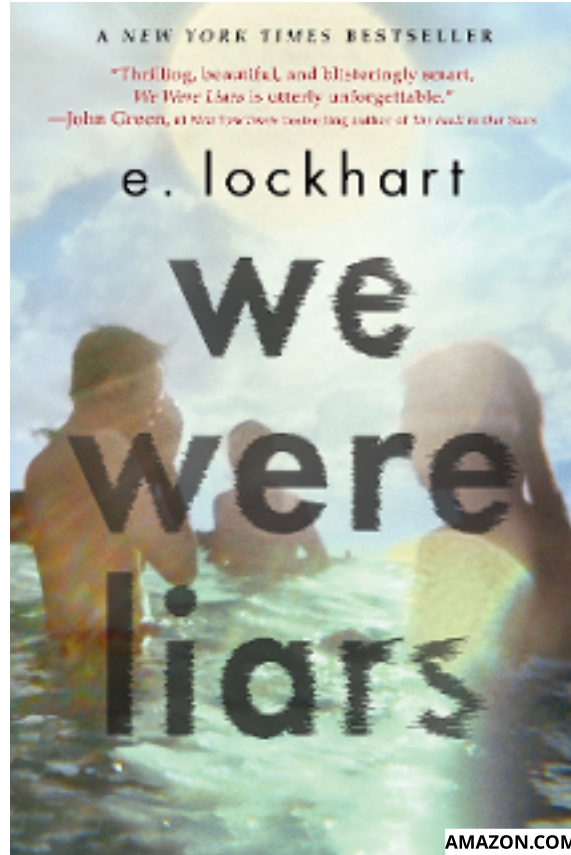
spending her vacations there, she exhibits love and experiences it's tragedies with the outsider. Then two summers ago, there was a tragic incident and everyone in the family knew about it except for her. Thus, she goes around trying to ask everyone, attempting to uncover clues to discover what happened that summer and unearth why everyone around her lies to keep the big secret.

What is so unique about this book is the writing style and the way Lockhart places snippets of *Once Upon A Time*-esque fairy tales relating to the family tree and their dilemmas. Throughout the book, Lockhart always adds some sort of variation to each tale, trying to find the perfect one that goes along with the book to

share the ending. The tale includes a short description of “the king/merchant” and the “three princesses/daughters” but, without giving spoilers, the best bit was about the witch.

In the end, this unpredictable book could either leave the reader lost, confused, or devastated; once the conspiracy is revealed, it was unexpectedly heartbreaking to simply read out the truth after the immense rising suspense. The writing style of this piece is not like other books, and should be on everyone's to be read list.

"A CUNNING, CLEVER and ABSOLUTELY GRIPPING novel, full of surprises."
- The Guardian



Quarantine year in review

Looking back on pop culture trends during the lockdown

By NATALIE PRICE
Editor-in-Chief

As high school kids throughout MoCo walked out of school on March 13, 2020, they had one thing on their minds: a two-week vacation. An extra spring break. Initially this was strictly positive, as students' jam-packed schedules turned into more free time than they could imagine. Unfortunately, as we all know, this story takes a downfall, since many of these students would never set foot in their high schools again.

If the COVID-19 pandemic taught us anything, it's to predict the unpredictable. But even as the world went up in flames around us, society found ways to make the most of the situation. Specifically, through the use of pop culture and social media. For the one-year anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic, here's my take on some of the biggest trends we've seen this past year.

We kicked off the lockdown with *Tiger King*, the eccentric documentary featuring the peculiar world of tiger breeding. Starring Joe Exotic, now a convicted felon, and Carole Baskin, a woman who allegedly may have killed her husband and fed him to their pet tigers, there was never a dull moment in this wildly entertaining show. Thinking back it still amazes me that yes, people this bizarre do exist.

When you weren't binging *Tiger King*, you were probably out on your

mandatory family walk around the neighborhood — a personal favorite of mine. At least in my experience, there was a whole two-week stretch where we did this every day. It wasn't a quarantine walk until you ran into

another family and had to awkwardly jump to the other side of the street to maintain social distancing.

Moving into the month of April, I'm sure many of us started our mornings the same way: making whipped “dalgona” coffee ... or at least attempting to. The recipe originated in South Korea, and if you were on Instagram or TikTok in early to

mid-April, you most definitely saw a video of someone making this foamy caffeinated concoction.

Soon after came *Outer Banks*, the teen drama that instantaneously made every watcher wish they were a pogue. Just admit it: you wanted to go on a treasure hunt with your best friends after watching this show. After being stuck in our houses for a month by this point, *Outer Banks* was more or less the perfect escape from our boring, uneventful lives.

Eventually, we entered a new stage

in our lives called Zoom University. By this point we were back to doing *actual* school work (I know, right? Whose idea was that?) and the annual stress of AP exams made its inevitable and untimely appearance. At least turning your camera on wasn't mandatory... yet.

As the weather warmed up and summer approached, we were brought back to the 70's with the resurgence of tie-dye. T-shirts, sweatshirts, pants, socks, *anything* that you could wear. You name it, someone probably tie-dyed it. And if you truly never partook in this trend, I'd be genuinely surprised.

Believe it or not, the months of summer felt surprisingly relaxed. School's out, sun's out, and there's a lot more to do when you're constantly outside. Unfortunately, this was simply the calm before the storm, as we soon received our admissions to Zoom University for round two...

Being completely honest, the months from September to December all kind of felt the same. Wake up, log onto Zoom, turn in your work at 11:59 PM the night it's due, go to sleep, repeat. But when you weren't doing schoolwork at the last minute,

you were probably playing the multiplayer social deduction game *Among Us*. With up to 10 players in a game, you are either a crewmate or impostor. The impostor's job is easy: sabotage the spaceship and kill all the

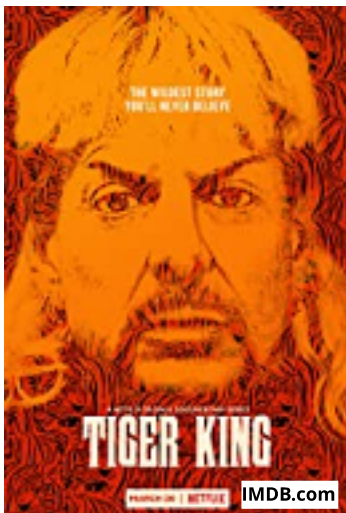
crewmates. The crewmates, on the other hand, have a slightly more challenging role: complete

housekeeping tasks around the ship, while simultaneously keeping a lookout for who the impostor(s) might be. This game often led to arguments, blaming each other, he-said-she-said, but most of all taught us that eyewitness testimony is not very

credible.

And the most recent of all, TikTok's viral “Nature's Cereal” recipe. Consisting of strawberries, blueberries, blackberries, pomegranate seeds, and coconut water (optional: ice cubes), this trend blew up not long after Grammy Award winner Lizzo gave it her stamp of approval. Her TikTok of her eating the cereal was captioned “IT'S ADDICTING.”

Having gotten through a full year of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am optimistic about what's to come. However, whether the future ahead of us is good, bad, or a little bit of both, you can always rely on society and the Internet to make the most of an unideal situation.





What is to come for the Scarlet Witch after *WandaVision*?

By STACY SHIN
Senior Staff Writer

Wanda Maximoff has quickly become one of the most interesting characters in the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) after the release of *WandaVision*, a TV series exclusively on Disney+ that explores her life and extreme grief after *Avengers: Endgame*. After the release of each episode, more and more theories were being made connecting the show to other movies from the MCU. So, what lies ahead for the extremely powerful Scarlet Witch?

Marvel has hinted at the existence of the multiverse for quite some time now, which makes it evident that Wanda will continue to play a major role in the MCU outside of her show, given the character's connection to the multiverse in the Marvel comics. And, back in 2019 at the San Diego Comic-Con, Marvel confirmed Elizabeth Olsen's appearance in *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, the upcoming sequel to the first *Doctor Strange*. From the extra credit scene of the first *Doctor Strange* and what we know from the comics, the villain in the *Doctor Strange* sequel is *Strange's* friend-turned-enemy Baron Mordo (played by Chiwetel Ejiofor), who seeks to destroy every sorcerer on earth.

One common theory posits that Wanda will befriend Mordo and fight



against *Doctor Strange*. This is backed by the extra credit scene of *WandaVision's* final episode, showing her in possession of the Darkhold — a collection of all of the evil spells in existence gathered by the Elder God Chthon.

Although the show did not explicitly create a multiverse, the extreme power Wanda showcased while dealing with her personal trauma after the death of Vision in *Avengers: Infinity War*, and her ability to create an alternate pocket reality, one could expect her to cause chaos across more than the multiverse.

Kevin Feige, President of the MCU, has also confirmed that *WandaVision*, *Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, and *Spiderman: No Way Home* will somewhat act as a trilogy. This does not confirm Wanda's appearance in the third *Spiderman* movie, but it does imply a strong association. This would also coincide with the rumours that Toby Maguire and Andrew Garfield, who played *Spiderman* in past movies, will show up in *Spiderman: No Way Home*, implying that the multiverse is collapsing.

Although there's no sure thing

when it comes to Marvel movies, these are some of the popular theories for what is to come for the Scarlet Witch after the ending of her show. For those who seek to know more about what is to come in the MCU, I encourage you to check out YouTubers such as *ScreenCrush* and *The Cosmic Wonder* to hear about the endless possibilities for the future of Wanda Maximoff and the rest of the Marvel crew. And for those who have not yet watched *WandaVision*, I implore you to check it out!

VIEWPOINT

A spotlight on women in film

How 2020 demonstrated progress for female directors

By MATTHEW MINTON
Editor-in-Chief

The lack of representation in film and media has been a long-standing issue that has only recently been addressed. Primarily, film studios and award shows have been focusing on showcasing and celebrating diverse talent in front of the camera, which is a wonderful thing. But having diverse talent working behind the camera is just as important and relevant, and has not been addressed with the same sincerity. In the film industry, the directing world has frequently been male-dominated, with scarce opportunities for female talent to shine. This trend is further reflected in award show representation, as prior to this year's Academy Awards, only five women have ever been nominated for Best Director.

This past year in film looks to break these trends, and the results of award shows reflect positive trends for female directors. At the Golden Globes, Chloé Zhao won Best Director for *Nomadland* amongst two other female directors nominated: Regina King for *One Night in Miami* and Emerald Fennell for *Promising Young Woman*. Notably, Zhao also became the first woman of color and Asian descent to win for directing at the Globes. Although the Academy Awards have yet to occur, her directing win along with the film's best picture win at the Globes has cemented Zhao as the obvious

frontrunner to win an Oscar for Best Director. An Oscar victory would be more than deserved; Zhao's use of real-life nomadic people in *Nomadland* and directing them to great performances — along with her knack for capturing real, human moments amidst beautiful, vast landscapes — cements her as a true talent to watch.

Furthermore, according to research done by the Center for the Study of Women in Television & Film, out of the top 100 highest grossing films in 2020, women directed 16% of them. This number is up from 12% in 2019 and 4% in 2018. This upward trend is promising, but it doesn't reflect the role of smaller, independent films that have served as a crucial gateway for female directors into the mainstream. Zhao herself started off in independent films with *Songs My Brothers Taught Me* and *The Rider*; now, following the success of *Nomadland*, she finds herself in the directors chair for Marvel's *The Eternals*.

Moreover, giving female directors ample opportunities is extremely important in authentically telling female-led stories; such is evident in Emerald Fennell's *Promising Young Woman*, which she wrote and directed. The film is an extremely powerful tackling of rape culture, with Carey Mulligan playing the lead role of Cassie, who makes it her mission to right the wrongs of men who take advantage of women. Such a film would never have felt so impactful



and relevant without a woman at the forefront of the creative decisions, and its staying power is reflected in the awards recognition the film is rightfully receiving. Oftentimes, male-directed films that tackle female-led revenge plots often led to creative choices that both exploit rape and cheapen women's bodies through the male gaze, a trope that Fennell's *Promising Young Woman* avoids in service of a more complex and well-rounded story thanks to its powerful female perspective.

Hopefully, the day comes when we won't have to note a director's gender in awards conversation because the barriers present for female directors into the industry will have been eradicated. I sincerely hope that any readers of this article,

especially avid-movie goers, will make the conscious effort to seek out more female directed films; it is only when our art is as diverse as the world we live in that our art can reach its fullest potential.

Recommendations of Movies with Female Directors:

Dick Johnson is Dead (Netflix)
First Cow (Showtime)
Miss Juneteenth (Amazon Prime)
Never Rarely Sometimes Always (HBO Max)
Nomadland (Hulu & In Theaters)
One Night in Miami (Amazon Prime)
Promising Young Woman (On Demand & In Theaters)
Saint Maud (Epix)



March Madness is here

By JULIA DIETRICH
Staff Writer

The time has come. After two long years of waiting, the NCAA Division I College Basketball Tournament, commonly referred to as March Madness, is here.

The tournament consists of 68 teams that are separated into four regions—east, south, west and midwest—and are all given a seed, or ranking, that determines which teams they will play by the selection committee that is made up of athletic directors for different colleges and commissioners of some of the conferences teams are a part of.

The first part is called the First Four, as eight teams battle for the last four remaining spots in the tournament. After the first four there are six rounds: the first round, second round, the sweet 16, the elite 8, the final four, and the championship. Each round, half of the participants are sent home.

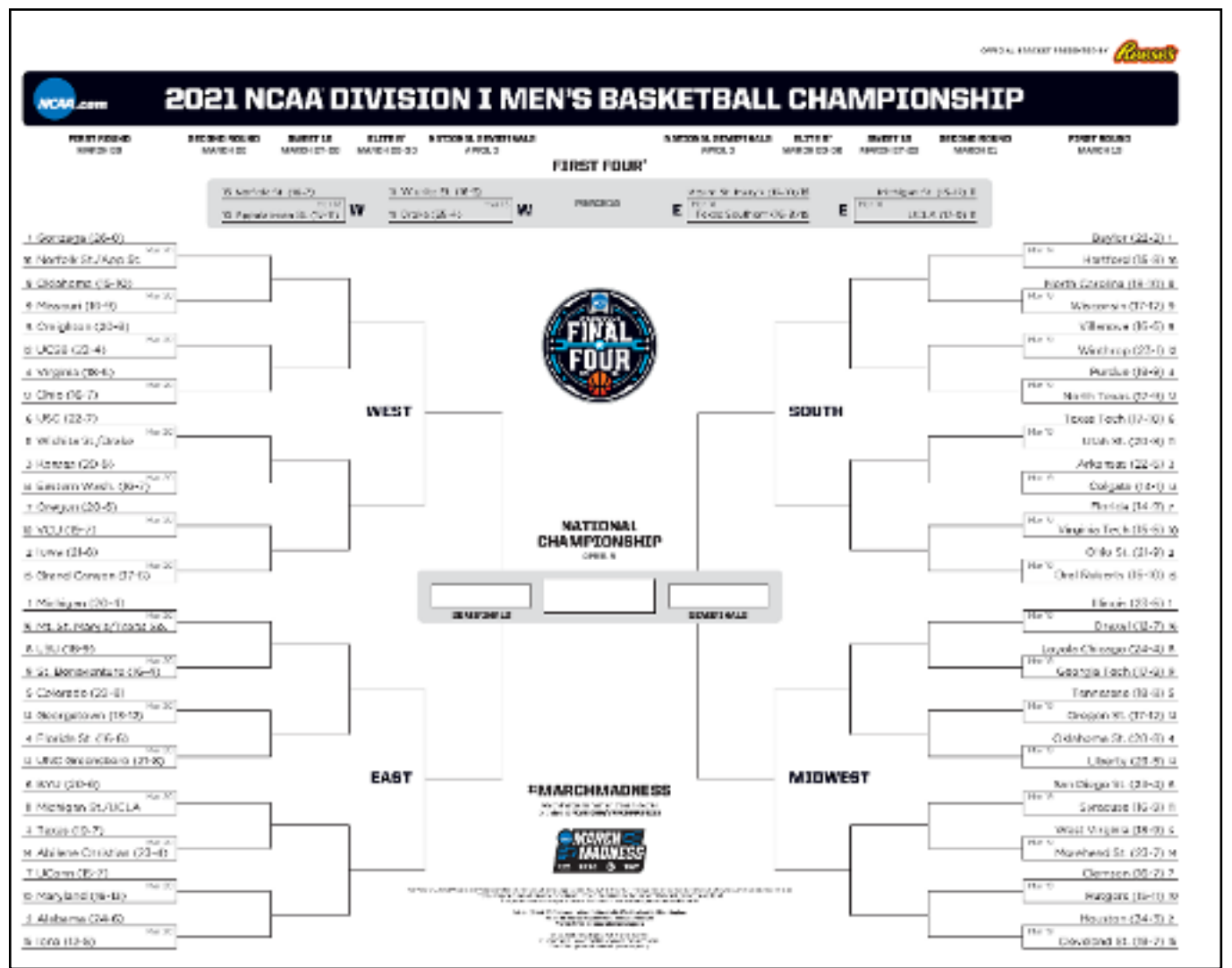
This year the first four games will consist of Texas Southern and Mount St. Mary's competing for the #16 seed in the east region, Norfolk State and Appalachian State competing for the #16 seed in the west region, Wichita State and Drake competing for the #11 seed in the west region, and Michigan State competing with UCLA for the #11 seed in the east region.

The placement of Michigan State as a first four team caused an uproar as many disagreed with the placement.

"Frankly I'm surprised [Michigan State] ended up in the first four, [since] Michigan State has beaten all three number one seeds," said Seth Davis, one of the presenters of the Selection Show, which announces all of the teams and their seeds.

Another team many felt was snubbed was Louisville, as they didn't receive a spot in the men's tournament.

"[Louisville] [was] on our conversation board deep into the



NCAA.COM

discussions that we had," said Mitch Barnhart, Athletic Director of the University of Kentucky and chair of the selection committee, said during the Selection Show. "The problem was that you had two teams that made really remarkable tournament runs in Georgetown and Oregon State, and so they were not under the consideration board and as they took those spots some people had to fall off."

Louisville, still had a chance to participate in March Madness. They, along with Colorado State, St. Louis and Mississippi, have been put on stand-by, which means they will replace a team if that team has a

COVID-19 outbreak. However, since no teams had to withdraw due to COVID-19 outbreaks, Louisville won't be getting a chance at the trophy.

On the flip side of the bracket are the four #1 seeds: Gonzaga, Baylor, Illinois, and Michigan. All four teams are considered to be the best in their region. They all have the easiest road to the final four because the tournament is designed to have the best or highest seeds play against the worst or lowest seeds. Being designated as #1 in a region means the selection committee expects that team to go to the final four.

Gonzaga is the overall #1 pick,

which means the selection committee believes they will be the eventual champion and most people agree with the designation.

"It's the favorite," said Andy Katz during a video on the March Madness YouTube channel. "They've got depth, they've got scoring, they are better defensively and they're undefeated."

While Gonzaga is the favorite for the championship, anything can happen. Upsets are common and so are Cinderella teams, or teams that do much better than they were expected to. And while we don't know who will win, we do know one thing for certain: March Madness is finally here.

Nationals out for revenge in 2021

By JAKE ZAIDERMAN
Staff Writer

"Would you believe spring training is already 40 percent complete?" The words of Nationals beat reporter Mark Zuckerman of MASN Sports reminds us that meaningful baseball isn't too far away. With that being said, the Nationals still have some kinks to work out with under three weeks until the start of the season.

The two biggest acquisitions of the offseason, first baseman Josh Bell and outfielder Kyle Schwarber, have looked great to start Spring Training. As of March 11, Bell is hitting .333 with 1 homer and 3 RBIs, and Schwarber is hitting .250 with 1 homer and 2 RBIs. Both have also looked very good on the field, with Schwarber exceeding his status as he has already thrown out a runner.

Schwarber has high expectations for this season. "I definitely think this lineup's gonna be dangerous. I mean, when you look at [outfielder Juan] Soto, I think he's the best hitter in the

game, I really do," he told MASN.

The pitching side of the ball, however, has some question marks to it. The rotation is all but set with the three-headed monster of Max Scherzer, Stephen Strasburg, and Patrick Corbin, rounded out with veteran lefty Jon Lester and Joe Ross, the latter of whom opted-out of the 2020 season. The bullpen, on paper, is one of the best that GM and President Mike Rizzo has put together in his time in DC. A group mixed with savvy veterans and young talent allows the starters to stay fresher over the course of the season. The addition of the top left-handed reliever Brad Hand was huge for the organization: the three-time All-Star led the MLB in saves last year and is a lock to be the Nats closer.

Still it'll be tough for them as the Nats are in the arguably hardest division in baseball, with the Braves coming off an NLCS appearance where they blew a 3-1 lead and the Mets acquired one of the best shortstops in the game in Francisco Lindor. Only two years removed from the top of the baseball world, the Nats are looking to prove everyone wrong.



Josh Bell rounding the bases after another 'Bell bomb'.



Bell thinking to himself how far he'll hit the next one.

BOTH PHOTOS COURTESY OF NATIONALS TWITTER



QO Hockey's historic season ends in playoff defeat

By **KENDALL LUMSDEN**
Senior Staff Writer



Although Montgomery County doesn't count hockey as a school-sponsored sport, QO's club team continues to show up and get better every year. Compared to last year's record of 5 wins, 7 losses, and 2 ties, this year the team showcased their dedication to improving. The team ended this year's season (November 13, 2020 - March 15, 2021) with 6 wins, 1 loss, and 1 tie.

Longtime coach Andy Katon was joined by second-year coach Mike Eyester in guiding the team through their season. The team's captain this year was #43, senior Tyler Eyester, who led his team to victory but also led his teammates in goals scored with 21 in the regular season. In January, the team's Twitter account tweeted a congratulations to Eyester "on making the Maryland Hall of Fame." The assistant captains were senior Brandon Cavey #73 and junior Anthony Spano #4.

Following Eyester in the amount of goals scored was sophomore Joshua Weitzman with 13 goals. Cavey follows sophomore Dylan Eyester's 19 assists with 10. Breakout star,

sophomore goalie Jeremy Eager, only let in 18 goals during the team's regular season, helping his team win 75% of their eight games played.

Their season started on a high note and continued their win streak throughout their first six games. Their closest game had a winning score of 1-0 against Walter Johnson, while their furthest were 11-1 and 12-2, thoroughly defeating Richard Montgomery and Northwest, respectively. Their two final regular season games ended in a 4-4 tie against Wootton and a 1-6 loss against Bethesda-Chevy Chase. They lost in the quarterfinals, the first round of playoffs, 1-5 against Richard Montgomery.



PHOTO CREDIT TO QO HOCKEY TWITTER

Date	Opponent	Score
11/13/2020	Richard Montgomery	W 11-1
12/04/2020	Damascus/Gaithersburg/Clarksburg/Watkins Mill	W 7-0
12/11/2020	Winston Churchill	W 8-4
01/10/2021	Northwest	W 12-2
01/28/2021	Bethesda-Chevy Chase	W 7-1
02/06/2021	Walter Johnson	W 1-0
02/12/2021	Wootton	T 4-4
02/28/2021	Bethesda-Chevy Chase	L 1-6

Maryland Men's Basketball looks for Cinderella story this March

By **BEN STROBER**
Editor-In-Chief

Exactly one year after March Madness was shut down along with all other sports, the Maryland Men's Basketball program will finally get their shot once again in the NCAA tournament. Being a projected top seed last year, it was very disappointing for the Terps when they found out the COVID-19 pandemic was canceling one of their better chances at winning it all in years.

After losing their two top players in Anthony Cowan and Jalen Smith this off-season, many considered Maryland to be in a "rebuilding phase." Coach Mark Turgeon and the returning players took offense to this claim. "We know the kind of team we are when we work harder than our opponent," Turgeon told reporters. "We hustle on defense like no other."

Being in the Big 10 conference also made this season that much more challenging for Maryland. With a shortened schedule, the Terps had a

lot fewer games out of conference to rack up easy wins. This didn't stop Maryland, though, as they were able to knock off some top-tier opponents this season in Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Purdue. All of these are tournament-bound teams besides Minnesota, who had a rough end of the year due to injuries. But Illinois is a #1 seed this season. Clearly, the Terps have shown they can hang with anyone.

Maryland has used senior leadership to lead to success from the Big 10 defensive player of the year Daryl Morsell. "Morsell has been one of the biggest guys for us all year," Turgeon told reporters. His defensive sparks have allowed scorers like Eric Ayala and Aaron Wiggins to get scoring opportunities.

After a five-game winning streak, Maryland looked to be in a position to easily make the big dance. However, two straight losses coming against weaker teams in Northwestern and Penn State left the Terps on the brink of collapse. Thankfully for the Terps, they picked up a massive victory over

a tough Michigan State team, which solidified their position in the NCAA Tournament.

Senior guard Reese Mona had high praise for his teammates after their come-from-behind win in the Big 10 tournament.

"Was I worried? Yeah. After coming off two losses, yeah, I was worried, but the guys did it," he said. "And that's a really good sign for us because we haven't done that a lot this year — when we're not playing great, just to really turn it on." Maryland will open up the tournament as a #10 seed and take on #7-seeded Connecticut, a tough team that has given teams in the Big East trouble all year. However, if Maryland can strap up defensively the way they have against the toughest of opponents, they can easily come out of this battle with a victory and move on.

Maryland will play UCONN on Saturday night at 7:00 PM. The big dance is on, but how long will Maryland remain on the floor? The road is tough, but a Cinderella-like story is never out of the question for

the Terps.

Another thing to note: the Maryland Women are a #2 seed in the women's side of the tournament! They are one of the top teams in the nation and will definitely be a team to look out for as March progresses.

"We know what kind of team we are when we work harder than our opponent."

- Mark Turgeon



PHOTO CREDIT OF ESPN





Fall Athletics Schedules

By ADAM GOTKIN
Staff Writer

After over a year of waiting, Quince Orchard athletics events are back. Boy's Soccer, Girls Soccer, Girls Volleyball and Field Hockey will all be playing five game schedules while Golf will be playing a three game schedule. Football games are currently not permitted: this has caused massive outrage throughout the community.

Boys Soccer	Girls Soccer	Girls Volleyball
3/22 7:15pm vs Poolesville 4/7 7:15pm @ Churchill 4/9 7:15pm vs WJ 4/12 7:15pm @ Wootton 4/14 7:15pm vs RM	3/22 7:15pm @ Poolesville 4/7 7:15pm vs Churchill 4/8 5:15pm @ WJ 4/12 7:15pm vs Wootton 4/14 7:15pm @ RM	3/22 7:00pm @ Wootton 3/24 7:00pm vs Churchill 4/8 7:00pm @ BCC 4/13 7:00pm @ Poolesville 4/15 7:00pm vs WJ

Field Hockey	Golf
3/19 3:45pm @ Magruder 3/23 6:00pm vs Rockville 3/25 3:45pm @ RM 4/8 6:00pm vs Poolesville 4/13 6:00pm vs Damascus	3/25 3:30pm vs RM/Sherwood/Wootton 4/8 3:30pm vs BCC/RM/Whitman 4/15 3:30pm vs Churchill/RM/Sherwood

All games will be broadcasted live on the NFHS Network for a subscription fee of \$10.99/mo or \$69.99/yr. Games will also be broadcast live on internet radio by the QO Sports Network. There are currently no spectators allowed to any games including parents. In other DC area counties playing sports, that is not the case.

Follow @QOSportsNet on Twitter and Instagram to stay updated on all Quince Orchard Sports News and broadcasts!

WANTED

Aspiring writers and students interested in the news industry



Sign up for Journalism during next year's class registration!

See Ms. Cooley-Klein in room 241 for more info