

THE PROWLER

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

How polarization may impact the 2022 midterms

By **MIA KAUFFMAN**
Editor-in-Chief

Mark your calendars, election day is just upon us.

Following an intense election cycle in 2020, the 2022 midterm elections on Tuesday, November 8 will be a crucial day in determining the future of our country's political climate.

The past two years have been filled with many unprecedented events: the Covid-19 pandemic, the insurrection, the overturning of landmark Supreme Court cases like *Roe v. Wade*, gun violence, racial injustice, and economic turmoil. All of these will be among the topics debated during these elections. Inflation and abortion rights will be at the forefront of every candidate's campaign. Due to the recent overturning of *Roe v. Wade* by the conservative-majority Supreme Court justices, NPR explained that "Democrats [are] motivated and many independent[s] are motivated by the issue of abortion, while the Republicans have the advantage of the economy."

Regardless of party, voters aren't happy with the direction America is heading in. The Hill's poll from July 11 states that only "13 percent of registered voters agreed that America is heading in the right direction." Americans want to see change in our government and voting is a way to voice that want.

While these elections are solely at the

state and local levels — including an array of senate, governor, and House of Representative races — parties are playing a bigger role than ever in voters' decision-making. Heading into state and local elections, it is clear that the priorities of the public have changed. Rather than focusing solely on the candidates and how they plan to help your state or community, voters are now casting their votes based on party affiliation. According to an NPR article by Domenico Montanaro, "there is comparatively little incentive to reach out to voters who might fall somewhere between the two parties," which is said to be contributing to the increase of polarization and lack of unity in our country.

Maryland has some very important elections involved in this cycle. Specifically, the governor's race is one to watch. After two four-year terms in office, current governor Larry Hogan's tenure has come to an end. However, he hasn't retired from his political aspirations quite yet, as he is currently touring the country to "test his chances as a presidential contender who could lead the Republican Party in a more inclusive direction," explained the Washington Post.

During the primary elections back in July, Maryland Republicans nominated Dan Cox, a far-right-leaning and Trump-endorsed candidate. After having a moderate Republican in office for the past eight years, Cox's win against Hogan-backed candidate Kelly Schulz shook up the GOP stance in Maryland politics. On the campaign trail, Cox has

advocated for stricter abortion laws and looser gun restrictions, and against the teachings of transgender issues in schools. Cox represents all of the things that Hogan has worked to disassociate the foundation of the Republican Party with over his tenure as governor. In fact, as stated in the Washington Post, "Maryland Republicans and national strategists described it as a tough loss, evidence that Hogan's influence may be waning the party." The outcome of this election will be very telling to the future of the Republican Party in Maryland.

Wes Moore will represent the Democratic Party in this election. Moore is a bestselling author, army combat veteran, and former chief of a nonprofit that fought against poverty. The issues highlighted throughout Moore's campaign resonate with Democratic voters' concerns of inequity, gun violence, education and inflation — opposing Cox's views. According to an article from The Hill on September 19, Moore is leading the race "by 22 points." Moore is projected to win the race and if he were to win, he would make history as Maryland's first black governor.

In the Senate, Maryland incumbent Chris Van Hollen is up for re-election. Van Hollen is running against Chris Chaffee, a member of Maryland's state Senate, who is representing the Republican Party. Chaffee has openly expressed his support for the police force, and his aspiration for lower property taxes on his Twitter. On the other hand, Van Hollen advocates for free school

lunches, Medicare, and dealing with the climate.

It is still unknown whether the Democrats have a strong enough following and momentum to keep their majority in the House and Senate. However, according to USA Today, "historical trends and numerous polls suggest that Republicans will flip at least the House in November." Nothing is certain yet and a lot can happen in the political world that will impact the elections before November 8.



HERE'S A LINK TO REGISTER TO VOTE!

The FBI's Raid of Mar-a-Lago Explained

By **HANYA SHAHZAD**
Staff Writer

The raid conducted by the FBI on former President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago home in August has been an ongoing event. So why exactly was the former president searched? Why was Trump hiding important documents, or as many Republicans claim, was it an abuse of power by the FBI?

Reports of classified documents being withheld by Trump were the main reason for the search, which were believed to be taken without clearance. According to Forbes, fifteen boxes of important documents had already been returned to the government by Trump which was revealed in January. But still more boxes were taken from the residence by federal agents during the search on August 8.

Trump is being investigated for breaking three federal laws: the Espionage Act, destroying classified documents, and hiding government documents.

The Espionage Act of 1917 prohibits anyone from releasing or keeping information that jeopardizes national defense. According to the

Washington Post, the documents were removed because of the Presidential Records Act, which ensures that a president's documents become public property. But how did the Department of Justice (DOJ) get to this point? There was communication between the Department and Trump beforehand, but lack of compliance led to the raid as Trump accepted a grand jury subpoena on May 11, adds the Washington Post.

Additionally, in an interview with CNN, their senior legal analyst Elie Honig [said] that the DOJ typically doesn't partake in delicate political moves if it's 90 days or less to an election which could explain the choice of August 8. Honig added, "Today is just about 90 days out exactly from the midterms, I think maybe 91 or 92 days out. That policy, that may be a reason why they did it today because they want to stay clear of that if they're interpreting that as a 90 day rule."

The raid led to mixed reactions. Many Republicans believe this was an unnecessary action and an attack by Democrats. Democrats, on the other hand, believe this was the next step to take, due to the severity of the national security risk that taking classified documents entails.

Furthermore, the Washington Post quotes Debra Steidel Wall, the current acting archivist of the United States, in a letter explaining how it "has now been four weeks since we first informed you of our intent to provide the FBI access to the boxes..." This suggests that Trump's team knew that the documents were a prominent target and still did not return them.


In more recent news, Trump's team and the DOJ are going back and forth on whether the arbiter, or judge, in the legal process should be allowed to review the classified documents. AP News writes that "the Justice Department, by contrast, said it does not believe the arbiter should be permitted to inspect classified records or resolve potential claims of executive privilege," and later adds "It [DOJ] has maintained that executive privilege does not apply in this investigation because Trump, no longer president, had no right to claim the documents as his."

Essentially, the DOJ feels that Trump is exempt from executive privilege because he is no longer the president, while his team is arguing that he still holds it. Executive privilege would be a way to

justify Trump's holding of the documents if it could be seen as applicable.

A special master has been appointed to the case to make sure all processes are being done right and reported as needed. They can also help look at documents or other functions needed by a court. More recently, the New York Times says the special master in the case and the federal judge who appointed him are going back and forth on whether Trump's team should have to state whether the FBI has an accurate listing of documents and are disagreeing amongst various topics like time limits as well. More information is constantly being introduced in this tumultuous case, and only time will tell the outcome.



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Monkeypox, an infectious virus and known trend on TikTok

By **PATRINA PUN**
Staff Writer

The mysterious virus called monkeypox has become a universal issue over the past few months, spreading rapidly across the globe.

According to the Human Rights Campaign, the first case of monkeypox to appear in the United States was on May 18.

Initially, with monkeypox, flu-like symptoms will occur which then transition to sores and rashes throughout the body.

Therefore to prevent the virus, CDC approved the vaccines Tpoxx and Jynneos, both accessible to everyone.

Despite all of that, the virus has also made a statement within the LGBTQ community as well.

According to the New England Journal of Medicine, studies showed that in 16 different countries, 98% of infections originate from people in the gay community.

Nonetheless, this does not necessarily imply that only homosexual men can contract the virus.

According to the British Broadcasting Company, monkeypox can spread through any form of direct skin contact, infectious rash, and bodily fluids.

In spite of all that, there is still very little community knowledge known about monkeypox. This has resulted in nationwide confusion as many did not expect a second major virus to arrive simultaneously with COVID-19.

This confusion has been specifically circulating in the halls here at QO, amongst students such as juniors Nadine Kaufman, Hayden Lee, and senior Mark Cabugwas.

Nowadays, teenagers no longer refer to the TV for news, but to TikTok.

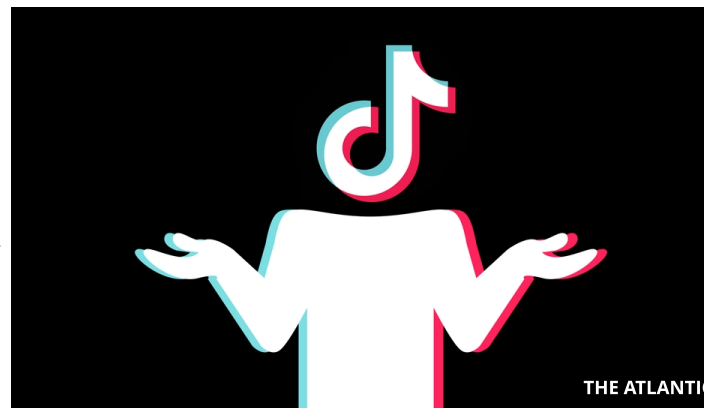
According to Pew Research, about 58% of teenagers nationally visit TikTok daily.

Kaufman, a part of the 58%, reports that monkeypox became a trending topic on the app. "It was all people making jokes about monkeypox on TikTok," she said. "It's nothing serious, so I would never call it factual information."

TikTok provides an endless amount of material about any topic searched, but the accuracy of the information is potentially up to the person watching it.

Similarly, Lee discovered the virus through TikTok as well. "I've only heard that it'll make you uglier and scar your body, but I'm not too worried about it, to be honest. I don't know that much, he said.

Making the decision to watch TikTok rather than credible news on TV or news articles, has caused an



uptick in the spread of misinformation. According to Fast Company, a business magazine, "the spreading of false information has become commonplace. Some users have been using TikTok to promote false conspiracies."

To be fair, there is no doubt that monkeypox has not made as large of an impact as Covid-19. Cabugwas recognized this, saying, "I know the virus is significant, but the lack of information about it compared to Covid doesn't really make the disease that important to me." Yet, according to CDC, there are currently 25,851 cases of monkeypox recorded and 2 total deaths in the United States. Globally, there are 68,428 cases documented, which may come off as much of a surprise to many.



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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.

New clubs engage students in getting involved in communities

By **MOTAZ DEIFY**
Staff Writer

On a typical lunch period, the outdoor basketball courts are filled by students eating lunch on metal tables, or running around playing basketball or football for fun. Contrasting to September 16, 2022, the courts were compromised of decorative and colorful cardboards, promoting clubs.

Besides tables and cardboards, populated groups of students walk and stop by a club, anticipating the outcomes of joining one—extracurricular activities for college, building a resume, making new friends, learning a new skill, and being surrounded by new community members.

At Quince Orchard, all old and new clubs are in favor of guaranteeing students these outcomes: specifically, wanting to surround students with each other in order to establish a better and more diverse community.

For instance, take QO Spikeball, a new club led by juniors Taylor Renzi and Elaina Fuster. Renzi states the main focus of their club is to "get together and [play] a fun sport."

"We want to allow everyone to play with each other and create a community," she added.

Spikeball is a simple sport where teams of two stand around a circular spikeball net, and one player serves the ball at the circular net by hitting it against their palm. Overall, the club tends to have many students constantly interact with each other by communicating and bonding as a team while playing spikeball. Fuster summarizes their goal of building

community by "engag[ing] the students and encourag[ing] lots of different people to join."

QO Spikeball is already making connections not only with those at QO, but with other schools by holding tournaments. Renzi explained that while "we still are figuring out how to do the tournaments with the help of the other clubs," Renzi and Fuster anticipate tournaments beginning this month.

Moreover, there are many other clubs outside of sports that emphasize the aspect of community, like Helping Hands, led by senior Deeya Mistry and junior Chase Pasekoff. (Note: Pasekoff is a staff member of The Prowler).

Helping Hands originally started out as an organization in 2020 founded by an anonymous Sherwood High alumnus with a goal to help "minority groups and groups that [don't] get as much attention in terms of donations," as Mistry described.

Mistry also highlights past actions that Helping Hands has performed, such as "support[ing] homeless shelters, nursing homes, and even children of incarcerated parents."

In terms of community, Mistry said the club emphasizes "working together to help others, hence the symbolism of the name—[Helping Hands]." Mistry added, "Helping Hands taught me the value of service and what it means to help others."

Even though the Clubs Fair is only hosted once every school year, there are still many opportunities to join and get involved in clubs year-round.

"If you are interested in joining a club later in the year, I recommend contacting the presidents of the club," Fuster said.

Concerned that new students are constantly eager to join, Renzi called attention to those who potentially would join too many clubs. "Expect a lot of clubs and it might be overwhelming, but don't join [so] many clubs to where you can't go to any," she said.

According to a Cougars Connect presentation from September 15, regarding the Clubs Fair, QO recommends that students should join at least three clubs.

Joining a club provides many ways to guarantee skill, recognition from colleges, and most importantly form a community. "Even if it's not a significant club, it's a good way to get involved with QO," Fuster said.





The Overturning of Roe v. Wade

A dramatic change in precedent that has divided the nation

By ISADORA KAUFMAN
Staff Writer

Stare Decisis. Six months ago, I was sitting in Ms. Jones's AP Government class when she explained to us this concept, which means that the Supreme Court is expected to follow the precedent(s) set in past Supreme Court cases.

Three months later, the court made a landmark decision: the Supreme Court ruled in favor of Dobbs in *Dobbs v. Jackson*, thereby overturning the precedent established in *Roe v. Wade*, a case that established a woman's right to privacy, and therefore a woman's right to make the decision to terminate a pregnancy.

In overturning this case, the five Supreme Court Justices have defied precedent by declaring that abortion no longer a right at a federal level, so it is now up to each state government to declare if women have the right to an abortion and up to what point in their pregnancy. This gives each state government the power to protect abortion or restrict it.

Following the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, 22 states have put laws into

action that restrict women's ability to get abortions, 12 of which have banned abortions entirely. The rest of the states have placed restrictions on the procedure based on gestational age or on the cause of the pregnancy.

Here in Maryland, women still have the right to get an abortion up through the second trimester of pregnancy. Following the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, many women living in states where abortion is heavily restricted may resort to coming to Maryland for an abortion.

Junior Nellie Lemiale said, "If I was put in that situation—well thankfully abortion is still legal in our state—but if I was in put that situation, I would be very upset and I am upset for the people that do live in those states."

Lemiale's opinion is shared by many at QOHS. All seven students who were interviewed for this article expressed that they disagreed with this ruling and feared for the women directly impacted by this decision.

However, across the nation, Lemiale's opinion is not shared by everyone. For many the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* was a joyous occasion. According to the *New York Daily*

News, pro-life New Yorker Andrew Giuliani reported feeling that the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* was "a victory for states' rights but more importantly, the sanctity of life."

While some politicians oppose abortion for ideological reasons, some people believe their opposition to abortion is entirely for political gain.

Senior Jacob Porter shared his initial reaction to the news: "They said this wouldn't happen, but it did because they lied. They are politicians and politicians lie."

The overturning of *Roe v. Wade* not only affects women but foreshadows possible changes for other minorities living in the United States.

Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, one of the majority who overturned the *Roe v. Wade* precedent, has already alluded to the possible overturning of cases that protected the right of same-sex and interracial couples to marry.

Senior Amalia Burkhart is one student worried for the future. "Some people may not understand the significance of this right now, but this is going to cause the loss of many basic fundamental rights," she said.



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Queen of England passes away

By HAILEY BAKER
Senior Staff Writer

On September 8, Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom passed away peacefully at the age of 96, at her Scotland residence, Balmoral Castle.

Following the Queen's death, Operation London Bridge went into effect. Operation London Bridge is the funeral plan for Queen Elizabeth II, and was created in the 1960s and revised several times afterwards, to be put acted out when she eventually passed away.

Operation London Bridge explains that when Queen eventually passes away, her private secretary would be the first to know, followed by the Prime Minister, the Cabinet Secretary, the Privy Council Office, the ministers and senior civil servants, the governments of the 14 other countries under the rule of the commonwealth, the media, and finally a footman at Buckingham Palace to inform the public.

Upon the public's knowledge of the Queen's death, news media anchors in the UK wore black to show respect, and the BBC social media account profile pictures were changed from red to black. This was just a few of the indications to the public that

the Queen had passed. At Quince Orchard, many students heard about the Queen's passing through social media.

Ten days after the Queen's death, following a mourning period, a funeral was held for her at Westminster Abbey. Two thousand guests were invited to come together to honor the Queen's legacy. These guests included the UK's royal family, global royalty, current and former United Kingdom prime ministers, and other heads of foreign governments, including President Joe Biden.

After the funeral, the Queen was laid to rest alongside her husband Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, in a prepared tomb at King George VI in St George's Chapel, Windsor Castle. Prince Phillip's death preceded his wife's in April 2021. The day of the Queen's funeral was declared a day of national mourning.

Following the Queen's death, England gained a new monarch, King Charles III, Elizabeth's oldest son and the heir apparent to the throne during her reign. He was officially proclaimed King on the Saturday following the Queen's death, at a ceremony that took place at St James's Palace in London.



KEEPING UP WITH THE

KOUGARS

By MIA KAUFFMAN
Editor-in-Chief

Welcome back, Cougars! Featured here is our new column highlighting important events and sharing the inside scoop of the QO community, so that you can Keep Up With the Kougars!

Nájera's farewell:

The QO community is saddened to hear that one of our assistant principals, Vilma Nájera, is ending her time here at QO to start a new chapter at Brown Station Elementary School (BSES). According to the newsletter sent out on September 19, Nájera has been named Acting Principal at BSES and will begin her time there starting October 1. However, as Principal Beth Thomas stated in the newsletter, "we are excited that Ms. Nájera will be afforded this leadership opportunity as she brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to the role."

English Resource Teacher (RT) Elicia Eberhart-Bliss will serve for the remainder of the year as acting assistant principal, and English teacher Rosie Justilien will replace Eberhart-Bliss as the acting English RT for the rest of the year. While the QO community will greatly miss Nájera and her presence at QO, we wish her all the best for her future endeavors.

Homecoming:

The Homecoming dance this year will take place next Saturday, October 15, at QO in the auxiliary gym. This year's Homecoming hallways theme is biomes. Each grade will be assigned a different biome from the options of tundra, dessert, jungle, and the ocean.

Next Friday, October 14, the state champion football team will take on Gaithersburg High School in the Homecoming football game. However, due to the recent events at the Northwest vs. Gaithersburg football game, the new protocols that were implemented last month will be in place.

QO Theatre's update:

Do you love a spicy murder mystery? Do you love being a part of an interactive audience? Do you love twisted and intense plots with lots of surprises? Well, if you do, the QO Theatre's fall production of "The Plot, Like Gravy, Thickens" is the show to see. "The Plot, Like Gravy, Thickens" is a murder-mystery-comedy that keeps the audience interacted with the plot as the play progresses.

The play will take place the weekends of November 5 and 12. Following a major victory at the Cappies Awards last spring, QO Theater's program is "excited to put on another fantastic show that is a must-see," as noted by QO Theatre's

VP of Publicity, senior Hayley Asai (a staff member of The Prowler).

This month's student highlight:

Senior Josie Belkin is taking her academic passions about the environment outside the classroom by interning with the Muddy Branch Alliance. Through her internship, Belkin tests the pH and chloride levels at local bodies of water such as Lake Varuna and Pennyfield Lock. Belkin has always had strong passions about helping our environment but explained that "during the Australian Wildfire[s] is when I really wanted to make a difference."

Belkin took action by contacting a family friend who does work in the Muddy Branch Alliance, and from there was introduced to her mentor Karl Van Neste. Neste is the Vice President of the Muddy Branch Alliance.

Belkin's internship consists of going down to the water, taking a reusable cup and filling it up halfway, testing the pH with some strips and matching the color. Belkin finalizes her process by testing "the chloride with strips that use a bar graph to measure," she explained.

This experience has been very beneficial for Belkin, as she has "learned a lot about the field work as well as normal procedures for labs."

The end goal of her internship is to eventually pass a bill to lower the amount of salt put on the roads. Belkin hopes to continue the work she is doing for the Muddy Branch Alliance and is inviting fellow students with the same passions to come join her on her quest to improve the state of our environment.



JOSIE BELKIN

If you would like to be featured in our next issue of Keeping Up with the Kougars, please reach out to us through our Twitter or Instagram at @qohs_prowler, or through email at QOHSproowler@gmail.com.



QO's Bridge to Wellness Center increases students' access to mental health care

By CHASE PANTEZZI
Staff Writer

At the beginning of this school year, students witnessed a major change in the first room in the English hallway: the former classroom that was once home to teacher offices and various English classes is no longer. Room 241 is now QO's Bridge to Wellness Center, which aims to provide a safe space dedicated to mental health resources.

The first impression students get when they enter the Wellness Center's office is a calm and inviting environment, where they are greeted by a friendly face. Karina Urriola, the Mental Health Specialist at Bridge to Wellness and QO '16 alumnus, began her position here last month after working for about three years as a mental health case manager and mentor. She has worked with children facing mental health crises related to suicidal ideation and groups of mothers who were incarcerated, helping give people space to process mental health battles in various settings.

The Bridge to Wellness Center is a relatively new idea that was created by a collaboration between MCPS, the Department of Health and Human Services, and Shepard Pratt — the largest nonprofit organization in the

United States focusing on areas of mental health, relating to aspects such as education and development.

Urriola said that Wellness Centers like this one are places where students can come for any variety of mental health needs, without having to worry about transportation, waiting lists, lack of privacy, or insurance. "It's all confidential; we try to keep it really discreet, so if a student wants therapy, but doesn't want the rest of the school to know, there are ways we protect their privacy," she said.

Students were less certain about the purpose of the Bridge to Wellness Center. Senior Milan Olascoaga had only heard about the new wellness center in passing. "I think it sounds more like a health room based on my first impression, but it also seems like it could be [serve as a place for] therapy and helping people when they are having panic attacks," she said.

However, once given a broad idea of what Bridge to Wellness does, she said that there were several mental health challenges that need to be addressed at QO. She said, "I feel like the teachers aren't understanding enough. They just don't accommodate students all of the time."

Olascoaga shared that the idea of a wellness center was "great." She added that "having help from the administration would allow for more



The new Bridge to Wellness Center has various resources, affirmations, and quotes to motivate students.

accommodations and then also spread more awareness."

Urriola explained how there are wellness centers currently in the vast majority of MCPS high schools, and their goal is to accommodate the increase in mental health needs for students. If the wellness centers that have been put in place perform well for students, then Bridge to Wellness will expand to all schools throughout the county.

Urriola said that a space that normalized mental health with services for students was something she wished she had as a QO student.

"[While] I was very privileged to have a support system outside of school, I know that's not available to everyone," she added. "I came back to be able to provide what I always wanted when I was at QO."

Urriola will begin individual and group check-ins with lunch bunches that surround different topics each week, such as conflict resolution. But students can also stop by her office in 241B any time. "Everybody should know we're here and we're really available for whatever students need," she said.

MCPS alum publishes YA novel "Seton Girls"

By FIONA FEINGOLD
Editor-in-Chief

Seton Academic High has it all: an undefeated football team with academic chops to boot. But the secret to Seton's success lies in its namesake girls, the titular subjects of Charlene Thomas's literary debut. "Seton girls" are peppy, determined, and willing to do anything for their school... or are they?

"Seton Girls" follows Aly Jacobs, the editor of Seton's newspaper, as she discovers the truth behind the school's 13-year winning streak. Throughout the book, Thomas, who graduated from Gaithersburg High School in 2007, spins issues of "affluenza" and sexism into a powerful young adult novel that is sure to grab readers from the very first chapter.

"It was really important to me to, on one side, tell a story about privilege and... the way that it can get out of control. I think, if it goes unchecked for too long... that sort of impacts the area of the world where Seton exists," Thomas said.

Another focus for Thomas was creating and centering protagonists of color. "I really wanted to write a story that had Black and Brown girls sort of at the center of it... I think that it's really important to remember that, you know, we're not sidekicks; we're stars," Thomas added.



Platonic relationships are also integral to "Seton Girls."

"It was important to me to put on the page a different kind of love story," Thomas said.

Aly spends much of her time on the outskirts of a tight-knit friend group whose members would do anything for each other — even if that means destroying everything Seton stands for. "Through the process of choosing themselves over the safety of what they've always known or keeping their mouths shut, they find each other," said Thomas.

But that doesn't mean the book centers on a group of "mean girls." "I feel like there are so many, from a plot device perspective, narratives about mean girls, and... the cool, pretty, popular group of girls that [exclude] everybody. And I really wanted to showcase a group of girls that doesn't do that," Thomas said.

In fact, Thomas's high school friend group inspired the one featured in "Seton Girls." "Nobody in my group of girlfriends is exactly anybody in Britt's group of girlfriends," she said, "but it's sort of this sentiment and the...way they protect each other."

Thomas includes pieces of herself in individual characters as well. "I think of Aly as kind of representative of where my headspace was at while I was in high school," Thomas said. "Britt is kind of the representation of my older point of view... If you smush Aly and Britt together, ...they're sort of like a compilation of myself."

The story's setting was influenced

by Thomas's time at Gaithersburg HS. "Environmentally, 'Seton Girls' is very much inspired by my high school experience and...[what] my experience was growing up in Montgomery County."

So, what recommendation does Thomas have for students interested in creative writing? Watch reality TV!

"I just encourage writers to consume content and immerse yourself in content constantly," said Thomas. "I joke all the time that part of why I watch so much reality TV is 'cause I'm doing research. And it's kind of a joke, but also I love reality TV!"

"I feel like consuming that... inspires me to come up with new ideas and... recognize different little nuances about people that I might want to weave into a story someday," she added.

Thomas's upcoming novel, "Peekaboo," will be released in 2024 and is currently in the editing phase.

"Peekaboo" takes place in the same universe as Seton, but focuses on a school that's "up the road and that is mentioned in 'Seton Girls,'" according to Thomas. "It is a twisty, spooky, eerie, speculative young adult novel that I'm excited about," she said.

Until then, "Seton Girls" can be found wherever books are sold.

WHERE DID COUGARS VACATION THIS SUMMER?

By Hayley Asai, Sophie Fawkner, Lily Kaplan, and Kate Belman

This past summer, junior Catherine Brady flew out to Arizona with her family for the first time. Brady's motivation for her week-long vacation to Scottsdale and Sedona was because her family "had never left the East Coast before."

What shocked Brady the most when she disembarked from the plane was the sweltering heat. On the horizon, large red rock formations rose up, providing a stark contrast to the Maryland treeline.

To Brady, the most memorable part of the vacation was the natural beauty, but a close second was when she found out the Baltimore Ravens were staying in her hotel room.

Freshman Noah Perlman took an exciting trip this summer to the beaches of Turks & Caicos. Perlman says that his "favorite part of the trip was probably scuba diving and spending time with family."

Perlman also enjoyed the ability to encounter a different culture than the one found in Maryland, sharing that the locals were very nice and inclusive. Perlman enjoyed eating some yummy sushi on his trip while relaxing with his family at the resort he stayed at.

Senior Catalina Salazar traveled to the beautiful country of Colombia to reunite with her family. "Due to COVID-19 being an issue for so long, it was nice to finally be able to visit my family once again," said Salazar.

Salazar took multiple flights to get to her destination.

Salazar noted that Colombia has a ton of tasty fresh fruit. "I absolutely love the large assortment of fresh exotic fruits that Colombia has to offer; I think that it is my favorite 'dish' to eat when I visit," said Salazar.

Salazar had an amazing time spending quality time with her family in this cool destination.

Senior Elizabeth Winter spent time in Italy and Greece this summer with her family. Winter's favorite part of the vacation was "being able to see new places." Meeting people that, like Winter, had been traveling to Europe for the summer was also exciting for her.

One place that stood out to her was the Colosseum in Rome. "We got to go underneath it and see how it was built," said Winter.

Italy had amazing dishes to offer, and one of Winter's personal favorites that she tried during her vacation was pasta carbonara. When she was not sightseeing, she was on a cruise for seven days that "took [her] to different islands."

Sophomore Ryan Garwood was interviewed for his lively trip to Vietnam, Thailand, and Laos. "It was very interesting to be able to experience and take part in Asian culture," said Garwood.

Out of all the places that Garwood visited, his favorite place was Bangkok, Thailand. "Bangkok is pretty much Vegas on steroids; you can do whatever you want," he said. Garwood shared that throughout Asia, people were very welcoming when it came to their lifestyles and food options. "The people there are very nice..., and you always feel like you're welcomed into their homes. I saw a ton of different types of street food options, [including] spicy food, and the people all dress very differently from people in the United States," Garwood said.

Sophomore Kayla Patel took overseas trips to Paris and London. She enjoyed London because of the activities she did, but Paris was prettier, in her opinion. While in London, she and her parents and younger brother had afternoon tea. Patel was fascinated by the the Tower of London and the Eiffel Tower in Paris. "It was really pretty, especially at night," she noted, Patel said that the local culture in London was "very city-like."

Paris, as well as London, had many great foods to offer. Specifically, Patel really enjoyed the macarons. Overall, she was very glad to be able to take a trip like this over the summer.





College Preparedness with Ms. Jones

By *MADISON SHERMAN*
Editor-in-Chief

It's that time of year for seniors: your supplementals start piling up, you are bombarded with university spam mail, and the Common App becomes your best friend. What is this wondrous, yet stressful time of year? College application season!

In a little less than eight months, our QO seniors will know where they are going to college. Whether students are applying to Ivies like Harvard or Yale, Big 10 schools like Wisconsin or Ohio State, or more quaint private schools like Washington and Lee or Chapman, each school has its own application requirements.

Luckily, QO has an experienced and well-educated College and Career Coordinator, Briana Jones, to help assist and equip students with the tools they need to get into college. Being a former admissions counselor at The University of Oklahoma, Jones knows the ins and outs of the college application process.

In an interview, Jones shared that the importance of test scores "vary per institution." Regarding academic scholarships, scores may be necessary. Therefore, it's "always helpful to confirm if merit-based scholarships require test scores on file," she said. However, if a school

is declared test-optional, regardless of whether you are a student with or without a reported test score, "that won't play a role in determining if you have a higher chance of getting in."

When thinking about how many schools you should apply to, Jones advises a good range is around three to seven. She doesn't recommend applying to more than 10 schools because, at the end of the day, each school has their own application fee, and "you only get to choose one."

If you are a student who struggles with procrastination and finds yourself overwhelmed with a load of tasks, "creating a spreadsheet for university deadlines" will help you stay organized and on target for success. Nevertheless, don't fall back on contacting QO about their responsibilities concerning your application. Jones emphasized the importance of staying "proactive when it comes to requesting transcripts and letters of recommendation," giving "the school and the teachers at least two to three weeks" of leeway to get the information submitted on your behalf.

Early Action is a great option for students who want nothing more than to submit their applications as soon as possible. Ms. Jones thinks it's best to apply Early Action

because "it allows your application to be placed in the processing queue earlier." If students submit closer to their final deadlines, "it becomes more competitive" since "they [universities] already start to admit students into the freshman class and can't accept everyone. At that point, it may become more challenging, but certainly not impossible," clarified Jones.

The final question of acceptance comes down to what colleges are looking for in terms of an ideal student. According to Jones, similar to test-optional policies, the search for a certain student "varies as well." Although, across the board, colleges are focused on two main aspects: academics and extracurriculars. Jones explains the system is similar to a pie, where "academics are going to be the biggest piece of the pie and the second slice would be extracurriculars." Honors courses, advanced courses, AP Courses, and dual enrollment are all factors that play a role in the academic character and rigor piece. SSL hours are an essential factor in the extracurricular and well-rounded



QOHS.ORG

piece.

The last note of advice from our College and Career Coordinator is to be confident because "you prepared yourself the best you can." As QO students, we all have the potential to pursue our passions. Following these guidelines and recommendations will aid you in your college journey and bring you one step closer to your ambitions. If you have any more inquiring questions, feel free to go to Jones herself in the Counseling Office; she only wants to see QO students succeed.

Has pumpkin spice gone too far?

By *CHASE PASEKOFF*
Staff Writer

Many don't view August 30 as the start of fall. On the other hand, Starbucks decided this year that the time was just right to switch their menu to include their fall-flavored items.

In the business world, the transition from summer to fall is quick and precise. The grocery store shelves stock up on seasonal foods, with scents of apple crisp and cinnamon filling the air as shoppers walk through.

However, as years have passed, one fall food flavoring has stood out amongst the crowd. From Goldfish to Oreos to pasta sauce, and cream cheese to deodorant and lip balm, the list goes on and on. This seasonal item has spread itself among nearly every aisle of the grocery store: pumpkin spice, of course!

Pumpkin spice-flavored foods have been around for nearly 100 years, beginning in 1932 with a select number of items. However, they gained notoriety in 2003 when Starbucks first released their famous Pumpkin Spice Latte. Since then, over 600 million PSLs have been sold, not including any of their other pumpkin-flavored drinks like cold brews, frappuccinos, and macchiatos.

Over the years, as companies' collection of items has grown and expanded, the timeline for seasonal items has grown and expanded as well. What started as a flavor dedicated to October now covers the entire fall season, ranging from August to December.

"I definitely think companies advertise their products to be pumpkin spice before fall starts so they get more customers, but it's working," junior Caitlyn Lee said.

For some, pumpkin spice also

represents the aura that is autumn, with the weather changing and the leaves falling. "I love getting pumpkin coffees and getting matching pajamas with my friends," Lee added.

Other students had a similar opinion in support of pumpkin spice items across different brands. "I think it's really smart for companies to start early. It's like the sign of the season starting," said senior Hannah Tomasetti. "It's a way for them to target anyone and everyone."

When asked about the range of products, Tomasetti said, "I don't really venture out into different types of pumpkin food. I pretty much stick to just drinks."

This raises an interesting question: has the reign of pumpkin spice gone too far? With all of the different products brands have made, is it getting to a point where it's too much? Products like Pringles, hummus, and even toothpaste have

been made over the years.

"I don't really think it's gone too far, but I do think some products are a bit unnecessary and kind of weird," Tomasetti added.

Junior Rush Mathai shared the same sentiment. "Even though I think most of the products are just geared to get more money, I still love them and think they're fun for the time of year," he said.

Pumpkin-flavored items also tie into the eventual end of October: Halloween. "I love putting up Halloween decorations around my house," Mathai added.

For some, pumpkin spice is a sign of summer ending, and fall beginning. For others, it's more of a money grab with some yummy foods to go along with it.

As far as Pumpkin Spice Lattes go, those will likely be a staple in many QO students' diets for the next month.

The revival of book to on-screen adaptations

By *MAMS JAGHA*
Staff Writer

Seeing one of your favorite books on the big screen (on TV or in theaters) is something that will never get old. Book-to-on-screen adaptations have always been around, even as far back as the 1890s. But, there has been a resurgence of young adult books being brought to life.

Recent examples include "Where the Crawdads Sing" by Delia Owens, "Dune" by Frank Herber, which is currently filming its Part Two, "The

Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes", the upcoming backstory to the world of "The Hunger Games" both by Suzanne Collins, and many more.

Having a visual representation of your favorite character, setting, and plot, and hearing an actor say certain lines or act out specific parts in the book adds to the magic of seeing it in person rather than imagining it.

But some feel that the authenticity of a book thrives in the mind. Changes like altering an actor's resemblance to a character, removing integral parts of the book, or even adding new plot lines all depend on the director and

how they want their creativity to be represented.

An example of this would be "Allegiant," the third and final movie in the popular "Divergent" series. Spoilers ahead: The movie ends with a cliffhanger, Tris, the main character, saves Chicago from a memory-wiping fog but as Tris makes her final monologue we see a hologram of David, one of the main antagonists behind Tris mysteriously smirking. However, in the book, Tris, dies and her love interest, Four, falls in love with her best friend. Though we don't know if there is going to be a fourth

installment in the movie series because of the cliffhanger, fans were still grateful that this part of the book was not added in.

This is a positive example of writers adding their own artistic representation to a movie. However, a negative example of directors adding their own artistic representation to a movie is the recent movie trilogy "The Hobbit."

While "Lord of The Rings" is a three-book series, "The Hobbit" is a standalone novel.



Films and Frights: favorite Halloween movies

BY SOPHIE FAWKNER and
LILY KAPLAN
Staff Writers

Halloween is right around the corner. Pumpkin-scented and -themed everything fills the fall air. Scarecrows, plus flashy and bright decor, fill people's lawns. For many, many decades, people have been going all out for Halloween, whether it means the classic trick-or-treating, attending a Halloween party, or just a chill night in watching Halloween movies.

Since Halloween is a time for people to get together and have fun, movies in particular are a great way for people to spend quality time with each other while still being able to relax. These movies range from vintage classics that many generations have watched and loved to new movies that bring viewers into the Halloween spirit.

Students in the Quince Orchard community haven't stopped this

tradition of celebrating Halloween. Sophomore Harris Cline, for instance, loves Halloween movies, as well as the holiday itself. "I love Halloween because it is filled with scary people and interesting things," Cline said.

Cline enjoys spending Halloween with his friends, watching Halloween movies, and seeing many different and scary costumes. "My favorite Halloween movie is Friday the 13th," he said. "My favorite character is Jason Vorhees because he is very scary, cool, and is one of the only Halloween characters that actually spook me."

Not only is Halloween a time for scary movies and spooky nights, but it is also a time for tradition and family. Freshman Aliyah Beard celebrates Halloween for pure joy and nostalgia. "I have always loved celebrating Halloween by trick-or-treating and trading candy with my siblings," Beard said.

While many people go out and want to be spooked on Halloween

nights, Beard will always cherish and appreciate quality time with her family, which she hopes to continue for years to come. On top of family tradition, Beard also loves watching "It's The Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" every year. "Each year for Halloween, my family and I love to relax and enjoy 'It's The Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown,' especially since we love Snoopy," Beard added.

While both Cline and Beard love to stick to Halloween classics as their favorite Halloween movies, freshman Noah Kravitz begs to differ. Kravitz said, "My favorite Halloween movie is actually a more recent one, which is Hubie Halloween. The movie stars Adam Sandler." As someone who loves Adam Sandler movies, it was a really exciting surprise for Kravitz when a Halloween movie was released starring Sandler.

"I love funny movies, so it was really exciting to be able to watch a Halloween-inspired movie while still being able to get a good laugh in," he added.

Whether you go out and party, watch scary movies, relaxing movies, nostalgic classic movies, or trick-or-treat, Halloween will always be a fun and exciting time for most people. A time where all people have the freedom to be whoever they want and act as however they please.

With all of these three different examples of how people celebrate Halloween, they all share one thing in common: joy. So, for this very frightful Halloween, fellow Cougars, make sure to go have fun (even if fun to you means that you sit inside your house all night and eat a whole bunch of chocolates and pizza). Stay spooky, Quince Orchard!

The revival of book to on-screen adaptations

CONT. FROM PAGE 8

Many viewers felt that there was not enough material to work with and therefore the movies were dragged out.

Much of the criticism against how the franchise failed was toward its director, Peter Jackson. The original director of the "Hobbit" trilogy was Guillermo del Toro, who unfortunately quit due to other project obligations. This left Jackson feeling under-prepared with less preparation time.

Though the anxiety of not knowing if your favorite book will be adapted correctly is reasonable, we also have to remember some amazing early young adult adaptations we have, because of readers loving a book

and directive leadership. Movies like "The Maze Runner," "The Hunger Games," and shows like "The 100" and "Shadow Hunters," are all classics that never really get old. All these films have a main character that performs acts of heroism through rebellion against an authority figure. It makes us feel a sense of empowerment that most teens don't feel necessarily feel as a certain age.

While the disdain of too many changes being made to a certain film might ruin our perception of it and make it "bad", our love for books and our passion for reading them should never change.



PIXAHIVE

Cougar Couture

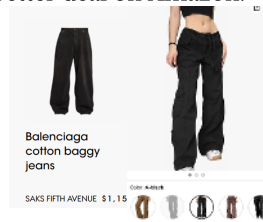


Baggy Jeans:

Since 2022

Balenciaga \$1,150 versus NINGJING \$16.00

Goodbye skinny jeans and hello breezy, loose-fitting jeans. Baggy jeans provide a way to dress up loungewear. The freeing feeling of rocking these jeans matches the same experience that accompanies sweats. While being comfortable, baggy jeans go with anything and everything, from oversized graphic tees to long sweaters. Find a better deal on Amazon.

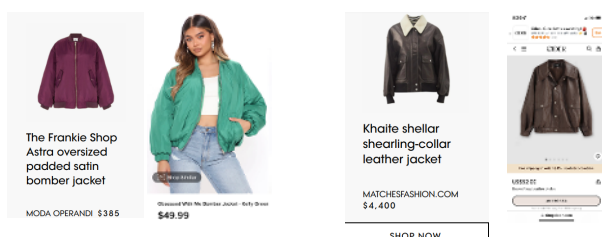


Leather and Bomber Jackets:

Leather: \$4,400 MATCHESFASHION versus \$52.00 Cider

Bomber: \$385.00 MODA OPERANDI versus \$49.99 FashionNova

Vogue considers the classic bomber and leather jacket as "highly considered investment purchase[s] for the season ahead." These timeless wardrobe staples can easily be dressed up or down. For instance, match a leather jacket with distressed jeans and retro sneakers to go for a street-wear look. Or match the bomber jacket with a slip dress and skinny pumps for a night out. Find similar versions at Cider and FashionNova.



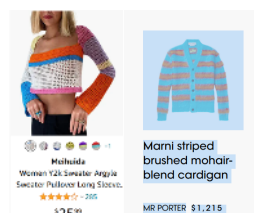
What to have in your closet this fall (adapted from Vogue.com)

Vogue provides a shoppable guide of trends and picks that editors are buying now from top designer brands. Instead of spending thousands of dollars on fall essentials, here are some dupes and cheaper items students in the QO community can purchase to follow all the rages of the 2022 fall season.

Vibrant Knits:

\$1,215 MR PORTER versus \$26.00 Meihuida

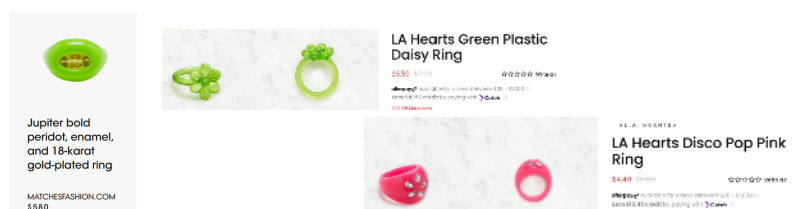
According to Vogue, when you rock a vibrant knit, "you immediately feel like a Sesame Street character." When the fall season darkens and becomes gloomy, colorful sweaters and straggly knits are a great way to add some flair and character to your style. This 2000s-style cropped knitted cardigan comes in a range of colors, from purple-green to blue-orange and my personal favorite, pink-yellow. This breathable crochet top is perfect over camis or tanks and paired with flared or baggy jeans. Find a cheaper version on Amazon.



Eye-Catching Rings:

\$580.00 MATHCESFASHION versus \$5.59 and \$4.49 LA Hearts

Building a jewelry wardrobe is just as crucial as creating a staple wardrobe. Vogue says "bold enamel tones" are in. Switch it up by stacking eye-popping rings rather than standard gold or silver. At Pacsun, the colorful rings from LA Hearts are cheap, so in this case, the more the merrier.





Will the new field hockey coach lead the team to winning the state championship?

By MADELEINE BURKE
Staff Writer

New to QO, Coach Kathleen Sigwart raises the stakes as she looks to lead the girls field hockey team to greatness.

Sigwart began her field hockey career in middle school as a defender, continuing all the way to Limestone University, starting all four years. She graduated as an All-American, which recognized her as being one of the nation's best field hockey players. Sigwart now works at the Maryland Department of Agriculture for the Office of Resource Conservation as a conservation planner.

This is not Sigwart's first year coaching a team to greatness. She started out coaching at Hood College, but more recently was head coach at Arundel Senior High School, where last season, she led them to win a state title. With her valuable experience, she was clearly the perfect candidate for the position as the new coach. After careful consideration, the varsity field hockey coach sounded like a job she could take. And with endless amounts of athletic talents from the team, she says she just couldn't say no.

During their 2019 season, the Quince Orchard varsity field hockey team made it to the state semifinals. In hopes of going even further this year, they started their intense training during preseason. Coach

Sigwart made sure each practice included conditioning.

"No matter the game, we will never be out-worked by another team," she said.

For the rest of the practice, the girls work on their footwork, stickwork, and multiple variations of drills. The team also played multiple scrimmages to get game-like experience in order to be ready for the upcoming season.

The girls had their first official game of the season on September 7, where they dominated against the Sherwood Warriors with a final score of 5-0. But the success doesn't end there. Just one week later, the Cougars obliterated Paint Branch with an even more impressive ending score of 9-0.

Sigwart sees the girls improving with each game they play. Even in their most challenging game yet against Blair, they were able to change the 0-2 score to a tie, all in the second half.

With their 3-1 record on their mind, the girls go hard at practice to maintain their reputation of the powerhouse that they are. While keeping similar schedules as preseason, Sigwart sends them off to QO's weight room, where the girls build up strength to challenge the upcoming hard competition.

With high scores comes a tough line of defense. The starting defenders include seniors Camille Thomas, Zoe

Howard, and Elizabeth Winter, and sophomore Hannah Wagner. Keeping these ending scores so high is junior Lila Moncak, being the team's top scorer with eight goals so far this season.

As far as motivation goes, there is no shortage of it from coaches and players. When it comes to the team, Sigwart has no doubt that the Cougars will win a state championship this year. She told the girls "our last day of the season would be November 12," which is the state final game.

And the girls couldn't agree more. From the beginning of preseason, they have had that goal in mind.

Junior Sarina Kitchen discussed the team's determination tactic.

"Whenever we need motivation to give it our all, Coach Sigwart will ask us all what day we want to be playing," she said. "And everyone responds 'November 12.'"

Team chemistry on and off the field is unbeatable, due to the friendships that last longer than their



COURTESY OF MICHELE LUMSDEN

season.

"Even before preseason we are all excited for field hockey to start", Wagner said.

For fans of the team that want to know what games to attend, Moncak suggests October 17 against Wootton High School, who booted the Cougars out of the playoffs last year. Moncak describes it as "one of our harder games this season."

With a coach that has as much talent and determination as Sigwart, these Cougars are on track to finally getting their state championship win they have been waiting for since 2019.

'Leading 'Em Up' on and off the field

By OLIVIA MAYTIN
Staff Writer

What was once a program unique to Quince Orchard football now has all of Quince Orchard varsity sports improving their skill.

Lead 'Em Up is a program that provides leadership and communication skills online and in person, which sports teams from youth to college level use to develop themselves into leaders.

New languages and traditions are formed with Lead 'Em Up. The goal of Lead 'Em Up is to become a "green" player—someone who will show up on and off the field for all of their teammates, not just some players. This teammate is a positive person who will always be cheering on the field or even on the bench. They bring positivity to the team and spread it around. The end goal of this program is to make the majority of the team green, creating a positive team environment.

Adam Bradley, the founder of Lead 'Em Up, started the program at his old high school, Watkins Mill. The football program asked Bradley to speak with the team because as a whole, they were struggling with cohesiveness and leadership skills on and off the field. Bradley sat with the team and decided what was best to cover for them.

"We formed a unique customized plan and new exercises that we felt would benefit the team," he said.

With help from Lead 'Em Up inspiring sportsmanship on and off the field, in 2019, Watkins Mill had their best year in a decade with the

overall wins being 7-3.

Now, Lead 'Em Up plays a significant part in the Quince Orchard football program: they have been part of the organization since 2019. From where they were four years ago to now is like "night and day," Bradley said.

Three years ago, Quince Orchard football was looking for more leadership and the team needed a more positive outlook. The whole football team did nine sessions with the organizers of Lead 'Em up and did nine extra sessions separately. The football program was excited and interested in starting this program because they wanted to get stronger as a whole. The closeness, focus, and selflessness they have gained over the past couple of years show the willingness of the team to improve each year. The team is committed to becoming green players, and once they start to see someone turning "red," they attempt to shut it down. When someone is a red player, they are negative on and off the field and bring themselves and the team down.

This summer, Quince Orchard decided to extend Lead 'Em Up to other sports. Now, every single varsity team at QO is affiliated with the organization. Every team is different, and to make sure each goal was covered for the individual team, Bradley met with each coach during pre-season and developed a

leadership plan. They decided what to cover and they made a unique customized plan with new exercises that will be completed by the team throughout the season. Once the plan was ready, Lead 'Em Up came to Quince Orchard and spoke to each varsity team individually.

"We will also be meeting in the middle of the season with the teams to see the progress of the team," Bradley explained.

"All of the sessions that were hosted were really good, and all the teams saw that it worked with football and they want to try it out," Bradley confidently said. The Lead 'Em Up organization will also be meeting with the teams in the middle of the season to see the progress.

To keep encouraging the players to stay green, every few weeks each member of a team nominates a couple of teammates to be the "green team members" for those few weeks. This is earned by demonstrating a passion for the sport and compassion for others.

Senior Lily Sweeney, captain of the girl's varsity soccer team, won the green player title for her team on September 14th. "Sweeney is always smiling and always positive, making the girl's soccer environment that much better," says a member of the girl's soccer team.

"I just think having a positive mindset and helping out the team on and off the field helped me become a green player," Sweeney says.

Anyone can become a green player, and you can see evidence of this honor at QO. For example, all the verified "green" football players at Quince Orchard have green stickers on their helmets.

A result of Lead 'Em Up was "not only the skills gained to be a better player, but to also be a better person on and off the field" Sweeney says. This program is expanding across the United States and is being used by thousands of schools. Make sure to look out for those green stickers!



LEAD 'EM UPS CANVA PARTNERS.



Season Updates

Football

By **SAMMY KRIMSTEIN**
Editor-in-Chief

Five weeks into the season, Quince Orchard has outscored their opponents 201-0. Yes, you read that right. Their offense has been a juggernaut, and their defense has yet to allow a point. After a thrilling 14-0 state championship season in 2021, the Cougars look to go back-to-back for the first time in school history.

September 2 @ Whitman | 61-0

With gorgeous fall weather and filled student sections, Friday night lights were back. The Cougars took the road to face the Vikings. Starting with the ball, it took the Cougars only two plays to find the end zone, with a rushing TD from their four-star running back sophomore Iverson Howard. The firepowered offense of Quince Orchard found the end zone eight more times that night.

September 9 @ Paint Branch | 35-0

Last year's QO-Paint Branch game was at the Cougar Dome, and it was QO's toughest regular season challenge—the Cougars barely escaped with a 20-13 victory. This time, QO traveled to Paint Branch, and dominated from the start. By halftime they were up 21-0. The first play of the second half was a return TD from senior and three-star Duke commit Kendall Johnson, his second TD of the day.

September 16 vs. Walter Johnson | 42-0

After two weeks on the road, it was finally time for football at the Cougar Dome. Another perfect fall evening, the Red Army packed into the bleachers, and once again, the Cougars

were firing on all cylinders. In his first game at the Cougar Dome as a Cougar, junior WR Tavahri Groves had two 2 TDs. With just minutes to go in the fourth, Walter Johnson was still shut out, but they lined up for a field goal, looking to become the first team to score on QO. Miraculously, the kick was blocked, and taken to the endzone by senior Josh Weitzman for a QO touchdown.

September 23 vs. Damascus | 28-0

The Montgomery County Game of the Week, QO vs. Damascus was a highly anticipated matchup. The Hornets were 3-0, and they upset Northwest back in Week One. This week, they were looking to do the same to Quince Orchard. In the first half, neither team could gain the upper hand. A physical battle, the score was tied 0-0 at halftime. After halftime, it was a completely different story. Two plays into the second half, Howard exploded through the line of scrimmage for 70 yards and a touchdown, turning the tide of the game. The defense held strong again, holding the strong Damascus rushing attack to a shutout.

September 30 @ Seneca Valley | 35-0

In Week Five, the Cougars took on the 12-time state champion Seneca Valley Screaming Eagles. A brisk and cloudy evening, Seneca was undefeated heading into the matchup.

That didn't matter to the Cougars. Senior QB Savan Briggs connected with senior WR Kobe Neal to get things started, and the Cougars were off. Groves added two more TDs (one for 73 yards) at the return to his old school, and Cougars steamrolled the Screaming Eagles 35-0.

Girls Volleyball

By **MADLINE BURKE**
Staff Writer

The QO girls volleyball team is excited about returning to the court in 2022 with a number of new faces, ready to build off of last year's winning record of 8 wins against 3 losses.

Last season, while fighting hard in the last minutes of the third round of playoffs, the Cougars fell to Urbana High School. But this has not defeated these girls' spirit and drive for a big win this year. Team captain and junior Sarah Manion has vowed that this year will see continued success with the expectation of advancing further in the playoffs.

And with the unbeatable team chemistry on and off the court, their goal is very reachable. This was all created during the difficult but very much necessary preseason led by varsity coach Allison Smorse.

New to the team, freshman Elly Vanlandingham enjoyed preseason as it gave her a chance to build a connection with her teammates.

"We all practiced 5-6 days a week and scrimmaged with other high schools to prepare us for the season," Vanlandingham said.

Manion described the preseason as a couple weeks of bonding for the team of a couple new players.

"Lots of people are playing a new position this year," Manion said, a result of multiple starting seniors having to say goodbye to the team last year.

Despite losing several seniors last year to graduation, optimism runs

high for the Cougars this season as they return with new and returning players. These fresh faces include VanLandingham, Amira Abegesah, and Eden Tardy, who are talented freshmen starting out on varsity.

The girls team has had a fast start to the season, winning their first two games so far against Blair and Watkins Mill.

"We have had a really good season and are coming out as a strong team in each of our games," said senior Amelia Winter.

Fans of the team need to bring their support on October 13 and 25 for the match-ups of the season. The Cougars will take on Wootton High School and Sherwood High School, respectively, to get revenge on the losses from last year.

If you plan on going to any game this season, Tardy recommends the Dig Pink game versus winners of the 2021 county championships, Wootton, on October 13. She predicts it to be their most exciting game of the season not only because of the competitive match-up that night, but the fundraising to support breast cancer research.

If you are a fan of this year's seniors, October 27 is a game you don't want to miss. The seniors will be celebrated for all their contributions to the program over the years as they go against Paint Branch.

As mentioned, expectations are high for the team to make a long run through the playoffs. The new faces and energy on the team as well as their fast start so far indicates optimism for the volleyball team reaching its goal in 2022.

Girls Soccer

By **GRIFFIN OWENS**
Staff Writer

The girls soccer team is looking to bounce back from another heartbreaking playoff loss.

Since their last championship in 2007, the team has returned to the postseason multiple times hoping to win their third state championship. Last year's group faced numerous challenges returning from a covid-shortened season in 2020. Despite those roadblocks, they maintained an impressive run all the way up to the state semifinals before ultimately falling to Broadneck in penalty kicks.

Led by 2022's QO Girls Coach of the Year and two-time state champion coach Peg Keiller, the Cougars have started out winning three of their first five games of the season. Their only two losses came at the hands of the former state champion, Whitman, as well as rival Northwest.

In addition to Coach Keiller, the team's recent success is headed by its

new captains: seniors Lily Sweeney and Lizzie Gelman, as well as juniors Megan Moon and Annie Faraone. The team's high-powered offense is a product of players such as 2021-22 first team all-state midfielder Faraone and sophomore twins Ellie and Erin Hodge.

In their first game of the season against Blair, the Cougars managed to escape with a 2-1 victory after two goals from Faraone, with one in overtime.

With the departure of nine of last year's seniors, such as all-state midfielder Carli Sullenger '22, the team is looking for new players to fill their place. This year's team is significantly younger than previous rosters, with only five returning seniors and nine underclassmen, including six sophomores and three freshmen earning a spot on varsity.

While this may be a challenge for some teams, it doesn't seem to be a problem for the Cougars; in their first four games, the Cougars have managed to outscore their opponents 11-7, with convincing wins over Richard Montgomery and Rockville. However, with losses to Northwest and Whitman the questions still linger: how far this can team go?

"Our expectation every year is to go back to states", said Keiller on the QO Sports Network. "I think we got a team that can go pretty far."

While the roster this year is different, it's safe to say that they aren't taking any steps back. It appears that the team's expectations will always remain the same: winning it all.

Boys Soccer

By **OLIVIA MAYTIN**
Staff Writer

The Quince Orchard boys soccer team has been preparing for this season six days a week, every week - and the hard work has been shown on the field! The men's soccer team is undefeated, 4-0-1.

Last year, the boy's soccer team ended with a record of 9-2-1 with a very tough 4-1 loss against Richard Montgomery High School. The team made sure to change that this year, beating RM 2-0 with goals by Senior Tomas Rebelatto and Junior Jordan Zelof.

This year, the wins have not come to them easily. The team had to work together as a whole and work hard for the whole entire 80 minutes of the game.

On September 24th, they had the hardest game of the year, Gaithersburg. "Gaithersburg tested

the team as a whole," boys Varsity Coach Bruno says. Because of an unfortunate red card given to one of the QO players, the team was down a member on the field. Not only were they down a player, but they were also down a goal making the score 2-3. They were not going to go down without a fight. QO passed around Gaithersburg and the team scored a goal that tied the game 3-3. In the last minute and a half, senior Mike Mevo scored the goal and the men's soccer team continued their undefeated season.

"The culture and passion of the team all the way from JV to Varsity has brought them together to continue for both JV and Varsity teams to be undefeated," Coach Bruno says.

Watch out for the boy's next game on October 8th against Poolesville and watch them continue their undefeated season!



INSTAGRAM @QOGVSOCCEER



The boys varsity soccer team this season

INSTAGRAM @QOMSOCCEER



Former QO athletes adjust to college

By **GRIFFIN OWENS**
Staff Writer

The class of 2022 was one of the best groups of athletes to come through this building, with 26 student-athletes going on to play a sport in college. Twenty-one of them are playing a sport this fall season: six boys soccer players, twelve football players, two girls soccer players and one cheerleader, all competing at various colleges across the country.

Jalen Huskey '22, a key contributor to the Cougars' state champion football team last year, currently plays cornerback for

practice over the summer.

On September 3, Huskey made his college debut against UCLA, registering one tackle in Bowling Green's 45-17 loss to the Bruins.

"Playing college football has always been a dream of mine since I started playing" Huskey said.

However, there are still a couple things that Huskey misses about QO athletics.

"I miss how the whole entire school got behind its sports programs," he said, "Especially playing football in front of the Red Army."

Two more defensive backs from last year's championship team, Sekou Kamara '22 at Shepherd University and Bryce Barnes '22 at William and Mary, managed to rack up 4 total tackles in their debuts.

A starter on last year's soccer team, Christian Woobay '22 is now playing soccer at Lycoming College.

"Lycoming has helped me see the physical side of the game,"

Woobay said.

In a game against Haverford College, Woobay scored the only goal

of the game to lead Lycoming to their second win of the season. In the ten



LYCOMING ATHLETICS

games they've played, Lycoming has four wins, four ties, and two losses.

Woobay is joined by three other QO alumni at Lycoming: Ken Kouassi '22, Leo Fogam '22, and Chris Djadja '22.

"I do miss the practices at QO because I had played with half the team," Woobay said. "They were the boys, and so I wasn't just playing with my teammates: I was playing with my actual friends." Djadja scored in Lycoming's 5-0 victory over Mount Aloysius.

A former member of The Prowler and this reporter's sister, Reese Owens '22, is the starting forward for Rhodes College after being part of last year's girls varsity soccer team. She's also had to transition to playing at the college level.

"Playing somewhere new is always going to be hard to adjust to," Owens said. "[Playing in college] is a little bit more physical exertion on your body." Owens was taken out of Rhodes' game against Washington University of St. Louis because of a suspected concussion. She did not play in the team's next game against Depauw, but

returned for the team's 2-0 victory over Millsaps College. The team is currently 5-1-1, with Owens scoring 2 goals in the season so far.



REESE OWENS

Owens (in white) playing against Huntingdon College in a scrimmage. Rhodes ended up winning the game 1-0.



HUDL

Bowling Green State University. Huskey committed to the Division I school shortly after QO's state championship game and continued to

Lex Fondelius—From Sweden to QO

By **SAMMY KRIMSTEIN**
Editor-in-Chief

When you think of Sweden, football probably isn't the first thing that comes to your mind. 'Is football even played in Sweden?' you may ask. If you're looking for the answer, look no further than senior Quince Orchard tight end and exchange student Lex Fondelius.

Fondelius, born and raised in Sweden — to a Swedish father and an American mother — started out playing the more conventional sports in his home country: soccer and hockey. At age 10, he was already bigger and more athletic than most of his competition. It was then when his mother, who had found home in Sweden through teaching English abroad, suggested he give football a try. The rest was history.

"I tried football and I had a great time," Fondelius said.

Of course, the culture surrounding football in Sweden is very different than it is here in the US. Generally considered very dangerous, football has always been a "niche" sport in Sweden, as Fondelius described. Time zone differences don't help football's popularity in Sweden either—Fondelius's home of Stockholm is six hours ahead of Eastern Standard Time. This made it difficult for Fondelius to watch NFL games live, but whenever his favorite team, the New England Patriots, was in the Super Bowl, he would find a way to watch — at 12:30 in the morning.

"I'd go to bed really early, sleep for a few hours, wake up, watch the game," he remembered.



COURTESY OF ALEXANDER FONDELIOUS.

Fondelius, wearing number seven, carrying the football back in Sweden.

All this considered, it's tough for football coaches in Sweden to scrape together a team. With smaller rosters, most players play offense and defense: they don't leave the field all game. In America, high school football is sponsored by the schools themselves, but in Sweden, players have to join club teams, as sports aren't connected with schools. With limited fields available, these club teams are only able to practice a few times a week.

When Fondelius arrived over the summer to start QO football practices, he noticed some major differences from back home in Sweden. Right away, he felt that scorching mid-August Maryland weather, a stark contrast to the more temperate summer climate in Sweden. Despite the heat, he was still able to appreciate the excitement and attention that

football received here in America, especially at Quince Orchard.

"One thing that's really fun in football here is the fact that since you have more time, you have more coaches, you have more kids, and you have more resources," he said, "The football—as in the game that you're playing on the field—it's a lot more fun."

Fondelius came over from Sweden for many reasons. A birthright US citizen, he is strongly considering going to college in the states, potentially at an Ivy League institution. He also has the option of going to university back in Sweden—for free. Nevertheless, he wanted to come to the states to get a sense for the standardized testing

excitement for Fondelius.

"I'm having a good time here and meeting new people [and] experiencing new things," he said.

Living with his mother's college roommate, Fondelius has now found a new home here in Montgomery County, and at Quince Orchard. Per MCPS rules, he has had to fill his schedule with many of the required classes needed to graduate. Although he currently has no electives in his schedule, taking classes at QO has given him the opportunity to gain AP credits and explore new subject areas, such as computer science, which he has taken a liking to.

With so many moving parts involved in coming to the US, adjusting to his new environment has taken some time. Luckily for Fondelius, his football teammates have become important friends for him, helping him acclimate to America. The support he has received from his football peers on and off the field has been "valuable" for Fondelius, as he stated.

Just a few weeks ago, Fondelius and the Cougars had their home opener against Walter Johnson. For QO fans, coaches, and players alike, the atmosphere at the Cougar Dome was electrifying. For Fondelius, playing his first home game as a Cougar, it was special.

"Running out through those banners on Friday night, seeing everybody, watching people taking pictures, the flags being waved, the smoke, the band's playing," he said, adding, "I took the moment to like, stop, look at the crowd. Smell the air. It was just a really cool experience."



COURTESY OF ALEXANDER FONDELIOUS.

Fondelius with his new Quince Orchard team at an away game against Paint Branch.

environment and the American high school experience. Although he had been to America to visit a few times before, leaving all familiarity over 4,000 miles away was not easy for Fondelius.

"I don't have my mom, I don't have my people. [I'm] at a new place. And honestly, I thought it was gonna be more jarring than it has been," he said. "I do really miss my friends and like hanging out with my people."

While difficult, moving halfway across the world has also had its