

PROWLER

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

Surging concern over sudden increases in fentanyl overdoses

By **PATRINA PUN**
Staff Writer

Fentanyl and heroin—both are major contributors to the recent increase in overdoses and deaths among high schoolers nation-wide.

According to Montgomery County Public Schools, from 2021-2022, there was a 120% increase in fatal overdoses and a 68% increase in nonfatal overdoses in youths. Yet, at this moment, fentanyl has become the significant contributing factor in the number of overdoses and deaths.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, fentanyl is an extremely powerful synthetic drug that was produced to treat severe pain due to surgery or pain conditions.

However, over the past decade, the drug began to be distributed illegally and has been more commonly found in drug supplies. Furthermore, according to UC Davis Health, fentanyl can come in many different forms such as pills, powder, and liquid. It is also commonly found mixed with other drugs like heroin, meth, and counterfeit medications. Hence, the availability and exposure to the drug have suddenly increased

tenfold. A pill can be easily laced with fentanyl and end a person's life without their knowledge. It has become far too simple for something this dangerous to happen, which consequently has led to an increasing number of students that have overdosed in school bathrooms or worse, been found dead.

Unfortunately, Montgomery County is one of many victims that have been heavily impacted from the usage of fentanyl. According to NBC, five students in Montgomery County have died due to opioid overdoses since the beginning of the school year. A small amount of fentanyl-laced in the pill has proven enough to end a 16-year-old's life in a heartbeat. In order to combat the overdose, naloxone, otherwise known as Narcan, is utilized. Narcan is a medication designed to reverse an opioid overdose. Narcan has had to be used 11 different times in MCPS this school year already. However, it has successfully saved 11 different lives, compared to the 11 deaths and 48 overdoses last school year.

In response to this sudden spike in the usage of fentanyl, to no surprise, parents have reacted with outrage.

According to WUSA9, Montgomery County parents have been demanding transparency regarding the “medical emergencies” that keep occurring during school. Kristen Walker Painemilla, Kennedy High School's PTSA president, claims that “MCPS can do more to get ahead of the rumors” and better their crisis communication. Security at school also goes hand in hand with drug crises, as they are often the ones to discover students moments after they overdose.

Paniemilla claims that MCPS is also currently experiencing a security shortage. To address this concern in more depth, MCPS has held two forums already regarding the usage of fentanyl and Narcan at Clarksburg and Northwood high schools. According to the Washington Post, the medical officer of Montgomery County Public Schools Patricia Kapunuan had called the forum “a call to action.” With fentanyl being 50 times as powerful as heroin and 100 times stronger than morphine, as well as a 77% increase in youth overdoses last year, Kapunuan claims the availability of the drug is what poses the greatest danger.

There were a diverse range of

parents that attended the meeting: those who had little knowledge about the entire situation, and those who were aware of their child abusing fentanyl and sought help.

Though there is no one solution to solve this dire and complex situation, parents were able to leave with a pack of Narcan and with the knowledge that one can walk into a fire station and request a pack for free.

This issue, however, is not only affecting high schoolers. According to Fox 5, on March third, a 20-year-old was found with more than 2,000 fentanyl pills at a traffic stop light. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration, a Montgomery County dealer was subsequently sentenced to 114 months of prison for the distribution of fentanyl.

This sudden spike in drug usage is not unusual in Montgomery County. The only unfamiliarity in this situation is the rising statistics each year regarding fentanyl overdoses. The best precaution a person can take is to inform themselves on how to effectively use naloxone and understand the consequences that come with the usage of these drugs.

Alex Murdaugh found guilty Famous lawyer sentenced to prison for killing wife and son

By **ISADORA KAUFMAN**
Staff Writer

On Friday, March 3, Alex Murdaugh, a South Carolina lawyer, was punished with two life sentences for the killing of his wife and son in early June of 2021, when Murdaugh reported discovering their dead bodies, acting as if he were innocent.

During the trial, the prosecutor for the case reported his findings,

specifically that two different weapons were used to kill the mother and son. While Murdaugh claimed to discover the bodies, his call to the authorities was over half an hour following the time of death(s), causing authorities to declare him a major suspect in the case.

Since 2021, the Murdaugh case has gained a lot of attention from the media, mainly due to the legacy of the Murdaugh family. Alex Murdaugh is the great-grandson of a successful

lawyer and founder of a personal injury firm in South Carolina. According to Entrepreneur, a business magazine, the Murdaugh law firm became “the go-to lawyers in Hampton County” for personal injury cases. The generations of male Murdaughs that came before Alex all worked at the firm, contributing to a legacy longer than a century.

This is not the first instance in which the Murdaugh family has been found linked to crime. Two years prior to the death of Paul Murdaugh, Alex Murdaugh's son, “Paul was charged with one count of boating while intoxicated and two counts of causing bodily injury”, Entrepreneur shares. Witnesses reported seeing Paul driving the boat while intoxicated, but important evidence was lost and Paul ended up only facing mild consequences, not even having a trial.

Following the death of Paul Murdaugh and his mother, Alex hired lawyers who claimed in October of 2021 that Alex wasn't guilty nor did he have motive for the murders.

The trial itself began this past January. According to CBS, “the jury

heard from more than 75 witnesses and saw nearly 800 pieces of evidence.” Evidence and testimonies revealed the surprising amount of crimes, often deaths, directly linked to the Murdaugh family.

More importantly, NBC explains how a video from Paul's phone revealed that Murdaugh had lied about not seeing his son or wife shortly before they died. The verdict that Murdaugh was guilty was reached quickly, likely due to the amount of lies discovered in Murdaugh's telling of the night of the murders.

Sentenced to two life sentences in prison, Murdaugh still claims to be innocent. Whether Murdaugh changes his claim later or not, the case has already started to defame the reputation of the Murdaugh family: a family who was venerated within the law community for over a century.

Creighton Waters, a lead prosecutor in the case, warns the public: “Let this be a warning: No matter who you are, if you break the law, the truth will come out and you will be brought to justice.”

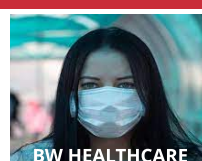


FLICKR

News

For more information on the harsh effects of Long Covid

PAGE 2



BW HEALTHCARE

Features

Check out Ms. Moon, who was nominated for MCPS Teacher of the Year

PAGE 5

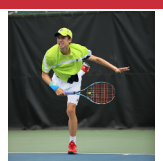


KATE BELMAN

Sports

Senior Noah Lewis dominates the tennis courts

PAGE 12



NEWS FLASHES

What's the new restaurant down the street from QO?

An introduction to roasted chicken, wings, and sandwiches to everyone

By **MOTAZ DEIFY**
Staff Writer

Remember Pizza Hut? After the facility on Darnestown Road was demolished and abandoned in 2019, it has now been renovated into a restaurant specializing in roasted chicken, wings, sandwiches, and salads, known as—Isaac's Poultry Market.

Located at 12163 Darnestown Rd (across the street from QO), Isaac's Poultry Market was set to officially open on Thursday, February 23. It did, but due to an overwhelming business day, it closed the following day. Nonetheless, Isaacs reopened two days after as they were "working closely with our great local vendors to restock [and] prepare for the weekend," according to a quoted statement from The MoCo Show.

The restaurant was opened by former Director of Operations at CAVA Rob Gresham, also a lifelong resident of Montgomery County.

While quarantined back in early 2020, Gresham collaborated with his 13-year-old son to come up with the idea of the Isaacs restaurant. Referring to the founder of gravity,

they named the restaurant after English mathematician Isaac Newton, who was "in quarantine during the bubonic plague in 1665," according to Isaacs official website.

There are QO students who work at Isaacs, including sophomore Terence Holahan. "I like the managers, the owners are really nice, and I also really like the work experience," says Holahan. In the active environment, Holahan works as a server: he prepares the food and gives out orders to customers, both dine-in and take-out orders.

Like KFC and Chick-Fil-A, the restaurant and their workers in it plan to "expand and become a franchise and have more places open," according to Holahan.

Sophomore Harris Cline also works as a server, making the food for customers and giving it out to them. He also likes the work environment at Isaacs because he "likes working with [his] friends, and creating a healthy schedule for [himself]," and he takes on a major role in making the food.

Isaac's is open daily from 10:45 AM until 10 PM.

The future of Biden's student loan forgiveness plan remains unsettled

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

Back in March 2020, Congress halted all payments and interest accrual for government-issued student loans due to the substantial economic downfalls of the pandemic. An initial six-month pause has become a multi-year extension as, according to Forbes, "President Trump and then President Biden issue several short-term extensions."

Now, three years later, Biden has constructed a one-time student loan forgiveness plan that promises to eliminate over \$400 billion dollars of debt. Specifically, according to CNBC, forgiving "up to \$10,000 of federal debt for most borrowers, and up to \$20,000 for Pell Grant recipients". A Pell Grant is a federal government issued loan that is limited to students with financial aid. Borrowers are expected to pay back loans with interest. This plan will relieve approximately 43.5 million Americans who carry the burden of student loans.

The plan has been rigorously criticized since its introduction in August of 2022. Critics of the plan argue that it will aggravate inflation, leave minority borrowers with more debt, and does not address the core problem at hand: higher education is simply too expensive.

The plan has endured several

lawsuits, two of which are being argued in the Supreme Court. At the end of last month, the court heard both cases that questioned the constitutionality of the Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act of 2003. Commonly known as the HEROES Act, the act "gives the secretary of education the power to 'waive or modify any statutory or regulatory provision' to protect borrowers affected by 'a war or other military operation or national emergency.'" In the first case, brought forth by Arkansas, South Carolina, Iowa, Nebraska, Missouri, and Kansas, the states emphasized that the debt relief would hurt their states' revenues.

In the second case, two loaners sued because they didn't qualify for the full \$20,000 amount.

In both cases, there is the prominent worry of executive overreach. However, the Biden administration explains that HEROES allows the education security to relieve loans during a national emergency, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

During the oral arguments, liberal-leaning justices voiced support for the plan while conservatives criticized it. An official decision is expected in June. So until then, the future of Biden's plan — and the balances of Americans' student debt — remains unsettled.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

The Prowler gladly accepts comments, concerns, and letters to the editor. Letters may be emailed to QOHSproowler@gmail.com, mailed c/o The Prowler to the school address above, or dropped off directly to Ms. Cooley-Klein in Room 234. Letters may be edited for space and clarity.

ABOUT

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

The harsh effects of Long Covid

By **HANYA SHAHZAD**
Staff Writer

Everyone is ready to move past Covid and forget about the days of quarantine. Cases have been gradually dropping and life has seemingly returned to normal. But for a few, Covid isn't a distant memory, but instead something that still affects them.

Covid (SARS CoV-2) with long lasting effects, or "Long Covid" as it's more commonly known, has left a mark and is still being explored today.

According to the CDC, symptoms that continue after having Covid can show up as early as four weeks after the original Covid diagnosis has ended.

The CDC defines Long Covid symptoms as "symptoms lasting three or more months after first contracting the virus, and that they didn't have prior to their COVID-19 infection."

These symptoms can include a wide range of respiratory complications such as difficulty breathing, chest pain, and heart palpitations.

There are also many neurological effects, a few being headaches and trouble sleeping due to anxiety and depression issues.

Problems in the digestive system can exist as well, like stomach pain and diarrhea.

Other issues also include tiredness, fever, joint/muscle pain, rashes, menstrual cycle changes, and the worsening of symptoms after mental or physical exertion.

The CDC adds that there is no direct test yet proving that post-Covid symptoms are actually a result of Covid, but that doctors take your

health history into account.

Johns Hopkins Medicine says there has also been evidence of post-Covid effects regarding taste and smell. These effects include not being able to taste or smell clearly after having Covid or developing an aversion to multiple tastes.

Although anyone can develop lasting effects of Covid, Long Covid is most prevalent in those who have experienced serious Covid, have pre-existing health conditions, are unvaccinated, and have MIS—multisystem inflammatory syndrome—according to the CDC.

One story of someone who faced the hardships of Long Covid symptoms comes from former QO student Elina Bhagwat '19, currently a senior at Richmond University who had Covid in February 2021. She described her symptoms during her Covid diagnosis as just "a mild cold" and "losing my sense of smell for a few days," as well as some body aches. Two months later in April 2021, she started experiencing new symptoms that she had never faced before. Bhagwat says her "smell and taste were distorted." Random smells and taste suddenly were unappetizing, and she says "there was no pattern" to the aversions.

A few of the tastes she couldn't consume and smells she couldn't tolerate included the taste of meat, the smell of gasoline, taste of many fruits, and the smell of coffee. She explained that certain perfumes and colognes smelled very "chemically," as did the taste of soda. Bhagwat says she

became "basically vegetarian" and "wasn't eating as much" due to the symptoms.

Luckily, the effects stopped around August, and Bhagwat has made a full recovery. However, for many, symptoms have persisted. According to updates made by the CDC in 2022, 19% of Americans who reported having Covid in the past are experiencing Long Covid symptoms.


Although the road to recovery from Long Covid can be tedious, Johns Hopkins Medicine recommends physical therapy and breathing exercises as a way to stimulate recovery.


How to prevent catching and spreading coronavirus.

Prevent catching the virus by:

 Washing your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

 Avoiding your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.


 Avoiding close contact with people who are sick.

 Wearing a face mask and practicing physical distancing by staying six feet or more away from others.

 Monitoring your symptoms and seeking medical attention if your symptoms worsen. **MEDSTAR HEALTH**

Prevent spreading the virus by:

 Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

 Covering your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throwing the tissue in the trash.

 Staying home when you are sick.



Montgomery County community responds to gun violence epidemic

By HAILEY BAKER
Senior Staff Writer

Last year, there were more school shootings—46—than in any year since 1999, when there was a devastating attack at Columbine High School, where 12 students and a teacher were shot and killed. This number is only increasing.

Every day on average, 12 children die and another 32 suffer injuries as a result of gun violence. This makes guns the leading cause of death among American children and teenagers.

Because of this gun violence epidemic, the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office and Police Department collaborated this year to educate students about gun violence and safety. Assistant State Attorney John Lalos and Director of Public Affairs Lauren DeMarco gave presentations at high schools throughout the county, including QO, in hopes of keeping schools safe and gun free. They emphasized a "See something, say something" mentality among students and staff.

During the assembly, Lalos and DeMarco listed red flags of potential gun violence that one should report

should they come across it. These red flags include someone suddenly withdrawing from friends, family and activities, either bullying or being bullied, chronic loneliness, and expressing clear threats or plans to partake in violent acts. Students can report this suspicious behavior to staff members at their school, an anonymous tip line online at safeschoolsmd.org, 1-833-MD-B-Safe, and/or their local police department.

QO security guard Joe Rice further emphasizes the importance of students speaking up when they feel themselves, or others, are in danger. "I understand that sometimes people see something and they don't want to say something, but at the same time the whole 'what if this actually happens?' comes into their heads, and it usually causes the person to do the right thing and bring it to our attention," he says.

Rice also describes security and administrators being vocal to the student body is a "very good thing" because "people feel comfortable coming to [them] to let [them] know things." To students who worry about speaking up, he says, "Get to know security guards and build that relationship, so you have somebody who you can feel comfortable speaking to." He also notes all

instances where students speak up are anonymous.

Furthermore, seniors Fiona Feingold, Caitlyn Burns and Caroline Axley, with the help of teacher sponsor Megan Cooley-Klein, started the Students Demand Action chapter at QO. (Editor's note: Feingold and Cooley-Klein are also members of the Prowler staff.)

High school and college students across 500 SDA chapters throughout the country work towards a gun violence-free future. SDA members meet to discuss and encourage ways to take action, as well as deconstruct and process recent events related to gun violence. SDA's goal is to advocate for common sense gun legislation, to educate community members about gun violence prevention, and to end gun violence for good.

"It's so scary knowing what is happening to kids our age and younger, and that something so extreme could happen on a normal school day. I don't want students/kids to have to experience that fear," Burns said.

Unfortunately, some QO students have experienced gun violence firsthand. Junior Jordan Richard ran from a mass shooting scare on last summer on July 4 in Orlando, Florida.

At a fireworks display, "We turned to the right and saw thousands of people running and people screaming 'gun, gun, get down!'" he said. Richard says he and his dad "froze for about half a second, just processing, and then [his] dad grabbed [him] by the back of the collar and started hauling [him] off in a full sprint." Surrounding him, Richard saw thousands of people trying to find cover, including a family of four hunched over behind a water fountain in tears.

While the gun-like sounds in the crowd turned out to be fireworks gone wrong, Richard said the experience "opened [his] eyes to what you see should something like that happen." Because of gun violence's impact, many find it important to raise awareness about gun violence and advocate for lawmakers to enact stricter gun legislation. Burns encourages students who are passionate about the topic to join SDA. Students can also go to marchforourlives.com to find ways to get involved in and/or donate to the movement to end gun violence. Most importantly, if you see something, say something.

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VIEWPOINT: LETTER TO THE EDITOR

To those who don't understand the true meaning of the American Dream

By CAMILA RIVERA
9th Grade Student

Living the American Dream in today's society is living with racism, prejudice and a white-dominant culture; students not being adequately represented in today's school systems doesn't help with this growing problem, either. Those coming to this country without any real knowledge of the culture, the new language, and most of all, the new way of life need someone who once was like them to look up to. In Montgomery County Public Schools, only 7.08% of teachers are Hispanic, and personally, in my ten years in MCPS, I have only ever had one Hispanic teacher. How is this acceptable? How are we expecting Latino immigrant students and Latinos as a whole to succeed without anyone they can relate to, someone to

make them feel like they belong, someone for them to look up to and say—"I can succeed," "Yo puedo exitar."

The "American Dream" that so many long and hope for is just yet another American hoax. In the novel *Children of the River* by Linda Crew, Sundara, a Cambodian teenage refugee, is set to have great hopes of coming to America after being forced to leave her own country. However, after experiencing life in America, at times when she is working long grueling hours in a field under a white man, or has trouble living between the two cultures, she dreams of returning to a country that is under attack. And to my primos back in Honduras, a third world country, I am here truly living the life, living the "American Dream"; a strand of papers to be called a citizen tied onto the pressure of simply being American. Because

they will never know what being a minority is like, and never will understand the look on white people's faces when you open your mouth and speak your native tongue. They will never be able to sympathize with a child who gets bullied for her accent and hair, and will never realize the true cost of being a Hispanic-American, until they become one themselves.

Most people picture the American dream as the fact that anyone can grow in today's society, that America is a country where everyone is equal; regardless of where someone comes from, they have a chance. That, unlike in their countries, it is not true that as the rich get richer, the poor get poorer. They are picturing this ideal because this is what is portrayed in movies, in stories, and by the white society. However, if this was a country where everyone was equal, why is it

that Latinos outnumber whites only on jobs with hard labor? If this is a country where anyone can grow, why are Black and Latino communities at the bottom of the socioeconomic chain? That though "All men are created equal," and these are the principles that our country fought over — twice — not all men view each other as equal.

Ninth grade students at QO wrote letters to the editor for an English 9 assignment and could submit them to *The Prowler*. Among all the submissions, this piece was chosen for publication by the staff members of the News section.

Want to submit your own letter to the editor? Send your piece (no more than 500 words) by April 17 to QOHSprowler@gmail.com for consideration for the May 5 issue.

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!

QO Theatre presents Anastasia:

On March 24, 25, 31, and April 1, Quince Orchard's award-winning theatrical program will be putting on "Anastasia" — a story oriented around self-discovery and staying authentic to your true self. Friday performances will begin at 7 PM, and Saturday performances will begin at 2PM and 7PM each day. In a QO Theatre press release written by senior and VP of Publicity Hayley Asai (a staff member of *The Prowler*), "this program is focused on student involvement and leadership throughout the cast, creative team, crew, and pit orchestra."

Make sure to mark your calendar, because you will not want to miss this production. Tickets will be available at the door with cash or check, costing \$8 dollars for QO students, \$12 for adults, and \$10 for everyone else.

The press release concluded that "for more information, check out their Instagram (@qohstheatre), email them (qotheatreboard@gmail.com), or visit their website (QO Theatre Homepage)"

McCormack's farewell:

The QO community is saddened to hear that our school psychologist, Jeanne McCormack, is ending her time here at QO to start a new chapter as the MCPS Resource Psychologist. McCormack is a cherished staff member, role model for many, and a valuable community member.

McCormack has been working at QO since 2014. Her position as the school psychologist has allowed her to work

side-by-side with students and help them achieve their goals both mentally and emotionally. For many, she has been a mentor and guiding light, helping them navigate difficult times and mental health challenges. She has been an invaluable resource to students and, as she noted, has loved "making connections with students and being that person to make them feel heard and respected."

In her new role, McCormack will support all psychologists in the district. In an interview, she highlighted important lessons she has learned from her time at QO, voicing to students that when facing a challenge it's important to "lean on the people around you to generate creative ideas, and keep an open mind that change is possible."

Reflecting on her time at QO, McCormack has loved to see how QO students and staff worked to improve. "When I see an opportunity for growth or change, students and staff lean into it and find creative ways to make the vision a reality," she said.

As she moves forward, she will deeply miss the students. "I have worked with adolescents for almost 15 years and the students at QO are special," she said. Regardless of her new chapter, she says she "will forever be a Cougar at heart."

The Prowler wishes McCormack all of the best on her next step and we are greatly appreciative for all of her contributions to the QO community over the past nine years.

QO's music department showcases excellence:

Harmony, singing, and instruments galore! March has been a busy and successful month for QO's music department.

Starting off strong, QO hosted the annual Orchestra Festival on Tuesday, March 7. The Symphonic Orchestra received the highest rating possible from each judge on their performances, qualifying for the State Orchestra

Assessment.

Similarly, the QO advanced choirs traveled down the road to Seneca Valley High School on Wednesday, March 8. The evaluation included rhythm reading, sight singing, and the performance of three songs. The choirs also received a perfect score across all categories and will move on to compete in the state championships at the end of April.

Additionally, the band had a successful festival and will move forward to compete in their state championships. Congratulations to the QO music department!

Student Highlight of the Month:

Senior Samantha Harris's love for graphic design started at a very young age. "I've always loved art and been pretty artistic," Harris said. However, it was during her freshman year when she discovered an interest in doing calligraphy on the app Procreate, a digital illustration platform, that her love for graphic design was born. From then on, the rest was history.

Over the past three years, Harris has enhanced her skills and gained experience navigating additional platforms such as Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop in art teacher Corey Simko's digital art class.

Harris also spends her summers in Fenwick Island, DE and works at the local franchise surf shop Atlantic Shoals. What started out as Harris doodling little tattoos on herself during slow periods led to her making signs around the shop. After throwing out ideas about future artistic opportunities, Harris was tasked with creating a logo for the shop.

At only 15 years old, Harris started crafting the logo. "It was a joint idea between my boss and I. She was so excited and told the owner who gave me the green light

to design," Harris said. She started the sketch in 2020 and finalized the design in the summer of 2022.

The design process revealed to Harris "how much detail goes into every graphic you see." She initially started sketching at home, and "through some subconscious creative channel, the octopus was created. It started with a pencil sketch that I redrew a few times, then outlined in pen, scanned, traced, and added color to in Illustrator [another digital art program] with the help of Mr. Simko." Harris's hard work has paid off as her logo is now being printed and sold on shop t-shirts.

In the future, Harris plans on designing graphics for a lacrosse clothing company and turning her passions into a professional career by minoring in graphic design at the University of Georgia.

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 QOHSprowler@gmail.com.



SAMANTHA HARRIS



Ridgeview English Teacher nominated for MCPS Teacher of the Year

By KATE BELMAN
Staff Writer

April Moon, a 19-year veteran English teacher and currently a 6th-grade English teacher at Ridgeview Middle School, has been nominated for MCPS Teacher of the Year.

Moon says she was “called into the office one day with the English department resource teacher and our assistant principal, and they explained to me that they were going to be nominating me for Montgomery County teacher of the year.”

Moon and her family immigrated from South Korea to the United States, and she says she remembers “just feeling lost in the classroom.” Moon grew up in an area with little diversity, being one of three total Asian kids in her entire school, one of them being her brother.

She realized she wanted to go into teaching with the idea of “having every student [able to] feel like they are seen and heard.”

Moon says her favorite part about being a teacher is being able to learn from the students. “I learn a lot from the students, especially about everything that is going on [in the world currently].” Another thing she loves about teaching is “the fact that for just one school year, I am a part of your journey.” She feels excited about the fact that she can be a part

of who her students strive to become in the future.

Moon, who used to be an English language learner herself, says she “understands how difficult learning English is,” and that “English is very confusing.” With lots of students coming from diverse backgrounds, Moon felt that she could be most helpful in this subject.

Moon learns not only from her students but from her fellow teachers. She says that she “can’t separate herself [from other teachers in the county],” and that it is her colleagues who help her learn. Throughout her career, she has always been surrounded by colleagues who she was able to learn many things from, “little to big.” Throughout Moon’s astonishing 19-year teaching career, she spent 12 years at Spark M. Matsunaga Elementary School in Germantown, working with 4th-grade students before coming to Ridgeview Middle School, where she has spent the last 7 years teaching English.

She hopes to accomplish “being able to reach all of [her] students,” not only with their academic needs but also their social and emotional needs as well.

The hardest obstacle Moon has faced in her career is her workload. “[Having] family responsibilities [as well as teaching and] trying to juggle all of that can be a challenge,” she said.

The final winner for Teacher of the Year will be announced at an

in-person award celebration in April, and the winner will compete for Maryland Teacher of the Year.



KATE BELMAN

QO wheels: staff and students share their vehicles’ interesting features and history

By CHASE PANTEZZI
Staff Writer

Have you ever seen an interesting car in the QO parking lot and wondered what kind it was or who it belonged to? After seeing the parking lot every day, students and staff cannot help but wonder who owns the cars they see. As someone who has been infatuated with cars my entire life, I decided to investigate the cars I suspected students might be interested in.

To start, social sciences teacher Penny Keune has a red Mitsubishi Eclipse Spyder convertible. She explained the joy that having the top down brings her on a nice spring day, and how her commute from Germantown “is only like 7 minutes. Once I get on Riffle Ford, I press the gas once and [the car] makes it the whole way.”

However, she is swift when necessary. “I don’t drive super fast, but if someone is on my tail, I can press the gas and leave them in the dust,” she said.



PHOTO BY CHASE PANTEZZI

Math teacher Paul Foringer said that his environmentalist daughter convinced him to get a Tesla Model 3.

He said that after putting solar panels on their house and getting rain barrels to efficiently collect water, the next logical step was to get an electric car.

He does not regret his decision. “It is very comfortable... It drives itself smoothly and has the ‘summon’ feature, where it can back up and come to me from the spot,” he explained. The amount of money he saves makes up for the extra time spent on road trips charging up, he said.

Foringer was in awe about the car’s features overall. “When I was little, the type of car where you could press a button and it does everything you want it to was the dream car, and now I feel like I have that. We are now in the future,” he said.



PHOTO BY CHASE PANTEZZI

Nick Pak, a special education teacher, drives an Acura Integra. When asked about which features he enjoys, he said, “I like how compact it is, how easy

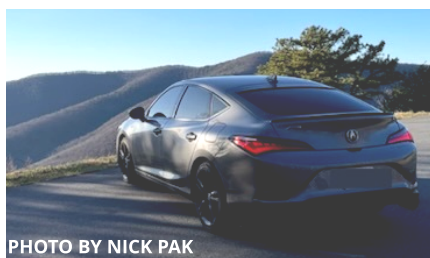


PHOTO BY NICK PAK

it is to park, the technology, and how safe and reliable it is.”

Other car enthusiasts praise the Integra for its driving experience and heritage as well. Pak agreed, saying that he “was a big fan of the older Integras growing up, and they just brought it back.”

Greg Benas, another special education teacher, appreciates his wife’s decision to purchase a Ford Bronco Badlands. “She was a former Jeep owner, but became infatuated with [the Bronco] at the auto show. When we were ready, they wouldn’t take orders, so it was a happy accident when we found one at the dealership,” he said.



PHOTO BY GREG BENAS

He enjoys being elevated and expects to take the Bronco on off-road vehicle trails and the beach, he added.



PHOTO BY NIKLAS SIEVERS

Students also wanted to share about their interesting cars. Senior Niklas Sievers drives a Ford Mustang. He called it “my dream car,” and said that he loves

how “it’s not not too expensive. It’s good-looking, fun, and fast.”

Lastly, senior Grace Oristian drives a 2012 Chevy Tahoe named “Rhonda.” She said that Rhonda’s size and safety in a crash are very impressive. “It’s like a tank — it’s huge,” she said, adding how “it doesn’t seem safe, but it’s a safe car. My sister got in a crash once and it was completely fine. Not a single dent.”

Other thrills that the car has had include football games and Taco Bell drive-thrus. “One time I drove people to and from the QO game with 13 people in the car,” she said. “It was insane.



PHOTO BY CHASE PANTEZZI

Somehow we managed to make it there and everyone was alive.”

She went on to say how Rhonda’s transmission once blew at Taco Bell, which was frightening because the car would not move.

While it may not seem like a typical ‘special’ car, Oristian said that it holds many memories and stories. “I’m very emotionally attached to my car. She has a lot of spirit just because I’ve grown up in that car, and my sister and I take her everywhere. I’m going to miss her when I go to college,” she said.

HELLEN KELLER

In the past and continuously today, having multiple disabilities was and still is incredibly difficult, and being a woman on top of it all didn't make things any easier. Helen Keller, who was a disability rights activist, was a prime example of someone who was judged for being blind and deaf. Though people criticized Helen Keller for her disabilities, Keller didn't back down and become frail. Instead, she took initiative and fought for the rights for those who shared similar disabilities such as her. As the first blind and deaf person to graduate from college with a B.A., Helen Keller was able to defy the odds and prove people who ever doubted her wrong. Helen Keller is a prime example of a woman who overcame her obstacles through hard work and dedication, without caring what others thought of her. Helen Keller will be remembered as an influential woman who fought for the rights of the disabled.

AMELIA EARHART

The history of aviation has long been dominated by men. Men were often praised for their aviation efforts, often winning awards and earning large sums of money. However, a huge piece of history and the revolutionary face of aviation cannot be overlooked. Amelia Earhart was the first woman ever to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. Earhart, who was born in 1897, had to make numerous attempts to prove herself in aviation history. During the early 20th century, women were meant to stay at home. But Earhart was determined to accomplish her goals, including to fly a plane solo. Amelia Earhart took that strong determination and grit of hers to achieve her goal, making her one of the most influential women in aviation.

ROSA PARKS

The Civil Rights Movement was a crucial part of American history that will always be remembered. Most people first think of male figures from that movement such as Martin Luther King, Jr. But while MLK was a wonderful activist, other female figures, such as Rosa Parks, also left an important impact on the fight for equal rights. During the mid-20th century, public buses were ordered to have a white section and black section. Rosa Parks was barred from sitting with the white people. As an activist and true believer in civil rights, Parks challenged segregation by refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a Montgomery, Alabama bus in 1955. By doing this, she was able to inspire the leaders of the black community to organize the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Parks not only challenged a cruel and unfair system: she became one of the most recognized and influential women in American history.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

BY HAYLEY ASAI
& SOPHIE FAWKNER



WOMEN

HELLEN KELLER ~ AMELIA EARHART

ROSA PARKS ~ MARY TAPE

HARRIET TUBMAN ~ SUSAN B. ANTHONY

MARY TAPE

Segregation prevented a lot of individuals from minority groups from receiving the same education. Since this was the case, a powerful woman named Mary Tape took initiative and fought for equal education. As a Chinese immigrant who had come from China to the United States as a young orphan, she had personally seen what it was like to have children be segregated from white students. Tape's agenda was to be an activist to help fight for change, in which both Chinese students and white students would be able to attend the same school and classes together. As a woman and mother, Tape took her daughter being segregated at school to heart. In a powerful manner, Tape brought the problem to the Supreme Court in the case of Tape vs. Hurley (1885). Due to the Tape family winning the case, they were able to get Chinese students the ability to attend public schools with white students. Tape will always be remembered as an influential woman in history who fought for what is right.

HARRIET TUBMAN

All throughout history, American slavery in particular has been presented with obscene amounts of cruelty. One truly inspiring woman, Harriet Tubman, decided to take the slavery crisis into her own hands. Just as one woman herself, she was able to have great success in protecting and saving around 300 enslaved people by taking them through the Underground Railroad. By doing this, Tubman was able to save innocent lives and give hope to those who had thought of losing their hope. Tubman was not only such an exceptional conductor, but having led 13 complete missions, she risked her life every single time. Tubman was a brave and selfless activist who would do everything she could to get freedom for herself and others. Tubman will always be remembered as a hero not only among slaves, but as a role model to all people throughout the world.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

Susan Brownell Anthony is one of the most recognized and influential women in history who positively impacted the women's suffrage movement in the United States. On top of being a huge voice for women's rights, her Quaker beliefs influenced her support of anti-slavery petitions starting at the young age of 17. It was difficult for women to get fair pay and work opportunities equal to men. Since this was the case, Anthony wanted to make drastic changes in society. She traveled across the country with other reformers, such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, to deliver speeches about what should be done to get equal treatment and opportunities for women. Susan B. Anthony will always be recognized and remembered as an important piece of women's history, and as someone who fought for the equal rights that women during the era of industrialization were denied.



Iconic hairstyles over the years

By **MADISON SHERMAN**
Editor-in-Chief

Change is prevalent in all ways. And one of the perks to change is differentiation in self-expression, especially in the beauty and fashion industry. Over the years, the evolution of hairstyles — from the flapper bob to The Rachel — has allowed people of all genders and backgrounds to express themselves in a multitude of ways. Hairstyles undoubtedly define the era they reside in. There are too many to write about, but here are a few of the most popular hair trends in history.

The Bob:

The clean-cut bob was born in the flapper era of the 1920s, where short hair for women was recognized as scandalous. Accompanying the short 'do were canceled invitations to social gatherings and disinterest from boys. The "bob" was first made visible to the public eye in 1915 and signified liberation from the era's ideal "Gibson girls," who often had luxurious updos with long hair. Chopping off your locks was a serious act. In fact, if you walked into a salon and requested a "bob," the hairdresser would sometimes flat-out reject the request. Instead, women headed to the barbers, who complied. Eventually, in the mid-1920s, when the style gained mass appeal, hairdressers noticed the trend was here to stay and gave in. According to Smithsonian Magazine, in 1924, more than 20,000 shops were established to cut the



cropped style. Variations of the hairstyle include the finger wave (taking your finger and a comb to create S-shaped waves), the Marcel (using the curling iron to create waves), and the Eton crop (cutting the hair above the ears and slicking it back).



The Afro:

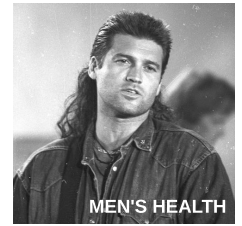
The Afro was a symbol of the Civil Rights Movement, which joined the Natural Hair Movement to exemplify the rejection of Westernized beauty standards. Looking back on history, in Africa, afros, braids, and other tribal hairstyles defined roles and status. However, when Africans were coerced into slavery in the American colonies, throughout the 17th and 18th century, everything changed. White people were quick to call the Afro "ugly" and "wooly," only accepting straight European hair. But in the 1960s, under the Natural Hair Movement, also known as the 'Black is Beautiful' Movement, some Black women were done processing their hair to meet these constricting beauty standards, and, instead, opted to embrace their natural hair. The movement was defined by Black activist Marcus Garvey's strong words: "Don't remove the kinks from your hair. Remove them from your brain." Notable celebrities like Kiersey Clemons, Saycon Sengbloh, and Tracee Ellis Ross still flaunt the Afro style at award shows, on the red carpet, and in everyday life.



The Mullet:

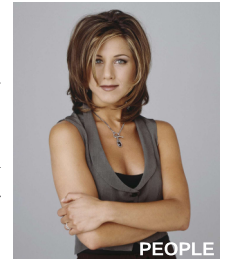
Business in the front, party in the back. We've all seen them, especially at QO during spring sports season, but, did you know that mullets are of French origin? Yep... that's right. The hairstyle was first worn in the early seventies by Henri Mollet, a French fashion guru, and was showcased in the French underground scene. The hairstyle was resurrected by television personalities, like radio presenter Pat Sharp, who adjusted the hairstyle's name to the mullet. In the 1980s, the mullet was adopted by stars. Before Billy Ray Cyrus ("Achy Breaky Heart" singer) became known as Miley Cyrus's father, he was one of the main contributors to making the mullet famous, as well as other musicians like Bono of U2, Micheal Bolton, and Steve Perry of Journey. Despite the brief period in the 1990s where some thought the hairstyle was laughable and a fashion joke, the style has continued to grow in popularity into the modern day. Side note: Some thank Joe Exotic, from the Netflix series "Tiger King," for bringing the mullet back into fashion. Modern variations of the mullet include the long and shaggy look, the bangs look, and the layered look. Now, I can assure you from my fashion sources that mullets are currently cool. Featured on *Vogue* in "The 9 Hair Trends Set to Explode in 2023" are

"Naughties Mullets." Just sit back and watch this trend "explode."



The Rachel:

Star actress Jennifer Aniston, who played Rachel on the hit-series "Friends," was characterized by her choppy layers in the 1990s. The style first aired on the episode, "The One With the Evil Orthodontist." These desirable layers developed into the Rachel hairstyle, created by Chris McMillian in 1994. McMillian claimed the style wasn't meant to break headlines; he simply wanted to give Aniston a new look. Although, during the second and third season of the show, salons everywhere were being bombarded with requests for the Rachel cut. People even flew to Los Angeles to receive the cut from McMillian himself. Aniston, however, had a negative outlook on the hairstyle. She said she couldn't perfect it without McMillian's help, and in an interview with *Allure* in 2011, Aniston called it "the ugliest haircut I've ever seen." Poor McMillian. Despite Aniston's hatred toward the style, its popularity prevailed and celebrities from singer Kelly Clarkson to actor Meg Ryan tried the look.



VIEWPOINT

The art, the artist, and everything in between

By **CHASE PASEKOFF**
Staff Writer

As society continues to become consciously aware of the effects of certain behaviors, many people have been advocating for public figures to be held responsible for their actions that may be deemed problematic. Whether the actions be racism, sexual harassment, abuse, or otherwise, this phenomenon of accountability has become colloquially known as "cancel culture." This has provoked the popular discussion of whether the general public can successfully separate an individual's actions from the work they create, commonly known as "separating the art from the artist." A more nuanced understanding of this complex issue can be made by exploring each side of the topic.

Those in favor of separating the art from the artist see it simply: One shouldn't affect the other. One argument that proponents of this ideology have made is that the music made by an artist is just an expression of their artistry and shouldn't conflict with their individual controversies. They argue that if the music sounds good, and you enjoy listening to it, why shouldn't you be able to?

On the flip side, people who oppose the idea of keeping the actions of the artist separate from their art view it as a more complex issue that needs to be addressed. Many would claim that by supporting an artist's work, you are directly supporting them and their

careers—and their controversies.

A prime example can be seen with someone like rapper Eminem, who has repeatedly used homophobic slurs in his music, despite not being a member of the LGBTQ+ community. Although this behavior is problematic in and of itself, he has received only some backlash, and of it, little has bled into his success as an artist. Next, we can look at an example regarding author J.K. Rowling, who has come under fire for her transphobic beliefs and rhetoric.

Although she has been rightfully criticized for her spreading harmful ideas regarding transgender people, all of her books are still sold. Some who resonate with the Harry Potter series feel at odds with the situation. The underlying question that comes from this debate is: when

do we draw the line between appreciating someone's work and focusing on our own morality? Many writers, columnists, and even online commentary creators have shared their two cents regarding this topic, one of the main toss-ups has been whether it's the responsibility of the consumer to choose not to support the artist, or whether the companies that are releasing their art should be held accountable.

If we look at an example regarding Will Smith, it can be seen from the incident at the Oscars last year, he was given a decade-long ban from future Academy Awards ceremonies. In that instance, the Academy separated him from his art on their own.

Alternatively, we can also look at an example surrounding

rapper Kanye West. After a slew of antisemitic and insensitive comments, West was dropped by Adidas, which sold his popular Yeezy shoes. However, in terms of music, it is still available on streaming platforms, meaning West still makes a profit from the streams he receives from the public. In this case, he was partially held responsible for his actions, however, the choice to listen to his music is still up to the discretion of the listener.

With all of that noted, it is important to be cognizant of the issues that certain celebrities have caused as well as their severity. It has become quite apparent that the number of public figures who have been "canceled" has been quite excessive — to the point where the true idea of trying to hold someone accountable for their actions has become ineffective and inconsequential. What started as a genuine effort to raise concerns for problematic and dangerous behaviors has turned into a way for people to make petty drama into a much larger, and oftentimes unnecessary, issue.

Regardless, the next time a controversy arises surrounding one of your favorite singers, you might want to take a second to think about the implications of your actions, and how it might change how you are perceived by those who are offended by the artist's decisions.





Expectations vs. Reality: Oscars Edition

By **FIONA FEINGOLD**
Editor-in-Chief

The Oscars: cinema's biggest night. Some watch for the red carpet fashion, while others are more interested in the inevitable celebrity drama. And of course, there are the cinephiles who genuinely care about whether their favorite films of the year will win.

Most of us fall into some combination of the three. As both an awards show buff and avid Letterboxd user, I decided to make my own predictions for the 95th Academy Awards. Here's how my bets fared on the night of the ceremony.

Expectation: "All Quiet on the Western Front" will sweep in the technical categories.

Reality: The military drama took home four out of the nine awards it was nominated for, including Best Cinematography, Best International Feature, Best Original Score, and Best Production Design. A harrowing account of a German soldier's experience fighting in World War I, "All Quiet on the Western Front" is a bare-bones look at the

bleak reality of war. This is the third movie adaptation of the titular novel, written by Erich Maria Remarque, but only the first time that the story has been told from a German perspective.

I predicted that the film would win Best Makeup and Hairstyling for its hauntingly realistic depiction of battle wounds, but that honor went to "The Whale," likely due to its impressive use of prosthetics on actor Brendan Fraser. I also believed that "All Quiet" would take home Best Adapted Screenplay, but the award was instead given to "Women Talking."

Expectation: "Top Gun: Maverick" will win one or two awards in the technical categories, but will have to beat out technical giants "All Quiet" and "Everything Everywhere All At Once" in order to win a majority of its nominations.

Reality: "Top Gun: Maverick" won Best Sound.

Expectation: "Avatar: The Way of Water" will win Best Visual Effects.

Reality: It's Avatar. Of course it won Best Visual Effects!

Expectation: "The Banshees of Inisherin" will either win Best Original Screenplay or nothing.

Reality: The contrarian frontrunner for Best Picture was up for nine Academy Awards and received zero. Many experts believed that the film might sneak up on a Best Original Screenplay or Best Picture win, but both of those went to "Everything Everywhere All At Once." I thought that the Academy would try to even the playing field by awarding Screenplay to "Banshees" and Best Picture to "Everything Everywhere All At Once."

Expectation: Austin Butler will win Best Actor for his performance as Elvis in the titular King of Rock's biopic.

Reality: Brendan Fraser triumphed over Butler for his portrayal of Charlie in "The Whale." Best Actor is seldom awarded to actors whose films are not also nominated for Best Picture, but Fraser is a rare exception to the rule.

Expectation: "Everything Everywhere All At Once" will win Best Picture.

Reality: "EAAA" won a whopping seven awards, including the highly coveted Best Picture. The film won all three acting awards it was nominated for (Best Actress, Best

Supporting Actor, and Best Supporting Actress), making it the third movie ever to win three acting Oscars. "EAAA" also won Best Editing, Best Original Screenplay, and, to my surprise, Best Directing. I predicted that the Academy would give the award to Steven Spielberg for his work on "The Fabelmans," a semi-autobiographical look at an aspiring filmmaker and his family — especially given that Spielberg has already won twice before. Following the Oscars, "Everything Everywhere All At Once" has become the most awarded film ever, with a total of 165 accolades.

Overall, my predictions were about 50% accurate. Out of the "Big Five" categories (Picture, Actor, Actress, Directing, and Screenplay), I only correctly predicted Best Picture. However, I did a much better job with the technical categories; acting, directing, and writing are all so subjective, but most of us can agree on what movies had the best special effects. Now it's time for me to catch up on viewing all of the winning films — until next year!

Review: Ethel Cain preaches about violence, religion, love in debut album

By **MAMS JAGHA**
Staff Writer

24-year-old trans singer songwriter Hayden Anhedonia grew up in a small Southern Baptist community in Florida. Surrounded by Evangelical pipe organs, a fascination with cults and occasional true crime shows, her alter ego 'Ethel Cain' was created and just recently "Preachers Daughter" her debut album gained popularity. Through her expansive album, we learn more about who not only Ethel Cain is but parts of who Anhedonia is as well.

Our first introduction to Ethel Cain is through Anhedonia's initial EP "Golden Age," a less conceptual play on her persona. The EP blends together a sort of dream pop and shoegaze sound that mixes Anhedonia's addition of big drums to her even bigger vocals. This combination adds to the trap-based production of raw elevating feelings of love. In the song "Casings," the background sounds of a fireplace soften the song into a euphoric serenade, while in "Head In The Wall," themes of rebellion bring out Anhedonia's angelic voice. Her ability to be vulnerable and still convey a hard-hitting message creates a consistent emotional narrative throughout her work.

Even apart from her work, Anhedonia is just as interesting as her character, and with this, she builds relationships with her fans that makes her so unique as an artist.

In an interview with "Them" magazine, Anhedonia explains that her third album "Inbred" is a lot more structured than "Golden Age."

"I did passive. Now I want to be aggressive," she said.

The result was songs like the intense "Unpunishable" and the playful "Crush." A mix of dark addictive storytelling and ethereal instruments that represents all the things Anhedonia wished she was more similar to, like being stern,

feminine, and even having a well-defined self-image. In this EP, she tackles the grimness of struggling to reclaim a hard past.

The final story we get of Cain is Anhedonia's 76-minute debut concept album called "Preacher's Daughter"; this is where we meet Ethel for the first time and hear of how she escapes the confinement of her religious upbringing only to enter an ill-fated romance. The album is set around 1991, a decade after the death of her own father, the town preacher.

The first track of the album, "Family Tree (Intro)" and its partner "Family Tree" combine many different themes while setting up the narrative. "American Teenager"—a "pop bop," as christened by QO junior and fan Eddie Bedore—references the loss of community members who serve in the armed forces and the importance of friends.

The story continues with the listeners meeting Logan Phelps, Cain's new lover, in the song "Western Nights." Her new love is not kind, and violent at times, but Cain finds herself loyal and still loving to Phelps. We hear how versatile the whole album is becoming and how much Anhedonia really put into it.

"You don't just feel one thing throughout the narrative, but a mix of so many different emotions," explains Bedore.

Likewise, the mournful "Hard Times," where Cain's moving voice sings of the abuse she faced from her father, gives listeners more insight into not just Cain's story but also her mother's.

"Her themes... incite so many feelings you can't explain until you're in your room with your headphones and the daunting lyrics," senior Gaby Delegarde confesses.

The second act of the album opens with "Thoroughfare." Cain just ran away from home and met another person named Isaiah. They drive from Texas to California and grow feelings for each other. Though, their story turns sour in "Gibson Girl."

Editorial Cartoon



"March 2, 2023"

BY AMADI PINKNEY

After the release of Prince Harry's tell-all book "Spare," he and Meghan Markle have been asked by King Charles III to move out of Frogmore Cottage, their residence in the United Kingdom. While the British media have been critical of the couple in the past, this decision has been seen as "cruel" and "unnecessary," and has "sparked significant debate online," according to Newsweek.

Her ninth track "Ptolemaea," named after the circle of hell in which traitors reside, is the first glimpse into the cult that will ultimately lead to her "death" at the end of the album. Before her passing, we get a beautiful ballad, "Sun Bleached Flies," and an improvised piano solo, "Televangelism."

Finally, "Strangers" acts as the

ending of this album. Cain becomes so angry that she turns in Isaiah's stomach because she has no grave and will never see her mother again.

Hayden Anhedonia is like no other. Her ways of connecting characters with different stories and fueling so many different emotions make her writing, as Delegarde professes, "out of this world."



Noah Lewis: Quince Orchard's King of the Court

By *SAMMY KRIMSTEIN*
Editor-in-Chief

Noah Lewis's list of tennis accolades is impressive, to say the least. Maybe jaw-dropping is a better word. After all, the Quince Orchard senior is ranked as the fifth best player in the state of Maryland, is a four-star recruit, and was named as a Washington Post All-Met Honorable Mention last year.

"The accomplishments feel good, and I got a lot of pride out of that," he said. "But at the same time, I think I have more fun just playing to be honest."

Since he began with competitive tennis at the young age of eight, Lewis has fallen in love with his sport, and with the process of improving. Growing up, he tried many different

activities, including baseball, basketball, and karate, but there was something about tennis that was special. Of course, he always enjoyed the feeling of striking the ball with the racquet, and the intensity of a close match, but he was especially drawn to the distinct challenges of tennis. He was intrigued by the problem solving aspect of the sport, likening it to a "chess game."

Lewis's passion for tennis has taken him all over the US. From Kalamazoo, Michigan, to Mobile, Alabama, he's had the chance to compete in national tournaments. On top of an already demanding training schedule that he maintains throughout the week, Lewis participates in these tournaments on weekends year-round. Through these tournaments, Lewis has had the opportunity to go head-to-head with

premier tennis players from across the country, and get exposure from college coaches through the recruiting process.

As he accumulated more and more success through tournaments, he started receiving offers to play at the next level. His list included multiple D1

schools, including the University of Richmond, Colgate University, and the US Naval Academy. But when all was said and done, Lewis decided to take his talents to a D3 school — Middlebury College, in Vermont.

Middlebury, a small liberal arts college barely bigger than Quince Orchard, had all of the right things for Lewis. When he visited in spring of his junior year, he was impressed by the "D1 level" facilities at Middlebury, but more importantly, the people that made up their tennis program.

"I really enjoyed [Middlebury's head tennis coach, Andrew Thompson] and the way he cared about the players," he said. "I also felt really comfortable with the team and their environment and how they practiced."

Though Lewis often competes in singles matches, he has not been alone on his tennis journey. For Lewis, his parents have always been at the center of his support system. While his mom always supports from behind the scenes — keeping Lewis well-fed and healthy — his dad has taken on some of the more tennis-related tasks — restringing racquets, booking tournaments, and driving Lewis all around the country to matches.

"Without my parents, I wouldn't have any of the opportunities I've



COURTESY NOAH LEWIS

had," he said.

Claude Grady, Lewis's longtime coach, has also been one of his biggest supporters. Lewis found Grady after injuring his back from overuse when he was just 12, and ever since, Grady has been an instrumental piece in Lewis's growth as an athlete.

"I think it's always been about consistency," Lewis described. "And he's always had my back. He's looking out for me, always."

In all of his years of tennis, Lewis has been able to create lots of lasting friendships with fellow players as well. Through these relationships, Lewis has made some of his favorite memories. From postgame ice cream with his QO team, to long car rides with a friend after tournaments, Lewis cherishes the bonds he has built through tennis.



COURTESY NOAH LEWIS

Will the new boys lacrosse coach be able to make history for QO?

By *MADELEINE BURKE*
Staff Writer

After 10 years of being head coach of the boys lacrosse team, PE teacher David Gonzalez, more commonly known as "Coach Gonzo," stepped down, leaving QO on a search for the best candidate for the newly open position.

Luckily, they found their perfect match — Clarksburg alumnus Connor Miller.

Although he used to line up against the Cougars — as a player on Clarksburg's lacrosse team — he now steps into the role of head coach at Quince Orchard. He only started playing because his friends convinced him to, but according to Miller, "it turned out to be one of the best decisions [he] ever made."

During Miller's senior year, he was a part of the team that made remarkable improvements to the program. For example, Clarksburg won a game against QO 4-3, which Miller describes as a "big win" because it was the first time the Coyotes ever beat the Cougars in a lacrosse game.

After his time at Clarksburg, Miller went on to play lacrosse in Pennsylvania at York College as a midfielder. He joined just as the program was on the rise. During his junior and senior year, the team was able to establish themselves as one of the top ten teams in the nation.

Miller wasn't only playing lacrosse during his time at York College: he earned a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering, which led him to move to San Diego less than a week after graduating, where he got his first job.

During his summers on the west coast, he took his first ever coaching job for Coronado High School's youth league. The following year, he was named the school's offensive coordinator.

Miller has loved watching the young athletes continue onto the next level. Lacrosse isn't as popular on the west coast as it is on the east coast, so when asked about the difference in coaching on both sides, Miller says, "The game is still growing, but at the end of the day it's the same sport."

After spending almost four years in California, Miller moved back to Maryland to be a Capture Manager/Business Development Executive at Peraton.

Having a full-time job and coaching a lacrosse team isn't uncommon, but is definitely a lot to juggle. Coach Miller is able to do it by constantly communicating with both of his jobs at Peraton and QO to work with him to make it all possible.

In order to get the boys ready for the season, Miller held weekly team workouts to condition and lift. Miller wanted the team to be able to easily get up and down the field because they are going to be playing a very fast-paced, high tempo game. That being said, Coach Miller also has set multiple goals for the boys to accomplish throughout the season. He hopes for the boys to not only win the division, but their first ever region and state championship games as well. Miller says he wants to "bring home some hardware" in order to "represent the QO community properly this upcoming season."

In order to meet these goals, Miller has his players constantly working, even when they don't think



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they are, by practicing all drills at a high speed. Miller says he does this to have the boys "execute at the high speeds we want to come game time."

All players, new or returning, are fired up for the new season, bringing high energy to the field. Returning this season includes senior Josh Weitzman, who is committed to play Division I lacrosse at High Point University next year. He led the team with 45 goals and 36 assists last season. Also returning are senior Rocco DePaul, with 27 goals and 14 assists last season, and sophomore Trent Mettler, who started as a freshman last year. The entire senior class is going to be key to the team's success this season.

All fans of the team should look forward to attending the home game against Northwest, March 25, at 12 P.M. because QO has a long lasting rivalry with Northwest among all sports.

A highly competitive matchup this season is the game on April 24 at 7:15 P.M., when they play against last year's state champions, Churchill.

The boys have a promising season ahead of them with the support of Coach Miller. Fans are wondering how far the team will go this season, but the real question is: who will Coach Miller be rooting for when the boys play Clarksburg? Miller comments, "Obviously QO."

Girls Lacrosse

By *LILY KAPLAN*
Staff Writer

It's that time of year again: Girls varsity lacrosse is starting their season. They're not just starting to work now, however. For the past few months, the girls have been training and working out in an effort to have a successful season.

Head Coach Taylor Blenckstone has been preparing for the season as well. They lost six seniors after last year's season. Now, the team is being led by three seniors: Huba Baldeh, Camille Thomas, and Elizabeth Winter.

Blenckstone describes her last season as "purposeful," with each girl coming to practice every day being enthusiastic and ready to play. Since then, there hasn't been much time off. "We had workouts twice a week from November to February," she said. "I could tell many of them really worked hard during the off season."

Tryouts were held on March 1. Those workouts paid off: Blenckstone said she noticed how the girls were effectively prepared.

One of these players, sophomore starter Gabbie Spano, who has started on the varsity team since her freshman season, was especially ready for this upcoming season that she had been preparing throughout the entire off-season. "I've been going to our workouts every Tuesday and Thursday, and I've been just working with Coach Twine," she said. The season starting up is a big excitement. "I'm excited to meet the new freshmen," Spano said. Similar to Blenckstone, Spano has big goals for the season. "Obviously, I'd like to make state championships, and also have an undefeated season, maybe," she added.

Come support the team at home on March 21, when they take on Richard Montgomery High School.



Season Previews

Girls Tennis

By **OLIVIA MAYTIN**
Staff Writer

You only live once, but in tennis, you get to serve twice. And the Quince Orchard girls tennis team is ready to smash it on the court.

When you see the yellow balls flying around, you know warm weather is coming, and longer days. The girls' tennis coach and special education teacher Julie Lyst loves the season because the sport brings "a lot of fun memories," especially with the students.

Lyst has been playing tennis since she could walk and continued to play in high school and at Montgomery College for one year. Once she was out of high school, she "started playing in the USTA (United States Tennis

Association) for a few years," and she also plays pickleball for fun.

The effort and passion are there for Lyst. Each day, she forms a practice plan, which is discussed with the girls before practice. Lyst wants the girls to have a passion for tennis.

"I hope the girls see how much love I have for the sport and that's one of the reasons I coach," she said.

She uses coaching to build relationships with all her players out of her love of the sport.

Four-year varsity tennis senior Iris Wu has been preparing for the season for the past couple of weeks. Wu explains that she "hits the ball around with some friends in the weeks prior to tryouts."

As the spring rolls around, she is "excited to play [her] last season of tennis with [her] teammates."

The lineup this year consists of a solid group of girls with "amazing underclassmen and upperclassmen," she added.

The goal of the Quince Orchard tennis team according to Wu is to "beat Poolesville and win [their] division."

The first match is away on Tuesday, March 21 at 3:30 PM against Wootton. Make sure to support the girls tennis team!



INSTAGRAM @QOTENNIS

Softball

By **LILY KAPLAN**
Staff Writer

Spring sports have been long anticipated this school year. The varsity softball team hasn't taken time off, however. Since last season, the girls have trained for hours, preparing for the upcoming season.

Heading into the season, they have seen lots of familiar talent, and lots of new faces as well. Four seniors are on the varsity team, filling the position of the ten seniors who had left the team since last season had ended. One of these seniors is Micaella Zamora, who has been playing softball for all four years of high school. Throughout her career, she has worked hard to move from JV to varsity.

Like many athletes who tried out for softball, Zamora went to off-season workouts and practices.

"I do hitting at batting cages, or I practice with my dad on a field or outside," said Zamora. "It's nice."

Zamora described tryouts as "fun," and said that there were "a lot of new people and [she] saw some old people, so it was fun playing with everyone again."

The turnout at tryouts was great. There were many new freshmen, who had either been playing the sport or who had wanted to try out a new sport.

Last year, sophomore Amelia Hmel was one of those freshmen, and



COURTESY JACKIE LEE

this year, she's back, and ready for the season.

"There was a good turnout of girls this year, and every girl that tried out made the team," she said. "Over half of all the girls were freshmen. It's very exciting to the coaches and captains, considering we lost a lot of seniors last year."

Hmel and other returning players bear the responsibility for creating a strong team environment, so that the sport is enjoyable for everyone. The team chemistry at the beginning of the season will impact how the rest of the season goes.

According to junior Nina Sayegh, "team bonding is important. It helps you to grow closer as a team and even play better together." Little things during practice have helped the team grow and become stronger and closer.

Varsity softball opens their season against Poolesville High School on March 22. Come out to Poolesville to show your support for the team!

Track & Field

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

Track and field is unlike any other sport at Quince Orchard. As one of QO's few no-cut sports, the program plays host to all sorts of athletes—some of the top sprinters and jumpers in the county, players from other sports looking to stay competitive in their offseason, and newcomers wanting a fun way to stay fit.

Track has had a wide appeal at Quince Orchard, and it shows. More than 150 Cougars registered to participate in track this spring season—more than 7% of the entire school. With eighteen different events to offer, there truly is something for every type of athlete. Through the years, head coach Sean Pelkey, a social studies teacher at QO, has embraced this unique aspect of track and field. "I think that track and field is a sport that has something for everybody," he said. "Everybody can get faster; everybody can improve."

Pelkey has coached track and field at Quince Orchard since 1999, and every year, he is met with a similar challenge: acclimating an entire crop of student-athletes who are completely

new to track and field. To teach these new athletes the nuances of the sport, Pelkey has developed a team culture that has fostered strong veteran leadership. Senior sprinter Kameran Williams has seen herself step into this role as the girls sprinting captain.

"[I] make sure to set an example for newcomers to the sport," she said, "and ... attempt to step more out of my comfort zone and become a better version of not only myself as a person, but myself as a leader and as a runner."

Although it is an individual sport, the team aspect of track and field is key. At Quince Orchard, the positive culture helps to ease new athletes onto the team.

"Everyone who steps foot into the team is welcomed with open arms and treated like family," Williams said.

This season, the Cougars hope to translate that positivity into success. After finishing in the middle of the pack during their divisional meets last year, QO is looking to take a step forward. They're looking for key contributions from a strong class of seniors, including Georgetown University commit Roberto Terrell, Elijah Snead, Kehan Bhati, and Williams. There is also high anticipation for athletes coming from other sports.

With so many new faces entering the equation, every track season is sure to have some breakout stars.

Since their practices began on March 1, the track and field team has been hard at work getting prepared for the season. When it comes time for their first meet on Wednesday, March 22, it's go time for QO track.

"Once we get to that first phase of the season, then it's time to compete," Pelkey said.



COURTESY KAMERAN WILLIAMS

Volleyball

By **GRIFFIN OWENS**
Staff Writer

Volleyball has always been one of the school's more popular sports, seeing participants year round ranging from girls volleyball in the fall to co-ed and boys volleyball in the spring season.

That doesn't even include the numerous players that crowd the gym doors at the beginning of lunch each day, waiting for their chance to play.

One of the more popular sports at QO has also been one of the more successful ones, with our school fielding competitive squads year after year. Despite all this success, one familiar opponent repeatedly seems to stand in their way: Northwest.

Last season, the co-ed team advanced deep into the playoffs before losing to the Northwest in the quarter finals.

Girls volleyball suffered a similar fate at the beginning of this year when they were defeated by Northwest in the playoffs after having a successful season.

The boys team also lost to the Jaguars last year, in what was seen as a disappointing season for the team, though they are optimistic about the future.

"I'm sure we'll make it further than last season, which wasn't very far," said senior Maximus Seo.

However, the losses of key players may affect the chances of that happening for both the boys team and co-ed. The boys team lost four seniors from last year's team,

including one of its team captains, Ian Lee. The co-ed team has lost even more, including 8 of 15 players from last year's roster.

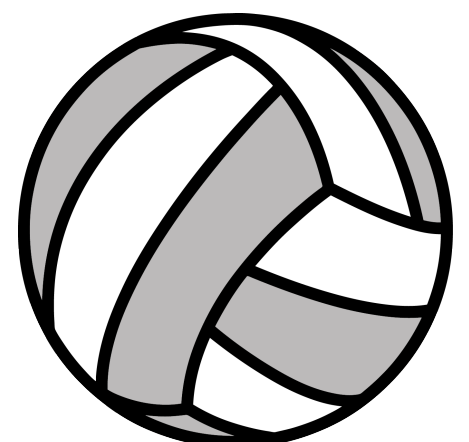
"I was lucky to have upperclassmen that gave me motivation and inspiration," Seo said.

The departure of these players will require others to step up this year in order for the team to even have a chance at getting further than last season.

Similarly to last season, the multiple upperclassmen who fill out this year's co-ed and boys rosters make volleyball one of the more experienced teams in QO athletics.

"I know with the experience I've gathered, I can help the underclassmen of this year learn the sport," Seo said, "as well as be someone they can trust to talk to."

After three weeks of tryouts and practices, both the boys and co-ed play the same team in their season debuts on March 21. Next Tuesday, the boys team will travel to play Damascus, while the co-ed team hosts the Hornets at 7:00 PM.





Get excited! March Madness is here

By MOTAZ DEIFY & GRIFFIN OWENS
Staff Writers

Every March, fans across the country eagerly sit in front of their TVs waiting for March Madness brackets to be announced. Afterwards, they sit and watch the action unfold—who will advance, what teams will be upset? Every move players make, basketball fans sit and bet on the big question: who is going to win the NCAA Men's championship this season?

Last year, the #1 seeded Kansas Jayhawks came back to defeat the North Carolina Tar Heels 72-69 in the national championship game. After only scoring 25 points in the first half and facing a 15-point deficit to open the second half, the Jayhawks outscored UNC 47-29 in the second half.

This year has shaken out a little differently. The reigning champion Jayhawks are ranked #3 in the nation—behind Houston and UCLA. The betting favorite, Houston, was knocked out after reaching the elite 8 in the tournament last year, while the Bruins were upset by North Carolina in the sweet sixteen.

Meanwhile, other bluebloods like Duke and UNC have taken a step back this season, as UNC barely finished over .500, whereas Duke fell down to rank #5 in the tournament. Due to their performance from this season, UNC will not be competing in this season's NCAA tournament.

As for why UNC disappointed Senior Thomas Fegley believes it was a mix of multiple factors.

"Injuries definitely contributed such as Armando Bacot going down," he said, "As well as coaching staff adjustments."

The Tarheels' final nail in the coffin came when Senior Armando Bacot was injured in the ACC Tournament. North Carolina went on to lose their next game against Virginia, just missing the tournament as a result.

This season, former #1 Purdue fell down to #5,

after upsets to Big Ten schools Rutgers and Maryland. After starting 13-0, Purdue suffered a series of upsets, beginning with their February 16 loss to Maryland, 68-54. A month before, Purdue dominated the Terps with a close score of 58-55. Even though Purdue faced a number of upsets, they've still remained first in the East Region.

The Cougars have high hopes for teams such as #8 Arizona because "they are likely to face mostly out of conference teams and they are undefeated against non Pac-12 teams this season," says junior Zack Jackson. "I think they're one of the top contenders for the tournament but they are prone struggle in closer games." Jackson said.

As of March 13th, Arizona will first face #15 Princeton on Thursday in the first round after Princeton have gone 21-8 overall, and remained champions within the Ivy League Conference, as well as Arizona seeds #2 in the South Region. However, Princeton "[doesn't] have size to match with Arizona," said Jackson.

One thing that often plays a role in tournaments is how the teams play going into the tournament according to Fegley.

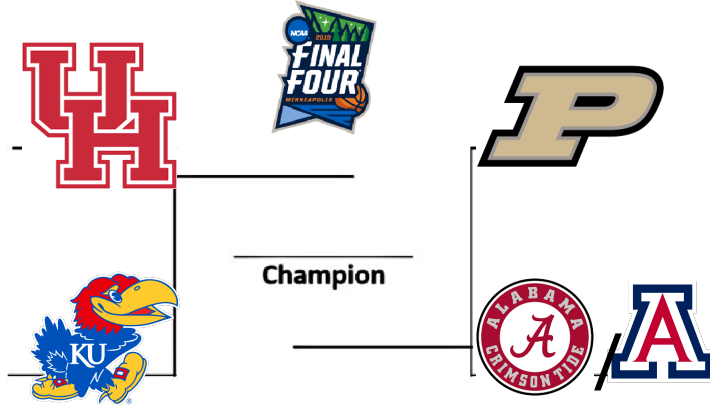
"Momentum always plays a factor," said Fegley.



Most likely to be upset before the Sweet 16



Most likely to make runs



Who Cougars predict the champion will be!

Sliding into baseball season

By OLIVIA MAYTIN
Staff Writer

As the weather starts to warm up and the dirt is raked, the Quince Orchard varsity baseball team looks to hit it out of the ballpark this season. We had the chance to catch up with guidance counselor and two-year head coach Michael McMillen.

Q: How are you feeling about the season starting?

A: When March first rolls around, it's always an exciting time, no matter how many years you're coaching. Every year, there's anticipation, excitement, and a little bit of unknown. It's all good and positive vibes.

Q: What are you doing differently this year than last year to improve that?

A: Something that we've told all the guys was that we are raising our intensity level. Last year, we got in a little bit of a rut, where we kind of just went through the motions at practice. When you go through the motions at practice, you're going to go through the motions at games. We had four one-run ball games and we lost them. By raising that intensity in practice, the players are going to say, "I'm ready, I've been there, ready, every day in practice." The focus has to be much better on the coaching staff and the players. Doing so will help improve the quality of practice, which will then improve the quality of play.

Q: What is the ceiling of the team?

A: As far as intensity and focus, I think the ceiling of the team is just a championship win. That's what you strive for every season. If you're not trying to win every game, and you're not trying to be the best, what are you doing, right? But it's going to be determined by how many guys we end up picking on the team: whether it's 13, whether it's 17, how do those guys show up to practice every day? If they're working, and they're listening, and they're coachable, the sky's the limit. If we go through old or bad habits, it's not going to be good.



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