

THE PROWLER

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

Recent legislation continues to restrict abortion rights

By MIA KAUFFMAN
Editor-in-Chief

In a historic and controversial Supreme Court decision, the precedent granting the constitutional right to an abortion was overturned. Set in *Roe v. Wade* ruling, the precedent explained that the right to liberty and privacy that is stated in the Constitution, protects a woman's right to choose. However, on June 24, 2022, the justices reversed the precedent and declared that there would no longer be a constitutional right to an abortion.

The aftermath of overturning *Roe v. Wade* has been prevalent across the country, but specifically, southern and right-leaning states have experienced the greatest impact.

Most recently, the Florida state legislature, which is dominated by Republicans, passed a ban on abortions after six weeks. The proposal was passed along party lines in a 70-40 vote. As of April 14, the bill has been signed into law by Governor Ron DeSantis. The governor's office released a statement following the enactment of the bill explaining that this ban will be used as a political strategy as he launches into his expected presidential campaign.

This ban follows an ongoing legal

challenge against the previous 15-week ban that was argued before the state Supreme Court this past January. The policy eliminated access to abortion services past 15 weeks, eliminating exceptions for victims of incest or rape. Ever since it was passed on July 1, 2022, the ban has stirred controversy. In this specific case, the lawsuit was filed from a team of organizations including Planned Parenthood, the American Civil Liberties Union, and several abortion clinics. The organizations argued that similar to the initial *Roe v. Wade* precedent, Florida's constitution protects the right to choose.

In a 4-1 decision, however, the justices in Florida's Supreme Court turned down the motion from the organizations and clinics.

An AP News article refers to White House press secretary Karine Jean-Pierre's comments on the repercussions of these bans: she said "this ban would prevent four million Florida women of reproductive age from accessing abortion care after six weeks — before many women even know they're pregnant." Jean-Pierre emphasized that "this ban would also impact the nearly 15 million women of reproductive age who live in abortion-banning states". Additionally, the ban would negatively impact many women who "have previously

relied on travel to Florida as an option to access care."

In addition to Florida's policies, many states including Mississippi, Louisiana, North Dakota, and Alabama have now banned abortion entirely, no matter the stage of pregnancy. Georgia law forbids the procedure after cardiac activity can be detected, which is around six weeks, according to AP News. The New York Times further explained that "in many states, the fight over abortion access is still taking place in courtrooms, where advocates have sued to block enforcement of laws that restrict the procedure." On the other hand, "other states have moved to expand access to abortion by adding legal protections."

In early April, a federal judge from Texas issued a preliminary injunction which is a ruling that "aims to preserve the status quo before final judgment," according to the Cornell Legal Information Institute. In this case, the injunction revoked the FDA's approval for mifepristone, a pill that is used for medically induced abortions. The judge issued the injunction while he presided over a lawsuit from a group of anti-abortion health professionals that were challenging the safety of the drug, which has been used in the US since 2000.

According to BBC, the Texas judge "said the FDA had rushed the approval

and did not properly consider side effects", despite several additional leading health organizations saying it was safe and effective. Right after the injunction, a federal judge from Washington state issued an opposing ruling "ordering the FDA to make no change to the drug's availability and preserving access to mifepristone in 17 US states."

Due to the contradictory rulings, the government appealed to the New Orleans 5th Circuit Court of Appeals. The government asked the Court to put the Texas order on hold when the appeal was heard, which would keep the drug available. The appeals court ruled to keep the drug available, but imposed restrictions.

With the complex nature of the case, the US Justice Department asked the US Supreme Court to intervene. On Friday, April 21, the court blocked the proposed restrictions and paused the lower court's rulings. However, the justices have re-routed the case back to the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The 5th Circuit plans to hold oral arguments on May 17. NPR claims that "however the 5th Circuit rules, the case will almost certainly end up back at the Supreme Court, with the potential for a decision in the case next term."

ChatGPT: The Pros and Cons

By ISADORA KAUFMAN
Staff Writer

Everyone's heard of plagiarism. In case you forgot, plagiarism is when you copy someone else's work and take credit for it, claiming it is "your own". Well, what happens when students stop copying the work of human beings, and start to copy the work of a robot?

ChatGPT allows students to do this. It is an artificial intelligence chatbot and a language processing model. In other words, ChatGPT has been programmed, based on the research it has gathered, to provide its users with natural sounding human-like responses to whatever their requests may be, whether it's helping you to respond to write an email to your not-so-favorite teacher without sounding annoyed, crafting a poem about your adoration of unicorns who eat Lucky Charms, or writing the essay about the Cold War you forgot to do. ChatGPT has an answer for everything—theoretically.

While one can not deny the appeal of A.I. like ChatGPT, which

could provide shortcuts for hours of homework, like all artificial intelligence, it's not perfect. ChatGPT has been programmed to write like a human, but it still often falls short of fully sounding like one. As humans, we often communicate using our emotional intelligence and common sense. ChatGPT often fails to respond to these complex emotions and ways of thinking or use the correct tone.

It's also important to note that while the information ChatGPT provides is from a database — and this database doesn't always consist of entirely accurate information. ChatGPT's database is based on information from the internet and its users. This means that the information it includes isn't always factual, but just what the A.I. finds to be the most popular and human-like response it can generate. According to scribbr, a plagiarism checker and proofreading website, ChatGPT gets its information from a variety of sources, including websites like Wikipedia, which don't always have the best reputation for providing accurate information.

The growing popularity of

ChatGPT has created another obstacle for teachers, who already have to use software like Turnitin to check for plagiarism. Now teachers can't solely rely on plagiarism checkers to catch students turning in work created by ChatGPT, but on new platforms like ZeroGPT, which tries to detect work created by artificial intelligence.

While ChatGPT still isn't currently fully able to imitate the distinct way humans speak or the level of background knowledge humans have, the fact that it's still able to fool many people that it is one, demonstrates the power of artificial intelligence and the threat it could impose to humans in the future. What happens when artificial intelligence like ChatGPT is able to sound and be as emotionally intelligent as humans?

The charity project Giving What We Can

shares how some experts predict that if artificial intelligence continues to improve in quality, it could threaten many people's jobs, as it will be able to do them at a much cheaper cost and faster pace.

While ChatGPT is mainly used right now by students to do their work, the long term effects on student's intelligence and work ethic could be detrimental. How will the next generation learn how to write, be creative, or simply use their brains if they can rely on their useful friend ChatGPT to speak for them?

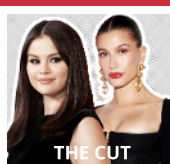


SANKET MISHRA

News

What really happened in the Selena Gomez vs. Hailey Bieber feud?

PAGE 3

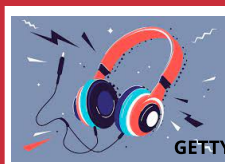


THE CUT

Features

See what QO students will be listening to this summer!

PAGE 9



GETTY

Sports

Read about QO's Ivy League-bound athletes!

PAGE 12



DARTMOUTH

Fans speculate nonexistent conflict between Selena Gomez and Hailey Bieber

By *PATRINA PUN*
Staff Writer

In those hours of mindlessly scrolling through TikTok, needing to fulfill that constant urge of being entertained, did the Selena Gomez and Hailey Bieber drama appear on your feed? If so, you're not alone as hundreds of thousands of TikTok users have fed into the drama as well.

With the continuous increase in the usage of TikTok, according to Wallaroo, the app now has officially over one billion active monthly users and had about 104 million downloads just last month, a 46% increase from last year. About 32.5% of the downloads from TikTok came from 10-19-year-olds and about 29.5% come from 20-29-year-olds. This statistic comes from several generations who have been exposed to TikTok, where the knowledge is infinite and the ability to stalk or resurface old pictures becomes far too simple. This exponential increase could only define the cause of the Gomez and Bieber drama, or what some may call "Jelena and Jailey" feud..

Back in 2011 to 2013, when young Gomez and Justin started dating, Hailey expressed her support and enthusiasm for the relationship through a series of tweets. According to Elle magazine, the tweets included statements like "Selena Gomez is so

100% team #Jelena," " I don't care what anyone says but Justin Bieber and Selena Gomez are the definition of a teenage dream," and "She is beyond flawless and he's ya know he's Bieber. They are the perfect relationship.. foreveralone."

Years ago, before her marriage to Justin, Hailey was a known Beliber and apparently a Jelener as well. On TikTok, pictures circulated of Hailey Bieber holding Justin Bieber magazines and attending his fan meets. Youtube videos, interviews, and articles can all be found surfacing the internet regarding Hailey's early support of her future husband. Yet with these pictures circulating came hateful comments on Hailey's infatuation with Justin's life as a fan. Many on social media speculated on just how and why Justin married a fan.

Another recent revelation: earlier this year, Kylie Jenner had saved a TikTok that possibly suggested the fact that the Jenner sisters had purposely invited Gomez on purpose so that Hailey could spend time alone with Justin. Back in 2014 when, according to Elle, Gomez had spent New Year's Eve in Dubai with Kendall Jenner and Kylie Jenner. Though some claim otherwise, stating that the trip was never planned with such intention. Regardless, Justin and Gomez had already been on and off by the fall of 2014 before officially

ending their relationship in March 2018. Meanwhile, between 2016 to 2018, Hailey and Justin were similarly on and off before officially getting married in 2018.

So how did this atypical celebrity drama blow up into a giant feuding phenomenon? To no surprise, with a bit too much time on their hands, fans began to nitpick Hailey's every move. According to Stylecaster, fans on TikTok claimed that Hailey was "obsessed" with Gomez as Hailey was found wearing similar outfits as the former. Hailey was even found sporting a "G" tattoo that oddly looks identical to Gomez's tattoo, which was meant as a tribute to her sister.

In the same month, Kylie Jenner and Hailey Bieber were accused of shading Gomez after she posted a TikTok of her bushy eyebrow: Kylie then proceeded to post on her Instagram story a photo of the eyebrow and captioned it, "This was an accident?" following a FaceTime screenshot of her and Hailey's eyebrow. Yet, Jenner and Hailey both denied any accusations regarding the subtle eyebrow shade as well as Gomez herself who simply told everyone to "be nice."

The hate towards Hailey only worsened when, according to Forbes, an old video resurfaced of Hailey mimicking a gag when Taylor Swift was mentioned. Gomez then defended Swift in the comments and

called her "one of the best in the game" before shortly announcing her break from social media in February 2023.

As fans continued to hunt for more information, Gomez finally reached her breaking point and posted an Instagram story on March 24th, revealing that Hailey had privately contacted Gomez herself regarding the death threats she's been receiving primarily from Gomez's fans herself. Gomez then posted on her Instagram story: "I've always advocated for kindness and really want all this to stop."

In response to this story, Hailey posted her own Instagram story, thanking Gomez for her kindness. To mark an end to this drama, both followed each other on Instagram.

Amidst all this drama, Justin Bieber was relatively quiet, despite the suggestive comments that Justin never stopped harboring an emotional attachment towards Gomez, or the fact that Hailey was the "side piece" in their relationship.

The irony of it all was that fans were far more concerned with focusing all their negativity towards two girls rather than Justin who had come out of this feud, unscathed. According to Cosmopolitan, this drama has only demonstrated the double standards and unrealistic expectations society has for women. Hailey and Gomez being a clear example of such.

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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.

Remembering 45 years of local mall

By *MOTAZ DEIFY*
Staff Writer

Growing up in the city of Gaithersburg includes doing many traditions such as: back-to-school shopping at Target in RIO, grabbing food and simply hanging out in the Kentlands and RIO. For the past 45 years, Lakeforest Mall was a hub where people would go for their shopping—until this past spring break on March 31, when the facility was permanently closed to the public.

Lakeforest Mall first opened on September 12, 1978, with original anchor stores such as JCPenney and Sears, and with approximately 30-50 stores to shop from. According to The MoCo Show, the mall was also "one of the first in the United States to feature an indoor ice skating rink," which then was replaced by the NTI Theatres movie theater in 1984.

Social Studies Teacher Penny Keune, for instance, remembers "go[ing] to the movies" with her kids when they were little.

Later, the movie theater was replaced by the food court, which since then occupied that area until restaurants gradually shut down, to the point where there was no more left to eat from. Among the restaurants were McDonald's, Panda Express, Kelly's Cajun Grill, and many more.

Lakeforest Mall was also known for its play areas that were famously located in the core of the mall. "I really enjoyed the play areas as a kid," said junior Zach

Green.

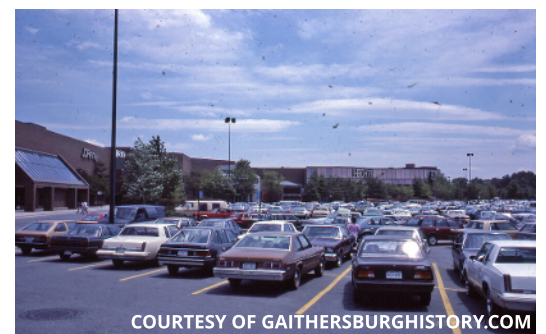
There were many factors that brought the successful mall to the ground. "People stopped going to malls," Keune believes. "That's part of it."

Also, criminal incidents kept happening inside and nearby the mall, which drove customers away. For example, according to ABC7 News, an individual was arrested for "the stabbing death of a T-Mobile employee in Lakeforest Mall" in February 2022. The employee was identified as 23 year-old Jose Alexander Maldonado. He escaped the store after stabbing; however, he then collapsed to the ground at the food court.

Green also mentions that many stores had become vacated by the end even before the mall closed for good, stores were closing down one at a time. The mall was at its decline for some time, when many entrances of stores enforced a metal gate, with Macy's being the last of them before the mall officially closed down on the final day.

After the mall's glory days, the only thing that was heard on a daily basis was silence, and what was seen was dark corners of stores, as trash and old belongings were left abandoned.

The fate of Lakeforest still holds promise, as its 100 acres of land offers an opportunity for redevelopment. Consequently, the now abandoned facility is planned to be demolished by 2024.



Lakeforest Mall's parking lot when the mall first opened



Lakeforest Mall's parking lot in recent years



QO Swifties excited for Eras Tour

By **HAILLEY BAKER**
Senior Staff Writer

Taylor Swift's undeniable talent and unwavering success in the music industry continues to amaze fans and critics alike. With a massive following of 85 million monthly listeners, Swift holds the title for most streamed female artist on Spotify. Her latest album, *Midnights*, made Swift the first artist to simultaneously occupy the entire top ten on Billboard's Hot 100 song chart. Fan favorite "Anti-Hero" topped the list, becoming the ninth number-one hit of her career.

Swift is currently embarking on her sold-out 52-date national tour, the Eras Tour, which infamously made headlines and sparked a Congressional debate earlier this year for its catastrophic rollout of ticket sales. However, despite the initial hiccups, many Quince Orchard students are ecstatic to see her. During the Eras Tour, Swift takes those in attendance on a musical journey throughout her ten albums—or Eras.

Just five weeks ago, on March 17, Swift kicked off her highly-anticipated Eras Tour in Glendale, Arizona. Freshman and long-time Taylor Swift fan (Swiftie) Lauren Schrier was in attendance. "It

felt surreal being at the opening night of the Eras Tour because no one knew what to expect," Schrier said. Despite the uncertainty, Schrier had an amazing time, and particularly enjoyed "the folklore album era and how interactive Taylor was with the crowd."

Throughout the massive three-hour length show, Swift shares special and intimate moments with Swifties. She also makes it a point to express her gratitude for being able to perform again after the pandemic.

While some students, like Schrier, have already seen the tour, many are eagerly anticipating their turn to attend.

Senior Noah Mayfield, who was previously featured in a Prowler article about struggling to buy tickets, and his mom are counting down the days until Swift's May 14 Philadelphia show, which happens to fall on Mother's Day.

"I've never seen a famous singer, actress, or anything like that in person before, so the fact that my first kind of experience like that is going to be Taylor Swift is huge for me," Mayfield said. "That is the only voice I can say with 100% certainty I hear every day because there are days when I don't even see people who live in my house."

Mayfield, who is also a musician,

takes great inspiration from Swift, and the added excitement of struggling to get tickets has made the experience even more special. He and his mom were overjoyed when they discovered the show falls on Mother's Day, making it a truly memorable mother-son moment.

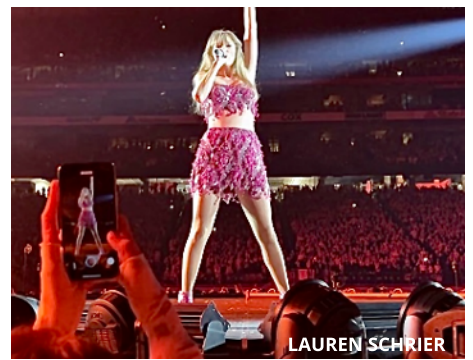
Another senior, Josie Belkin, who attended Swift's Speak Now tour in 2012 when she was young, is eagerly looking forward to the Eras Tour. She is also attending on May 14. "I can't wait. I don't know what I'm gonna do. I'm more looking forward to the Eras Tour than prom," Belkin said.

Belkin could only get one ticket to the show, so she is going by herself. But Belkin explained it's worth it to see Swift alone. "She makes me so happy," she said. "I'm independent enough to do it myself, and I'm not there to hang out with friends. I'm there to hang out with Taylor."

For fans like Schrier, Mayfield, and Belkin, seeing Swift live is a dream come true. It speaks to the immense popularity and connection that Swift has with her fans, as Mayfield pointed out: "There are so many people from school who are seeing her, and I feel like that really gives voice to how big this fandom is, and how connected it is. It's really sweet to know that I'm gonna have so many friends there."



LAUREN SCHRIER



LAUREN SCHRIER

Taylor Swift takes the stage on the first night of the Eras Tour.

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Bonds, bailouts and bankruptcy: Explaining Silicon Valley Bank's collapse

By LIAM DALY
QO Student

On March 10, we saw the largest bank failure since the financial crisis of 2008, when Silicon Valley Bank (NASDAQ:SVIB) experienced bank runs greater than their liquid capital, or money that can be quickly converted to cash, could account for. After they were forced to liquidate bonds for a crippling loss, they were taken over by the FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation). The FDIC later assured that all of Silicon Valley Bank's depositors were to be made whole, insuring entire deposits (instead of the FDIC minimum of \$250,000) with FDIC funds.

However, while some claim that this 'bailout' would come out of taxpayer's wallets, it will not, at least not directly. The FDIC insurance fund is directly paid by banks, for the service of providing exactly what we saw the FDIC do: act as insurance to depositors.

Why does the FDIC even exist? Well, during the Great Depression and the 2008 financial crisis, we saw public trust in banks crumble. This led to bank runs (people withdrawing their money out of fear of the banks failing), which caused more people to worry about the banks failing—causing more bank runs—and so on.

While this vicious cycle of fear is one of the most dangerous times for

the economy, if the government acts properly, and quickly, they can move to patch the wound before fear starts to spread. But how did the Fed manage to do this with SVB?

Silicon Valley Bank was primarily focused on one industry—technology. However, it wasn't large companies using SVB, it was primarily small start-up companies looking for a place to find newly acquired cash. Why was this client base led to SVB? After the brief Covid-19 crash in 2020, we saw the market rally 110% (SPY), and big tech companies move even more GOOGLE (177%), AAPL (213%). After this, many small tech businesses started to emerge, and after very successful IPOs (due to the sector's momentum), these companies were looking for places to keep their money. They turned to Silicon Valley Bank. SVB wasn't an extremely large bank at the time, but it offered competitive interest rates in a low interest rate environment. This was the price you had to pay: go with a big bank like Bank of America, or Capital One, and get 0.5-2% interest annually, or go with a smaller bank, and get closer to 1.5-2.5% annually.

Well, naturally, in a time where the market was soaring, interest rates were near zero, and the only way things could go was up, they went with the slightly riskier option and put their money in Silicon Valley Bank. But things didn't go up.

Enter the bond market, the trading of public debt. In order for

banks to make a profit, they have to make more money investing deposits than they pay out to depositors in interest. Well, how do banks ensure stable risk-free yields? What they often do is purchase federal bonds. Federal bonds provide the holder with a set amount of cash every year (or half year) and upon the bond expiring, the holder gets their initial payment. Due to the previously explained low interest rates during the Trump administration, these bonds often had interest rates of 1% or less, and what Silicon Valley Bank did was purchase a lot of them, for three and a half years out.

But what happens when interest rates rise? When interest rates rise, the bond market values older bonds with lower interest rates less, because the government is currently offering much better interest rates.

So Silicon Valley Bank is left sitting there with a large sum of money in bonds that have lost a large chunk of their value, while owing a client base of startup companies who quickly need their money. Which, as anyone can see, isn't ideal.

When their clients came to SVB requesting their cash back, they needed to quickly sell the bonds to get enough cash on hand to fulfill their clients' requests. However, when word got out that the bank, where these companies are storing the majority of their money, does not have enough liquid capital to cover their obligations, every company now races

to pull their money out. And now Silicon Valley Bank has to sell \$21 billion worth of bonds for a loss of \$1.8 billion.

As some of you more financially literate folks may know, losing 1.8 billion dollars isn't good. In fact, it was so not good, that Silicon Valley Bank essentially went bankrupt. They no longer had enough money to pay back their depositors, so the FDIC had to step in and pay for the remaining clients' funds.

Why was this needed? Why couldn't the government have just paid the \$250,000 per account they were liable for, and leave it at that? After all, these companies had taken a risk by depositing more than the \$250,000 minimum order to secure a higher interest payment, why not let them reap the rewards of their risky decision?

Well, that's not exactly all that would happen. What would happen if you suddenly heard that banks were failing to fully pay depositors their deposit? Well, this would cause more runs on banks. If this were to happen, we would see a return to 2008 levels of distrust, leading to a collapse of the debt market, a collapse of the stock market, even more run-away inflation, and all-around economic consequences.

Liam Daly is a freshman at Quince Orchard High School and has experience as a research assistant in the financial industry.

KEEPING UP WITH THE

KOUGARS

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 Cougars!

Seniors move forward onto their next chapter:

As we enter the month of May, anticipation is filling the air, senioritis is in full swing, and the countdown is on for QO's graduation day — June 2. This year, like last year, graduation will take place at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County at 10 AM. The ceremony will include speeches from a variety of people: a selected valedictorian and a student-body representative, senior class president Deeya Mistry, a teacher speaker, and principal Beth Thomas. This momentous occasion will mark the end of a great four years for the class of 2023.

Students elect a new SMOB:

On Wednesday, April 19, students across the county exercised their rights by voting for the next SMOB, and Sami Saeed, a junior at Richard

Montgomery, was elected to serve for the 2023-2024 school year. The Student Member of the Board, typically referred to as the SMOB, is the student representative on the Montgomery County Board of Education. They represent student voices on a board of adults.

According to the news section of the MCPS website, "Mr. Saeed received 70 percent of the vote, while his opponent, Mr. Yoseph Zerihun, a junior at Springbrook High School, received 30 percent." Saeed is an active member of our community, currently serving as SGA president of his school, "a member of the SMOB Advisory Council and the Montgomery County Commission on Youth and Children."

Saeed ran his campaign based on the slogan "Change now, talk later." Some of his main campaign focuses included expanding mental health awareness and services, school safety initiatives, closing the opportunity gap, and proposing policies to meet a net-zero carbon emission goal.

Saeed will replace the current SMOB Arvin Kim, a senior at Walt Whitman, and will take office on July 1.

Student highlight of the month:

It was the first day of school when technology teacher Derek Sontz mentioned the possibility of getting certified in cybersecurity. Instantly, senior Marco Parello's eyes lit up. Parello had always loved computers, but the idea of the Cisco CyberOps Associate certification program fascinated Parello. From then on, with the help of Mr. Sontz, and many hours of hard work and dedication, Parello began studying for the certification.

Parello discussed that the journey to certification was intense. In order to study for the certification, Parello first took notes while completing the 28-unit CyberOps Associate course on Netacad, a virtual academy that offers courses for aspiring cybersecurity professionals. The course helped familiarize Parello with the required knowledge for the certification. Parello says he then "used the official test concept page from Cisco [a technology company that develops, manufactures, and sells cybersecurity software] to create flashcards on knowt.com," a resource to create flashcards digitally. Parello adds he is currently taking "daily two-hour sessions of studying the flashcards by typing the answer from memory."

Yet, Parello's passions don't stop

with cybersecurity. Recently, he has found an interest in 3D printing and says he has begun to "fix the 3D printers in room 132," and has "spent hours researching how to fix Flashforge Guider IIs," a type of 3D printer.

Parello credits his QO classes for helping spike his interest in cybersecurity. In the future, he plans to major in cybersecurity at George Mason University, and to use the certification to boost his resume. Attaining the certification is very important because, according to Parello, "they are often required by the federal government for contractors" and "most companies won't even look at your resume if you don't have any certifications."

While this is the last issue of the year, if you would like to be featured in our next issue of Keeping Up with the Cougars next fall, please reach out to us through our Twitter or Instagram at @qohs_prowler, or through email at QOHSproowler@gmail.com. Have a great summer Cougars!



AP Art and Design students prepare their final portfolios

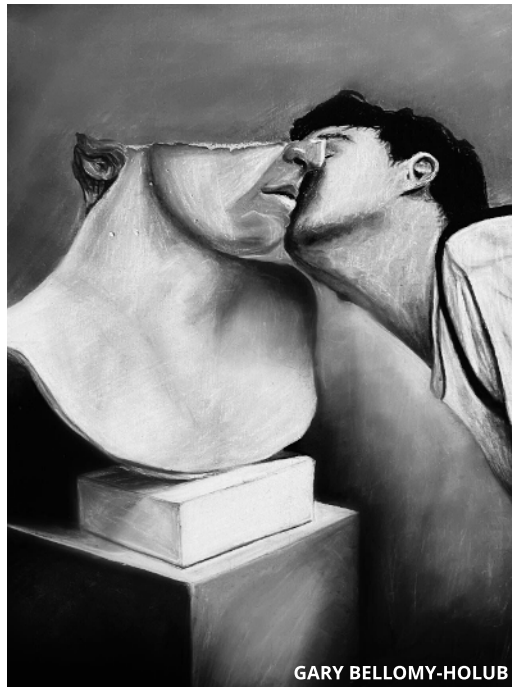
By **FIONA FEINGOLD**
Editor-in-Chief

It's officially AP exam season. For many QO students, the first two weeks of May are the most stressful of the school year. But not all AP tests involve a Scantron and test packet. Students enrolled in AP Art and Design face a different kind of culminating assessment: their test scores are based solely on a portfolio of 15 original pieces and accompanying written reflections.

Senior Gary Bellomy-Holub is currently in his third year of taking art at QO. Before enrolling in AP Drawing, he took Foundations of Art and Studio Art. Bellomy-Holub decided to take the AP class for both the creative feedback and potential college credit. "I'm honestly just curious how my art will be interpreted and potentially enjoyed by others," Bellomy-Holub said.

Bellomy-Holub says his portfolio revolves around "the difficulties of being a gay teenager in modern society, portrayed with inspiration from Ancient Greek culture and architecture." Many of his pieces were created with black and white charcoal.

In order to begin working on a piece, Bellomy-Holub looks for inspiration on websites such as Pinterest and Google. Once he has a general plan of what a piece will look



like, he will create a reference photo by editing different pictures together. "I like to have everything planned out before I start my piece, so by the time I start, I know exactly how my piece will look when I'm done," Bellomy-Holub added.

Another AP Art student, senior Kameran Williams, has taken art classes at QO since her freshman year. Williams enrolled in Photography 1, Photography 2, and Photography 3 before taking AP 2D Art. "I knew that I wanted to challenge myself and my creativity, and I knew

that AP Art would be just the place to do it," Williams said.

In her portfolio, Williams decided to focus on "the negative mental health challenges that men face in today's society that [are] often overlooked [in favor of] the struggles of women," Williams added. "It's common for people all over the world to support the saying that 'men can't cry,' and I wanted to be able to prove that they can through photography." Each of Williams's pieces features a male figure struggling with mental illness.

Both Bellomy-Holub and Williams agree that the portfolio process has had its fair share of ups and downs. "The process has definitely been a challenge because of how demanding it is, but it's honestly felt so good the past few days because I'm finally seeing all my pieces come together in one cohesive portfolio," Williams said.

Bellomy-Holub added, "It's super rewarding to work on a piece for a long time and finally finish it, and it turns out exactly what I imagined it would." With each new piece, Bellomy-Holub says he "had to push the limits on what I had previously done in the piece before."

The class itself, consisting of sixteen students and spanning two class periods, has become a tight-knit group over the course of the school

year. "[Class is] always very productive and educational, but it's also full of laughter and jokes and we really feel like a family," Williams said.

For Bellomy-Holub, Williams, and the rest of the AP Art cohort, working on such an extensive body of work has generated new perspectives on a variety of complex topics, including art itself. Williams said, "I've always known that you can do crazy things to what was once a simple piece of film, but sitting and actually doing it...has made me into a better [artist]."



Plans after high school: how QO students are navigating their futures

By **CHASE PANTEZZI**
Staff Writer

As high school students, it feels like we are all constantly made aware of the pressure placed on us to succeed. Beginning freshman year, thoughts about what will happen after high school linger in the back of our minds. As we become juniors and first semester seniors, we must consider standardized test scores, how to perfect our college applications, involvement in extracurriculars, etc.

The stress at that point is already overbearing, and can become even more detrimental after we are accepted into college or if our path feels like it is something other than college. We must take financial factors, as well as what we are emotionally driven to pursue, into account. According to Research.com, "24% of students in the United States are getting stressed about their future and finding a job after graduation."

A different website, Best Colleges, cites that "52% of high school students feel pressure to make decisions about their future too soon," and that "Nearly 1 in 3 students believe that college costs and mental health struggles will impact their future plans."

These factors and statistics reflect the reality of the post high school experience — no one knows exactly what to do and how they are going to accomplish their goals.

Senior Noah Carino explained his struggle when contemplating his decision on which college to attend.

"There are good things from my top two colleges, and there are bad things about both of them that I look over," he said. "I keep finding myself stuck between the two and can't make any real decisions. It's hard to prioritize what I actually want."

Many students also stress over the financial aspect. Carino said that budgeting and waiting for financial aid has been one of the most difficult parts of the process to date.

Senior and Harvard commit Bella Andrade shared a similar perspective. "The most stressful part of the college application process would have to be making sure to apply to scholarships while applying to schools," she said. "In the end, colleges are still a business to them. They rarely give out money, and some give out scholarships while some do not — some give merit, some don't."

Other students have opted to apply for trade school when they decided that college was not a suitable option. Senior Anthony Astrissi is going to the Plumbers & Gasfitters Local 5 trade school, which does projects in the D.C. area. He said that he will be gaining more experience with how gasfitting — which is used for heating — is applied to various situations.

Astrissi explained how the process of trade school is similar to a job application, where it involves the application, a written ethics test, and an interview, leading to a hands-on process. "The real stress that came from applying was the time — waiting it out, knowing that I am competing against other people," he said.

Astrissi also advised others to definitely consider trade school, because college is not the only option. He said that there is a lot of money to be made because not many people know how to get into the trades or what the job entails.

However, for those going to college, the process has been worth it so far. "It was very gratifying and was very academically validating [when I was accepted to Harvard]," Andrade said. "It showed me that all of the sacrifices I have made in the last four years — going out, hanging with friends, my mental and emotional health — [were] all worth it in the end." Andrade recently had the opportunity to travel to the prestigious college for an admitted students day. She said that while she is nervous about college education, the opportunity to meet students and sit in on real classes made the transition seem less daunting.

Students were asked what advice they would give to underclassmen who are soon to be entering the process of deciding their course post-high school. Both Carino and Andrade made it clear that it is vital to get your essays done as early as possible. Andrade said she regrets not finishing a draft of her main essay in the summer.

Carino's principal tip was to go to CollegeTracks. "They are amazing people; I love them so much," he said. "They took a lot of stress off of me." He added, "For personal stuff, take some time and think about what you want from your next four years of school."

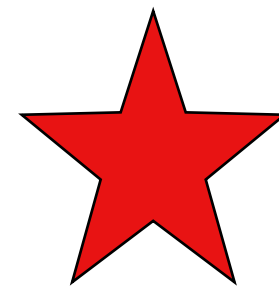
Andrade also said that she regrets not applying to scholarships earlier.

She made the point that your personal essay has to emphasize your journey and growth.

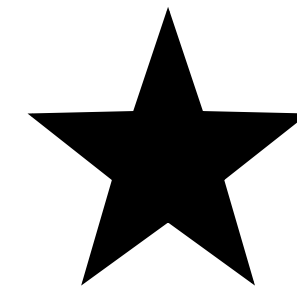
All in all, while there are many aspects of their futures that stress them out, QO students are generally very excited as they look forward to what is to come. Carino said he is excited to get out of his comfort zone and possibly be in New York City if he decides to pursue an education at Fordham University.

Andrade put it best as she summed up the essence of the prospect of the future, no matter what your path is: "Something I learned is that no matter what titles you have, people will always remember how you made them feel, which is the most important thing."





2022-2023 Student Memories



By Sophie Fawkner and Kate Belman

Freshman: Nadia Aung

From meeting new friends—whether that be in classes or during track practice—to fun and exciting football games, freshman Nadia Aung says she loves her Quince Orchard experience. “Ever since I have gone to QO, I have made so many new friends,” she says. Not only did Aung make many new friendships during her



NADIA AUNG

freshman year, but she has been able to attend sporting events such as football games. As a part of the track team at QO, Nadia has been able to set numerous personal records in events that she had never even thought of running before. “I wanted to take on a challenge and try something new, so the two mile was definitely a new experience for me,” she said. While Aung has not yet been at QO for a full year, she has enjoyed attending football games with her old and new friends, where she was able to take part in the QO community. “I truly feel that QO is not just a school, but it is a community filled with so many memorable [moments],” Aung said.

Sophomore: Trent Mettler

Sophomore Trent Mettler has made many memories here at Quince Orchard High School. From football games to playing as number 99 in varsity lacrosse games, Mettler has had an exhilarating second year of high school. When it comes to football games, he specifically loves the Red Army. “I would say that the Red Army is super fun, and I can’t wait to hopefully take part in it as a general in the future,” he said. Not only does he enjoy the whole experience of football games, but Mettler says he loves the brotherhood that has been established on his lacrosse team. “Everyone comes together and does something that they thoroughly enjoy. This is what makes our team and lacrosse community so special,” he said. Mettler doesn’t only focus on sports and team bonding, but he also made a good point of how each and everyone at QO has something extraordinary to offer. “QO as a whole is filled with students and staff who really just want to do great things, and they all bring their unique abilities and strengths, which makes QO a great place to attend,” he said.



TRENT METTLER

Junior: Catherine Brady

Junior Catherine Brady is a highly involved QO student. From theatre productions to honor societies, she’s done it all. Brady recalls her favorite memory from QO as the first day returning to in-person learning back in 2021. “Getting to see my friends for the first time in over a year and actually feeling like my high school career was starting was a super impactful memory,” Brady says. QO has many different opportunities and options for students to express themselves and their creativity and personality. Brady herself is an actress in QO Theatre, most recently in the musical “Anastasia.” She is also a student leader in QO Theatre, as well as the secretary of the Student Board of Directors. With 16 honor societies at Quince Orchard, there are lots of options for students to choose from. Brady is a member of Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society, Tri M Math Honor Society, National English Honor Society, and International Thespian Society. Catherine thoroughly enjoys the productions that the talented QO Theatre presents. She says that “having been in both of the shows and [being] a student director, [I have] made my closest friends and made a ton of my favorite memories,” but specifically she credits “late night rehearsals [and] being in the school long after everyone has left” as great moments for bonding.



CATHERINE BRADY

Senior: Matthew Pinto

From the football field to the basketball courts, senior Matthew Pinto has enjoyed his time at Quince Orchard—even though he has only been here for the past two years. Pinto, who has gone to QO for both his junior and senior year, was a member of the varsity football and basketball team for both years. “Winning states [twice] was [one of my favorite memories at QO] and I liked joining all the clubs,” he said. Pinto says that sometimes he can become too stressed due to all his extracurricular activities, but he “loves taking part in leadership roles here at QO.” Matthew is also a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and said he has thoroughly enjoyed the meetings. Pinto also occupies an important role in SGA as the representative for his senior class. Pinto said, “I love helping out with school [events], and being a part of the school spirit. Seeing events come out [after] being planned out, I love it.”



MATTHEW PINTO



What's fresh?

Summer and Spring Trends

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

As a senior Editor-in-Chief, I'm sad to leave my fashion column behind after this issue. I have deeply enjoyed honing my passion for fashion journalism and giving you the best fashion and beauty advice throughout the school year. Fashion has always been an integral part of my life, and I was truly honored to relaunch the first Prowler fashion column since 2015. At Syracuse University, I plan on majoring in Magazine, News and Digital Journalism, specifically focusing on fashion and beauty in the journalism field, at the Newhouse School of Public Communications.

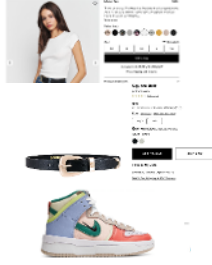
For my last issue, I leave you with the hottest summer and current spring trends so you can feel and look your best now and all summer long. Always remember to stay true to yourself in your style and be your own trendsetter.

Spring:

Baggy is Better:

I think it's safe to say we can fully get rid of skinny jeans, at least for this spring season. L'Officiel is calling this baggy jean craze "baggy mania." Over the past few years, especially since the post-pandemic era, fashion has been leaning more towards comfort and stealing the styles of the 90s, which we seem to be doing a lot. Big, baggy jeans, which first emerged in the 90s hip-hop era, give off that cool,

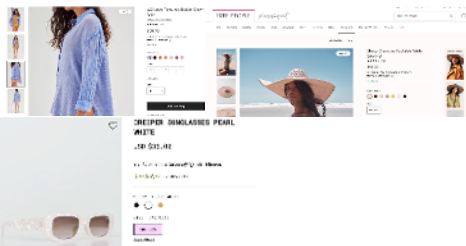
effortless look and can be styled in a multitude of ways. Try pairing yours with a tucked-in basic tee, a belt, and some high-top sneakers.



Button Up, Buttercup:

The versatile menswear-inspired piece has become a wardrobe staple. Button-ups come in all colors and fabrics: striped, white, blue, cotton, denim, or silk—you name it! Whether you're going for overdressed or under-dressed, button up shirts fit the criteria. Unwind at the beach with an open button up, acting as a light coverup. Or, dress it up with wide-legged jeans, booties, and some hoops for a night out

Beach Day:



White footwear:

Brighten up your footwear this spring with a white shoe of choice. White footwear continues to provide a timeless and classic look. Some of

my favorite white shoe finds for the season include Chuck Taylor's chunky white All Stars and Nike's Icon Classic Sandal.



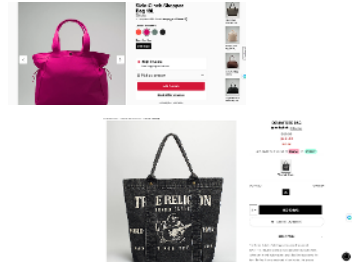
Bold Bottoms:

Step into your more adventurous side with some fun print pants. Vibrant bottoms stand out and give off an uplifting vibe to any look. Prada, Bottega Veneta, and Dries Van Noten have all showcased them on their runways. Don't be afraid to stray away from boring denim and make a statement.



Summer:

BIG bags: Say goodbye to tiny bags that only fit your lip gloss and wallet. We have recently seen a push for functional fashion and oversized bags are all the rage. There were countless appearances of big bags at the Bottega Veneta Spring 2023 Ready-to-Wear show and they continue to prove stylish for the summer season as well.



Neutral Netting:

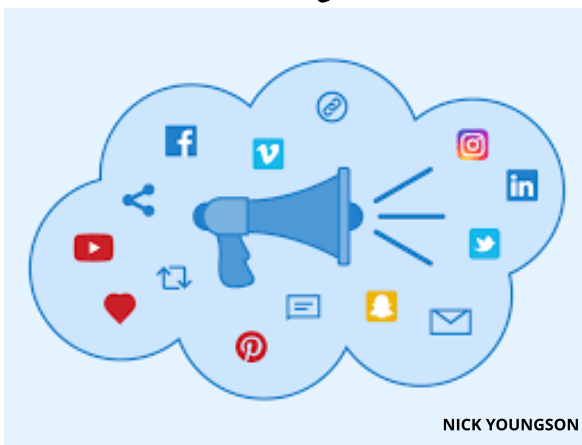
Neutral netted pieces are taking the summer season by storm. Crochet fashion became a defining look last year and has only become more popular since. Explore the world of crochet from dresses to bags and everything in between.

Clear Shoes:

The transparent shoe has been claimed by *Vogue* as the biggest footwear trend this season. The glass slipper Cinderella-esque shoe has quickly been adopted by Prada and Valentino, as well as popularized by celebrities such as Rihanna and Kendall Jenner. The purpose of a clear shoe can be either to draw the eye toward another statement piece or highlight the shoe itself with a colorful transparent option in combination with other subtle clothing and jewelry pieces.

VIEWPOINT

Parasocial Relationships: The illusion of celebrity fan relationships



NICK YOUNGSON

By **MAMS JAGHA**
Staff Writer

Through the presence of social media, users are allowed a connection with celebrities, athletes, and sometimes even animated characters. But is it really a connection if this relationship is one-sided?

When we really like an artist, book character, or movie star, we start to "relate" to them, follow them, and live through them vicariously. This creates the illusion of a bond or even friendship that is called a 'parasocial relationship.' We see interviews online that qualify as who these famous people are, so we think we know them and understand who they are.

There are three levels of parasocial relationships: Entertainment-Social, Intense-Parasocial, and Borderline-Pathological.

The Entertainment-Social level is when a celebrity is just a source of entertainment or gossip, like when we watch a really good show and decide to follow some of the actors' social media.

Intense-Parasocial is when we have intensive or compulsive feelings toward a celebrity. An example of this is when a person becomes attached to a celebrity and decides that they "love" them or that the celebrity is the only one who truly "gets" them.

Finally, Borderline Pathological is when one has uncontrollable behaviors or fantasies toward a celebrity. A popular example of this is in 2009, when a fan claimed to be singer-songwriter Rihanna's future husband and she had to get a restraining order against him.

Though sometimes there are positives to parasocial relationships, like an increased sense of belonging, reduced loneliness, and stronger social connections, at times the negatives can outweigh them. We need to be

aware before anything spirals out of hand. Just because someone opens up aspects of their lives to the public does not mean that their life is public.

Some have said that it could be argued that they are not 'relationships' at all. In 2016, after the controversy with Kanye West, Taylor Swift sought seclusion for a year because of how much hate she received on social media from West fans. For a while, she was rarely seen in public again.

Another more recent example was Frank Ocean's 2023 Coachella performance. After arriving late, Ocean did perform some songs and even hinted at new music, but his set was cut short and he left abruptly. This made fans at the event and online doubt him as an artist, though he had been dealing with the death of his brother and how music had affected their relationship beforehand. This is an example of how when

celebrities "mess up," we start to question if we really know them, and in truth, we don't—because they are not just tools of entertainment, they are human beings that deserve respect and have some rights to privacy.

The sharing of celebrities' personal information, relationships, or troubles shows how invasive the public/internet is. At the end of the day, celebrities (no matter who) deserve a pardon from the constant overreaches in their lives.



SEOBIILITY



Sounds of the Summer

What will students be listening to in Summer 2023?

By CHASE PASEKOFF
Staff Writer

The sky is clear as the sun blazes onto the grass. The formerly bare trees are now full of leaves and dandelions have filled the ground. The sun no longer sets at 5:30, and the thoughts of spending the day at the poolside aren't figments of our imagination anymore. Our patience has paid off, and summer is upon us once again. Driving around with the roof off while wearing sunglasses will no longer be an aesthetic you could only find on Pinterest, but a reality! That said, a new summer also means a new style.

Summer sounds tend to be shaped by the most popular music hits. Typically dominated by very pop-heavy fare, the top radio songs over the next few months will likely be held as representatives of what summer 2023 "sounded like." However, let's see what the songs and genres that students have come to associate with summer are.

When it comes to QO students, Harry Styles is one of the main artists that should be expected to be heard. "My go-to summer song is 'Treat People With Kindness' by Harry Styles because it's so upbeat and happy," said junior Maddie King. "The song just reminds me of making good memories with friends and doing good," King added.

Freshman Sophie Levine shared a similar sentiment. "One of my favorite summer songs is 'Canyon Moon' by Harry Styles because it's such a fun and upbeat song," she said.

Both songs were released in 2019, potentially indicative of the fact that songs with summer vibes can be held onto for several years. Regardless, it seems as though Harry Styles' music is

a staple in some QO students' summer playlists.

While many songs have an inherent summer feeling, other QO students, like senior Danielle Garcia, shared that their summer favorites are those that remind them of summer memories. "My go-to summer song is 'Santeria' by Sublime," said Garcia. "Growing up I only ever heard it during the summer, so whenever I hear it, I automatically think of summer, the beach, and all those good vibes." This brings up another interesting perspective: perhaps summer songs have a more meaningful value rather than an inherent "summer" energy.

That being said, genre-specific music is also a main factor in what some QO students choose to listen to. "I like to listen to pop and country in the summer because they can be the most cheerful styles of music in my opinion," said King. "I feel like when it starts to get warmer out, I gravitate towards that type of music." This makes sense: sunny days and clear skies are often associated with happy music and upbeat tempos.

On the flip side, Garcia says she prefers to listen to "reggae rock during the summer because it encapsulates what I want all my summers to feel like." Reggae rock has a bit more of a distinct sound but still embodies the idea of a carefree and relaxed vibe that many look for each summer.

With all of that being said, the music one chooses to listen to in the summertime greatly depends on one's mood and overall perspective for the summer. Some prefer very poppy, upbeat songs with happy undertones, while others prefer music that has more of a connection to the summer memories they've made over the years.

Editorial Cartoon



CARTOON BY AMADI PINKNEY

"April 21, 2023"

According to a report by CNN, the government of Yokosuka City in Japan has announced it will start using the AI tool ChatGPT to help with "administrative tasks." Japan, which has one of the lowest birth rates in the world at 1.3 births per woman, has a "rapidly aging" population, and Yokosuka City, like many across the country, has a shrinking population as a result.

Scan the QR code to read more!



Prom Personalities: Which Are You?

By CHASE PASEKOFF
Staff Writer

Get ready, Cougars! Tomorrow night, the juniors and seniors of QO will be dancing under the lights at Pinstripes in Bethesda. But before that can happen, let's go over the five different types of people at prom.

1) The Planning One

They've been preparing for the past six months for the special night. They made dinner reservations as soon as the date was announced and picked out their outfit back in January. They made the group chat with their friends to discuss the plan, even though they'd probably already decided everything on their own. If you're wondering what time pictures are at, you should probably text The Planning One.

2) The Tired One

This person should probably take the group chat off of Do Not Disturb. If they send a text along the lines of "Ohh prom's tomorrow?" at some point today, don't be too shocked. Despite being informed of the plans for the past three months, this person seems to find a way to forget anything the group has decided on. This person is likely The Planner's worst enemy, so try to avoid getting in between any conflicts these two have!

3) The Complaining One

We all know there's always one high-maintenance friend in every situation, and prom is no different. This person will always find a way to have some sort of issue with any plans the group collectively makes. Don't be surprised if this person tells you they're okay with the restaurant you made reservations for, but then changes their mind tomorrow afternoon!

4) The Judgy One

Be prepared for some harsh criticism from The Judgy One, not just towards you, but towards everyone. At the dance, they'll seem to have a comment about everyone's outfits, dates, or practically anything they can think of. Even though they can be quite blunt at times, you're thankful that they told you straight up not to wear what you had planned initially. Regardless, if you're looking to have prom be a fun and judgment-free zone, maybe you should ask the Judgy One to dial it back a bit tomorrow night.

5) The Fun One

This person has one mission and one mission only: to make prom the most fun and entertaining night possible. Whether it be cracking jokes throughout the night, or making an embarrassing mistake that makes everyone burst out laughing, this

person is sure to make the night one to remember. They might need some supervising to ensure they don't have *too* much fun, but that's what friends are for!

Hopefully, you've been able to see which type of personality you are at

prom, whether you're a combination of one of these, or none of them at all. Either way, somehow it all works out and these people make for a great night to remember. If you are looking for any information about tomorrow's special night, check @qohs2024 on Instagram for prom details.





Reflecting on my journalism experience at QO

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

I've loved to talk and write about sports for as long as I can remember. Whether I was recording mock sportscasts with my friends, calling a game perched in front of my TV, or writing articles for the sports newspaper I handed out to my friends in fourth grade, my younger-self was naturally drawn to this idea of sports journalism. I loved to talk, I loved to write, and I was the biggest little sports fan you could imagine — it was inevitable for me to take a liking to sports journalism.

So when I first stepped foot into Quince Orchard High School in 2019, there was one thing I knew I wanted to do: I wanted to write for the school's student newspaper — The Prowler. My sophomore year I took the Intro to Journalism course online — during the blur that was virtual learning — and by my junior year, we were back in-person, and I was finally a Staff Writer for The Prowler.

Junior year brought another milestone on my sports journalism journey — my first full season with the Quince Orchard Sports Network. I had initially joined during my freshman year, but that was cut short due to the pandemic. I got involved as much as possible during my virtual sophomore year, but junior year was where everything came back into full swing. Broadcasts were back, and I had the amazing opportunity to serve as a color commentator alongside the club's founder Adam Gotkin '22.

After years of aspiring to be a sports journalist, imagining myself covering the biggest moments at the biggest games, I was actually doing it, but still with the joy and enthusiasm of a wide-eyed kid. Not only was it an absolute blast, but I also learned so much through all of the real experience working as a journalist. Conducting proper interviews, crunching for an approaching deadline, preparing notes for an upcoming broadcast — these are all things I experienced at Quince

Orchard that will prepare me for a potential career in the field.

Just thinking of all the amazing opportunities that I have had to explore my passion for journalism at QO makes me realize the gratitude I have for this place. With a specific interest in sports, it has been amazing to attend a school with such a rich tradition in athletics. Of course, a perfect example is the dominant football team. Through my time with the Quince Orchard Sports Network, I called 23 football games. All 23 were wins for Quince Orchard, culminating in two State Championships. Having the opportunity to broadcast the championship game from Navy Marine Corps Memorial Stadium not once, but twice as a high schooler was unbelievable. It wasn't just the winning ways of the team, though. The incredible support of the QO community revolving around sports is nothing short of astounding. During this year's state championship game, QOSN had almost 800 unique listeners — a true testament to their passion for QO sports. Having that community engage with the work I've done has been so rewarding and meaningful.

None of these opportunities would have been possible without the supportive staff here at QO. For the QO Sports Network, a huge thank you to Mr. Rabberman, our sponsor. He graciously granted our club access to broadcast Cougar sporting events and was instrumental in logistical planning throughout the year. And for my amazing experience with The Prowler, thanks to our sponsor Ms. C-K. The wisdom, thoughtfulness, and kindness she provided everyday allowed the paper to thrive as a whole and opened up opportunities for every staff member.

By the time I began my senior year, I had worked my way to positions of leadership as editor-in-chief of The Prowler's sports section and president of the Quince Orchard Sports Network. It was an honor and privilege being named to these roles, and just as the QO community had supported me, I



Sammy Krimstein: S.K Sports
SAMMY KRIMSTEIN

Recording a sportscast for fun when I was in elementary school.



GARY KRIMSTEIN
Broadcasting a Cougar football game for the QO Sports Network in the fall.

wanted to give back to the QO community. As editor-in-chief, my main goal was to provide more coverage of QO-related athletic events to showcase the talent and dedication of our student-athletes. I'm very proud to say that our section accomplished that goal this year — every single article published in the sports section tied back to Quince Orchard. Huge kudos to all of our amazing staff writers — senior Griffin Owens, juniors Madeleine Burke and Olivia Maytin, and sophomore Lily Kaplan.

With the QO Sports Network, I sought to expand the club, and give more people the same opportunities that I had — to discover and pursue their passion for sports broadcasting. This year, we did just that, increasing club membership to over 20. It has been so cool to meet others who are just as passionate about sports journalism as I am, and to witness their passion, dedication, and hard work come to fruition through the club.

When I first discovered sports journalism, I loved it because of the sports. The diving catches, the buzzer-beaters, the close plays — it was exciting stuff, and I wanted to be a part of it. Now as I prepare to study journalism at my dream school, Northwestern University, I realize that I've stayed interested in sports journalism for a different reason: people and their stories.

Working for The Prowler has given me the chance to tell so many

compelling stories: a pair of football-star brothers who were recruited to play D1 football, a teacher who discovered a hidden talent for rugby, a foreign-exchange student from Sweden who was also a football player. Each story was unique, powered by the hopes and ambitions; the successes and failures of people in the Quince Orchard sports world. I loved learning about these kinds of things — the things that truly defined the character of all of these people. Throughout my time with The Prowler, many of my articles were no longer about sports themselves, but about the humanity that is found in every facet of sports.

Through my experience with the Quince Orchard Sports Network and The Prowler, all of my favorite memories all boil down to the connections I formed with people here at QO. I'm going to miss the relationships I formed with our talented student-athletes through interviews, the bonds I created with the supportive staff members, and the friendships I made with peers who also had a deep passion for journalism. As excited as I am to write more articles, broadcast more games, and make new connections at college, it's bittersweet saying goodbye to everyone at QO — especially those I've met through journalism. Even as I leave, I know that the moments I spent connecting with the amazing people at Quince Orchard are ones that I will carry with me forever.

Double varsity athletes: making the impossible possible

By **MADELEINE BURKE**
Staff Writer

Picture this: waking up early to get to school on time, spending nearly seven hours taking challenging classes, rushing to a long athletic practice that starts right after school, then coming home sore to hours of homework. While this may seem strenuous, impossible even, there are many student athletes at QO who are no stranger to this lifestyle.

Junior Elaina Nist, who has played multiple sports and taken numerous AP classes throughout her high school career at QO, is evidence that although it can be a lot of work, it is indeed doable. She has played basketball in past seasons, but this year has played soccer and lacrosse.

As a varsity athlete, Nist can attest to the large commitment it takes to participate in the successful programs QO has to offer. The girls soccer team went all the way to the state championship this year, going 12-3 on the season. As of April 28, the girls lacrosse team is 8-2, and is expected

to go far in the playoffs.

Academically, Nist excels in the classroom as she is enrolled in four AP courses this year — Calculus AB, English Language and Composition, Modern World History, and Psychology. She also has experience getting involved in extracurricular activities as she was a part of SGA her freshman year and volunteers through various QO clubs such as Best Buddies and Comfort Cases. Nist recommends getting involved in all that QO has to offer because it "teaches you important life skills like teamwork."

Student athletes like junior Kelly Adams, who has played a surplus of QO sports, have gotten the routine down. Because she also takes four AP courses — Calculus BC, Chemistry, English Language and Composition, and Physics — she knows how important time management can be.

Adams played soccer in past years, but currently is on the track and basketball teams. She ended this year's basketball season with an impressive team record of 15-7, and at the

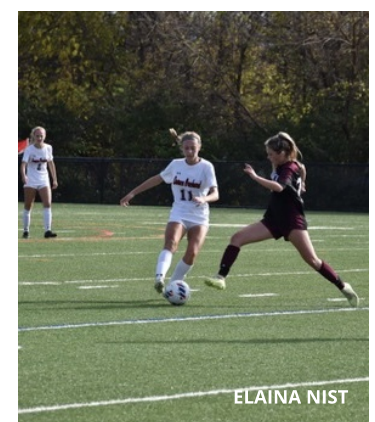
moment is having a successful track season. Adams says her most memorable moment from the basketball season was playing Poolesville, a highly competitive team, and beating them in overtime.

Playing multiple varsity sports is no walk in the park, so how do these student athletes at QO do it all? One answer always seemed to shine through when asked how they manage their responsibilities — procrastinating as little as they can.

"I only get one chance to get it done," said Nist, so she says taking advantage of the opportunities to get work done is important.

Adams shared similar advice. "I sometimes do work during lunch if [I] need to save time after school," she said.

It is crucial for these student-athletes to stay on top of their work so they don't fall behind. When getting into a routine Monday to Friday, it has been important for them to make time for the things they really enjoy. Hanging out with friends, watching a favorite movie, or even



ELAINA NIST

taking their dog for a walk can prevent the common overwhelming feeling people tend to get.

Although this might seem to be a tough challenge to take on, both girls would 100% recommend getting involved in QO athletics because of the friendships they have made since freshman year and the endless memories that come along.



KELLY ADAMS



Season Updates

Girls Tennis

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



COURTESY SAMANTHA HARRIS

With playoffs fast approaching, Quince Orchard Girls Tennis is gearing up to make a run. After dropping their first two matches of the season to tough opponents, they went on a surge — winning their next four games. A defining moment was their dominating 5-2 victory against the rival Northwest Jaguars.

"I think our most exciting win was Northwest," said senior captain Samantha Harris, "There was a lot of

anticipation leading up to the match and beating our rivals was so fun!"

At this point in the season, the team is 6-5. On April 14, the team had their senior night against Wheaton, honoring the group of seven seniors that contributed to tennis at QO. Through four years of practices and games, the team's seniors have cherished their time with QO tennis. For Harris, leaving is bittersweet, but she values the memories she has made.

"I'm going to miss my team the most. It's such a great group of girls and I'm so sad to leave them," she said, "though I've already made some of the girls promise to come visit me [at] college."

After their decisive victory on Monday against Watkins Mill, the team's seniors look to end the season strong as they race towards playoffs.

By **LILY KAPLAN**
Staff Writer

The year is coming to an end, but spring sports haven't stopped working hard to ensure that they're the best they can be. The boys varsity tennis team is a very solid team this spring and a 9-2 record, the boys have definitely made a name for themselves as they continue to work towards the playoffs.

One team member, junior Devin Lee, has been playing for QO since his freshman year. He describes the team as being eager for playoffs: "[The team is] focusing on playing the same way in matches as [they] play in practice," he said. With this in mind, Lee believes that the boys tennis team has a shot at winning state championships this year.

The boys were able to claim the division title for the second year in a row after their 7-0 win on April 20 at Sherwood.

Starting with their big 7-0 win on March 27 against Paint Branch, there

hasn't been a match where the boys hadn't beat the other team. Lee also doesn't believe that there has been a least successful match: "Every match is important. Win or lose, there is something to be learned."

Boys tennis has so far had a really successful season — not just with matches, but with team spirit as well. Come support the boys as they head for the playoffs.



DEVIN LEE

Boys Lacrosse

By **MADELEINE BURKE**
Staff Writer

The spring season for QO sports has begun and boys lacrosse has come out with a bang. With an overall record of 8-2 as of April 28, the Cougars bring a tough, dominating presence every time they step on the field.

The team is led by first year Coach Connor Miller and their four captains:



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seniors Josh Weitzman and JJ Pomrunk, junior Daniel Anderla, and sophomore Trent Mettler.

Looking back to last year's season, the boys have certainly advanced their level of play: the number of QO goals have increased while goals against QO have decreased. They are shutting down teams this year that were a potential threat to them last year.

One significant improvement shown so far this season was their game against the B-CC Barons. Last year, the Cougars were losing by six points at the end of the first half, and were able to bring the score up to 8-10, ending in a QO loss. But this year, QO walked into the Dome with a chip on their shoulder, and dominated the game from the beginning with an winning final score of 19-11.

As of publication, the boys are likely to be headed to the playoffs. Come watch them and support. With their consistent level of play, their very first state championship win could be well within reach.

Girls Lacrosse

By **LILY KAPLAN**
Staff Writer

As we near the middle of May, we see the last of the spring sports events, and girls lacrosse has had an amazing season.

Their 8-2 record is a direct result of the team's hard work, effort, and dedication to the game. The QO girls lacrosse team has put in many hours on and off the field to better themselves and their skills. Since November, the team has been doing

pre-season workouts twice a week in the QO weight room.

The Sherwood and Damascus games gave the Cougars their only two losses thus far during the season. "I think we learned about where our weaknesses lie and will continue to build and learn," explained Coach Taylor Blenckstone, who has been coaching the team since last spring.

Every other game has been a success for the girls. One notable matchup was their game against Blair, in which the Cougars won decisively, 18-6. The Cougars acknowledge this as being their most successful game.

"We as a team had gone through a lot of adversity that week and we had players step and take on difficult roles," Blenckstone said, "Overall, it was the best team effort and best lacrosse we played all year."

Closing up on the season, the team continues to train each and every day. Come support the team at their next away game (or "on their road to states") today, May 5.



MATTHEW MILLS

Volleyball

By **GRIFFIN OWENS**
Staff Writer

While some school teams may have a down season after losing over half of their roster, it seems that QO volleyball is not one of those teams.

Despite the roster shakeup, both varsity QO volleyball teams have performed very similarly to last year, with both old and new players stepping up to fill the roles of those who have left.

"They [the team] have been very welcoming," said first year coed volleyball player and junior Brendan Amsellem.

After playing their first game of the season on March 21, the coed volleyball team started out strong, surrendering only one set in their next three games, not losing a single game on their way to an undefeated 4-0 record.

Amsellem credits some of that success to the leadership of the team's senior captains.

"They basically help us through our games," Amsellem said. "They are just a role model for the whole team."

While the boys team hasn't had the best season record-wise, the team started out the season with a dominant performance against Damascus, winning 3-0, before losing their next two games to Clarksburg and Walter Johnson without winning a single set.

It took the coed team one month to finally notch a mark in the loss column this season, when the team traveled to play a Wootton team who had only one loss at the time. On April 17, Wootton handed the coed Cougars their first loss of the season, winning the close game in 5 sets.

Their second loss of the season came

soon after, as two days later the 5-2 Churchill beat the Cougars in four sets.

At this point in the season, the boys team is now four games under .500 with a record of 2-6 after suffering a three-game losing streak in the middle of the season, losing to schools like Wootton, Churchill, and Whitman.

The Cougars missed their chance to finally knock down rival and last year's coed champion Northwest early in the season, as the game was postponed due to the referee's illness.

"I think it could be a pretty good match," had said Amsellem on April 18, about playing Northwest. "I heard they have a pretty good middle blocker."

The game was postponed to April 24, where the coed team lost to Northwest in three sets. Meanwhile, the boys team did the opposite, beating the struggling Northwest boys team in three sets.

As of May 2, both teams only have one game remaining in the regular season as they travel to Gaithersburg High School to play the Trojans on May third.

Both the boys and coed teams will advance to the playoffs, and they are hoping to finish the season, and the school year, strong.



INSTAGRAM @_db_edits_

Seniors Emma Evans (middle) and Julien Mata (right) face off against Clarksburg on March 28, in a game that the Cougars won in three sets.

Staff Spotlight: Elicia Eberhart-Bliss

Acting Assistant Principal's athletic journey

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

Plenty of QO staff members have experience playing sports. Many played in high school, and some played in college — a few even played two or three growing up. With experience in five different sports under her belt, Acting Assistant Principal Elicia Eberhart-Bliss may take the crown.

During her high school days in Chambersburg, PA, Eberhart-Bliss was a three-sport athlete, competing in volleyball, basketball, and softball. She committed to play volleyball at nearby Shippensburg University, but during the preseason of her sophomore year she broke her foot — sidelining her for the entire year. It completely changed her trajectory with the sport, and the trajectory of her life. While she was injured, Eberhart-Bliss decided to leave the sport of volleyball, but eventually took on two new sports: baseball and rugby.

After returning from a junior year study abroad trip to Australia, where she was first introduced to rugby, Eberhart-Bliss found herself without a sport for the first time in her life, and wanted something to fill the void. She craved to get back into athletics — so when a friend recruited her to play for a semi-pro women's baseball team,

Eberhart-Bliss jumped at the opportunity.

At the age of 21, Eberhart-Bliss joined the Virginia Flames of the Eastern Women's Baseball Conference, playing in games all over the DMV area. While many of her softball skills translated to the baseball field, there were some adjustments in transitioning between the sports. The ball was smaller, the field was bigger, and as a catcher, Eberhart-Bliss had to get used to pitchers releasing the ball overhand as opposed to underhand.

As one of the younger players on the team, Eberhart-Bliss valued the opportunity to learn from all of her teammates — in baseball and in life. She only played one year for the Flames, but the connections she made with her peers had lasting impacts.

"From the mentoring perspective, it was cool, because I had exposure to women who are in careers or starting careers," she said. "[It] was a unique experience outside of just playing."

After her tenure with the Flames, Eberhart-Bliss spent several years teaching in Pennsylvania, and began to pursue her master's degree, but eventually, she wanted to try something new again. Just as she left for Australia as a college student, she once again ventured abroad, but this time as a teacher in England.

Living with other teachers from the same school, Eberhart-Bliss soon rediscovered the sport that had

initially interested her on her first time abroad: rugby. Although she had never actually played the sport, it had intrigued her since her time in Australia, so she tried out for a local club team — and made it. She originally began to play as a social outlet, but soon began to develop a passion for the sport.

"I fell in love with it, because it combines the sport background I had, it combined everything together," she said. "Tackling someone is thrilling."

Eberhart-Bliss was the only American on the team, but it didn't matter. She instantly felt comfortable with her teammates, and started developing friendships from the sport.

"The culture of rugby is very open and welcoming," she said. "You'd hang out on the field, you'd do social things afterwards."

Eberhart-Bliss only played in the UK for one year, but her passion for rugby became permanent. Upon returning to the US, she first finished her master's degree at Penn State, and soon found a new rugby team in Frederick, Maryland. Her experience in the UK proved valuable, as she eventually rose to become captain of her club team.

After playing in Frederick for several years, Eberhart-Bliss began to coach for her Frederick club team. It was her first experience coaching, and she soon took a liking to it. She made

her way back home to Pennsylvania, and started coaching at the high school level, where she led her team to the state semifinals multiple times. She appreciated her time coaching — it gave her the chance to spread her love and knowledge of rugby to others. Although her busy work schedule has kept her from rugby in recent years, Eberhart-Bliss intends to return to coaching sometime in the near future.

"The full circle moment of [coaching rugby] is rewarding," she said. "So empowering for you, but also empowering for the people that you're working with that you might be coaching or mentoring."

From player to captain to coach, Eberhart-Bliss's journey through athletics taught her the power of trying new things. She "could have easily said no" to her friend recruiting her to play baseball. She could have easily passed up the opportunity to play rugby. Instead, she decided to take some risks, and venture outside of her comfort zone. What began as a devastating foot injury culminated in the discovery of two new passions, and the realization of valuable life lessons along the way.

"I think just putting yourself out there and trying something new is a super valuable experience," she said. "I recognized how much you can be empowered by trying something new."



Ivy Interviews

Catching up with QO's Ivy League athletic commits

By **OLIVIA MAYTIN**
Staff Writer



DARTMOUTH

Girls varsity captain Annie Faraone has been playing soccer since she was three years old and is continuing her soccer career in 2024 at Columbia University.

Q: What got you into this sport?

A: I have three older siblings who all played soccer, so it just made sense to sign me up. My mom played collegiate soccer [at Delaware], so of course she wanted her kids to play.

Q: When did you realize you wanted to pursue this sport in college?

A: Ever since I started playing, I knew I would want to play as long as I could. Once I came of age to realize you could play sports in college, I knew I wanted to.

Q: What were some challenges that you have faced throughout your soccer journey?

When I was about 13 years old, my coach was leaving for a new club. He is

one of the best around, so I moved clubs with him. That brought a whole new team of girls I didn't know. It was challenging at first, but now it is the best thing that ever happened to me.

Q: What was the recruiting process like?

I had phone calls with several different Division I colleges three to four times during my process, [during] which all try to sell you on their schools.

Q: Why did you choose such a prestigious school?

A: It gives me the opportunity to challenge myself. The team and coaches won me over, and I knew after spending an amazing visit with them that they were people I wanted to be around.

Q: What do you like about the college?

A: When you go up to Columbia, you drive through the busy city of New York. But the moment you step on campus, it's this quiet sanctuary. I love the city, but I also love my quiet time and with Columbia, I have both.

Q: What was it like to commit to an Ivy League?

A: It was very exciting and fun. When people found out they all were like "WOW," and it made me feel like I was on top of the world.

Q: If you were talking to an athlete going through the recruiting process, what advice would you give them?

I would tell them to worry about only what they want. Ignore all other opinions and focus on what school best suits them. I would also tell them to feel no rush on their decision and just be grateful they have the opportunity to experience this process.

Senior Fred Mulford started rowing during the winter of 2020-2021 and is continuing his rowing career at Dartmouth College.

Q: What got you into this sport?

A: I had a friend who rowed for this local team.

Q: When did you realize you wanted to pursue this sport in college?

A: I knew I wanted to pursue this sport in college after my first spring season since I ended up loving the sport and competition.

Q: What were some challenges that you have faced throughout your rowing journey?

A: Illnesses were a challenge. I got around three colds, the flu, and COVID within a season or two.

Q: What was the recruiting process like?

A: I was mainly filling out questionnaires and then keeping coaches updated until they'd invite me on official recruiting visits to hang with the team and check out the school.

Q: What school did you commit to?

A: I went on official visits to UPenn, Princeton, and Dartmouth but committed to Dartmouth before my Stanford official [visit]. The reason I chose Dartmouth was that they have an in-depth rowing program ranked around 5th in the US. I also just really loved the campus, people, coaches, and the woods up in New Hampshire.

Q: What was it like to commit to an Ivy League?

A: Committing to an Ivy League was quite thrilling since I never would've thought I'd even have a chance to make it when [I was] a freshman in high school.

Q: How are you preparing for the Ivy League education?

A: I'm preparing for the Ivy League education by trying to avoid senioritis and keeping my habits together while continuing to work on my rowing performance.

Q: If you were talking to an athlete going through the recruiting process, what advice would you give them?

A: I would tell them to reach out to coaches as soon as they can and to try to make themselves known to them since that'll help their chances.



AVI RUBIN



COURTESY FRED MULFORD