

THE PROWLER

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

A historic school year comes to an end

By *JAY MOTIWALA*
Editor-in-Chief

People of Quince Orchard High School and Montgomery County—we're almost there. By the time this article is released, there will be just a little more than a month left of school in the 2021-22 school year. This is the first school year where the majority of the schools in the county were able to engage in in-person learning for the larger part of the school year since 2019, and it sure left us with a lot to discuss.

We came into school covered, with face masks being mandated as a part of Montgomery County regulations. All students and staff members were required to wear masks when inside the school building, with varying degrees of success. QO personnel were treated to seeing all of the wrong ways to wear a face mask by some students, from masks not covering their nose to barely hanging onto their chins.

Meanwhile, Dr. Monifa McKnight began her first full year as Interim Superintendent of MCPS. On February 8, the Montgomery County Board of Education unanimously voted to appoint McKnight as the Superintendent of Schools, promoting her from her previous interim position.

The pandemic continued to affect our schools, and reached its climax

during the return of students from winter break. MCPS was at a surge of cases at this point, with school and county-wide positive percentages and closures at their peak. On January 5, Montgomery County calculated that QO was above the 5% positivity rate for Covid-19, thus eligible for school closure. As if hearing the dramatic reactions of students, MCPS iterated that all schools who met the 5% threshold were not guaranteed to move to virtual learning, even though eleven other schools were already doing distance learning. This statistic led to K-95 masks and Covid-19 rapid test kits being passed out to all students in homeroom classes.

As mentioned before, this was the peak of Covid-19 troubles for MCPS. After this rough stretch, the county saw positivity rates go down, and as a result, restrictions started to go down as well. MCPS voted to make masks optional for students and staff in school buildings on March 8, and effective May 2, schools were no longer required to tell students if they were located near someone who tested positive for Covid-19.

Being in-person for the vast majority of the school year unfortunately allowed for school tragedies to occur. On January 21, a student named DeAndre Thomas was critically shot at Magruder High School, yet survived the harrowing

incident. Also, a student named Jaylin Lawrence Jones from Northwest High School was found deceased on January 24. Closer to home, a Quince Orchard teacher was also heinously assaulted by a student, leaving many to worry about her condition and scratch their heads over the incident.

As much as the first year in-person since 2020 kicked our collective butts, we found a way to not only make it through the year, but to thrive.

All three Pep Rallies were able to be held in the locations they were supposed to be held in, with the fall and spring being outside in the Cougar Dome and winter being in the main gymnasium. How effective they were depended on who you asked, yet they were able to operate how they should've.

The famous QO varsity football team was able to play in full swing, with our Cougars even winning the 2021 State Championship. The Red Army was back and better than ever, coupled with red paint on bodies and insta-worthy pictures throughout the Cougar Dome. How could I forget about that one friend who comes along to be social, yet knows next to nothing about the sport of football?

The QOHS Theatre department was able to hold their two shows in person this year, with the first show requiring the actors to wear masks on stage, and the second show going

maskless. Both shows garnered rave reviews.

The SGA organized the school's Homecoming Dance outside on the tennis courts, and on April 30, juniors and seniors enjoyed the first official QO prom in two years. Kids were finally able to move their bodies in ways that could kinda sorta be called dance moves, depending on who you ask, of course.

Finally, the culture of the school came back. Popular QO traditions like the Senior Breakfast and parking lot decorating made a return. Homecoming hallways filled the school to celebrate the start of the year and to show school spirit. Spider-Man: No Way Home dominated the conversation during the wintry months, distracting many a student from learning and causing many a teacher to threaten to spoil the movie as punishment. The last time a movie dominated a school's culture this much while we were in person was Avengers: Endgame, which was released more than three years ago.

Students were able to form meaningful connections with each other and their teachers, and strengthen their learning thanks to being back in the classroom. It may have been hell to get here (and during certain parts of it), but we did it. Together.

The role of swing states in the 2022 midterms

By *MIA KAUFFMAN*
Staff Writer

Election season, ah, the chaos. Competition fills the air as candidates fight to win votes. Mailrooms flood with ballots from people from near and far not able to make it in person. Lines, miles long, wrap around buildings while people inside cast their votes for the candidate of their choosing.

The midterm elections are coming up this year on Tuesday, November 8, and candidates have gone full fledged into their campaigns to ensure they win their desired seat in Washington, DC. The primaries are only weeks away in some states like North Carolina and Georgia, while in Maryland they're not until July 19. There's a lot riding on these elections for both sides of the aisle. Once again, Republicans and Democrats are pinned up against each other striving for the majority. Due to the narrow Democratic majority in Congress, this will be an especially competitive election year.

The Senate races will definitely be ones to keep an eye on. With the 50 to

50 majority for the Democrats—due to the fact that they have Vice President Kamala Harris's tie breaking vote—they are in a very vulnerable state. President Joe Biden's approval ratings in the low 40's will weaken the Democrats and also puts the Republicans at an advantage.

As such, every single one of the 34 Senate elections this year is crucial. Swing states will play a vital role in the election results this year; here are some to keep tabs on.

Arizona has a history of being an unpredictable swing state: it has been compared to a swinging pendulum that moves back and forth from left-leaning to right-leaning. It was one of the swing states during the 2020 presidential election, and ultimately went blue for Biden. After winning a special election in 2020 that would fill the spot of previous senator John McCain for the rest of his term, Democrat Mark Kelly is up for reelection. His opponent will be one of the nine Republicans in the tight primary race vying for that seat in DC. So far, it looks as if the frontrunner for the Republicans is Mark Brnovich, the attorney general of Arizona. According to CNN's series Race to the White House, Brnovich and Kelly are neck

and neck in the polling. A lot can happen from now until November, so time will tell.

Georgia has been a long-standing red state that's a safety net for the Republican party. However, Georgia went against its history when it went blue for Biden in 2020. They also elected two Democratic senators, and one of those senators up for reelection. Incumbent Raphael Warnock, a Georgia native and pastor in Atlanta, was elected through a special election just like Mark Kelly. Senator Johnny Isakson (R) had resigned and Warnock was elected to finish out his term.

There are currently seven Republicans running in the Georgia primaries. The front runner, former football player Herschel Walker, has already received endorsement from leaders within the Republican Party, but is also facing accusations of domestic violence from at least two women, one of which is his ex-wife. Georgia's primaries are coming up on May 24, so it will soon be known who will face Warnock on election day. This race will be telling of Georgia's political standings post-2020 elections.

In North Carolina, incumbent

Richard Burr's retirement opens the gateway to both Republicans and Democrats who hope that the results sway in their favor. Republicans hope to hold onto the seat, and Democrats see a new possibility as Trump only won the state in 2020 by a small fraction. Cheri Beasley, former chief justice for the North Carolina Supreme Court, will represent the Democratic Party. It is still unknown who will represent the Republican Party in November, but it looks like it is between former governor Pat McCrory and current representative Ted Budd. With North Carolina's primaries approaching on May 17, the candidates will soon be solidified.

All of 435 seats in the House are up for reelection. With similar states and counties up for grabs as the Senate, including Michigan and Texas, election night will be an event filled night. The primary election results in these swing states will foreshadow and help predict what will happen on election night.

CORRECTIONS FROM LAST PRINT ISSUE

Please see Page 10 for some corrections/clarifications re: a Page 1 story from last month's issue.

News

Check out some articles & opinions from Journalism students!

PAGES 3-4



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Features

Learn about the Oscar winner from QO!

PAGE 9



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Sports

Get your update on QO spring sports!

PAGE 11



RAWPIXEL



Coachella: what's all the hype about?

By **MIA KAUFFMAN**
Staff Writer

You're scrolling through your Instagram feed when a bunch of festival photos pop up on your screen: influencers dressed in funky and vibrant outfits, videos from the countless concerts of your favorite artists, artsy food pictures that make your mouth quench. Mindlessly scrolling, flipping through story after story, and you don't even know what this seemingly magical event is. After a few clicks around on Google, you discover that this is Coachella, but what even is that?

Coachella is an annual music festival held in the Coachella Valley in Indio, California. One of the largest and most profitable festivals in the US, let alone the world, Coachella brings together people every year to enjoy concerts from artists as big as Beyoncé herself to smaller and emerging bands and solo acts. The festival is held over two different weekends in April, this year it was held the weekend of April 15th, and

April 24th.

Coachella is especially unique because different installations of art are showcased throughout both weekends. This year, 11 different artists, designers, and architects are represented through immersive installations. By using different art mediums and light, colors, and sound, these installations dive into global themes centered around immigration, environmental sustainability, pop culture, and community. The installations are dynamic and abstract structures that, along with presenting messages and themes, serve as navigational markers for festival goers.

Like the art, the fashion at Coachella is like no other, as attendees pull out all the stops and show up in their best looks. Some even say that Coachella is a full on fashion festival. According to Vogue, this year American singer and songwriter Conan Gray's "hot pink valentino look shut down Coachella." Whether that's a designer dress or a funky pair of cowboy boots, attendees



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

always gotta be ready for the cameras. (Who knew a disco-ball jumpsuit, like the one worn by Harry Styles, was desert festival chic?)

Coachella has a pretty impressive attendance record with over 250 thousand attendees every year. Amongst those festival goers are A-list celebrities. This year the biggest names at the festival consisted of the Kardashian and Jenner women, "High School Musical" star Vanessa Hudgens, Diplo, and the one and only Meghan Thee Stallion.

This year's lineup was also pretty hefty, including

artists such as Billie Eilish, The Weeknd, Doja Cat, Swedish House Mafia, and, of course, Harry Styles. Many performers even dropped new music, giving concert and festival goers an inside listen to the next top hits. With an occasional crowd surf from the performer, the crowd was as electric as ever.

But Coachella isn't all that picture perfect. With big crowds of people come hour-long waits for food, drinks, and activities. Forget waiting in line: as the festival is essentially in the middle of the desert, the only way to get there is to drive, leaving painful levels of traffic

entering and exiting the festival. Also, don't plan on seeing every single performer, as many overlap, even the headliners. According to Insider, "Of the many artists we were excited to see, several were scheduled for the same time on different stages," so it can be tricky to fit it all in.

Despite the big crowds and long lines, Coachella is a true powerhouse in the concert and festival industry that continues to bring in large crowds and massive amounts of attention year after year.

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Senior Staff Writers: Fiona Feingold, Jake Zaiderman

Staff Writers: Hayley Asai, Hailey Baker, Ava Garzan, Grace Gnamoa, Max Handelman, Mia Kauffman, Sammy Krimstein, E. Leath, Reese Owens, Jake Revzan, Madison Sherman, Sam Smith, Xavier Suggs

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Copy Editors: Hailey Baker, Fiona Feingold, E. Leath, Reese Owens

Business & Distribution Manager: Mia Kauffman

Staff Advisor: Ms. Megan Cooley-Klein

CONTACT US

Quince Orchard High School
15800 Quince Orchard Road,
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Phone: (301) 740-3600

Website: qohsjournalism.wordpress.com

Email: QOHSproowler@gmail.com

Twitter & Instagram: @qohs_prowler

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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.

Ketanji Brown Jackson confirmed to Supreme Court

By **JAY MOTIWALA**
Editor-in-Chief

After previously being nominated by President Joe Biden, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson was confirmed to the Supreme Court as the 116th justice on April 7 after a hearing in the Senate. Jackson will become the first black woman and the sixth woman to ever serve on the Supreme Court.

Jackson's reaction to the votes being tallied was captured on an emotional video, with her grinning and hugging President Biden when Vice President Kamala Harris announced her official confirmation.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said in response to the nomination: "Today [April 7] is one of the brightest of lights. Let us hope it's a metaphor, an indication of many bright lights to come."

Judge Jackson presented a speech to the media and fielded questions from reporters the day after her confirmation, where she said it will be an "honor of a lifetime" to serve on the Supreme Court as the first black woman.

Jackson presented a powerful speech, in which she said, "In my family, it took just one generation to

go from segregation to the Supreme Court of the United States."

"It has taken 232 years and 115 prior appointments for a Black woman to be selected to serve on the Supreme Court," she added. "But we've made it!"

The confirmation process itself was marred with controversy, yet no politician within a public setting doubted Jackson's experiences and qualifications for the position. She had previously spent seven years as a federal judge, and in 2021 was elected to serve on the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. She was also a federal public defender, and is the only Supreme Court Justice to ever serve in such a position and the first justice who has had experience defending criminals since Thurgood Marshall.

Not only is Jackson filling Justice Stephen Breyer's spot, who has since retired from the position, she had also clerked under him before getting confirmed to the court.

The hearings for Judge Jackson's confirmation began on March 21 and ended three days later, on March 24. As is custom with all judicial confirmation hearings, this one took place

in the Senate. Senator Dick Durbin (D) is the chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and thus presided over this hearing.

Jackson was lauded over her accomplishments and previous work, with Senator Mike Lee (R) of Utah describing her qualifications as "impressive." Senator Ted Cruz (R) also issued positive remarks towards her, calling her "charming" and "talented."

Arguably the most ardent source of positivity came from Senator Cory Booker (D), who moved Judge Jackson to tears with a statement emphasizing the importance of a black woman being in her position, and how "nobody's going to steal that joy" that comes from her nomination.

Jackson, however, was not without her critics. Many opposing Republican Senators issued arguments to dissuade the Senate body from appointing her.

Many GOP Senators began the hearing by comparing this hearing to that of Brett Kavanaugh's, who was accused of sexual assault by Christine Blasey Ford and was riddled with questions about that event from the Democratic Senators.

Senator Marsha



Who let the dogs out? The Kentlands!

Lakelands/Kentlands community discuss their thoughts on their furry friends

By CHASE SOTSKY
Journalism B Student

We all know how important others can be in our lives. Whether a human makes a great impact or some form of pet, it is important for everyone to have someone in their house or near them to whom they make a difference.

In the Lakeland/Kentlands neighborhood, folks tend to welcome pets into their homes with open arms as a source of comfort and to brighten their lives. This was the exact case for Leonard Kaplan. Kaplan had a rough last two years. At the beginning of the pandemic, his wife, Mary, was diagnosed with dementia and Kaplan made a difficult but necessary decision to put her in a nursing home. He never went a day without a visit or a call, "even when I didn't think I could handle it. I needed her in my life and she needed me," Kaplan said. "My family took notice of this and convinced me to adopt a dog."

Kaplan went searching for his new family member immediately before finding his new dog Hailey, an African Hunting Dog-German Shepard mix who is shy and formerly abused, yet sweet. "Lots of times she just pulls me while she goes and chases a fox and I

have to let go of her leash. But she always finds her way back home," Kaplan said.

The Kentlands is a great place to meet new people and often, people meet others through their dogs interacting. "Originally it felt like a chore, but after meeting these lovely people around this neighborhood, I've started to not think of it as a chore anymore," said resident Jonathan Greenburg.

"Waking up in the morning to walk the dog really helped my daily schedule. It's allowed me to start my day early. Most times it's not by choice but it's helpful," said Greenburg. "I mean, who doesn't want a dog licking their face as an alarm clock?" he added sarcastically.

Oftentimes, people tend to sleep in because it's easier. But having a dog can change your mentality from "I should get up now" to "I need to get up now," since you have someone relying on you.

Dina Doron, former hair stylist and Lakelands resident, enjoys her dog, but is satisfied with just the one.



Main Street in the Kentlands neighborhood

"Don't get me wrong, I love [my dog], but I don't think I can [get attached] like this again," she said. Doron adopted Lily, 15, a King Charles, right when Lily was born. "It was extremely difficult at first. But soon she learned what I had taught her and it has been

great since," she said.

All in all, the Kentlands/Lakelands community loves their dogs and enjoys the company they provide. Just like that, the community let the dogs out!

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These opinion pieces (and one on page 8) were written by Journalism B students and chosen for publication in a blind/anonymous review by *Prowler* editors.

We need to band together to solve the looming climate change crisis

By *KATE BELMAN*
Journalism Student

Imagine that it is the year 2070, and you decide to go for a walk. You throw on some flip-flops and open your front door to head outside. You are instantly sweating since it is extremely hot outside, one of the side effects of climate change. On top of that, there are regular heavy downpours and major floods. Droughts cause shortages of drinking water, and poor quality drinking water.

NASA scientists believe that in the future, there will be more heatwaves, changes in precipitation patterns, temperatures on the rise, stronger and more intense hurricanes, sea level rises, and more.

They expressed in an article that, “Global climate change has already had observable effects on the environment. Glaciers have shrunk, ice on rivers and lakes is breaking up earlier, plant and animal ranges have shifted and trees are flowering sooner.”

“Global warming’ refers to the rise in global temperatures due

mainly to the increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere,” according to USGS (Uni. “Climate change’ refers to the increasing changes in the measures of climate over a long period of time – including precipitation, temperature, and wind patterns.”

Our world is full of so many different places, each uniquely beautiful in its own way. If we want it to stay this way, we need to take action. This means more of the three r’s; reduce, reuse and recycle, more renewables, such as solar or wind energy, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

If we as a people band together to solve this issue, we could see a huge turnaround on our planet. Climate.gov states that, “Transitioning to energy sources that do not emit greenhouse gases, can slow the pace of climate change.”

If we all make small changes to our daily practices, we can modify the direction that we are going, and see huge improvements with the state of our planet.



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Social media poses new possibilities for teens to become politically active

By *CHASE PASEKOFF*
Journalism Student

Teens today are more outspoken than ever. Whether it be participating in a student activism project for gun control, advocating for more mental health resources, or protesting for abortion access, they have used their voices and their power in numbers to stir change. One of the main ways they’ve united is through social media. Instagram, Facebook, and Tiktok are only some of the resources our generation uses to express their passions with other people. This leads to the question that many have been wondering, “Is social media making teens today too concerned with politics?”

This is a multilayered question, and therefore requires an explanation to the same degree. First, we need to look deeper into the growing interest in political activism that adolescents have expressed in the past several years. A survey done by The New York Times revealed “A generation of soon-to-be voters who felt disillusioned by government and politics, and already hardened along political lines — something political scientists said was new for people this young.” It went on to also reveal a “significant share of teenagers who felt motivated to become involved themselves, whether out of



SHOPIFY

inspiration or frustration.” The pressing question is, what is causing this generation to become more politically active than ever before?

The answer is simple: the use of

social media. When we look back maybe 25 or 30 years ago, we did not see nearly as many teens involved with advocating for what they believe.

According to PBS NewsHour, “Teens

have been using social media to circulate news posts, register to vote, share petitions, fundraise, donate, offer political commentary, document and share acts of injustice and mobilize their peers to take action.” With easy access to so many different groups of people with just the click of your phone, it has become infinitely easier for high school or college-age students to unite.

Some will argue, however, that this is not a positive thing, and adds pressure and stress to teens. In an article from American University, it states, “One of the hallmarks of generalized anxiety disorder, or GAD, is frequent worry about many issues or events. Nonetheless, it should signal to parents of children with anxiety disorders that worrying about political issues could be an additional stressor.” While this may be true, and politics may heighten the stress of people with anxiety, having a disregard or impartial view on current issues is not the solution to helping alleviate someone’s anxiety.

Ultimately, it’s anything but negative for teens to be involved politically. Using social media to their advantage to make a real impact on our world has the potential to have amazing effects. It’s up to us, the next generation, to use our resources to our advantage and make an impact. After all, teens are the future, right?



VIEWPOINT

Don't fear, a gap year is here!

Why students should consider taking a year off between high school and college

By REESE OWENS and
CARLY MALAMUT
Staff Writer and Journalism Student

"You won't make any friends. You'll miss out on the experience. Employers won't take you seriously." Is what Megan Lee from GoAbroad.com states are reasons students coming out of high school should not take a gap year.

Though gap years have become more frequent, they are still viewed as unconventional. It is assumed that students who decide to take a gap year are lethargic and less motivated to return to college or university. These assumptions have proven to be false: according to the Gap Year Association and college finance website withfrank.org, surveys found that 90% of those who took a gap were back in school within a year. There is more to taking a gap year than being lazy.

Why do people take gap years? The biggest reason is feeling unprepared. After four years of high school education, some may feel that it wasn't enough for them to discover what they want to study and what they want to do with their life. Going into college and randomly selecting a major you are unsure about is a quicker path to burnout compared to taking a gap year. Researchers from withFrank.org concluded that at least

80% of college students change their major throughout their college education. Students taking a gap year, on the other hand, have given themselves more time to reflect upon their interests.

Another more specific reason to take a gap year is to develop a real sense of the work world: taking on internships, perhaps living and traveling on your own, and

college can automatically give you an advantage once you return to college. According to research from Western Governors University, 66% of students who took a gap year said they took their work more seriously when they returned to college. There is an obvious mindset change that has benefited from a gap year.

While the growth and release one might feel from a gap year might



networking in order to create larger opportunities rather than ones inside a college. Boosting your work resume, your work experience, and interactions with people outside of

cause enduring maturity and development, the mental relief alone that a gap year student would feel may outnumber the positives of throwing oneself right into college. According

to YellowBrick, a psychiatric center based near Chicago, "gap years can be a real asset when it comes to mental health [as] around one-third of college-aged American students reported experiencing depression in the year prior to [college]." The mental burden some students have felt throughout high school might contribute to a lack of performance in college. However, a gap year could relieve students of the limitation caused by depression, improving their performance in the future. Gap years are beneficial specific to students' mental health in that students are able to identify a stronger sense of self, develop an improved universal perspective with relationships, and gain an expanding competence required for meaningful and purposeful living outside of school. The independence, stability, and self-directed responsibility allows students taking a gap year to flourish.

If you are a graduating senior or rising current junior, and you feel extremely stressed about your life and career path, don't feel ashamed to make that decision to take a gap year. Opportunities are expanding and now more than ever is the perfect time to learn more about yourself while discovering your independence.

Review: QO's Spring Musical, *Newsies*

This review was written as part of the Cappies program, where area high school students review plays from other schools. Look out for the Cappies award ceremony on May 10 to see if Newsies was nominated for any awards!

By MAYA BERRY
Student Reviewer from South Lake
High School, Reston, VA

The newsboys of New York electrified the Quince Orchard High School theater with their show-stopping, humorous, and witty Disney production of *Newsies*. Living in the Big Apple in the late 1800s sounds like a dream, doesn't it? Well, the cast and crew of *Newsies* brought the grave realities and challenges of life as a newsboy during the Newsboy Strike of 1899 to life and fully embraced and displayed the spirit and fervor it took to take a stand against the injustices of New York's two publishing titans.

This classic, timeless musical follows the story of Jack Kelly (Matthew Rubin), a rebellious teen living on the streets of New York. While Jack dreams of a bigger and better life far away from the city in Santa Fe, he's poverty-stricken and barely survives on his meager pay as a newsboy. Jack and his crew of rough-and-tumble "newsies" decide they've had enough and take action against two publishing titans following a rise in newspaper prices. This historical yet lively musical directed by Jess Vogel captivated audience members, unveiling the corruption and greed in the news industry during the turn of the 20th century. Jack Kelly couldn't have said it better himself: "Without newsies, nobody knows nothin'."

Every character in the show was

well-played, with distinct character choices that contrasted with the other characters.

Danny Zheng's mannerisms and physicality as Les Jacobs were evocative of a cheeky younger brother and pint-sized salesboy. As beloved Davey Jacobs, Hayden Polsky played into his role as the strait-laced, bright big brother and brains of the resistance – a perfect complement to Les. Sung with an endearing smile and charismatic charm, the audience was sold by Polsky's uplifting solo piece in "Seize the Day." Katherine Plumber's struggle to make a name for herself as a legitimate journalist was portrayed excellently by Catherine Brady. Memorable performances included Jordan Richard, who brought the audience to tears with his emotional and perfect-pitch solo as Crutchie in "Letter from the Refuge." Matthew Rubin as Jack Kelly acted at the Broadway-level and maintained an impressive New York accent amidst complex stage combat, choreography, and solo numbers. Patrick Barrett's menacing tone truly complimented his character of high authority, Joseph Pulitzer. Last but not least, Giorgia Dallasta, as Medda Larkin, demonstrated confidence and power



FELIX ANGELASTRO

in her voice. While dressed to the nines, Dallasta's gorgeous vocals in "That's Rich" perfectly matched her vivacious costumes.

The props in the production, managed by Averie Pascall and Alora Peltzman, captured the "from the ground up attitude" the boys had to live by in this time period. Prop choices were thoughtful, including Crutchie's crutch (cleverly draped in a strike flag mid-production), Katherine's vintage camera, and multiple stacks of authentic-looking newspapers. Furthermore, costumes by Finn Campbell, Priyanka Estoll, and Kangmin Kim fabulously conveyed the rugged style of newsboys at the end of the 19th century and all the intricate character-specific pieces.

Furthermore, makeup by Jamie Loehr expressed the tough-guy exterior of the newsboys, in tandem with costuming, adding a fantastic Broadway-level technical element to the show. Overall, the production wonderfully displayed the power of the young boys who rallied across New York City to strike against the unfair conditions and raise newspaper distribution prices. The ending, packed with the high-energy and grit of the cast, further illuminated Harvey Fierstein's authorial intent and summoned the audience to consider their purpose and relationships in life. Knowing that those around us can help guide us and serve as our mentors on the right path. We, too, can seize the day!

Declan Kim, junior

"The last thing I listened to was 'Dirty' by Beach Bums," said Kim. "Recently I've been listening to Shoegaze. I like the blended vocals, it's calming and it has mesmerizing vocals that sound underwater." Some of the main genres Kim mainly listens to include rock, indie music, and surf punk, but his taste is broad. Kim also stated that he listens to music since it helps distract him from what's going on.



Lucid Dream (Beach Bums)

WHAT MUSIC IS QO LISTENING TO?

Sean Rubery, freshman

The last thing Rubery listened to was 'Control' by Doja Cat. He has been listening to Doja Cat a lot recently and says that he enjoys that the artist is "calm and kind of slow but has a big beat." He likes hip-hop and indie for the same reasons, citing the calming beat. Rubery said that he typically listens to music when he is "doing work," stating that it "helps [him] concentrate."



Purrr! (Doja Cat)



Gravity (Brent Faiyaz, DJ Dahi, and Tyler the Creator)

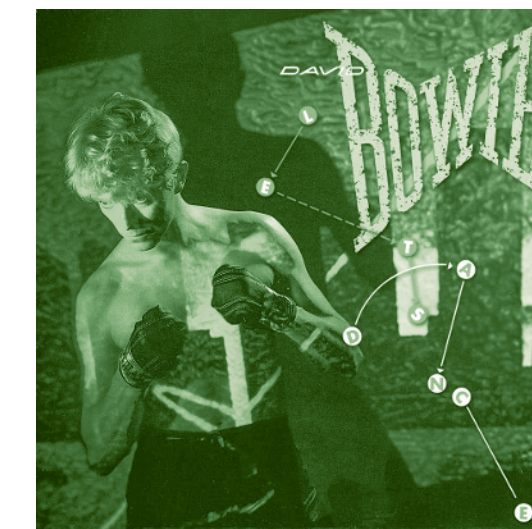


Folklore (Taylor Swift)

By **Hayley Asai**

QO students have some diverse music tastes.

So what
have they
been
listening
to?



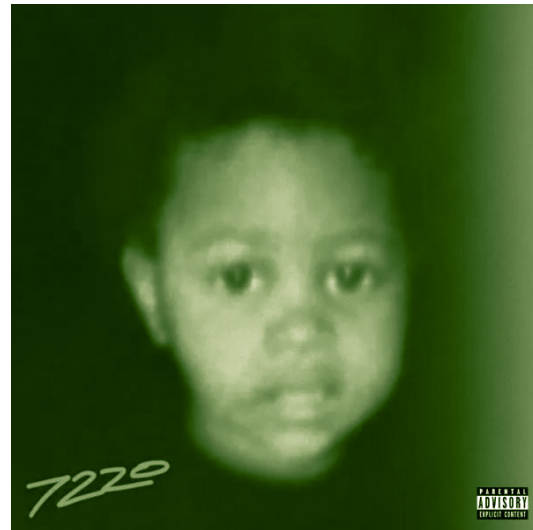
Let's Dance (David Bowie)

Lulu Baker, junior

"The last thing I listened to was Let's Dance by David Bowie." Baker said that she has also been listening to "Juno" by Remi Wolf recently. When asked why she enjoyed Remi Wolf, Baker said, "I don't even know how you can describe Remi Wolf." Baker is a fan of a variety of genres, including pop and alternative pop, which includes artists like Remi Wolf.

Darius Ellis, senior

Ellis said that the last thing he listened to was, 'What Happened to Virgil?' by Lil Durk. "I've been listening to 7220 by Lil Durk a lot recently," said Ellis. To Ellis, one of the most appealing parts of Lil Durk is that he tells the truth in his raps and influences the crowd. Darius also stated that he "just like[s] rap, R&B too." He added, "It gets me through the day, gets me motivated."



7220 (Lil Durk)



SATURATION III (BROCKHAMPTON)

Ishani Maheshwari, freshman

Maheshwari's most recent listen was the song 'Jumper' by Third Eye Blind. Maheshwari stated that she has, "been listening to 'My Head Is An Animal' by [sic.] Monsters and Men." She enjoys the album because, "It's not really pop. It's more like a chill rock. It's not upbeat but not gloomy and it's really calming." Before a soccer game, when she is anxious, Maheshwari finds herself listening to music to chill out.



Third Eye Blind (Third Eye Blind)



When The World Comes Down (The All American Rejects)

Anonymous, junior

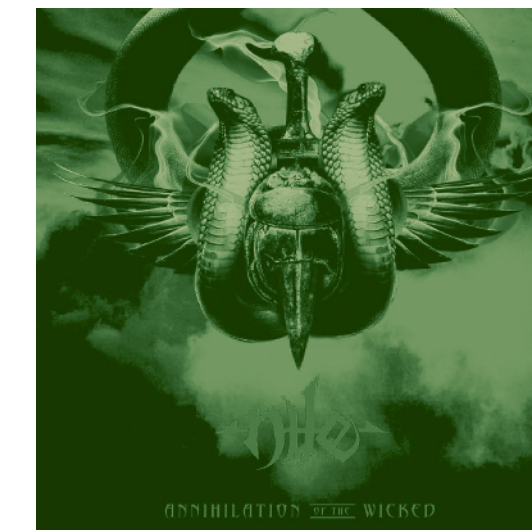
"The last thing I listened to was, 'Gives You Hell' by The All American Rejects. "One artist I've been listening to a lot is Neon Trees. I like it cause it's good and kinda upbeat. I also like K-pop, like BTS and TWICE and BLACKPINK. I like to play BTS on the piano," they said. "I listen to music when I play Valorant and go to the gym." The interviewee also stated that they enjoyed playing piano and they enjoyed German composers.



Born To Die (Lana Del Rey)

Carly Malamut, sophomore

"The last thing I listened to was 'National Anthem' by Lana Del Rey," said Malamut. She has also been listening to 'Call Me If You Get Lost' by Tyler, The Creator recently. She said that she, "Likes the way that Tyler, The Creator tells a story throughout the album and every song connects." Malamut also enjoys indie and indie folk due to the way it reminds her of nature and being outside.



Annihilation of the Wicked (Nile)



TAKE TIME (Giveon)



AP Bio community increases student learning and engagement

By *DELILAH LOCKE*
Journalism Student

When most people think of AP Biology, they think rigorous, fast-paced, and demanding. People think of the safety goggles and experiment stations, the lab analysis and research. They might not be thinking of birthday celebrations, social media pages, and fun. However, in John Lanham's seventh and eighth period AP Biology class, students get the best of both worlds.

Lanham's class is unique: they have a great community inside and outside of the classroom. This has not only made students happier, but it also facilitates better learning during class. "I think that the class community has impacted my learning positively as I feel more engaged in the classroom," says senior Kathryn Crane. "I feel that my learning has strengthened since I can collaborate with my classmates without a sense of competition or judgment from one another."

This sentiment is shared by many in the class. Junior, Tess Isaacson, expresses how much she enjoys the class: "I look forward to it every single day." The class environment stems

from being collaborative. Everyone helps each other to learn the material. Isaacson says, "I feel like I can ask any question and not feel...pressure or feel like I'm being judged for asking." Everyone is encouraged to work hard while enjoying being in class with each other.

According to the Centre for Teaching and Learning, "A significant relationship has been identified between classroom community and perceived cognitive learning, learning engagement, and learning outcomes." The more comfortable people are with their peers, the more confident they are to participate and ask questions. This helps students not only with understanding material from one class, but sets them up for success in the future. The class connection is strong with the AP Bio class, and so is the eagerness to learn.

Not only does the class care for each other, they also care for their teacher very much as well. For Lanham's birthday, the entire class orchestrated a celebration including cake, signs, and party hats for everyone. "Getting him a cake and singing him happy birthday" was so fun to do, senior Jack Mendelow says. A picture of the entire class celebrating can be found on the class



A photo of Mr. Lanham's AP Bio class on the day of his birthday celebration.

Instagram page "apbiowolves," where the students are actively posting about everything they get up to. The bio says "Best class ever!" and

everything about Lanham's AP Biology class proves the statement true.

VIEWPOINT

How does music influence the way we're perceived?

By *MAMUYOVWI JAGHA*
Journalism Student

Growing up in Nigeria, I was surrounded by a culture heavily dependent on music and fashion. Since I could remember, I've always been a musical person. From rap, to indie, to jazz, I've never been one to discriminate. Seeing the difference in people's faces when music turns on and how it made everyone feel so connected made me feel so content.

Around the age of 9 I moved to America. The cultural differences were stark; The way people ate, what they ate, the things they listened to, and how it separated people, and even the clothes they wore, and the judgment that came with it. I was only 9 but even at that age it was very noticeable.

Growing up in America, I was surrounded by people of different cultures, styles and ways of life, and music was a huge part of that.

Reporter Jacqueline

Howard explains through a study that, "Your taste in music might have more to do with the culture around you than how your brain is wired." I moved from a place where everyone was culturally the same to growing up in a predominantly white area. I spent most of my adolescence in a box, being made fun of, and just overall different.

One of the ways I thought I could fit in better was by changing the music

I listened to.

Researcher Dr Susino explains that "Some people seem to have already settled on their emotional responses without even hearing the music, by drawing on prejudices or stereotypes around particular genres of music." My top played songs went from afro beats to a variation of pop songs

I was used to music bringing people together not separating them,

so why is it so different here? Why could I connect with a certain group of people by listening to rap and I could connect with another group by listening to pop? Maybe it was because we were so young and impressionable, and the media taught stereotypes influenced us so much, but because I and other people acted differently than these stereotypes didn't mean we should have been ridiculed.

The Alestle staff explains, "Music serves as a tool for people to define themselves and their culture, and allows people to express themselves through performance or even just through listening." Because we did not know nor understand ourselves yet the impact other people's opinions had on us greatly affected who we were. One step to truly accepting the people around us is accepting their culture and their differences. Music is a big part of culture everywhere and understanding that will start the change we need as a society.





QO alum wins Oscar for *Encanto*

By Fiona Feingold and Chase Pasekoff
Senior Staff Writer and Journalism Student

Ever since its November 2021 release, *Encanto* has been a hit with viewers of all ages. After the film came out on Disney Plus, it was difficult to spend any time on Instagram or Tik Tok without coming across a song from the soundtrack. By January, “We Don’t Talk About Bruno” reached #1 on the Billboard Hot 100.

As the director and co-writer of *Encanto*, Jared Bush ‘92 recently accepted the Oscar for Best Animated Feature. Bush’s other credits include *Zootopia* (co-director and co-writer), *Moana* (writer), and *Raya and the Last Dragon* (executive producer).

During his time at QO, Bush initially focused on math and science. “I didn’t care for English, but I had an awesome teacher. She really pushed me and thought I could be really good at creative writing...I found I really loved it,” he said.

Bush was also involved with QO’s music department. He was a member of the marching band, symphonic band, pep band, jazz band, and pit orchestra, preparing him to work on movies with strong musical components.

“My love for music and all the education I got helped me greatly. I understand the language of music. It makes it very easy for me to discuss stories in terms of music,” Bush said.

While he didn’t know right away

that he wanted to work in film, Bush realized he was interested in the medium after receiving a video camera from his parents. He began to create movie parodies along with “weird home videos” that sometimes included QO teachers.

Graduating with a major in American and English Literature from Harvard University, Bush

moved to LA after college unsure of what he was going to do. “When I started in Hollywood, I didn’t know that I would be a writer. I had to learn the ins and outs of how things worked,” Bush said. He began working on the side as a scriptreader, looking over hundreds of scripts, and spent evenings after work writing his own. Bush got his start in sitcom writing and became a writer’s apprentice on a TV show.

Bush eventually landed a job at Disney Animation Studios, describing the experience as “very autonomous. [Writers have] lots of leeway to write about what we want...I’ve found that



the people running things have been nothing but wonderful.”

As of this month, Bush has worked with the company for 11 years. According to him, “It’s very rare for a writer to be there for more than a year...It’s a company that trusts the storytellers to find the best types of stories.”

Encanto is one of those stories. Centered around the magical Madrigal family,

the movie focuses on Mirabel: the youngest of three siblings, she is the only member of her family born without a gift. When disaster strikes the Madrigals, she has to fight to save her relatives’ magic.

Bush started working on *Encanto* while finishing *Zootopia* and *Moana*. To prepare, he embarked on a two-week research trip to Columbia, the movie’s setting. Bush and his collaborators soon decided that they wanted the story to have elements of magical realism. “[We] wanted to bring in magic, but didn’t want it to be European magic,” Bush said. “We wanted what you saw to be real and

real places.”

Additionally, Bush had to look at some of his own relationships while working on *Encanto*. “I’m not Colombian, but I did come from a large extended family. You may not have a large extended family. You may be an only child...[but] I really got into those stories and those stories became a lot of the stories of *Encanto*,” he said.

The road to becoming a Disney screenwriter wasn’t always easy for Bush, though. “[Accepting feedback] never gets easier. I’ve been doing this job for decades. Five hundred people give you feedback, on a typically rough version of what it’s going to be,” he said. “People are giving you this feedback because they care about you and because they care about this project and, a lot of times, because they’re emotionally invested.”

Bush also explained how failing has allowed him to improve as a writer. “Some of my best lessons have been through failing. I rewrite literally hundreds of times. Not once or twice or ten or twenty...Part of it is believing you’ll get there someday,” he said. In fact, Bush wrote over 1,000 drafts for *Moana*, over 1,500 drafts for *Zootopia*, and 1,700 drafts for *Encanto*.

When giving advice to students aspiring to have a career in the entertainment industry, Bush said, “Take these opportunities and make them mean something. Make them matter. You have this chance to tell your story so make [it] matter.”

A.D. 16 premieres at Olney Theatre Center with hopes of moving to Broadway

By HAILEY BAKER
Staff Writer

A new theatrical production named A.D. 16 had its world premiere at the Olney Theatre Center, running from February 4 through March 20. The musical—starring well-known Broadway performers Phoenix Best (Dear Evan Hansen) who plays Mary Magdalene, and Ben Fankhauser (Disney’s Newsies) who plays Jesus—follows the story of Mary moving to Nazareth with her father, played by Alan H. Green (Charlie and the Chocolate Factory), and falling in love with her next door neighbor—Jesus.

“They were absolutely lovely to work with,” Olney Theatre Company dramaturg Alissa Klusky said, about working with big Broadway names. “I think everybody who worked on the show would say the same thing about the process, which is that it was joyful from start to finish.”

Klusky, as the dramaturg, sat in on each rehearsal, and collaborated with the actors and creative team to ensure the story connected and was easy to follow, and as historically accurate as possible.

The show is loosely based on the Bible, although the Bible never explicitly talks about Jesus’ teenage years.

The show was written in a collaborative effort with music and lyrics by Cinco Paul (Despicable Me, Schmigadoon!), book by Bekah

Brunstetter (This Is US), and direction by Stephen Brackett (Broadway’s The Lightning Thief, Be More Chill, and A Strange Loop, which will open soon on Broadway after a successful run in DC at the Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company).

Throughout A.D. 16’s 45 day run, it captivated audiences throughout the DMV area, wanting to support a local show before it gains great popularity.

“I have always loved seeing the shows at Olney Theatre, and am enthralled when I have the opportunity to see a show before it [goes] to Broadway,” said senior Matthew Rubin, who starred in Quince Orchard’s recent production of Newsies.

The creative team of A.D. 16 has their eyes on New York, hoping to get to Broadway eventually. “I suppose it depends on which producer ends up being involved in the show,” Klusky said, but she added, “I think the team is definitely hoping the show will go to Broadway.”

Many shows that want to go to Broadway play in regional theaters first, like the Olney Theatre Center, so the production team and future investors can see how audiences react. Depending on the producer that becomes involved in A.D. 16, the next step for the show will most likely either be a jump to Broadway, or a run at an Off-Broadway theater first.

Off-Broadway theaters are

theaters in New York City with anywhere from 99-499 seats. This makes Off-broadway shows much smaller than most Broadway shows, and therefore less expensive. Olney Theatre Center has a capacity of 445 seats, so a jump to an Off-Broadway theater would be significantly easy.

“I think it would be a good fit on Broadway eventually. I think they should first try Off-Broadway and then move to Broadway,” said Rubin. However, he added, “They will need to make some changes for sure. For example the set is too small for a Broadway stage. Also, the cast either needs to be bigger or smaller. Right now, it doesn’t seem [like] the right size for a show like this on Broadway.”

Rubin added, “I would definitely want to see it if it moved to New York. I did that with Beetlejuice and absolutely loved seeing the changes made.”

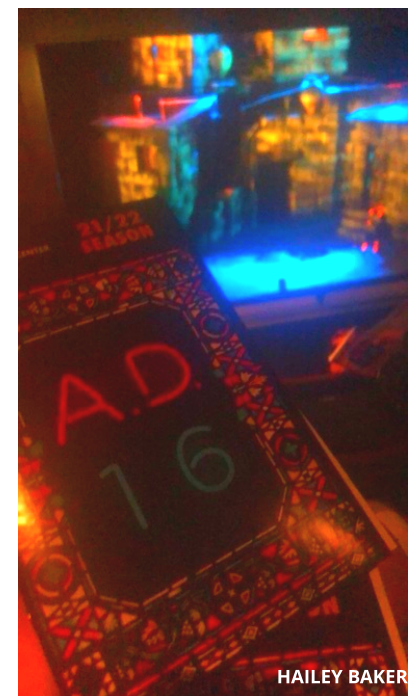
English and theatre teacher, and Quince Orchard Theatre director, Jess Vogel, agrees that she would love to see A.D. 16 again, if or when it eventually goes to Broadway.

“I think that’s a really unique thing that we have here in the DC area—we have access to all of these shows before they actually go to New York,” Vogel said. The fact that the Olney Theatre Center run was the world premiere of A.D. 16 was a determining factor for her in seeing the show. If the show goes to Broadway, she said, “I just wanted to be like ‘Oh, I saw that before it was

big.” Kind of bragging rights, I guess.”

According to Klusky, the show will be looked at further for changes that can be made to it, although she is hoping that the changes will be minor. “I definitely think that the backbone of the story is there.”

Journalism student Chase Pantezzi also contributed to this article.



This photo was taken pre-show at A.D. 16, of its program and stage.



Holy 5hit...AP Exams are here!

By *MADISON SHERMAN*
Staff Writer

It is April 30. You toss and turn in your bed fearing the month of May to arrive. You think of all the exams you signed up for in the beginning of the school year and how in a couple of weeks, or even days, you will face reality and take the exams yourself. When the clock strikes 12 a.m, you jolt up from your bed and think to yourself, "It's AP exam season."

Whether you have prepared an organized study schedule or ordered review books like Barron's or Princeton Review, AP exams can cause immense levels of stress amongst students. However, the crippling anxiety from this stressful month can be prevented by several helpful study tips, as well as a few superstitious techniques, if you choose to do so. This article will provide a beneficial guide to comprehending study material more efficiently, helpful tips from teachers, and steps to take a few days before your exam. Please note that everyone has their own methods to studying and some of these provided tips and strategies may work for some and not others. That is completely okay!

How to study efficiently, according to Edutopia:

1. Studies have shown that working for shorter periods of time at high intensity has led to successful students. In the era of social media, multitasking while studying causes your brain to restart and refocus every time you switch between your phone, or any other distraction, and study material.

2. Pre-testing, or practicing questions before learning the content, enhances learning. Pre-testing is proven to improve post-test results more than spending the same amount of time studying.

3. Spaced out study sessions are also beneficial, where focusing on a topic for shorter periods on different days has proven to improve recollection of material. Creating flashcards that can be used for spaced practicing is just one of the many options to fulfill this technique.

4. Self-quizzing is another effective study technique. Creating your own test questions as you learn new concepts and thinking about the types of questions the exam may ask will aid you in preparing. Finally, it is highly recommended to check out the previous College Board prompts and questions to familiarize yourself with the way the exam will be worded and the rigor of previous exams.

5. Paraphrasing and reflecting

while studying is essential. Oftentimes, when we read a textbook chapter in AP World or a complex passage from AP Lang, we don't retain the information presented. Utilizing intentional learning strategies will help you get around more difficult content, including thinking about how to explain the content as a five-year-old, asking questions, and relating what you have learned to prior knowledge.

Tips from current QO AP teachers:

Skyra Blanchard, an AP Lang and English 9 teacher, was an AP reader herself for the 2020-2021 school year and has a great amount of experience with preparing her students for the Lang exam, as well as getting to know the exam's content. Her key takeaways to tackling the exam include being confident in what you know, utilizing resources you are given, and to "do the damn thing!" Additionally, Blanchard emphasized the importance of believing in yourself and containing "trust that your teachers have prepared you." She says there are a wealth of materials on the College Board website and buying any external materials is unnecessary. "You have every resource at your fingertips," said Blanchard. Specifically for the AP Lang exam, Ms. Blanchard explained the College Board provides annual review videos. Last year, they had three that were each an hour long. She suggests that taking three hours to watch these videos is a great way to get in that last-minute review.

Jeff Jernigan, who has been a math teacher for 25 years and a calculus teacher here at QO for 14 years, has secured the success of many of his students achieving 5s. His theory of being an aggressive learner has prepared students all year long for the AP Calculus AB exam. Jernigan stresses the idea of practicing and managing time so students will feel less stressed on AP exam day. He suggests "using practice tests to identify your strengths and weaknesses" and "learning how to coach yourself during the test to remind yourself there will be hard and easy problems and not

to stress." Jernigan also suggested to "get a good rest the night before the test, and eat a good breakfast the morning of the test because you just never know."

What to do a few days before the exam, starting from three days ahead, adapted from Kaplan:

Three days before: Take a full-length practice test under timed conditions. Make sure you give yourself a 48-hour or more window before taking your test to complete this practice exam. Otherwise, you may be exhausted, which may harm your score.

Two days before: Go over the results of your practice exam. Don't worry about the number of questions you got wrong. Instead, focus on your overall performance on the different topics. Choose the few topics you struggled on and brush them up!

The night before the exam: DO NOT STUDY. Get together an AP Exam kit featuring a few No. 2 pencils (mechanical pencils aren't allowed), a few pens with dark or black ink (for free-response questions), a watch without internet access that makes no noise, your school ID, and if applicable, your student accommodation letter, which verifies you have been approved for testing accommodations.

Morning of the Exam: Wake up on time, eat a substantial breakfast, and don't drink a ton of caffeine, especially if you aren't used to it, because bathroom breaks are limited. Dress in layers to accommodate for any types of testing temperatures. Get there early and assess the traffic or any possible delays.

During the exam: Be confident and remind yourself of the hard work and preparation you have done. You have worked all year for this. You got this!

Superstitions:

Many people hold superstitious beliefs, some more uncommon than others. Whether you follow a certain routine on exam day or study a certain way, it is up to you to keep a positive mindset coming into the test. Superstitions include bringing your own lucky pen, or wearing a certain hairstyle that you believe you always score well with. Manifesting, or containing strong hopeful emotions to achieve desired results, is also used by many for tests and AP exams. Ultimately, these superstitions can't hurt!

QO SPRING SPORTS CALENDAR

All remaining games in the regular season

Fri, May 6 7:00 pm	Boys Varsity Baseball	Blair Varsity Baseball	Away Unknown location
Fri, May 6 7:00 pm	Girls Varsity Softball	Blair Varsity Softball	Away Unknown location
Mon, May 9 5:15 pm	Boys Varsity Baseball	Paint Branch High School Varsity Baseball	Home Quince Orchard High School
Mon, May 9 5:15 pm	Girls Varsity Softball	Paint Branch High School Varsity Softball	Home Quince Orchard High School
Wed, May 11 4:00 pm	Coed Varsity Track	MCPS Championships	Away Seneca Valley High School
Sat, May 14 9:00 am	Coed Varsity Track	MCPS B Meet	Away Albert Einstein High School
Wed, May 18 4:00 pm	Coed Varsity Track	4A West Region Day 1	Away Gaithersburg High School
Thu, May 19 4:00 pm	Coed Varsity Track	4A West Region Day 2	Home Gaithersburg High School
Fri, May 27 4:00 pm	Coed Varsity Track	MPSSAA State Championships Day 1	Home Morgan State University
Sat, May 28 10:00 am	Coed Varsity Track	MPSSAA State Championships Day 2	Away Morgan State University

In The Prowler's March 18, 2022 issue, the article "Prowler investigation highlights complexities of QO sexual assault case" included some inaccuracies and/or ambiguities. Although the article was reviewed by administration prior to March 18, we received additional information after the article's initial publication. We would like to issue the following corrections and clarifications:

- The article stated that "Jane filed her report and was instructed to stay home for a few days." According to administration, the student was never

instructed to stay home as a result of reporting this allegation.

- The article stated that "Jane received a flash pass to the counseling office for her to use." According to administration, the student did not obtain a flash pass because of this incident. The flash pass was awarded for another concern from the student.

- The article stated that "Administration could not discuss the specifics of any student safety plans due to privacy concerns." However, after publication, physical evidence was shown to Prowler staff confirming that a safety plan had

been put into place in this case, and that the QO administration had followed proper procedure.

- The article stated "Administration also stated that an investigation found issues with the credibility of Jane's story..." The Prowler learned after publication that the Special Victims Division of Montgomery County, not school administration, had and has sole authority to determine the credibility of an alleged incident.

- The article stated that "the case was investigated and then dismissed by the Special Victims Division of

Montgomery County." In this case, "dismissed" was meant to convey that the claim was investigated fully by MCPS and the Special Victims Unit and subsequently found to be unfounded, not that the case had been dissolved before a conclusion was reached.

- The QO administration would like to emphasize that, as in the case discussed in the article, all sexual assault claims are taken seriously and thoroughly investigated. If you have experienced sexual harassment or assault, please inform a trusted adult at the school.



Spring Sports Season Updates

Track and Field

By **SAMMY KRIMSTEIN**
Staff Writer

Track and field may often be thought of as an individualized sport, but for Quince Orchard track and field, it is very much a team sport. Of course, most of the events are individual, and athletes compete for their individual times, but the close bonds between teammates help make Quince Orchard's track team a family, and just as much of a team sport as football or basketball. The friendships of QO track and field create a positive environment for athletes, helping them to improve their performance on the field.

"I feel as though I am very close to my teammates which affects my sportsmanship in a good way," said sophomore Ava Holt, "They make me feel included which pushes me to do better."

With a record of 3-3 in their divisional meets, QO has gotten high-level performance from many of its athletes this year. Some standouts so far this year have been junior Roberto Terrell, (who leads the boys team in the 100M, 200M, 400M, long jump, and triple jump), Kehan Bhati (who leads the boys team in the 800M, 1600M, 3200M), Kameran Willaims (who leads the

girls team in the 100M) and Manie Mevo (who leads the girls team in the 200M, Long Jump, and Triple Jump).

Mevo, who set a school record for the triple jump in April, and holds the 14th best mark in the country, recently received her first Division-1 offer for college track, from Towson University.

"I felt ecstatic when I got my first offer from Towson," she said, "It was after an amazing visit and meeting the team. It felt humbling and reminded me that hard work will always be credited."

With the season approaching its end, the seniors of QO Track and Field and beginning to reminisce about their time with QO track. For Mevo, the people is what she will miss most.

"I will miss all the relationships I made here," she said, "I've been connected with the team for 4 years straight, competing with each other, and making unforgettable moments."

Now, the QO track and field team looks to the MCPS Championships, 4A West Regional Finals, and MPSSAA State Championships, which are all coming up in May.

Journalism student Mamuyorwi Jagha also contributed to this article.

Boys Tennis

By **SAMMY KRIMSTEIN**
Staff Writer

—Going down to the wire, with the division championship on the line, the Quince Orchard Boys' Tennis team's late April match against Poolesville was one to remember. In 3rd-set tie breaks, they had to beat Poolesville's #1 singles player and #1 doubles team to win the match, and clinch the division. In singles, it was junior Noah Lewis stepping up for the victory, and in doubles, sophomore Brady Hahn and junior Patrick Young defeated Poolesville, clinching the division title for QO.

With a record of 7-3 on the season, QO is a team with plenty of depth, led by first-year coach Karen Jones. Jones, who also coached volleyball for over 15 years at Quince Orchard, has focused the team on staying aggressive while cutting down errors, and developing mental toughness for when things don't go as planned. Her debut season a success so far, Jones enjoys her time coaching tennis for QO.

"My favorite part of coaching tennis

has been getting to know the boys, they are all great and have a lot of fun," said Jones, "I like seeing them gain confidence and improve throughout the season."

A key factor to the team's winning season has been the supportive team atmosphere. From helping each other in practices, to rallying behind each other in matches, all of the members of the team know that their teammates have their back. Junior Stephen Wu has seen the bonds between players help them win matches, including their division-clinching match against Poolesville.

"Though matches can sometimes be a roller coaster ride of emotions filled with ups, downs, and sharp turns, having this team behind you is one of the most empowering experiences ever," Wu said.

With the regular season finished, QO Boys Tennis hopes to ride the success and energy from their regular season into the playoffs.



COURTESY OF STEPHEN WU

Co-Ed Volleyball

By **OLIVIA MAYTIN**
Journalism Student

Each spring, the gym is packed with groups of people hitting it off, but one group especially is serving it up on the court: the coed volleyball team.



PIXABAY

The team has a 8-3 record as of Friday, April 29. Sophomore Eddie Bedore says the team "motivates each other," which has made their record amazing.

Bedore has said nothing but positives about his experience on the team. It's not just a team, but it's also a family, he says. The positivity "and support... of each other [is so strong] that once you are on the team, you never want to leave," he added.

Bedore's love for the sport grows every time he plays, but one of the reasons he started playing was because of sophomore Sarah Manion, who is also on the team. "[She] started playing before me and would always say how fun it is," said Bedore, and once he tried it out for the first time, he fell in love.

COVID took a toll on a lot of sports for schools, but volleyball was still hitting it off at Quince Orchard High School. Unfortunately for Bedore, he broke his leg last year and was not able to participate. Watching his teammates play on the court made him "want to get back out there and touch a ball," he said. He knew he always had a passion throughout his time playing, but he "realized how strong it was last year."

Volleyball is not just a team sport: it's a family sport that brings each other up on and off the court. When watching them play, it's obvious there's so much love there. And you can still watch them play. Playoffs started this week. Watch them serve each team!

Girls Tennis

By **SAMMY KRIMSTEIN**
Staff Writer

After losing their season to the pandemic in 2020, last year's QO girls' tennis team was thrilled to be back. Although they struggled to win matches, finishing with a final record of 2-6, the 2021 season gave the team an opportunity to reconnect with each other, and return to the team spirit of girls' tennis.

Now, with the 2022 season in full swing, QO has hit its stride. After dropping their first two matches against tough teams in Wootton and Churchill, QO won six of their next seven matches, improving their record to 6-5. Head coach and special education teacher Julie Lyst has had high praise for the jump her team

made this year.

"My favorite part of this season's team has been meeting all our new members and seeing our old members flourish into better tennis players," she said. "Everyone is improving and it is great to see!"

With returning players and new players coming together, the energy and focus for the team has been a key factor in their success. One first-year player, sophomore Alexandra Yaen, has noticed the "winning attitude" that the team has adopted for this season.

Quince Orchard wrapped up the regular season with their last match against Watkins Mill on Tuesday. After that, it's time for the playoffs for QO.



COURTESY OF MADISON SHERMAN

Journalism student Motaz Deify also contributed to this article.



ESSAY

My farewell message to QO

By ADAM GOTKIN
Editor-in-Chief

I think it would be fair to say that I didn't have the typical high school experience. Instead of going out and partying, or hanging out with friends. I was working, and I know that I'll never regret that. My goal is to become the top sports broadcaster in the world. And nothing will ever stop me from becoming that, the next generation's Joe Buck.

For me it started before I can even remember. My whole life, all that I have known is sports. But most of that isn't relevant to QO, so I can leave that for my memoir in 70 years. The real start was the first week of ninth grade. I saw on Twitter a post from The Town Courier, the local newspaper. They said that they were looking for student interns to help cover QO and Northwest sporting events. I jumped on it right away and landed it. A week into high school, I was covering the eventual Maryland State Champions.

Working with The Town Courier was amazing. I was able to dive deep into the girls soccer team and do post-game interviews with Coach Peg Keiller, which helped me develop as a journalist more than anything. And as mentioned before, the football team won the state championship that year. Being on the field during that is a moment I will never forget. But I always wanted more. So I began thinking of what else I could do.

On January 9, 2019, I sent an email that changed my life. It was to Mrs. Thomas and it started with, "My name is Adam Gotkin, and I am a freshman at QOHS. My passion in life is sports broadcasting and because of this I would like to create the Cougar Broadcasting Club." From there, I outlined my dream of what would eventually become the QO Sports Network. I met with Mrs. Thomas and Mr. Rabberman and somehow they agreed, after non-stop pestering, to allow me to start the QO Sports Network.

Skipping ahead to the fall of 2019, it was finally time. I created the Instagram and Twitter accounts and the QO Sports Network was born. The first broadcast was going to be a girls

volleyball game versus Churchill. And it could not have been more of a disaster. To start, I had never watched a volleyball game in my life. Then, some of the names were impossible for me to pronounce at the time. So I already went in with a disadvantage. And then, the WiFi didn't work. My microphone wouldn't connect and it was impossible to stream off of the laptop that I had planned to use.

After only one broadcast, I feared that all of my work was for nothing and the QO Sports Network would be dead on the spot. But I wouldn't let that happen. My mom allowed me to use her laptop, which was compatible with our software and the next sport was soccer, which I was more familiar with. Things went smooth for game number two, which set up the biggest

game yet: QO vs. Damascus in football. A game that fans around the nation were waiting to see. Top prospects on the field and probably close to 5,000 people in the stadium. I thought I did a decent job, until I got a DM the next day on mocofb.com that started with, "I'm not here to insult you. I wanted to be clear about that."

Jeez, that's a great way to boost confidence, I thought. But I read it and made sure to work on everything that I was told I did wrong. I always had that in the back of my mind. Time went on and I got better. QOSN was starting to grow in viewership and club members. Things were going better than I could have ever imagined, and then March of 2020 hit. And everyone knows what happened then.

With COVID, all sports were gone. Everything that I worked on was done. And my mental health was in the mud. I had no release and I really struggled for the first few months. Eventually, I was able to get some reps in calling a simulation of the video game MLB: The Show on Twitch, but it wasn't the same. I was itching to get back onto the field.

Luckily, eventually things started to clear up and live sports were back. The QO Sports Network started again in April of 2021 and we jumped back in right where we left off. That, along with the opportunity to become the youngest professional sports broadcaster in the nation with the Maryland Bobcats and the voice of the collegiate baseball team Gaithersburg Giants, made it so everything was back to normal for me. My life was back.

All of my work in high school was building towards the fall of 2021: my senior year, and my chance to call a state championship. The football team and girls soccer team, the two squads that meant the most to me, both had chances to do it. The girls fell just short, losing in penalties in the state semis, but the boys made it. After the semifinal win over Northwest, I saw a post from the same person who'd DMed me earlier, which said, "A heck of a job by Adam Gotkin." From there, I knew I had made it. And it was time to go to Navy Marine Corps Memorial Stadium to call the QO vs. Wise state championship game. As everyone knows, the Cougars won and my dream became a reality.

Less than a month later, I was accepted to and committed to my dream school, and the top school for sports broadcasting in all of the United States, Syracuse University. Everything had come full circle.

But this is just the start of my career in sports broadcasting. I can't thank everyone at QO enough for helping me become the person I am today. I'll never forget you all and I can't wait until the time when you turn on your TV and go, "Wait, I went to high school with that kid." If I leave any wisdom to you, it is to work harder than anyone else. Take advantage of all opportunities that you are given and at the end of the day have fun.



Adam, on his dad's lap, at the Sports Legends Museum in Baltimore, MD, doing the broadcasting simulator.



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